Preparedness Package for Refugee Emergencies (PPRE)

Key points

- Refugee emergency preparedness should always be undertaken in partnership with the host government, UN and NGO partners.
- UNHCR (co-)leads refugee emergency preparedness with host governments (all actions undertaken before a refugee emergency occurs).
- The PPRE approach requires general preparedness everywhere, and more advanced humanitarian refugee emergency preparedness measures where needed.

1. Overview

The objective of emergency preparedness is to ensure that the strategic direction and required building blocks for an eventual response are in place. Experience has shown that starting the delivery of emergency aid, especially at scale, takes significant lead time. By undertaking preparedness measures, operations front-load preparatory actions before a crisis occurs. Preparedness includes: a context analysis, planning, gap identification, partnership development and coordination, and perhaps resource pre-positioning. Good emergency preparedness lays the foundation of an emergency response.

The Preparedness Package for Refugee Emergencies (PPRE) sets standards for preparing specifically for a refugee emergency. The approach combines preparedness actions (that are not risk specific) with scenario-based contingency response planning. It replaces earlier guidance for refugee contingency planning and is aligned with the new IASC Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP) approach to non-refugee emergencies. It is designed for use by UNHCR offices, which (co)-lead inter-agency refugee emergency preparedness with host governments; offices should involve all relevant partners from the outset.

The PPRE provides tools that enable offices to:

- Measure the current level of preparedness against minimum requirements, and achieve minimum requirements using a checklist of Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPAs).
- Assess risk systematically and prepare better for potential refugee emergencies.
• Increase the level of preparedness when required, using the Advanced Preparedness Activities (APAs) checklist.

• Lead, facilitate and prepare inter-agency contingency plans for a potential refugee emergency (when required), at country or regional level.

2. When and for what purpose

Refugee emergency preparedness must be undertaken wherever a refugee crisis is foreseeable. Some PPRE components are triggered at specified levels of risk, as shown in the table below. The PPRE provides a framework for preparing systematically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>When?</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPRE Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPAs)</td>
<td>All the time, all UNHCR offices (except advocacy operations that may not be affected by emergencies)</td>
<td>To maintain systematic minimum preparedness; to self-assess status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HQ checklist for MPAs</td>
<td>All the time, by UNHCR HQ Regional Bureaux and Regional Offices</td>
<td>To systematically support country operations in emergency risk analysis and preparedness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk analysis and monitoring - refugee emergencies</td>
<td>All the time at regular intervals, by all offices and UNHCR HQ Regional Bureaux and Regional Offices.</td>
<td>To monitor the risk of a refugee emergency risk, and trigger advanced preparedness actions (APAs) when necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPRE Advanced Preparedness Actions (APAs)</td>
<td>Medium risk: APAs to be considered. High risk: APAs mandatory.</td>
<td>To get ready to respond to a new emergency, and initiate or lead contingency planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPRE contingency planning (CP) (part of APAs)</td>
<td>Medium risk: CP to be considered. High risk: CP mandatory.</td>
<td>To agree scenario-based plans with all partners on emergency response actions and resources required.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3. Summary of guidance and/or options

Partnership with UN agencies and NGOs is essential for effective refugee emergency preparedness. UNHCR therefore works consistently with partners to fulfil its overall responsibility to support Governments to prepare effectively for refugee emergencies.

To prevent emergencies from overwhelming the capacity to respond, the PPRE provides a phased approach that, if properly applied, makes it possible to achieve and to measure preparedness actions. MPAs are a set of activities that all operations must undertake. They are the basis for advanced preparedness. APAs prepare the operation for emergency response mode, and include scenario-based contingency planning.

A UNHCR-led inter-agency contingency plan can be converted into a Refugee Response Plan (RRP), which also serves as an emergency funding appeal.

4. How to implement this at field level?

Refugee Emergency Preparedness Coordination

Preparedness coordination occurs within the framework of the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM). The UNHCR Country Representative is responsible for initiating and leading timely preparedness, including contingency planning, as required. When the risk of an emergency warrants it, a UNHCR-led contingency planning task force should be created, involving Government, UN agencies and relevant NGOs.

The Representative maintains a strong and constructive relationship with the Humanitarian or Resident Coordinator, who should be kept informed of actions taken to prepare for a possible refugee influx.
Partnership in preparedness and planning
The form and extent of partnerships will depend on the country context, and the emergency response capacities of Government, UN agencies and NGOs in the country. In most cases, partnerships draw on the capacity or technical expertise of UN and NGOs to provide humanitarian assistance services. Partners may also (co)coordinate specific assistance sectors.

Early warning (risk assessment and risk monitoring)
At country level, UNHCR contributes refugee-specific analysis to inter-agency early warning efforts. At HQ level, through the Division of Emergency, Security and Supply, it participates in the inter-agency Early Warning Early Action process. Twice a year, this generates an early warning report and recommended actions, shared with the IASC Emergency Directors Group and the RC/HC in all concerned countries. More information on this process can be obtained from the UNHCR Division for Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS).

Contingency plans in ‘mixed’ situations (refugee/IDP)
In ‘mixed’ situations, where an IDP or natural disaster operation is already in place (or planned), a separate and specific contingency plan for refugee influx should be established. If an IASC contingency response plan has already been established for other risks (natural disaster, internal displacement), the refugee contingency plan is a separate document, and should align with the IASC plan as far as possible.

5. Links
Choularton, R., Contingency planning and humanitarian action: a review of practice, Humanitarian Practice Network Paper
Refugee Emergency Preparedness Hub (log-in for UNHCR users only)

Need help?
CONTACT UNHCR HQ, Division for Emergency Security and Supply (DESS), at: hqemhand@unhcr.org

Annexes
• UNHCR IOM FOM 056 2013, Guidance Note on the Preparedness Package for Refugee Emergencies
• UNHCR PPRE guidance Note (English), 2013
• UNHCR PPRE guidance Note (French), 2013
• UNHCR PPRE print publication in PDF, 2014
• UNHCR PPRE Training Session 1 (Overview)
• UNHCR PPRE Training Session 2 (Emergency Risk Analysis and Planning Scenario)
• UNHCR PPRE training – Session 3 (Contingency Planning Process), 2013

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