

Mid-Term External Evaluation of Reach Out: a Refugee Protection Training Project

An inter-agency project of a coalition of international humanitarian NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Final Evaluation Report



Jeff Handmaker, External Evaluator

Dunne Bierkade 14-b ■ 2512 BC Den Haag ■ Netherlands

Tel. +31 (0)70 363 0785 ■ Fax. 362 5814

E-mail: handmaker@reahamba.nl ■ Web: www.reahamba.nl

K.v.K. 27186316 ('s Gravenhage) ■ b.t.w. NL 2214 72 952 B01

Contents

Page

1. Background to the Evaluation.....	4
1.1 The Challenge of Linking Refugee Protection and Humanitarian Assistance.....	4
1.2 Agencies and Partners.....	4
1.2.1 Organisations' Perceptions of Reach Out	5
1.2.2 National, not Local	5
1.2.3 Contributions of National and International Organisations.....	6
1.2.4 Key Messages from National NGOs.....	6
1.3 Challenges of Multiple Stakeholders	6
1.4 Protection problems identified by Reach Out Participants.....	7
1.4.1 "Most Important" Protection Issue	7
1.4.2 Steps taken to protect refugees	8
1.5 Clarifying the role of the evaluator	8
1.6 Methodology used by the evaluator.....	9
1.6.1 Work Plan.....	9
1.6.2 Questionnaire	9
1.6.3 Field Visits – South Africa, Senegal, Bulgaria.....	10
1.7 What Host Organisations Desired to Gain through their involvement	10
2. Quality and Methodology of Reach Out Training	11
2.1 Summary of Key Observations from Participants / Interviewees	11
2.2 Reflections from the Durban Training of Trainers Workshop (TOT).....	11
2.3 Feedback from the Questionnaire.....	12
2.3.1 Personal expectations / reasons for attending the course	12
2.3.2 Positive Reflections – <i>Training Methods and Content</i>	13
2.3.3 Room for Improvement – <i>Training Content</i>	14
2.3.4 Positive Reflections – <i>Trainers</i>	15
2.3.5 Room for Improvement – <i>Trainers</i>	16
2.3.6 Room for Improvement – <i>Organisation</i>	16
2.3.7 Training Materials	17
2.3.8 Additional, positive feedback	17
2.4 Feedback from the Field Visits	18
2.4.1 Quality of the Reach Out Trainers / Balanced Facilitation?	18
2.4.2 Appropriateness of the Training Methods – a "tree for talking"	18
2.4.3 Quality / Effectiveness of the Training Materials.....	18
2.4.4 Participants – selection and composition.....	18
2.4.5 Usefulness of the Field Guide for NGOs	19
2.5 Role of the Host Organisation	19
2.5.1 Role of the Host Organisation in the Reach Out Workshop.....	19
2.5.2 Organisation of the Reach Out Workshops.....	19
2.5.3 Better Optimising the Role of the Host Organisation.....	20
2.6 Recommendations.....	20
3. Refugee Protection and Inter-Agency Issues	23
3.1 Summary of Key Observations from Participants / Interviewees	23
3.2 Reach Out Stakeholders	23
3.3 Feedback from the Questionnaire.....	24
3.3.1 Personal Change	24
3.3.2 Organisational Change	25
3.3.3 Impact on Organisations' Relationships	25
3.4 Feedback from the Field Visits	26
3.4.1 Impact on the Policy and Behaviour of Organisations	26
3.4.2 Appropriately meeting the needs of organisations	26
3.4.3 Contribution of Reach Out to More Cooperative Protection Efforts.....	26
3.4.5 Contribution of UNHCR to the Workshop	27
3.4.6 UNHCR initiatives to follow-up on workshop findings.....	27
3.4.7 Influence of Reach Out on UNHCR thinking and programming.....	27
3.4.8 Relationship between UNHCR Field Office and Headquarters	28
3.5 Recommendations.....	28

4. Project Management	29
4.1 Has Reach Out achieved its objectives?	29
4.2 Closer Involvement of / Better Communication with other Stakeholders	30
4.3 Composition and Role of the Working Group.....	30
4.4 Interaction between Agencies and Partners	31
4.5 Recommendations.....	31
5. Future Directions and Concluding Messages	32
5.1 Drawing on Existing Resources and Initiatives.....	32
5.2 Enhancing a good product – “multipliers”	33
5.3 Identifying Priorities through a Wide-Ranging Consultation Process.....	33
6. Summary of Key Recommendations	34
6.1 Quality and Methodology of Reach Out Training.....	34
6.2 Refugee Protection and Inter-Agency Issues.....	35
6.3 Project Management	35

Annexes

Annex A: Working Plan, Mid-Term Evaluation	36
Annex B: Interim Reports Produced	37
Annex C: Questionnaire, sent to participants in late January 2003	37
Annex D: Questions asked of participants during the field visits	40
Annex E: Positioning of Stakeholders in Reach Out (Observation)	42
Annex F: Overview of Protection Activities by UNHCR in Bulgaria	43
Annex G: Focus on workshops / organisations as resource (Proposal)	44
Annex H: Acronyms and List of those individually interviewed	45

1. Background to the Evaluation

1.1 The Challenge of Linking Refugee Protection and Humanitarian Assistance

A principal objective of the Reach Out Training Project is to build awareness amongst humanitarian assistance organisations that provide material support (medical, food, shelter, etc.) to refugees in field operations around the world that the *assistance they provide* and the *circumstances under which they operate* have protection consequences. As the Field Guide (above) states:

The phrase “international protection” covers the gamut of activities through which refugees’ rights are secured. (page 18, *A Field Guide for NGOs*)

The challenge of linking refugee protection and humanitarian assistance was perhaps best illustrated in Senegal, where there are several human rights and humanitarian assistance organisations that work closely together, though not without associated tensions:

Humanitarian organisations feel

- they should feel able to challenge UNHCR, government and others (“ring the bell”) when they disagree with a particular policy or action;
- refugees believe all refugee problems are solved by UNHCR and their implementing partner – government too refers refugees to them;
- sometimes it was easier for human rights organisations to take up advocacy efforts since they have their “hands in the mud” and were more vulnerable to criticism – human rights NGOs, on the other hand, can more easily criticise, but sometimes need to “come back to earth”;
- assistance is protection – human rights NGOs see *them* treating assistance as a privilege;
- training without follow-up is useless;
- lack of communication can lead to multiple organisations assisting the same individual(s);

Human rights organisations feel

- humanitarian organisations are “slow” on advocacy, which might require an urgent response;
- every organisation chooses how it wishes to act, some are more political than others;
- humanitarian organisations working as implementing partners are “extensions of UNHCR”;
- UN Agencies don’t always know their “partners” can also be human rights organisations;
- some organisations see discrimination where others do not;

However, far from disclosing a divide in the activities of human rights and humanitarian NGOs, the fact that organisations are actively engaged in confronting and discussing these issues illustrates a heightened awareness that the link between protection and social assistance is inextricable.

1.2 Agencies and Partners

In conducting this evaluation, a distinction has been made between agencies and partners, reflecting the different perceptions that organisations have regarding the Reach Out initiative.

Agencies are seen as international organisations with field operations, generally with headquarters located in a developed country; UN organisations, notably UNHCR and the project's donors are also identified as agencies. All members of the Working Group can be described as agencies.¹

Partners, on the other hand, are seen as national institutions (NGOs, national red cross / red crescent societies, academic institutions and governments) with predominantly national activities that the project interacts with, whether as participants in a particular training location or, in some cases, playing a role as host organisation in a workshop.

Further, it was observed that countries dealing with relatively small numbers of refugees, arriving on primarily an individual basis (for example Senegal, South Africa and Bulgaria) rarely have international organisations operating there, with the exception of UN agencies. This can be contrasted with countries that have large refugee populations, such as Tanzania and Zambia, who are often residing in camps and looked after primarily by international organisations.

1.2.1 Organisations' Perceptions of Reach Out

A strong observation from this evaluation is that partners perceive Reach Out very differently than how agencies perceive it.

Agencies (international organisations), including UNHCR, IOM and UNICEF, mentioned that, unless a specific emergency exists, it is likely that the only international organisations to be involved in refugees will be national NGOs and government. Agencies were for the most part very positive of Reach Out's efforts to build capacity amongst national organisations, although some concern was raised that thorough needs analyses were not conducted in advance.

Agencies particularly appreciated the opportunity to share information and experiences about how organisations and government approached the refugee issue. Agencies furthermore acknowledged that the Reach Out workshop was a valuable means of bringing stakeholders together as well as providing support to both NGOs and government.

Partners (national organisations) felt that Reach Out was a "good product", with another participant stating that Reach Out was "produced with a lot of inspiration and experience"; some expressed, however, that they missed more substantial input from national organisations and/or facilitators. Social counsellors in particular welcomed the opportunity to introduce new information from "outside", which in the case of psychological counsellors was a crucial element of their work.

Some national participants expressed that they would have appreciated a focussed workshop, though also recognised the value of the course in raising awareness, bringing information to some participants for the first time and making a link with integration – one participant stressed the value of getting participants (especially government) to "understand integration as an aspect of protection".

Other national participants felt that Reach Out was valuable in getting organisations to appreciate that they had a "common basis" in their work.

1.2.2 National, not Local

In some countries, including those visited during the course of this evaluation, there are not many international organisations involved in refugee protection / assistance. For some organisations, the word "local partner" has no meaning; they see themselves as national organisations, acknowledging that others might operate more at an international level. The distinction between "agency" and "partner" does have meaning to them.

¹ These organisations include: International Rescue Committee (IRC), International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Inter Action, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Oxfam Great Britain, Care, International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), Swedish Red Cross Society, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Council of Churches, Save the Children UK, and Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR).

1.2.3 Contributions of National and International Organisations

Some national organisations make contributions to processes in other countries; this is particularly evident in regions such as West Africa, where conflicts (and refugees) have spilled across borders. Consequently, regional networks such as WARIPNET² have emerged. Further, both national and international NGOs have supported the emergence of national organisations in other countries.

Both international and national NGOs confirmed that UNHCR sometimes perceive them with considerable caution, unless they are engaged as implementing partners. National NGOs feel that international NGOs also treat them with suspicion, not believing they are capable of humanitarian assistance operations. One NGO commented that: "if international NGOs don't want to build bridges with national NGOs, they will have problems".

1.2.4 Key Messages from National NGOs

One **key message** from national NGOs is that if a situation in a particular country becomes very difficult, international NGOs (and UNHCR) will leave, often leaving national NGOs to "pick up the pieces".

Another **key message** is from national NGOs is that they often have the technical capacity, but lack the experience to handle a crisis.

A third **key message** is that organisations in the south could play a very effective role as "mediators" in facilitating better relationships between human rights and humanitarian organisations.

1.3 Challenges of Multiple Stakeholders

Very interesting feedback was given to a question posed to participants during the field visits to Senegal and Bulgaria regarding the challenge of multiple stakeholders in the refugee assistance field, and the danger that refugees' interests can be forgotten. This feedback reflected a rich experience of working with refugees, with some participants having spent more than two decades providing either protection and/or assistance to refugees. As one Senegalese refugee coordinator with twenty years of field experience explained, concerning the challenges of multiple stakeholders:

"there is a tendency for each organisation to give privilege to their own concerns, while at the same time forgetting that refugees are also stakeholders".

Most participants also remarked that one should avoid relying on just one perspective and to *coordinate efforts with other stakeholders*. Further, it was stated that to achieve this, concrete initiatives are needed with a clear acceptance of organisations' strengths and weaknesses.

Apart from better coordination, participants felt it was important to develop standards in assistance in order to measure (and improve) the quality of assistance to refugees, while others mentioned the need to engage in lobby activities.

The need to *improve communication / dialogue* between organisations, and between organisations and refugees, was also raised by a number of participants as a key challenge, particularly in countries where intercultural communication skills were limited, as in Bulgaria (and arguably South Africa also).

Funding of non-governmental activities was also raised a key challenge, while most organisations also recognised that the primary responsibility lay on governments to provide assistance. It was widely felt that efforts needed to be taken to convince government of the value in supporting activities of experienced, non-governmental social assistance organisations.

² www.waripnet.org

1.4 Protection problems identified by Reach Out Participants

Respondents to the questionnaire were surprisingly diverse in describing protection problems. Sexual harassment and violence towards refugees as well as security issues in camps were the most prominent protection problems in the view of respondents. A large number of respondents also highlighted their long experience in working with refugees, with “many problems”, but no specific issues mentioned.

Interestingly, the provision of humanitarian assistance (with specific reference to health, housing and medical assistance) and camp maintenance was also strongly featured along with, confirming a widely held perception amongst humanitarian workers that protection issues were closely interlinked with ensuring that refugees access basic assistance. One respondent clearly stated: “humanitarian assistance is also protection”. Advocacy issues and monitoring the treatment of refugees also featured strongly in participants’ responses.

Top 3 Protection Problems



A smaller number responded that there were “no new issues” or handled few cases, while an equal number of responses reflected the protection of children, IDPs and policy issues as specific protection problems.

A few mentioned the (in)voluntariness of repatriation, armed conflict, application procedure and lack of funds / resources as protection problems.

Finally, individual responses mentioned the following as protection problems: gender issues, specific refugee groups (coming from a particular place), relations between host / refugee communities, staff deployment, resettlement. One participant stated that “although UNHCR has the mandate, they frequently don’t have the personnel to provide an adequate degree of protection”.

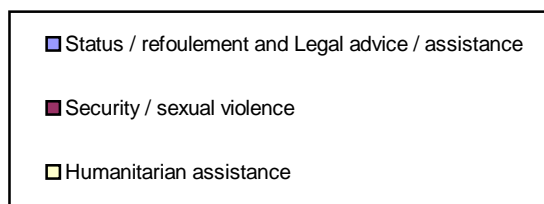
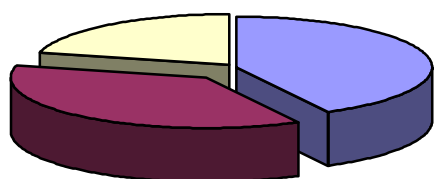
1.4.1 “Most Important” Protection Issue

While similar to the previous question, what respondents considered to be the “single most important protection issue” proved to be surprisingly different, though equally diverse.

Given the prominent coverage in the media and amongst humanitarian assistance organisations, it was perhaps not too surprising that **security** issues, with particular mentioning of “sexual violence / abuse” towards refugees, was prominently featured. More surprising to the evaluator were the many references to the **legal status** of refugees and legal assistance – “refugee status determination process” or “refoulement” – as the most important issue.

The provision of **humanitarian assistance** was, again, strongly reflected.

Single Most Important Protection Issue - TOP 3



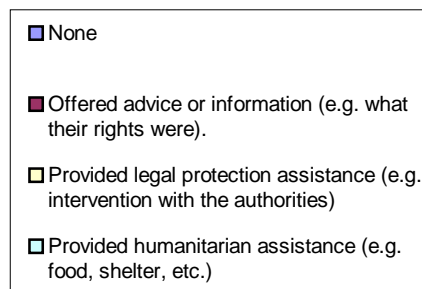
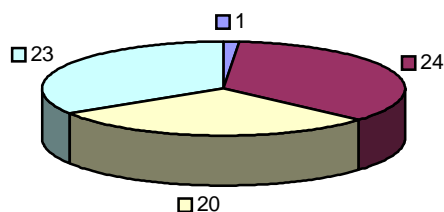
Slightly fewer respondents indicating the initial reception of asylum seekers and “accessing credible organisations, along with protection of children and other “vulnerable groups” as the most important issue. One respondent specifically mentioned child soldiers in this context.

A few mentioned respect for the rights of refugees and creating awareness, resettlement and policy issues as the most important issue.

1.4.2 Steps taken to protect refugees

The steps that organizations took to protect refugees included: psychological support, family tracing, working as a team, ensuring the proper functioning of UNHCR, making sure that refugee voices are heard and IDPs.

What steps has your organisation taken to protect refugees?



1.5 Clarifying the role of the evaluator

The job of the evaluator in this mid-term evaluation was to make a broad assessment of the Reach Out project, in accordance with the stated terms of reference. Being a sole evaluator and given a short period of time, it was necessary to focus on key aspects of the project, namely:

- the process in which training locations are identified;
- whether needs assessments in these training locations is conducted (or not);
- the appropriateness of the training materials and methods;
- the manner in which each workshop is evaluated;
- the extent to which follow-up activities are promoted and undertaken in the field;
- examples where RO workshops have had an impact in the field;
- the management of the RO project;
- the role of the Working Group;
- clarification of the role of the local partner / agency;
- reflecting on the training agenda and types of workshops RO undertakes;

1.6 Methodology used by the evaluator

Notwithstanding certain constraints faced in conducting this mid-term evaluation, it was still possible to produce a fairly extensive survey of how RO operates, the impact of its workshops and what recommendations RO could consider.

1.6.1 Work Plan

The evaluation was carried out in terms of a work plan, agreed with the chairperson of the Working Group and Reach Out project manager (attached as Annex A), consisting of:

- a base-line survey of RO documentation;
- extensive individual interviews with RO project staff, especially the project manager;
- individual interviews with members of the RO Working Group;
- individual interviews with RO trainers;
- bilingual (English and French) e-mail questionnaire;
- individual interviews with participants from RO workshops in Senegal and Bulgaria;
- comparisons with other, existing global and training initiatives.

1.6.2 Questionnaire

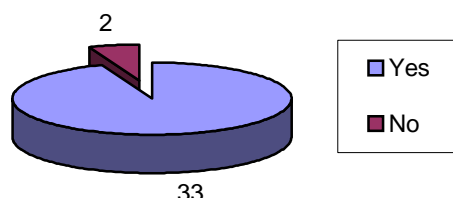
The e-mail questionnaire proved to be a useful method of evaluating the broad impact of the Reach Out training workshops, with respondents representing feedback from 13 training locations. The questionnaire was sent to +/- 500 participants in all of the RO workshops; approximately 150 of these were returned unread or undelivered. 35 respondents provided comprehensive feedback from the survey, representing nearly 10% of the total of those evaluated, which is a respectable enough response rate.

In general, respondents to the questionnaire were very positive about the Reach Out training. The critical feedback was there, but of a constructive nature, suggesting practical solutions for improvement rather than outright negative criticism.

A **strong message** emerged that *joint planning* was key to improving course content and structure.

Most respondents replied "yes" as to whether they considered their organisation had a mandate for refugee protection. Those who responded "no" confirmed that they nevertheless were still involved with refugee protection in their work.

Do you consider your organisation to have a mandate for refugee protection?



NOTE: Some attended more than one workshop →

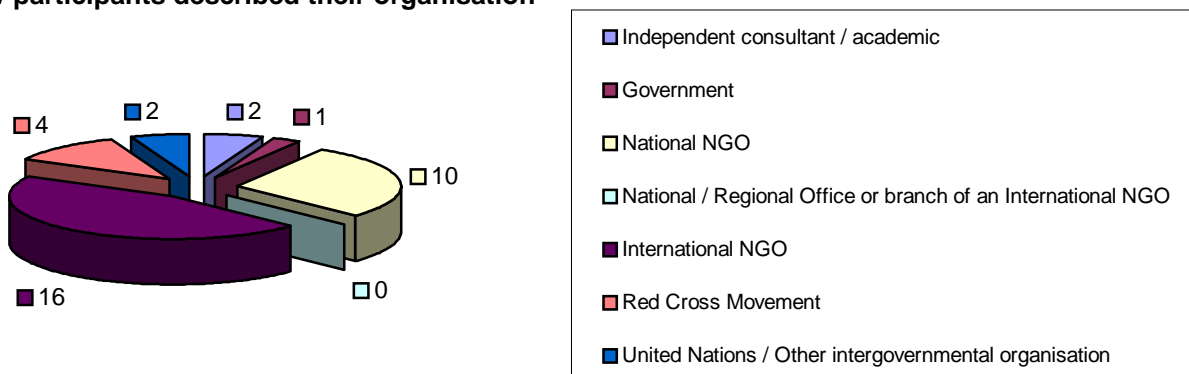
Addis Ababa	5
Amman	4
Calgary	3
Chennai	1
Chiang Mai	3
Dakar	3
Dar Es Salaam	4
Freetown	3
Moscow	1
Nairobi	2
Nice	6
Peshawar	1
Washington D.C.	2

Total participants surveyed	38
Spread of Countries	13

Total responses 35

The background of respondents to the questionnaire was broadly representative of the many different kinds of organisations working with refugees in the field, though most (74%) described themselves as working for either national or international NGOs.

How participants described their organisation



1.6.3 Field Visits – South Africa, Senegal, Bulgaria

In addition to the evaluator’s assessment of the Durban TOT workshop, the field visits to Bulgaria and Senegal provided an opportunity to gain deeper insights in assessing the quality of the training workshops as well as the impact they have had in stimulating inter-organisational cooperation. Thirty-five participants were individually interviewed at length during the course of the field visits.

Comprehensive reports of these visits were produced and shared with the interlocutors of the field visits, whose assistance was invaluable as well as the Reach Out project manager and Working Group chairperson. A list of standard questions asked by the evaluator is attached as Annex H.

1.7 What Host Organisations Desired to Gain through their involvement

Host organisations collectively expressed three main areas where they desired to gain through their association with the Reach Out Workshop.

Firstly, they desired to *reinforce their capacity and partnerships*. This was especially important in societies where civil society organisations were still largely undeveloped (as in Bulgaria), but was also useful to enhance existing partnerships in countries where civil society organisations were well organised as in South Africa and Senegal). The workshop also provided an opportunity to “increase the profile” of their organisation.

Secondly, they wished to *gain more competence* on refugee issues, in particular depending their knowledge of the link between assistance and protection or “understanding protection as multi-faceted”. It was, however, recognised that the course was not intended to go deeply into issues, but to raise awareness.

Thirdly, they appreciated an *opportunity for theoretical reflection* on protection issues, taking them away from their day-to-day assistance work.

2. Quality and Methodology of Reach Out Training

2.1 Summary of Key Observations from Participants / Interviewees

In general, feedback from numerous, individual interviews, particularly during the field visits concluded that the training delivered by Reach Out trainers was of a high standard, although some of the training methods might be better adapted to specifically suit the culture and specific requirements of particular countries / regions and especially respect cultural sensitivities. In particular, interactive methods tended to work very well. Moreover, participants explained that they wished to contribute their "themes of choice" to be covered by the training programme agenda. Thus, while the main aim of training – knowledge transfer – is being achieved, *the content and methods might be more firmly rooted in the locations where the training takes place.*

Further, *detailed needs analysis do not take place* in a designated country / region before a Reach Out training is undertaken, which was perceived by many interviewed as a drawback. As a consequence, only a limited basis exists to measure whether specific workshop objectives are being achieved, beyond knowledge transfer.

Reach Out training and the Field Guide for NGOs are *geared more towards building awareness about protection issues, rather than providing a sophisticated understanding of how to resolve them.* This said, the training materials and the handbook "Protecting Refugees: A Field Guide for NGOs" are *highly polished and relatively easy to follow.* Both the materials and methods were remarked upon as being *euro centric* in their design and could reflect perspectives and input from other countries. This should not necessarily be seen as a limitation, but as a basis and an opportunity to vary the materials for each workshop by drawing on experiences in the field.

Identification of participants goes hand in hand with the identification of specific objectives to be achieved; several interviewed felt that this ought to *more closely involve local partners/agencies.* Furthermore many felt that Reach Out needs to be clearer as to what the course can offer.

Most participants reflected that the workshop provided another valuable *opportunity to interact with and learn from each other.*

Finally, the *role of the local partner/agency is quite vague* beyond acting as local organiser, booking conference venues, transport and the like and could be more substantive.

2.2 Reflections from the Durban Training of Trainers Workshop (TOT)

Positive observations from the Durban TOT include a good gender representation, an avoidance of technical discussions and the linking of protection to humanitarian assistance activities. It was also useful to identify refugee protection and training as part of a continuous "cycle", as well as to stress the value of good organization and an acknowledgement that some aspects of training are not foreseeable.

Further, Reach Out employed a creative use of metaphors (however, see below) and interactive training methods (in particular role-plays and use of the fictional "border"), also stressing the importance of getting to know the participants and linking the training to their experiences in the field. Insisting that training was a "team effort" was a valuable message, which was reinforced by the critical, but respectful "peer review" process.

Observations on where there was **room for improvement** included awkwardness on the part of Reach Out trainers, especially at the beginning. There was only a cursory reference to the Field Guide as well as some confusion associated with the refugee cycle and refugee protection framework. There was also a lack of balanced representation (in terms of the experience and knowledge of the participants) in some of the breakaway groups.

There was sometimes an “over-facilitation” by providing too much direction to the proceedings, when it could have been more useful to stimulate feedback from a highly enthusiastic group of participants – interactive sessions nearly always worked well.

In some cases, the use of some methods and metaphors was too complex and technical, while in other cases they proved too simplistic. Sometimes the content itself was overly superficial, which in the case of some refugee concepts (e.g. “refugeehood”) could prove to be highly problematic, not least since the refugee definitions themselves provide considerable space for interpretation, and indeed vary between countries and regions. It would also have been useful to expand on the role of refugees as participants in refugee protection.

It should always be remembered to use socially and culturally sensitive language in conducting the training workshops, which the local partner/agency can be of great assistance with.

A **detailed set of notes** from the assessment of the Durban TOT, including some (tentative) recommendations was passed along to the Reach Out Team Manager, attached here as Annex F.

2.3 Feedback from the Questionnaire

The majority of respondents (80%) were informed about the Reach Out Protection training course by the working group of the Reach Out project.

Respondents heard of the course directly from Reach Out (5), Oxfam (3) and International Rescue Committee (IRC) (4), and to a smaller extent via UNHCR (2), International Catholic Migration Commission (1), and NGO Networks (1).

A smaller group (4) heard of the course through host organizations. And an equally small group (4) of respondents found out about the course from other organizations.

2.3.1 Personal expectations / reasons for attending the course

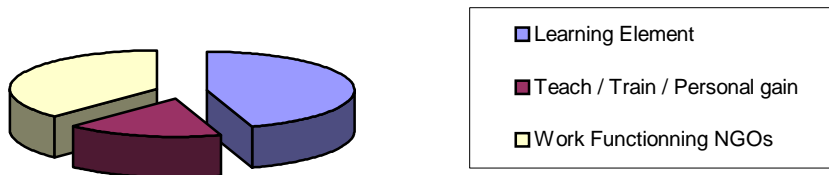
The expectations of respondents, who were asked to indicate their “top 3” expectations/reasons, can be grouped into three main categories. Answers to this question generated well over 80 responses.

The first expectation of respondents was to **learn more** on refugee protection. Apart from wanting to gain general knowledge on refugee protection, respondents identified specific issues (many not conventionally seen as strictly refugee protection), including: humanitarian issues, unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups, sex abuse, and asylum. Five respondents also highlighted logistical issues of refugee protection, such as theoretical and practical aspects of resettlement and organizing food, shelter and relief assistance and dealing with the initial influx of refugees. The request for specific *regional* information was noted by a couple of participants.

Secondly respondents expected to learn how to **teach and train others**, in addition to gaining personal experience. In total, eight respondents pointed out that learning how to teach and train in the field of refugee protection was first priority for attending the course. The learning element of the course was also seen as gaining professional experience as well as improving their role and capacity in supporting refugee protection. Two respondents highlighted the importance of seeing things from a “different point of view”.

The third main reason for participating in the course was to **find out more about the work and functioning of (other) NGOs**. Two sub-levels were distinguished in this category. On the organizational level respondents wanted to increase their general understanding of projects, as well as assessment and evaluation of the Reach Out program. They showed interest in the role of UNHCR and other NGOs in general and their role in the field of refugee protection in particular. On the inter-personal level, respondents wanted to get to know others who work in the same field, exchange experience and do some networking. Two respondents stated their expectation that this might result in partnership and future coordination.

Expectations / Reasons for attending Reach Out



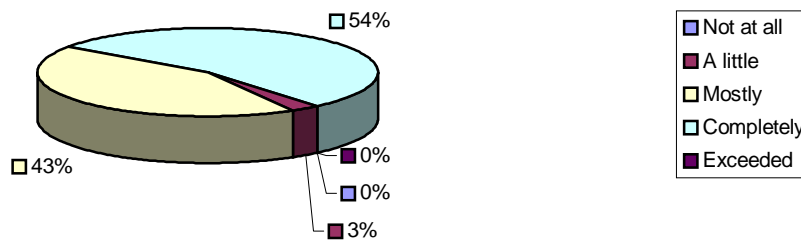
The responses to this question positively reflect the two principal goals of the course, which were:

- 1) To raise awareness of refugee protection issues in the context of humanitarian assistance;
- 2) To promote inter-organisational cooperation and coordination.

Thus, respondents' highest priorities were to increase their knowledge, either in general or on specific aspects of refugee protection, followed by the desire to meet people that work in the same field. Although the learning and training aspect had a lower priority, it also reflected a significant share of the respondents' expectations.

Asked whether the content of the training "met their expectations", respondents overwhelmingly felt that it had "completely" or "mostly" did.

Did the content of the training meet your expectations?

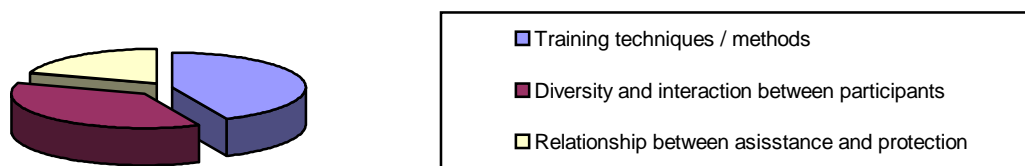


2.3.2 Positive Reflections – *Training Methods and Content*

Respondents were more unequivocal in identifying the most useful and informative aspects of the training. *Training techniques, methods and preparation* were extensively noted as having been some of the "most useful and informative aspects" of the training workshop; with one participant highlighting that they were "creative and effective" (see also below, 2.3.4). Equally popular was the *diversity and interaction between participants*, enabling them to share experiences and make contacts.

A number of respondents identified the explanation of the *relationship between assistance and protection* as being useful, with respondents stating that it helped them identify what the "real rights" were and discovering that "protection is really very wide and not just legal".

Most useful and informative aspects



The basic concepts of the international refugee protection system and refugee law were further identified as being useful and informative. Others identified the quality of the trainers and practical application of resettlement criteria as useful aspects of the training.

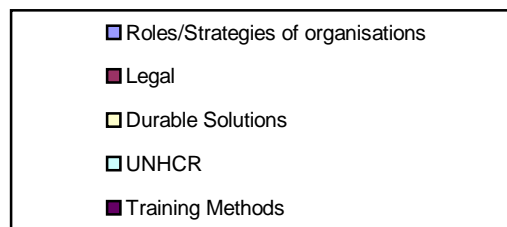
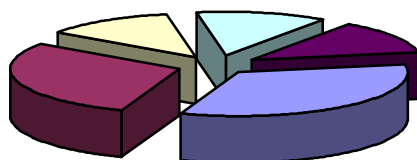
Finally, a smaller number appreciated an explanation of the particular protection needs of specific groups such as refugee women and children as well as the Protecting Refugees field guide for NGOs.

2.3.3 Room for Improvement – *Training Content*

Most respondents wanted more attention to be paid to legal issues, including legislation / policy and especially issues concerning international law and practice. A large number also wanted more attention given to the responsibilities and roles, including: interaction between different organisations as well as strategies and mechanisms for refugee protection and integrating programmes.

The internal organisation, activities and challenges of UNHCR was also mentioned by respondents as needing more attention, along with durable solutions, especially resettlement, but also voluntary repatriation. Respondents also wanted more attention given to training methods and dividing issues into separate modules for individual courses on specific areas.

Main Areas of Room for Improvement (training content)



A smaller number of respondents identified the relationship between programmes of assistance and protection, the self-reliance and needs-assessment of refugees and refugee integration as needing greater attention. It was suggested by a few respondents that Reach Out use real countries and examples in case studies, also drawing on the perspectives of others working in humanitarian organisations. Others identified the protection of women and children, with specific attention to tracing, sexual abuse and exploitation, as needing greater attention.

Individual responses highlighted the need for greater attention to be given to: individual arrivals / minorities and mixed populations, status determination, ensuring that refugees are aware of their rights, statistics, more detailed information related to the specific situation in the country/ region, protecting against corruption by humanitarian staff and conflict resolution.

Further areas for improvement

Respondents further reflected on what was **confusing**. The operational side of the training was reflected upon, identifying specifically *language problems* and the *high speed* of teaching.

On the information and content, respondents commented that there was either *too much information* or the exercises were too extensive, which made the time-content ratio imbalanced. Two respondents found that *time pressure* at the end only allowed for skimming through final topics. One respondent found it confusing that respondents brought up changes when, as part of a specific exercise, they were asked to recreate a lesson.

Furthermore, some respondents felt that the content of the training did not always meet the *varying level of knowledge* among participants, which led to (alternatively) *misunderstandings*, a feeling of being overwhelmed, or boredom.

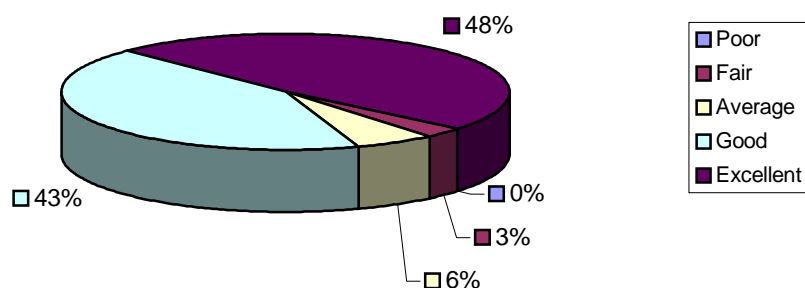
Confusions faced by respondents

- 1) Language problems / high speed of teaching
- 2) Too much information / time pressure
- 3) Varying level of knowledge / misunderstandings
- 4) Confusion on some specialised topics

Finally, there was some confusion on the understanding of *specialised topics*, including: child issues, resettlement, the international legal protection framework, and the operational functioning of UNHCR.

2.3.4 Positive Reflections – Trainers

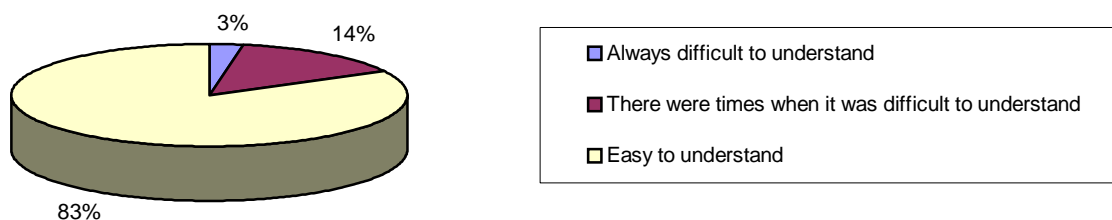
Respondents overwhelmingly felt that the material presented by the trainers was either “excellent” or “good”, in response to whether it was *enjoyable, encouraged learning and was at an appropriate level*.



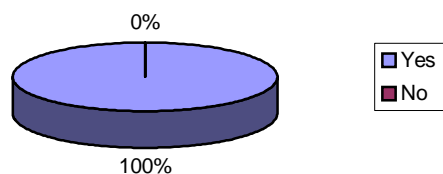
Respondents also volunteered additional information, reflecting a range of positive reactions. Respondents valued the training as being good, enjoyable or encouraging. Trainers were described as energetic, knowledgeable and professional. One participant had some concerns about the content, but had been assured that the workshop had been “substantially refined”.

Further reflections on the trainers are illustrated in the following tables:

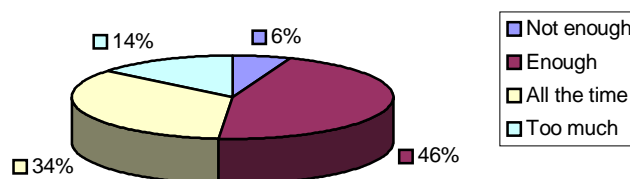
Were the trainers easy to understand?



Did the trainers allow an opportunity for participants to ask questions and do you feel the trainers provided acceptable answers?



Did the trainers allow for enough group participation?



2.3.5 Room for Improvement – *Trainers*

As to whether respondents would have liked to have seen things done differently, replies to this question can be grouped in three different categories, in order of stated importance: information, teaching, and planning. Respondents commented mostly on **information**. They would have preferred to *jointly plan the sessions* with the trainers. Also, trainers should *allow participants to outline themes of choice*, and not have the information point too much towards Training of Trainers. Apart from too much information presented, three respondents made specific, negative reference to the *pointlessness of "Sirius"*. One participant also commented on the limited distribution of books.

On **teaching**, respondents noted the need for alternative training skills and interviewing techniques, in particular *guidelines to subdivide the course*. Two respondents would have liked the trainers to be more attentive and *not wander off in long speeches*. The teaching was *too fast* according to one participant and two more found that there was *not enough time* for participants to add information to the debate.

Finally, some minor comments on **planning and logistics** were: too many workshops (modules), and too much time per module and group participation. In addition, one participant pointed out that the group was too big, which led to a related suggestion that the teaching strategy should be adapted to the size of the group.

Room for Improvement – Trainers

- 1) Jointly plan the sessions with host organization**
- 2) Allow participants to outline themes of choice**
- 3) Avoid use of SIRIUS**
- 4) Provide guidelines on sub-dividing the course**
- 5) Avoid long speeches, but watch speed and time**

2.3.6 Room for Improvement – *Organisation*

Most respondents felt they could have benefited more from various persons working in many different countries, and in particular from facilitators who were in a position to better know the **local situation**. More specifically, respondents would have liked more time to take up questions, most especially on practical aspects: operational aspects in the field, strategies for preventing corruption and protecting the vulnerability of the NGO staff. Others wanted the organisers to give a chance for local NGOs to participate more, to focus less on one country and finally to adapt training more to the local / regional context and less from an NGO / international point of view.

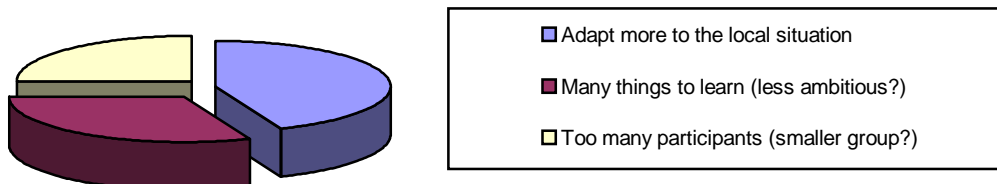
Other respondents felt that there were **too many things to learn** in three days; one respondent proposed that the duration be better planned, and another suggested that the course could have been a half-day longer. A further respondent proposed that there be a pre-workshop day to cover some of the basics so that the workshop could start at a higher level. Others asked for guidelines on how the course could be sub-divided: rather than producing the full training in one-go.

A smaller group again reflected previous points, namely that there were **too many participants** and that conveying many different levels of knowledge among such a diverse group was difficult. One respondent explained this by stating that:

“You had people there who were heads of country offices and had extensive legal and facilitation experience and you had people from local NGOs who had no ideas about the issues and this meant (that) either one group was lost or the other group was bored.”

It was proposed by another that facilitators could have compensated for this by altering their strategy, which was clearly more suitable for a smaller group. A number of respondents specifically felt that more time was needed for learning about the operations of UNHCR.

Room for improvement (organisation)



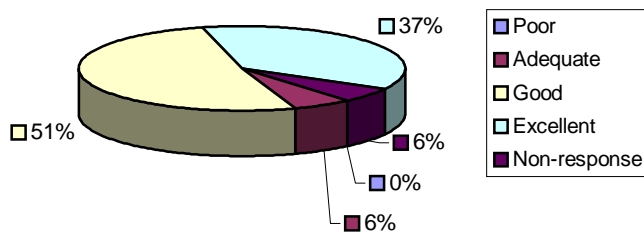
Respondents also highlighted additional areas for improvement, namely: accommodating participants in the same hotel / training venue to promote networking and further discussion and facilitating the development of an Action Plan with organisations that participated and a plan for follow-up.

One respondent requested CD-ROMs in different languages and another requested a bag or satchel to carry materials.

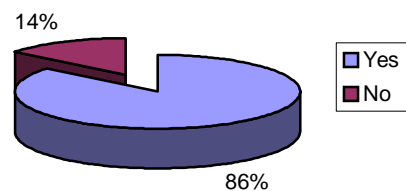
2.3.7 Training Materials

Half of the respondents felt that the handouts were “good”, with around a third stating that they were “excellent”. Furthermore, respondents overwhelmingly (86%) stated that they use the materials and/or handbook in their own work.

Were handouts useful and easy to read?



Do you use the materials / handbook in your own work?

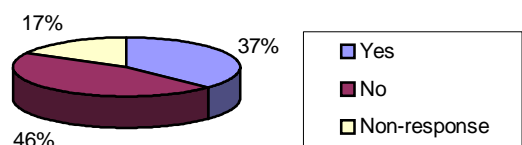


2.3.8 Additional, positive feedback

Further, unsolicited feedback mentioned:

- there was a “need for more of such workshops”
- the course was “well-done and easy enough to understand”
- the course was “well organised and interactive”
- the course made them “consider doing the longer, more in-depth workshops”

Is there anything else you wish the organisers had done differently?



2.4 Feedback from the Field Visits

2.4.1 Quality of the Reach Out Trainers / Balanced Facilitation?

Confirming the responses from the questionnaire, most participants interviewed in Bulgaria and Senegal were in agreement that the training workshops were generally quite balanced (allowing for adequate involvement of all participants). While participants remarked that the trainers were professional and of a high quality, participants in Bulgaria and Senegal also indicated that they would have appreciated *more input from local facilitators* who were more familiar with the local situation, which was similarly observed by the evaluator and participants in the Durban workshop.

It was also widely reported that vibrant discussions took place. Further, it was widely expressed that the *workshop created an opportunity for organisations to interact with each other*, one participant mentioned that they had become "almost friends" with each other.

Securing accommodation of all participants at the training venue greatly benefited the workshop in Bulgaria, particularly as the venue was located a distance from participants' place of work. By contrast, in Senegal, where participants were not accommodated and commuted to the venue every day, which was located close to participants' place of work, many participants did not attend every day and became distracted by work, which "weakened interaction between participants".

2.4.2 Appropriateness of the Training Methods – a "tree for talking"

Also as reflected in the questionnaire, the training *methods were generally very well received*, with the exception of the SIRIUS model, which many did not understand.

Participants commented that the training methods were "enjoyable and effective means of communicating information" and "ensuring participation". This was beautifully illustrated in Senegal, where the training methods were described as "a *tree for talking*" as opposed to one where the trainers "took a saw to open your head in order to put something in".

It was explained that the training methods were *particularly useful for non-lawyers*, while lawyers commented that at times it was too simple or even "superficial".

The *case studies were also highly praised* by participants; in Bulgaria it was commented that the session provided an interesting "reversal of roles", which enabled participants from different backgrounds to better appreciate the perspectives of other organisations.

2.4.3 Quality / Effectiveness of the Training Materials

Participants also praised the materials as being useful and of a high quality; one remarked that they "brought complex ideas in a good working definition". Again, it was remarked (particularly in Bulgaria) that the materials could have drawn on the experiences of participants or have focussed on issues of particular relevance to the local situation; for example, it was mentioned that, in Bulgaria, inter-cultural and language skills would have been useful.

While it was acknowledged that participants had been provided with a "lot" of materials, most did not feel this was a problem and a number also mentioned that they had used the materials in other training sessions.

2.4.4 Participants – selection and composition

Host organisations were in most cases actively involved in the choice of participants, though the Reach Out team generally handled the selection process. Most participants that they recommended, however, were selected.

Participants were of very mixed levels and backgrounds, which some participants remarked as a “challenge” for the facilitators, though most felt that this diversity was a “good thing”. It was also broadly remarked that the composition of participants was varied and broadly representative of the refugee protection and assistance issues, with the opportunity to exchange experiences being a particularly useful aspect of the workshop. Several participants stated that the course was particularly beneficial to those who were new to the field.

It was further remarked that, if government was to participate in the workshop, then departments other than that responsible for status determination should also be present, for example health, education, welfare, etc.

2.4.5 Usefulness of the Field Guide for NGOs

While some participants, particularly those new to the field, viewed the Field Guide as a useful tool; few participants reported that they used the Field Guide in their daily work or for advocacy purposes.

However, one government representative responsible for monitoring human rights issues indicated that the Guide was useful in investigations (e.g. measuring compliance). Other participants indicated that it was a helpful “reminder” of the course.

The few participants who did find the Field Guide useful in their daily work stated they would like to be provided with extra copies, including copies in Russian (Bulgaria).

2.5 Role of the Host Organisation

Organisations that had hosted workshops in South Africa, Senegal and Bulgaria were specifically asked a range of questions regarding their role in the organising and (in some cases) facilitation of the workshops.

2.5.1 Role of the Host Organisation in the Reach Out Workshop

All four host organisations that were individually interviewed,³ not including those who responded through the questionnaire, understood their role as more of an administrative / logistical than a substantive role, with limited contribution to the development of the workshop agenda, content and facilitation. Organising a workshop at short notice, and over a holiday period (as was the case in Durban) proved to be a major challenge.

Host organisations reported that it was important to accommodate training participants at the training venue, including covering the costs of evening meals, so as “not to break up the dynamic of the group”.

2.5.2 Organisation of the Reach Out Workshops

In *most cases*, *Reach Out had approached host organisations* as to whether they would be willing to host a workshop. One of the host organisations had specifically requested a workshop, after having attended a previous one.

All host organisations reported that there had been *no specific needs assessment* undertaken in advance of the workshops, and that this would have been useful in focussing the content to better suit the realities of the refugee situation they faced. Host organisations did, however, report that UNHCR had apparently contributed to gathering knowledge of the local situation.

It was stated that where the host organisation was given more freedom in organising the workshop, as reported in Bulgaria, this tended to work well, since organisations were in all cases highly experienced in organising workshops locally. However, host organisations mentioned that in cases

³ Amnesty International (Senegal), OFADEC (Senegal), Bulgarian Red Cross Society, Lawyers for Human Rights (South Africa).

where Reach Out played a more 'involved' role in the organisation of the workshop, as reported in Senegal and Durban, tensions arose.

Many participants who were invited were unable to attend for financial reasons, since Reach Out did not cover the costs for (international) transport.

2.5.3 Better Optimising the Role of the Host Organisation

In short, host organisations felt that *Reach Out should be clearer in terms of what it expected from them, to be realistic in terms of what could be done and what could not*, particularly in terms of budget issues, and to *distance themselves from the logistical details*, which locally based organisations mentioned they knew more about anyway.

Host organisations urged Reach Out to *avoid organising workshops at the last minute* and to ensure that a *qualitative needs-assessment* took place in preparation of the workshop.

Furthermore, all host organisations urged Reach Out to *draw more on experienced, local facilitators* that would have more knowledge of the situation in the country. It was further mentioned by one host organisation (in Senegal) that the:

"long term viable vision would be for host organisations to take the lead and carry out the training themselves".

Host organisations recognised that organising such a workshop was not an easy task and *required commitment from a group of NGOs*.

Finally, host organisations urged Reach Out to recognise that it is *often the case that cooperation already exists in the host country*, which the workshop can contribute to and reinforce (see above).

2.6 Recommendations

- 1) A closer relationship with, involvement of and joint planning with the **host organisation** as a principal facilitator would enable Reach Out to draw more on the wide range of experiences from the participants. This could be of great benefit, not only in enhancing the impact of the facilitation, but in helping to identify specialised speakers to provide more detailed input on complex concepts such as "refugeehood" (see above).
- 2) Undertaking a **detailed needs analysis** could enhance the training materials and methods; this could furthermore help deepen the understanding that the provision of humanitarian assistance has protection consequences.
- 3) The confusion associated with the refugee protection framework (e.g. SIRIUS) might be more appropriately represented in a **different diagram**.⁴
- 4) Don't refer to organisations involved in refugee protection as "actors", which they don't relate to as much, but rather as **stakeholders**.
- 5) To be more effective, Reach Out may need to consider **developing more targeted programmes**, each with a more specific target group in mind and based on an adequate needs assessment. See also below, recommendation 7.
- 6) Reach Out should be **clear what it expects from the host organisation and encourage host organisations to express what they expect** (see 1.7, above).
- 7) Reach Out should **avoid organising workshops at short notice**.

⁴ For example, in Senegal, the valuable suggestion was made that this be more concisely explained and represented as different components of a baobab tree, which has particular cultural relevance in West Africa – see above "tree for talking".

- 8) Reach Out, together with the host organisation, may need to specifically adapt its overall content, and **perhaps limit some of the overall material, to provide for special input on additional areas of special relevance / concern** that the Reach Out material does not normally cover, for example:
- a) Status determination;
 - b) Corruption of humanitarian staff and government officials;
 - c) Conflict resolution;
 - d) Strategies for recognising and protecting the vulnerability of field staff.
- 9) Throughout the training agenda could remain more open to **some detailed discussion on key areas of concern**, for example:
- a) Legal aspects;
 - b) Responsibilities and roles;
 - c) Internal organisation, activities and challenges of UNHCR;
 - d) Durable solutions;
 - e) Protection of women and children;
- 10) Reach Out's teaching strategy **could be adapted to suit the size of the group** (e.g. by splitting large groups into two separate ones).
- 11) Reach Out and/or the host organisation should consider organising a short, **preparatory workshop on key subjects for participants who are new to the field**, so that the main workshop could begin at a higher level.
- 12) Every effort should be made to ensure that **participants are accommodated at the same venue**, ideally where the training takes place and at a distance from participants' places of work, and to **ensure that adequate funds exist** (amongst Reach Out funds or externally) to ensure that participants' costs will be covered.
- 13) It should be asked in advance of the workshop in **what language** participants would prefer to receive materials.
- 14) If government is invited, every effort should be undertaken by Reach Out and the host organisation to **secure attendance from a wide range of government social agencies**, including health, education, welfare, etc.
- 15) The process might benefit from a skilled **interlocutor** (ideally locally-based), who works well with the local partner / agency. Whether identified by the Reach Out Team or (ideally) the local partner, then a consultant arrangement would be envisaged, as it would involve quite some work (see below).

The proposed tasks of the interlocutor would be to follow the process from beginning to end, working closely with the host organisation, and involving the following activities:

- a) to coordinate a *specific needs assessment* in the intended training location;
- b) to facilitate in the *identification of the role of the local partner / agency* (if not decided already);
- c) to *clarify the role of the host organisation*;
- d) to *clarify the specific objectives* to be achieved through the training (to be assessed at a later stage – see below);
- e) to *clarify the local resources available (technical and material)*;

- f) to *confirm potential interest from local participants*;
 - g) to *communicate to Reach Out* on needs, roles, objectives, resources and participants;
 - h) to *facilitate* in the training itself, if requested by the host organisation;
 - i) to *follow-up with a meaningful assessment* at a later, pre-determined period to try and measure the impact of the training
- 16) Each training could be followed by an in-depth, critical **evaluation meeting** at the end of the training between Reach Out and the local partner / agency, possibly facilitated by the third party interlocutor.

3. Refugee Protection and Inter-Agency Issues

3.1 Summary of Key Observations from Participants / Interviewees

As responses to the questionnaire illustrated, it is always difficult to assess whether a training workshop has had a measurable impact on the policy and behaviour of various organisations that have been attending workshops; participants' views on this vary considerably. The field visits, however, provided some clarity however, by clarifying the roles that they play at a national level and explaining how they perceived the Reach Out initiative. A strong, positive observation from participants was that the workshop provided an opportunity for organisations involved with protection and/or assistance to interact with each other and, in some cases, government and UNHCR, which resulted in *strengthening existing relationships and clarifying the roles of various stakeholders*.

The questionnaire disclosed that a large number of participants had appreciated Reach Out's *linking of refugee protection with their humanitarian assistance*, with 22% of respondents now recognising their humanitarian work as a protection issue.

Respondents to the questionnaire identified a range of areas in which the workshop contributed to personal change in their own work, with most feeling that it had been *useful to their future work*. Respondents were less clear as to whether Reach Out contributed to organisational change, though most respondents did indicate the workshop had promoted an *acknowledgement of the importance and/or increased the involvement of their organisations in refugee protection activities*.

The results of the field visits also confirmed that one of Reach Out's greatest challenges is to meet the capacity needs of a *diverse range of organisations that attend its training workshops*. However, there is some evidence of improved coordination between agencies in the field, for example in Senegal, where a leaflet on local asylum determination procedures and reception arrangements has been developed ("Demandeurs d'Asile et Refugies au Senegal: Manuel d'Informations Pratiques"), although there remains uncertainty regarding the extent to which all participants were consulted.

Support and *enthusiasm from UNHCR in the regions is clearly mixed*; there are reports that in some workshops UNHCR has provided considerable support, whereas in others their input has been limited, if present at all. Concerns regarding miscommunication between the Reach Out Team and UNHCR Field Offices might partly be explained by the fact that Reach Out ordinarily communicates through DIP rather than the regional bureaux (see below, 3.4.8). There has been only limited interaction with UNHCR's NGO Liaison Unit, which might also be a useful point of interface.

The workshop was felt by UNHCR to be *broadly consistent with their country operations and planning*, although these aspects *could have been specifically addressed at the start* (e.g. through a detailed needs analysis).

Some organisations indicated that the workshop had *contributed to a better understanding of problems regarding refugee protection and made a positive contribution to existing processes*, but *could have been even more effective if the organisers were informed about where linkages and cooperative initiatives existed in the first place*.

Reach Out has, to date, *not involved international human rights organisations*, and this might be something to be "corrected".

3.2 Reach Out Stakeholders

The stakeholders of Reach Out can be seen as encompassing three main groups, namely: the *Working Group, other agencies* (including field offices of Working Group agency members) and *local partners*. The Reach Out project staff reported that it feels pulled in many different directions by these various, occasionally competing interests, which may have something to do with uncertainty in how Reach Out staff views its own role in the project, though there now exists greater clarity in the context of the Reach Out Host Agreement, which four of the working group members have signed.

Reach Out may wish to focus more on being a *resource to all stakeholders*, rather than simply a vehicle for implementing the mandate of the Working Group, as it currently is. This could also help in addressing the sustainability of the project, by deciding how that *resource* (training methods, training materials, trainers and extensive network of participants) might be preserved in future.

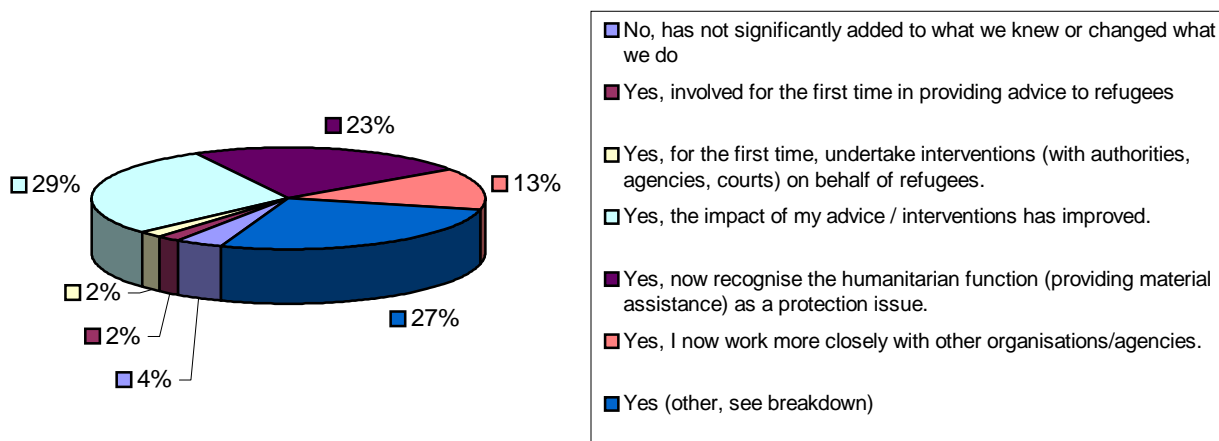
Some working group members regretted that Reach Out has not succeeded in involving human rights organisations in the training projects, and that the earlier, negative experiences should be overcome, that organisations should move one. Several working group members acknowledged that there was considerable training expertise and refugee protection knowledge within the human rights NGO community that could be usefully tapped into.

3.3 Feedback from the Questionnaire

3.3.1 Personal Change

Asked whether the Reach Out protection training had a direct impact on their own work, standard responses to the questionnaire disclosed that a great many respondents felt the workshop had either improved the impact of their advice / interventions or involved them for the first time in providing advice to refugees, a couple of participants responding that they now “undertake interventions with the authorities”. A smaller number indicated that they now work more closely with other organisations and agencies.

Do you feel that what you gained from RO training has had a direct impact on your own work?



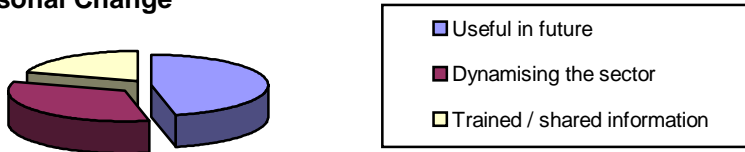
In addition to standard responses to the questionnaire, respondents identified a diverse range of **other areas** in which the workshop had a direct impact on their work.

Quite a few respondents mentioned that, generally, the knowledge gained from the course could be **useful in future**; some respondents explained that they don't currently work with refugees. Other respondents stressed that they were “better prepared” or had appreciated “linking protection with programme issues”. One respondent stated that “I'm a better trainer, but not better at directly providing protection”.

A number of respondents felt that the workshop was “**dynamising**” to the sector; one participant mentioned that the course had “provoked, challenged and stimulated” them, while another mentioned that the workshop made the laws relating to refugees, asylum seekers and displaced “come to life”. A further participant felt that the workshop had “made (his) job of highlighting the importance of Refugee Protection much easier”.

A smaller group indicated that they had **trained others** or shared information on the course.

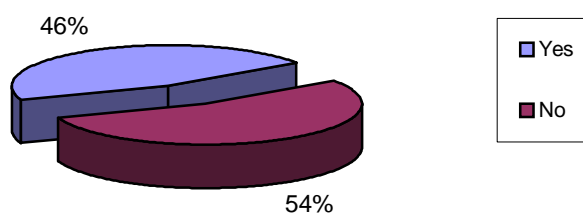
Personal Change



3.3.2 Organisational Change

Just under half of the respondents felt the workshop had led to change within their organisations, although, as explained below, few elaborated in any great detail what change took place.

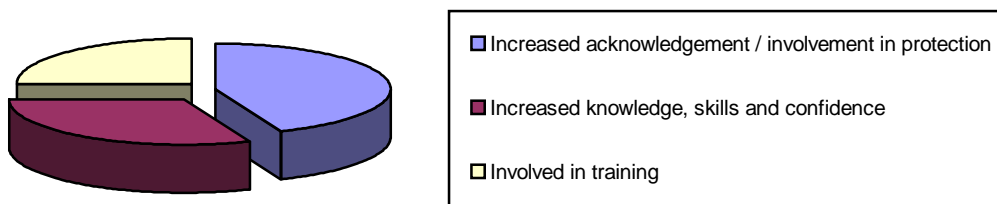
Do you feel that your participation in the RO Training has led to change in your organisation?



There were only a small number of responses to the question whether their participation in the Reach Out Training led to change within their organisation. Most respondents felt that the workshop had promoted an acknowledgement and/or increased the involvement of their own organisation in protection activities. Another group felt that the workshop had increased knowledge, skills and confidence concerning refugee protection.

A smaller group felt they were better trainers and have become involved in training staff. A couple of respondents indicated that the workshop led to “increased collaboration” with other organisations.

Organisational Change



Individual responses stated that refugee protection had become “part of strategic planning”, while another indicated that they had an “increased understanding of the role of UNHCR (in resettlement).”

3.3.3 Impact on Organisations’ Relationships

Responses to the impact of Reach Out Training on their organisation’s relationships and cooperation with UNHCR, NGOs and governmental authorities were very diverse. Most indicated the workshop had contributed to “maintaining relationship” and that relationships were “as good as they were”. Others stated that they felt there were “increased opportunities of working with UNHCR as a partner”.

A smaller number indicated they had a “better understanding of problems” regarding the protection of refugees, with a few indicating they had “stepped up efforts”. One respondent indicated that they had organised a similar workshop with other organisations.

A few indicated that the workshop had “increased their ability” to play a coordinating role, with others stating that they felt “field staff were clearer about what to expect” from UNHCR and governmental authorities. One respondent stated that the workshop had contributed to an “increased recognition” of their national NGO as “credible” by international organisations.

A couple felt that their had been no impact, with one mentioning that this was “unfortunate”.

3.4 Feedback from the Field Visits

The main observation of participants in Senegal and Bulgaria was that Reach Out made a positive contribution to existing processes, but could have been even more effective if the organisers were informed about where linkages and cooperative initiatives existed in the first place.

3.4.1 Impact on the Policy and Behaviour of Organisations

Few organisations felt that the workshop had impacted on their organisations’ policy, as one participant explained, while the workshop could “stimulate the work of a single person ... to change a policy requires the efforts of more”.

However, it was said that the workshop had *enhanced awareness of the relationship between assistance and protection* and *encouraged some organisations to consider adopting more comprehensive approaches*.

3.4.2 Appropriately meeting the needs of organisations

Most participants replied that the workshop was of benefit to them, but would appreciate more in-depth courses as follow-up. Others felt that the content was too broad and could have already focussed on issues of more direct relevance to their work in the country; as one participant put it, there was need to “fill the gap between theory and practice”.

In short, participants felt the course raised awareness about an issue of which they wanted to know more; many participants mentioned, there was “not enough training” on refugee protection issues.

3.4.3 Contribution of Reach Out to More Cooperative Protection Efforts

Where there was coordination between organisations before the Reach Out workshop, it was felt that these relationships were strengthened, but while the workshop should have created opportunities for involvement of *new* organisations in these networks, follow-up with them was more limited. Nevertheless, it was broadly felt that the *workshop promoted acceptance* between different organisations, in particular between government and NGOs and *contact persons were identified*.

In Senegal, a *manual / pamphlet on refugee protection was proposed at the workshop and developed in the months following*, though there remained some questions regarding the degree to which all organisations had been consulted. In particular, government had not been adequately consulted in the development of the pamphlet. This is related to what was mentioned in the last paragraph, namely that coordination that existed *before* the workshop continued afterwards and was strengthened, but involvement from new organisations has been more limited.

Government representatives in Bulgaria, two of whom were very new to the field at the time of the workshop, benefited greatly from the workshop and claimed that it had *enhanced the quality of their decision-making* as well as strengthened their relationship with social assistance organisations.

As mentioned earlier as well, participants in both countries indicated that the *workshop was especially beneficial to those who were new to the field*, both government and NGOs alike, in particular *raising awareness of the importance of protection* to assistance activities.

Finally, it was mentioned by some organisations that they had *used Reach Out modules in their own training projects* since the workshop.

3.4.5 Contribution of UNHCR to the Workshop

Most participants were positive of UNHCR's contribution, acknowledging them as a *valuable source of information and expertise* on refugee protection. Other participants felt that *UNHCR needed to be playing a more active role in assistance* and, for them, the workshop was the first time they had become acquainted with the organisation.

For its part, *UNHCR appreciated the opportunity to explain its position* and to know of others working in the field. UNHCR noted where there were particular areas of further training needed.

3.4.6 UNHCR initiatives to follow-up on workshop findings

Since it operates on multiple levels, including other UN agencies, NGOs, government, the police, universities, etc., *organisations do not always appreciate the range of inputs it makes* on protection-related matters.

In Senegal, UNHCR followed up what had been proposed at the Reach Out workshop by: attending a further workshop (e.g. organised by WARIPNET), contributing to a meeting to discuss the critical situation in the Ivory Coast and contributing to the development of the manual / pamphlet on reception of refugees and status determination.

In Bulgaria, UNHCR was engaged in a wide range of activities that had been proposed at the Reach Out workshop, including: the development of an interdisciplinary university course on refugee issues, a review of national legislation, fundraising issues for NGOs, coordination of NGOs on issues concerning EU Accession, developing a social clinic for refugees and supporting protection activities for women and children. With regard to the latter, UNHCR has, together with its main implementing partner (Bulgarian Red Cross) actively supported the establishment of an organisation run by refugees and focussing on issues concerning women and children.

3.4.7 Influence of Reach Out on UNHCR thinking and programming

In both countries, while not specifically fitting in with their national operations and priorities (which, it was proposed, could have been specifically addressed by way of a needs analysis), UNHCR confirmed that the Reach Out workshop was broadly consistent with one of its major objectives, namely "building local capacity". Training was a regular feature of their country protection reports.

In Senegal, UNHCR aimed to involve NGOs in more protection-related work, including: direct assistance to refugees, empowerment projects for refugees, training on protection issues, alerting UNHCR on protection issues and informing refugees of their rights.

However, UNHCR-Senegal felt strongly that its role should be more supportive than facilitative, for two main reasons:

- 1) Initiatives should be initiated and followed-up by NGOs to ensure their sustainability; and
- 2) Too much involvement from them raised a danger that it might be seen to be imposing itself.

In Bulgaria, the situation was different. UNHCR was much more active in bringing various stakeholders together, but this could be related to the fact that the refugee issue was much newer to the country than in Senegal for example, where organisations were refugee assistance and advocacy organisations more established.

The Reach Out workshop was therefore constructive in UNHCR's contributions to support emerging assistance and protection efforts at both NGO and government levels.

3.4.8 Relationship between UNHCR Field Office and Headquarters

The relationship between UNHCR at the field level and headquarters was generally felt to be unproblematic and that they “communicate well”.

Communication was primarily with the country bureaux, though on protection-related issues there was separate contact with the Department of International Protection (DIP). It was suggested that issues relating to training would be more likely to be addressed through the bureaux.

3.5 Recommendations

- 1) At UNHCR Headquarters level, Reach Out should investigate whether it might be more effective to communicate with the relevant regional bureaux, and to develop its relationship with the UNHCR NGO Liaison Unit.
- 2) Reach Out should explore possibilities for involving human rights organisations (e.g. in the development of training materials and facilitation of workshops).
- 3) Reach Out should focus more on being a resource to all stakeholders and consider how this considerable resource ought to be preserved in future.
- 4) Reach Out should develop, in advance of the workshop and possibly with the assistance from an interlocutor, a more in-depth appreciation of the activities of and relationships between NGOs, UNHCR and government agencies in the country.
- 5) Reach Out should continue to facilitate space within the workshop to enable participants to conclude specific recommendations for taking matters forward.
- 6) A record should be presented at the end of the workshop about what the participants had agreed to take forward.
- 7) Reach Out should continue to draw on UNHCR’s knowledge, expertise and contacts, particularly at the field level.
- 8) Opportunities should be created for facilitating critical and constructive dialogue, especially with UNHCR and governments.

4. Project Management

The Reach Out project team is composed of three full-time staff (manager, assistant and trainer), with a part-time intern also making a contribution in Geneva. The current trainer was recently employed (end January 2003) after a lengthy recruitment process.

Reach Out staff has observed that, in the beginning, roles of different staff members were not clear and that communication has not always been easy with the project manager, who “keeps a lot to himself” and is often “impatient”, though his experience as a trainer and knowledge of protection issues was highly regarded. In short, other staff hoped that their views and ideas would be listened to more often and taken into account in the planning of workshops and modules, while at the same time it was recognised that the project manager was responsible for the final outcome.

The project team has been expected to deliver a very demanding training schedule of +/- 9 three-day training workshops per year. The first year of the project was especially demanding since it also involved the development of training materials, methods and administration. A further challenge was that Reach Out was expected to produce materials and deliver training in English and French, and later also delivered training in Russian.

There has been some delegation of activities to independent consultants (the RO project employed three consultants in relation to specific training events over the first 2 years of its existence) and local partners and agencies in the field (administration). However, this delegation has been ad hoc, depending on the immediate needs of training workshops.

Organisation of workshops takes place within a very limited time frame. For example, planning for the Durban TOT began in November and the training took place at the end of January (with a Christmas holiday in between). It is not certain at this stage how reflective this is of preparation for other trainings.

The location of training venues is decided by multiple (and sometimes competing) factors, including the following:

- 1) The Reach Out project team proposed certain countries, according to two basic criteria, namely:
 - a. No existing initiatives (avoiding overlap)
 - b. Countries had a sizeable refugee situation
- 2) Working Group members identified a location, for example based on their field operations
- 3) Some agencies / partners specifically requested training

The current positioning of stakeholders (see Diagram, Annex E) is complex, with agencies participating closely at the level of the working group (both inside and outside of working group meetings) and communicating at a (conceptual and physical) distance with partners in the actual organisation of the workshops. As explained below, there is no clear understanding of the roles that stakeholders should be playing.

What does not happen (also indicated above) is a detailed needs analysis in the location where a training workshop is to take place. This is viewed by a number of those interviewed as a major gap.

4.1 Has Reach Out achieved its objectives?

It seems clear that Reach Out has – in broad terms – essentially achieved what it set out to do. However, there is much room for improvement in consulting with other stakeholders (possibly through an interlocutor) how trainings locations are decided, workshops are organised, training materials are better suited to fit the needs of the training location and the manner in which training is implemented as well as promoting a more effective post-workshop evaluation and follow-up.

As illustrated above, arguably the two strongest, positive reflections raised by workshop participants during the course of the evaluation is that the workshop **did two things**, namely:

- 1) Providing awareness regarding the connection between legal protection and social assistance;
- 2) Providing an opportunity for organisations to interact with each other, learn from each other's experiences and promote better cooperation.

However, it was also strongly reflected that Reach Out **could have**:

- 1) More specifically targeted content to reflect local situations;
- 2) More actively involved national organisations in the planning and facilitation of workshops.

For the evaluator, these were the key, crosscutting messages of the respondents in the questionnaire, the participants interviewed in Bulgaria, Senegal and Durban, the evaluator's assessment of the Durban workshop and extensive interviews with working group members and others.

4.2 Closer Involvement of / Better Communication with other Stakeholders

Partners, Agencies and the Reach Out Team alike observed that there was "room for improvement" concerning communication between each other, particularly when one is also a host organisation. Reach Out staff further acknowledged that all stakeholders (partners, agencies and especially UNHCR) could play a more active role in the organising of workshops.

One person interviewed proposed "if Reach Out were able to get information directly to offices in the field, it would have a greater impact". Partners and Reach Out staff alike also acknowledged that national organisations could play a greater role in presenting the Reach Out material. As one Reach Out staff member put it, there are many "knowledge lessons to be gained from local partners". However, Reach Out also observed that this would be a challenge since expatriate staff (with international organisations) "don't like the idea of being briefed or trained by local partners".

It was further, widely acknowledged by Reach Out Team and partners in particular, that an *interlocutor* (as explained earlier) could play a valuable role in enhancing the coherence, relevance, smooth functioning and follow-up to training workshops.

4.3 Composition and Role of the Working Group

The Working Group is perceived as a weakness of the programme by the members themselves, who were extensively interviewed. It was reported by several working group members that the Group is generally committed in terms of the subject matter, but there are uncertainties regarding roles and accountability and a reluctance to hear critical perspectives. One Working Group member proposed that what appear as "uncertainty" may in fact be interpreted as "flexibility" on the part of its members.

Further, the many different views of the Working Group reflect uncertainty in terms of protection priorities and definitions of what protection is. However, the Working Group meetings were widely regarded as a useful forum for finding out what other members of the Working Group are doing.

One Working Group member proposed that they be provided with a "working plan" and/or terms of reference, which would clarify what was expected of them.

The role of the Working Group is, however, regarded as a key resource to the project, though members expressed that it may benefit from engaging with others in the refugee protection field, for example with human rights organisations involved in refugee protection.

Finally, communication between the Reach Out project manager and others (including the Working Group and local partners/agencies) needs to be improved, which the project manager has acknowledged himself. At the same time, the Working Group needs to be clear what it can offer as well as what the Reach Out Team expects from the Working Group.

4.4 Interaction between Agencies and Partners

Reach Out staff remarked that it tends to work a lot more closely and have more direct contact with *agencies* than with *partners* (see above), much of this having to do with the set-up of the Working Group. Members of the Working Group expressed some reservations as to whether participants from partner organisations benefit as much as participants from agencies. Some members of the Working Group also expressed reservations whether the training ought to be aimed for partners at all, feeling that it should rather focus exclusively on training humanitarian agencies. Other members of the Working Group have expressed (in almost equal number) that the RO Workshops should aim for a broad target group, encompassing both partners and agencies.

Partners, on the other hand, expressed that the course was, generally speaking, very valuable to their work in generating awareness about the link between protection and assistance, although (as mentioned above) in future they would like to have more focussed courses. Further, partners observed that the workshop gave them an opportunity to strengthen their ties with international organisations, while at the same time allowing them to share with them (and other colleagues) their knowledge and experience of refugee issues at a national level.

Finally, it was interesting to note that while there were differences of opinion between human rights and humanitarian assistance organisations at a field level, there was clearly much more frequent interaction than what exists at the level of the working group.

4.5 Recommendations

- 1) In general, Reach Out staff should clarify the roles of the working group and partners, which should enable them to focus more on the training workshops.
- 2) There should be a more consultative and transparent process in the selection of potential training venues and recommendation of potential participants. Partners in particular should be more thoroughly consulted.
- 3) A more modest training schedule for three-day workshops and training of trainers (TOT) workshops should be considered and Reach Out should promote more partner-led training programmes, providing these projects with technical assistance as needed.
- 4) There should be more delegation of responsibilities to consultants, particularly those who are commissioned as interlocutors.
- 5) Reach Out should engage more locally based consultants, making relevant enquiries with national organisations and regional UNHCR offices.
- 6) Reach Out should continue drawing on participants from the Training of Trainers workshops.
- 7) As mentioned earlier, detailed needs analyses should be carried out in advance of a (potential) workshop – if there is inadequate enthusiasm / interest amongst organisations in the country, then the training workshop should not take place there.
- 8) Communication should be improved between Reach Out Team and the Working Group as well as between the Reach Out Team and partners, possibly with the assistance of a skilled interlocutor.

- 9) Reach Out should discuss with the host organisation, in advance of the workshop, regarding possibilities for follow-up training after the workshop takes place, and what contribution Reach Out could make in terms of technical advice and/or facilitation.

5. Future Directions and Concluding Messages

Currently, a great deal of energy is being put into (1) *continually attempting to understand the roles and responsibilities* of both the working group and partner and (2) constantly taking on tasks which *could more effectively be undertaken by others*, not least the working group and partners and especially the host organisation.

As the diagram of UNHCR's programme in Bulgaria shows, the core of their work is the refugee community. In the case of Reach Out, the *core of its work is the training programme*, which offers sophisticated training methods, training materials, a protection handbook and other materials (often provided by other organisations). As mentioned in the previous section, Reach Out would do well to consider how these valuable accomplishments, materials and networks could be *preserved in future*. The following proposals are meant to provide "food for thought" for both the Working Group and Reach Out Team.

Further, all indications from various interviewees and observations by the evaluator suggest that Reach Out would more effectively utilise its resources and *maximise its potential* if it focussed on a *less-rigorous training schedule*, allowing it to channel more energies into fewer Reach Out-led workshops and channelling more energies into supporting partner-led workshops.

5.1 Drawing on Existing Resources and Initiatives

To maximise output by supporting partner-led workshops with technical assistance, Reach Out can draw on a range of resources and existing initiatives.

Firstly, Reach Out can draw on an extensive network (+/- 500) of *individuals who have participated in Reach Out training programmes* to date, in addition to the existing network of the working group members, which has proven to be a valuable resource already.

Secondly, Reach Out could *explore links with other capacity-building initiatives*, for example:

- The Hugh Pilkington Trust in Oxford, UK, together with the Ford Foundation and various other collaborators, has been supporting a *refugee protection-training programme* in Africa.
- The West African ngo's working with Refugees and Internally-displaced Persons NETwork (WARIPNET)⁵ has been a successful initiative, supported by human rights organisations (in particular the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights) and offering a range of *capacity building workshops* to its membership of national NGOs, based in the West Africa region. Building on the workshops, a *WARIPNET Protection Handbook* has been recently developed.
- The European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)⁶ is another regional initiative, which has amongst its objectives "*strengthening NGOs in Wider Europe*", especially through training courses for organisations in (mainly) Eastern Europe.
- The *SPHERE Project* has trained a wide range of NGOs, though it has expressly not engaged in refugee protection training and in any event is likely to wrap up its activities in the next year – there are undoubtedly many Sphere project training participants that might desire

⁵ www.waripnet.org

⁶ www.ecre.org

protection-related training and there are a few members of both projects' working groups who could serve as focal points for interaction and follow-up.

Thirdly, Reach Out could take the time to identify and deliberately tie-in with a range of national, regional and global initiatives, with the aim of *strengthening collaborative advocacy efforts*, including:

- Following the UNHCR's Global Consultations on International Protection, which benefited from inputs of humanitarian and human rights NGOs, refugee protection experts and governments, the UNHCR launched its *Agenda for Protection*⁷ in order to take certain recommendations forward. The Agenda's *Six Goals* can be useful targets for Reach Out to link workshops. Furthermore, workshops could also be linked to UNHCR's current *Regional Consultations on Refugee Protection*.
- Regularly using PARINAC as a focal point for workshops is another resource that Reach Out could continue draw upon (it is evident this has happened already). Workshops could *specifically reflect the advocacy concerns* of members in a particular country or region.
- Both ECRE and WARIPNET, in addition to supporting capacity-building initiatives, are also engaged in advocating on particular issues, which Reach Out could play a role in supporting these efforts by adapting its methodology for *targeted workshops on specialised issues*.
- National advocacy initiatives exist worldwide, including the National Consortium on Refugee Affairs (NCRA)⁸ in South Africa, which, as with Reach Out's collaboration with the Refugee Consortium of Kenya, could usefully be tapped into, supporting existing, collaborative efforts.

As indicated above, with regard to all training initiatives, Reach Out is urged to consider a more prominent role for local partners/agencies as well as to consider the utility of involving interlocutors in the development and facilitation of training programmes in future.

5.2 Enhancing a good product – “multipliers”

The *key messages* illustrated in the previous section of this evaluation, can be very instructive in helping Reach Out chart its programme for the future. Furthermore, repeating a crosscutting conclusion raised by respondents in the e-mail questionnaire, “joint planning (is) key to improving course content and structure”.

Reach Out is widely regarded as a good product, but could be doing more, enhancing existing collaboration between organisations. Reach Out could – together with the host organisation:

- ✓ better plan its modules to focus on topics of particular relevance to a particular country or region;
- ✓ ensure that host organisations and partners play more extensive roles in workshop facilitation;
- ✓ produce a report of specific areas of follow-up, presented on the last day of the workshop.

5.3 Identifying Priorities through a Wide-Ranging Consultation Process

The working group and Reach Out project team have already agreed at the 3 March Working Group Meeting to undertake a process of consultation, in light of this evaluation, amongst both working group members and participants, assessing the output of Reach Out so far and identifying key priorities that Reach Out could be making in terms of its management of existing resources and feasible output for the future.

⁷ For details of both the Global Consultations and Agenda for Protection see: www.unhcr.ch/

⁸ www.ncra.org.za

This consultation process could take into consideration the wide range of recommendations that emerged during the course of extensive consultations throughout this evaluation and in particular *engage with partners*.

Finally, while not asked about what Reach Out could do beyond its existing mandate, the evaluator remains convinced that the project could be managed more effectively and greatly maximise its potential. This anticipates the possibility of a reduction in funding and recognises that there are many (human and financial) resources available that are not being tapped into, at least as much as they could be.

6. Summary of Key Recommendations

6.1 Quality and Methodology of Reach Out Training

- 1) Closer relationship with, involvement of and joint planning with the host organisation;
- 2) Undertaking a detailed needs analysis;
- 3) Different representation of the refugee protection framework;
- 4) "Stakeholders", not actors;
- 5) Consider developing more targeted programmes;
- 6) Reach Out and the host organisation should be clear what the other expects of them;
- 7) Avoid organising workshops at short notice;
- 8) Consider limiting some of the overall material, to provide for special input on additional areas of special relevance / concern;
- 9) Remain more open to some detailed discussion on key areas of concern;
- 10) Adapt the teaching strategy to suit the size of the group;
- 11) Consider organising a short, preparatory workshop on key subjects;
- 12) Accommodate participants at the same venue, away from participants' places of work, and to ensure that adequate funds exist to cover participants' costs;
- 13) Ask in what language participants would prefer to receive materials;
- 14) Secure attendance from a wider range of government social agencies, including health, education, welfare, etc.;
- 15) The process might benefit from a skilled interlocutor (ideally locally-based), to follow the process from beginning to end, working closely with the host organisation, and involving a range of activities (see above);
- 16) Each training could be followed by an in-depth, critical evaluation meeting.

6.2 Refugee Protection and Inter-Agency Issues

- 1) Investigate whether it might be more effective to communicate with the relevant regional bureaux of UNHCR and to develop relationship with the UNHCR NGO Liaison Unit;
- 2) Explore possibilities for involving human rights organisations in workshops;
- 3) Focus more on being a resource to all stakeholders and consider how this considerable resource ought to be preserved in future;
- 4) Develop, in advance of the workshop and possibly with the assistance from an interlocutor, a more in-depth appreciation of the activities of and relationships between organisations;
- 5) Continue to facilitate space conclude specific recommendations for follow-up;
- 6) Present a record at the end of the workshop what participants agreed to take forward;
- 7) Continue to draw on UNHCR's knowledge, expertise and contacts, particularly at field level;
- 8) Create opportunities for critical and constructive dialogue.

6.3 Project Management

- 1) Clarify the roles of the working group and partners;
- 2) More consultative and transparent process in the selection of potential training venues and recommendation of potential participants / consult partners;
- 3) A more modest training should be considered / promote more partner-led training workshops;
- 4) Delegate more responsibilities to consultants, particularly interlocutors;
- 5) Engage more locally based consultants;
- 6) Continue drawing on participants from the Training of Trainers workshops;
- 7) Detailed needs analyses / if inadequate enthusiasm, training workshop should not take place;
- 8) Improve communication;
- 9) Discuss possibilities with host organisation for follow-up training after the workshop.

Annex A: Working Plan, Mid-Term Evaluation

Consultancy Days (30 total)	Exact Dates where relevant (2003)	Task	Methodology	Location
2	20 / 21 January	Discuss / clarify with Reach Out Project staff the terms of reference for the evaluation Interviews and consultations with working group members, trainers and resource people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Travel to Geneva for interviews and consultations with Geneva-based staff and Reach Out Trainers, Working Group and other resource people ➤ E-mail / telephone follow-ups 	Geneva The Hague
1/2 day		Develop set of standard questions for initial participants' evaluation of training impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop set of standard questions, including those in terms of reference ➤ Discuss via e-mail ➤ Send to training participants 	The Hague
5		Review baseline data on refugee protection training and the creation and history of Reach Out project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review Reach Out project documentation ➤ Review other data on refugee protection training generally for comparative purposes ➤ Draw on own experience in the development, facilitation and evaluation of refugee protection training projects ➤ Telephone / e-mail consultations for clarifications 	The Hague
5	27-31 January	Attend Reach Out training workshop	Observe workshop. Interviews and consultations with coordinating staff, resource persons and participants	Durban
1/2 day	18 February	Further, in-depth interview of Reach Out Project manager	Meet with Henk to gain further clarity on the operation of Reach Out	The Hague
2		Draft Interim Report	Report writing	The Hague
1/2 day	3 March	Present Interim Report	Presentation to Working Group	Geneva
4 1/2		Revisit Field Setting (1)	In-field consultations and interviews with workshop participants, coordinating staff and resource persons	Dakar, Senegal
4 1/2		Revisit Field Setting (2)	In-field consultations and interviews with workshop participants, coordinating staff and resource persons	Sofia, Bulgaria
3	4 April	Draft final report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Report writing, structured in line with the terms of reference ➤ E-mail follow-ups 	The Hague
1/2	7/9 April	Discuss feedback / clarifications to the report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Telephone consultation ➤ E-mail follow-up 	The Hague
2	11 April	Finalise report	Report writing	The Hague

Annex B: Interim Reports Produced

The following, interim reports were produced during the course of the Mid-Term Evaluation and shared with the Reach Out Manager and the Chairperson of the Working Group.

- Evaluator's Assessment of Durban Training of Trainers Workshop
- Interim Report for Reach Out Working Group Meeting, Geneva, 3 March 2003
- Mission Report – Composite Feedback from Senegal
- Analysis of Detailed Feedback to Participants' Evaluation Form
- Mission Report – Composite Feedback from Bulgaria

Annex C: Questionnaire, sent to participants in late January 2003

*NOTE: All participants received English and French versions. Special e-mail set-up for the evaluation. Translation / logistical assistance was provided by Rea Hamba Advice colleague **Lin Petry**.*

Dear Participant in the Reach Out Training,

I have been commissioned to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the Reach Out training project, as an external consultant.

Your feedback on the Reach Out training that you participated in will be invaluable in assessing the impact of the training on your organisation's work.

Please take the time to complete this short questionnaire (below or attached) as fully as you can.

Kindly return the completed form by 15 FEBRUARY 2003 at the latest to evaluator@reahamba.nl

Thank you very much.

Jeff Handmaker (Rea Hamba Advice)
Freelance Consultant and
External Evaluator of the Reach Out Training Project

>> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >>

REACH OUT PROTECTION TRAINING
MID-TERM EXTERNAL EVALUATION

>> Participants' Evaluation Form <<

Please answer the following questions as fully as you can and return your completed questionnaire BY 15 FEBRUARY 2003 to:

evaluator@reahamba.nl

Part A: Background of the Participant and Organisation

1. Participant's Name and Organisation (optional)

>> NOTE: All answers to this questionnaire will remain confidential. <<

2. How would you best describe your organisation?
(Please insert an "X" as appropriate, and please select only one.)

- a) Independent consultant / academic
- b) Government
- c) National NGO
- d) National / Regional Office or branch of an International NGO
- e) International NGO
- f) Red Cross Movement
- g) United Nations / Other intergovernmental organisation

3. Location of the Reach Out Course attended

4. Dates of the Reach Out Course attended
5. What is your position within your organisation?
6. Has your organisation observed refugee protection problems in the past? Please elaborate.
7. What do you consider to be the single most important refugee protection issue in the context of your organisation's work?
8. Does your organisation have a mandate/policy to respond to refugee protection issues?
 Yes No (Please insert an "X" as appropriate.)
9. If yes, then what steps (if any) has your organisation taken to protect refugees?
(Please insert an "X" as appropriate.)
 - a) None
 - b) Offered advice or information (e.g. what their rights were).
 - c) Provided legal protection assistance (e.g. intervention with the authorities)
 - d) Provided humanitarian assistance (e.g. food, shelter, etc.)

Part B: Training Content

10. What were your personal expectations / reasons for attending this course?
(in order of popularity)
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
11. Did the content of the training meet your personal expectations?
(Insert an "X" as appropriate, and please select only one.)

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Not at all A little Mostly Completely Exceeded
12. What areas / issues (if any) would you have liked to have seen covered more extensively?
13. What do remember as being the most useful and informative part of the training?
14. Was any aspect of the training confusing? (Please explain)

Personal Change

15. Do you feel that what you have gained from the Reach Out protection training has had a direct impact on your own work?
(Please insert an "X" as appropriate)
 - a) No, it has not significantly added to what we knew or changed what we do.
 - b) Yes, I am involved for the first time in providing advice to refugees.
 - c) Yes, for the first time, I undertake interventions (with the authorities, agencies, courts, etc.) on behalf of refugees.
 - d) Yes, the impact of my advice / interventions has improved.
 - e) Yes, I now recognise the humanitarian function (providing material assistance) as a protection issue.
 - f) Yes, I now work more closely with other organisations/agencies.
 - g) Yes (other, please explain)

Organisational Change

16. Do you feel that your participation in the Reach Out Training led to change within your organisation?
 Yes No (Please insert an "X" as appropriate)

17. If yes, what types of change and at what organisational levels?

18. What impact, if any, has the Reach Out Training had on your organisation's relationships and cooperation with UNHCR, NGOs and governmental authorities?

Part C: The trainers

19. Did the trainers present the material in a way that was enjoyable, encouraged learning and was at an appropriate level? (Insert an "X" as appropriate, and please select only one.)

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Poor Fair Average Good Excellent

20. Were the trainers easy to understand? (Insert an "X" as appropriate, and please select only one.)

_____ _____ _____
Always difficult to understand There were times when it was difficult to understand Easy to understand

21. Did the trainers allow an opportunity for participants to ask questions? Yes No (Please insert an "X" as appropriate.)

22. If yes, do you feel the trainers provided acceptable answers? Yes No (Please insert an "X" as appropriate)

23. Did the trainers allow for enough group participation? (Insert an "X" as appropriate, and please select only one.)

_____ _____ _____ _____
Not enough Enough All the time Too much

24. Is there anything you would have wished the trainers to do differently? (Please explain)

Part D: Training Materials and Organisation of the Course

25. How did you hear about the Reach Out Protection training course?

26. Were the handouts provided at the training useful and easy to read? (Insert an "X" as appropriate, and please select only one.)

_____ _____ _____ _____
Poor Adequate Good Excellent

27. Do you use the materials / handbook now in your work? No Yes (Please insert an "X" as appropriate)

28. Is there anything else you wished the organisers of the course had done differently? No Yes (If yes, please explain)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

<< << << << << << END >> >> >> >> >> >>

Annex D: Questions asked of participants during the field visits

A. Quality and Methodology – All Interviewees

1. Quality of the Reach Out trainers? Balanced Facilitation?
 - 1.1 Did some participants dominate the proceedings, preventing others from becoming involved?
 - 1.2 Did participants ask questions? Were these questions appropriately answered?
2. Appropriateness of the training methods?
3. Quality / effectiveness of the training materials?
 - 3.1 Room for improvement (see questionnaire)?
4. Participants (usefulness of the training in the field)
 - 4.1 Was the training directly relevant to your own work?
 - Did it enhance the quality of your work?
 - 4.2 Appropriate Selection of Participants?
 - Was the composition of participants was reflective of the range of protection problems faced in Senegal / Bulgaria?
 - Was there an assessment of the background of participants?
 - Was this assessment adequate?
 - Was there anyone you would like to have attended who didn't?
 - How could this be improved?
5. Do you find the Field Guide for NGOs useful as core basis for the training and of practical use in your own work?

B. Local / National Partner / Agency Only ("Host Organisation")

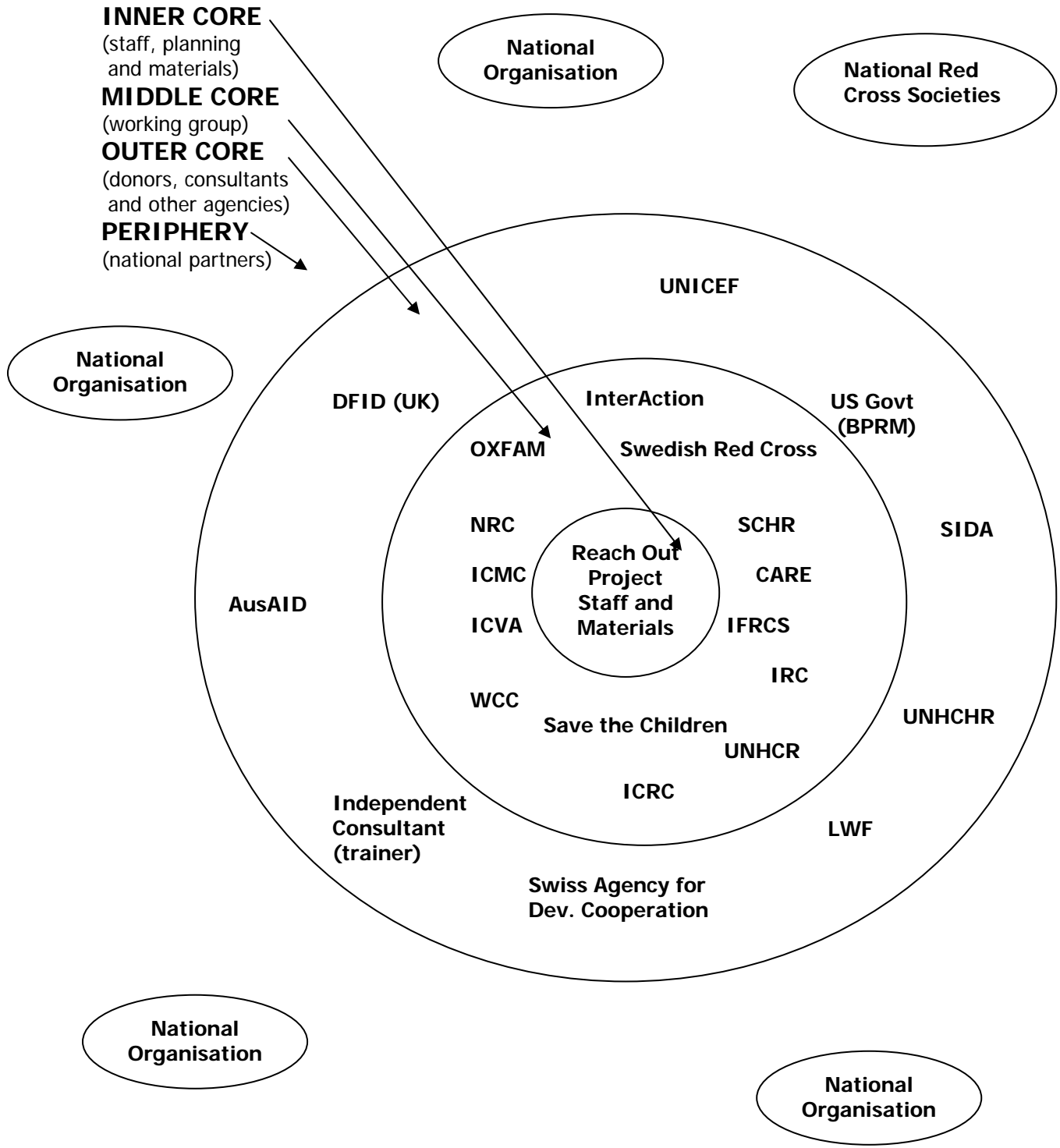
6. What did you understand to be the role of the local / national partner ("host organization") in the RO training?
7. What did you desire to gain through your association with the RO training?
8. Organising of the Reach Out Workshops?
 - 8.1 How was the training requested?
 - 8.2 Was there a needs assessment carried out?
9. How can the role of the host organisation be optimised, especially regarding:
 - 9.1 Selection of content?
 - 9.2 Selection of participants?

C. Refugee Protection / Inter-Agency issues – Impact in the field (General)

10. How do you perceive *Reach Out* as a project and a concept?
11. Has Reach Out training impacted on the policy and behaviour of your organization regarding refugee protection? If yes, in what way?
12. Do you feel the RO training appropriately met the needs of your organization?
 - 12.1 Do you feel it appropriately reflected the background and experience of participants?
 - 12.2 Would you have preferred a more focused course?

13. What are the advantages and limitations (challenges) of multiple agencies (stakeholders) in Bulgaria / Senegal?
 14. Has the training led to more cooperative protection efforts in the field?
 - 14.1 Did Reach Out make a direct contribution to more cooperative protection efforts in the field?
 - In what way?
 - 14.2 Since the workshop, have you noticed an improvement in the coordination between your organization and other partners and agencies in the field?
 - In what way?
 - 14.3 In particular, since the workshop, have you noticed a difference in your organisation's relationship with UNHCR?
 - In what way?
 15. What direct contribution did the UNHCR make to the Reach Out Workshops?
- D. Refugee Protection / Inter-Agency issues – Impact in the field (UNHCR only)**
16. What contribution did the UNHCR make to the Reach Out Workshops?
 17. Has UNHCR taken the initiative to follow up on the workshop findings?
 - 17.1 What kind of follow-up has taken place?
 18. Has the project influenced UNHCR thinking and programming?
 - 18.1 Did the RO training workshop fit with UNHCR's national operations and priorities?
 - 18.2 Has the RO training affected UNHCR's approach to its assistance functions?
 - In what respects?
 - 18.3 Has the RO training increased UNHCR's engagement with NGOs in protection-related activities?
 - In what respects?
 19. Is there a difference between the perceptions and attitudes of Headquarters and field offices?
 - 19.1 How so?
 - 19.2 Do you feel that headquarters appreciates the conditions you are working under?

Annex E: Positioning of Stakeholders in Reach Out (Observation)



Annex F: Overview of Protection Activities by UNHCR in Bulgaria

From: www.unhcr.bg/contents_en.htm

