

**UNHCR & Home Office**

**QUALITY PROTECTION PARTNERSHIP: ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2022 / 2023 (April 2022 – March 2023)**

**13 October 2022**

**PROJECT WORKSTREAMS**

**WORKSTREAM 1            Screening, intake and triage**

|                           |  |               |
|---------------------------|--|---------------|
| <u>Objectives</u>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure protection sensitive screening and intake processes for identifying:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- individuals in need of international protection; and</li> <li>- applicants with specific needs or at heightened risk.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ensure that screening and routing effectively serves to triage into differentiated case processing modalities, enabling efficient and high-quality asylum decision making in line with international standards.</li> </ul>  |               |
| <u>Method</u>             | i. Consider findings of current screening review and support in the design of training for screening officers.   | To March 2023 |
|                           | ii. Support and advise the Home Office with ongoing development / transformation of the screening process. This includes in relation to any accepted recommendations from the forthcoming screening audit report relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of vulnerabilities / trafficking;</li> <li>• Sequencing of registration and screening and the targeted collection of information at various stages of the process;</li> <li>• Efficient collection of accurate information to enable triaging of cases; and</li> <li>• Quality assurance.</li> </ul> | To March 2023 |
| <u>UNHCR Focal Points</u> | TBC.   |               |

|                                 |                              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <u>Home Office Focal Points</u> | National Asylum Intake Unit. |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|

WORKSTREAM 2 Detention

|                                 |   |                       |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| <u>Objectives</u>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that the use of detention, insofar as it affects persons of concern to UNHCR, accords with international standards, and is utilized in line with the relevant policy; and</li> <li>To promote well-reasoned asylum decision making at first instance.</li> </ul>   |                       |
| <u>Method</u>                   | i. Provide support and guidance to Home Office colleagues in Immigration Enforcement and Returns Enforcement and Detention policy by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reviewing policy documents, guiding standards and operational forms relating to immigration detention and vulnerability – where required; and</li> <li>Providing a teach-in on and sharing past learning around the Vulnerability Screening Tool.</li> </ul> | Ongoing to March 2023 |
|                                 | ii. DAC and Asylum Policy to Work with Immigration Enforcement to implement the accepted recommendations from QPP’s Detained Asylum Casework audit report.  | Ongoing to March 2023 |
| <u>UNHCR Focal Points</u>       | TBC.  |                       |
| <u>Home Office Focal Points</u> | Immigration Enforcement (IE), Detained Asylum Casework (DAC), Asylum Policy.  |                       |

WORKSTREAM 3 Alternatives to Detention

|                   |   |                       |
|-------------------|---|-----------------------|
| <u>Objectives</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support the UK work with testing and evaluating Alternative To Detention (ATD) pilots.</li> </ul>         |                       |
| <u>Method</u>     | i. Monitoring and Evaluation of ATD pilot 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain oversight of ATD evaluation consultant; and</li> </ul> | Ongoing to March 2023 |

|                                 |  |  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
|                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the HO to explore the possibilities for holding an event with NGOs to mark the publication of the evaluation report for pilot 2.</li> </ul> <p>ii. Ongoing work on ATD following publication of final evaluation report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide ongoing technical support to Home Office and NGOs.</li> </ul> | <p>Report due November 2022;<br/>Event in December 2022</p> <p>Ongoing to March 2023</p> |
| <u>UNHCR Focal Points</u>       | TBC.   |  |
| <u>Home Office Focal Points</u> | Strategic Projects.  |  |

**WORKSTREAM 4**      Further submissions / fresh claims

|                   |   |                      |
|-------------------|---|----------------------|
| <u>Objectives</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure sound procedures for the processing of subsequent asylum applications in order to strengthen the fairness and integrity of the UK's asylum system.</li> </ul>   |                      |
| <u>Method</u>     | <p>i. A comprehensive review of the fresh claims process to understand what drives fresh claims and identify opportunities for triaging and efficiencies. Issues to be considered will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What drives fresh claims (e.g. change in circumstances, passage of time, new evidence in support of previously rejected claim, non-protection needs);</li> <li>• Whether cases that meet the threshold are being properly identified;</li> <li>• Whether refusal decisions in cases that do not meet the threshold are well enough reasoned to resist judicial review (JR)/pre-empt further fresh claims; and</li> </ul> | <p>To March 2023</p> |

|                          |   |  |
|--------------------------|---|--|
|                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether applicants with non-protection claims are using the fresh claim procedure and if so, any indication of the motivation (fees, lack of identity documents, access to the NHS, poor legal advice, etc.).</li> <li>ii. A final report would identify training needs and consider new processing modalities, including triaging (drawing on Home Office findings regarding recent triaging initiatives in first asylum claims and alternative to detention pilots), and potentially including involving interviews up front, early legal advice, and independent voluntary return assistance.</li> </ul> <p>Methods would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review of caselaw, policy and relevant findings from other studies and pilots;</li> <li>• Paper based audit of fresh claims;</li> <li>• Focus groups with Home Office staff to identify training needs and policy issues; and</li> <li>• Focus groups with legal practitioners.</li> </ul> |  |
| UNHCR Focal Points       | TBC.  |  |
| Home Office Focal Points | Secondary Casework.   |  |

**WORKSTREAM 5**      Statelessness

|            |   |               |
|------------|---|---------------|
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote well-reasoned stateless decision making at first instance, that are in accordance with both UK legislation and policy and international standards.</li> </ul> |               |
| Method     | i. Training provided by UNHCR to Stateless Determination Procedure staff, as initially agreed in 2021 workstream.   | To March 2023 |

|                          |   |               |
|--------------------------|---|---------------|
|                          | ii. Input into simplified rules and related policies. | To March 2023 |
| UNHCR Focal Points       | TBC.  |               |
| Home Office Focal Points | Statelessness Determination Team.                     |               |

WORKSTREAM 6 Training

|            |   |                       |
|------------|---|-----------------------|
| Objectives | Ensure well-reasoned and efficient first-instance asylum decision-making by supporting Home Office in the development of interview training for asylum claims.  |                       |
| Method     | <p>Support and contribute to the Home Office led work to assess and improve the new starter 9 week training programme which includes Induction (1 week) Foundation Training Programme (3 weeks), consolidation (3 weeks) and Interview training (3 weeks). To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNHCR will share materials and guidance on interview skills and techniques;</li> <li>• Home Office to share existing interview training programme for UNHCR written and oral feedback;</li> <li>• Regular meetings between relevant training and policy staff at UNHCR and the Home Office to support Home Office redesign of the interviewing training programme;</li> <li>• UNHCR to continue to provide written and oral feedback on structure and content of the Foundation Training Programme through review of overall programme design and of specific written materials relevant to Refugee Status determination, including consolidation materials, and regular meetings with training staff; and</li> <li>• UNHCR to observe launch of new Foundation Training Programme (planned for January 2023) and follow the progress of new decision-makers through the consolidation period to assist in assessment of its effectiveness (methods to be agreed but may include focus groups, surveys or file reviews).</li> </ul> | Ongoing to March 2023 |

|                          |                                  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| UNHCR Focal Points       | TBC.                             |
| Home Office Focal Points | Asylum Operations Training Team. |

**WORKSTREAM 7** Policy Review – Review of Home Office Suicide & Self-harm Guidance

|                          |   |  |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Objectives               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support the Home Office in developing effective safeguarding guidance to staff responding to risks of self-harm or suicide to ensure that the ‘risk-identified to risk-managed’ journey is underpinned by recognised best practice and that action on cases can be prioritised on a most vulnerable basis.</li> </ul> |  |
| Method                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To review draft policy as provided by Home Office Asylum Policy relevant to the draft policy on safeguarding adult asylum seekers from self-harm and/or suicide; and</li> <li>ii. To support any further work, as requested by Home Office Asylum Policy.</li> </ul>  | <p>September 2022</p> <p>Ongoing to March 2023</p> |
| UNHCR Focal Points       | TBC.  |  |
| Home Office Focal Points | Domestic Asylum Policy.   |  |

**WORKSTREAM 8.** Asylum / National Referral Mechanism (NRM) nexus

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote well-reasoned asylum decision making at first instance; and</li> <li>To ensure that decision making in cases where an individual is identified as being a potential victim of modern slavery, insofar as it affects persons of concern to UNHCR, accords with international standards, and is utilised in line with the relevant policy.</li> </ul> |
|------------|---|

|                          |  |                       |
|--------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Method                   | <p>Short review into caseworkers' approach to asylum decision making involving applicants who identify as victims of modern slavery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Review how Home Office asylum decision makers approach asylum claims where an individual has or is in the process of receiving either a positive Reasonable Grounds decision, or positive or negative Conclusive Grounds Decision within the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). This will include a mapping of the two processes and the relevant procedures in the operation, supported focus group discussions with Home Office staff and observations of staff training where possible.</li> <li>ii. Review the communications process between asylum decision makers and Single Competent Authority (NRM) decision makers, regarding material facts and information sharing. Potentially include agreed touchpoints throughout the processes for efficiency.</li> <li>iii. A snapshot audit of up to 15 asylum decisions where the individual has been referred into the NRM. Hold an inception meeting with relevant policy and operational colleagues. Recommend keeping the scope to just adults at present, as the devolving decision making for children pilots may impact these cases in future.</li> </ul> | Ongoing to March 2023 |
| UNHCR Focal Points       | TBC.   |                       |
| Home Office Focal Points | Single Competent Authority.  |                       |

WORKSTREAM 9. Asylum Transformation (details to be confirmed)

*UNHCR is in discussions with the Transformation team and there is general agreement that the QPP be involved in this work; however, the details of QPP involvement have yet to be confirmed.*

|            |         |               |
|------------|---------|---------------|
| Objectives | • TBC.  |               |
| Method     | i. TBC. | To March 2023 |

|                                 |                                       |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>UNHCR Focal Points</b>       | TBC.                                  |
| <b>Home Office Focal Points</b> | Asylum and Protection Transformation. |

WORKSTREAM 10. Trauma-informed code of conduct

|                                 |   |   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Objectives</u>               | To support the Home Office in developing codified standards of trauma-informed practice against which people working within the asylum system can be held accountable.  |   |
| <u>Method</u>                   | <p>Work with Home Office and external delivery partner to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Identify how code of conduct will be used;</li> <li>ii. Clarify objectives for the code of conduct by considering previous ethical issues that have occurred;</li> <li>iii. Agree a format for the code of conduct;</li> <li>iv. Align the group’s work with the two other trauma-informed pilot projects;</li> <li>v. Review and feedback on code of conduct on a iterative basis drawing existing comparable examples; and</li> <li>vi. Support the assessment of the effectiveness of the code of conduct by working with Home Office, delivery and research partners.</li> </ul> | <p>For points (i)-(v) between September 2022 and March 2023.</p> <p>For point (vi) from March 2023 to March 2024 (i.e. next Workplan)</p> |
| <u>UNHCR Focal Points</u>       | TBC.  |   |
| <u>Home Office Focal Points</u> | Asylum Safeguarding and Mental Health.  |   |