

**Virtual Workshop for NGOs:
Refugee Protection in the Context of COVID-19**

**Session 2: Protection Monitoring During COVID-19:
Identifying Needs, Vulnerabilities, and Risks; Referrals and Responses
8 July 2020**

CASE STUDY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Ahead of the workshop, study the case study and questions in all four sections. Note down any thoughts or answers you may have.
2. During Session 2, participants will be divided into 4 breakout groups to discuss the case study. Each group will discuss only the questions related to their section of their case study.
3. If you have a preference for which group you are placed in, please indicate so in your Zoom registration or write to us and let us know, otherwise, participants will be placed randomly in equal numbers between the groups.
4. Before you start your discussion, appoint a rapporteur from your group. The rapporteur's role is to present a summary of the group discussion and key findings after the breakout session has ended.

CASE STUDY

NOTE: The following scenario is hypothetical. Any resemblance to actual persons or events is purely coincidental. We have considered a number of complicated issues as a learning tool, so that participants can spot the issues, and apply protection principles and discuss what they would do to address the issue.

Group 1:

Following news of boat pushbacks in the region and boat arrivals and disembarkation in nearby countries, xenophobia and stigma against refugees and the humanitarian workers who work with them escalated in your country (Country A). Both refugee communities and humanitarian workers began to be labelled "carriers" of the disease. The government of Country A has begun making public statements, that no boat will be allowed to disembark in the country, and that they will work towards repatriation of refugees in the country within the year.

→ *What protection concerns does this give rise to?*

→ *What kind of response, if any, would be strategic?*

On July 7th, a boat quietly lands on the coast of your country. The people are weak from several weeks at sea with inadequate food and water, and many collapse onshore. Staff of your organization is called to the scene to help out.

→ *What should they be looking for?*

Group 2:

While at the location, some of your trained staff have conducted simple needs assessment interviews with those capable of engaging with you, and have learned the following: They said they had set sail from country B because everyone was being killed or rounded up and put into closed camps. They said they had been pushed back two times, once by country C, and once by country D. People started to die on the boat after supplies ran out. They spoke of the men in charge of the boat, who had demanded ransom from everyone on board, after they had failed to disembark anywhere. Those who could not pay were put onto a separate boat and set adrift until they landed here. Some people had been forced to separate from their children, all young girls who the people put on a third boat and sailed in a different direction.

→ *What does this information tell us the protection issues are?*

→ *What additional information might we need?*

→ *What do we do with this information?*

A group of locals start to gather nearby and shout threats that they are all infected, and we should push them back out to sea. The shouts were getting angrier, and the crowd was getting larger.

→ *How could this situation have been prevented?*

→ *Now that it has happened, how can we de-escalate an escalating situation?*

Group 3:

Other humanitarian agencies arrive at the scene to help. The local police and military arrive and begin to round people up and take them away. Several of your staff members are arrested by the police.

→ *Is there any protocol we might consider with regard to multiple humanitarian agencies on sight?*

→ *What about with government, police, and military on sight?*

→ *What response can we take if our staff are arrested?*

After reports emerge that the people are back on a boat anchored offshore, the boat is located. While some local groups protest to set the boat adrift, a group of locals shout slogans to let the boat disembark and help the distressed persons on board. Among the people on board are a number of children, and two pregnant women, and they are calling out for help and to be brought ashore. Finally, some community members alongside some of the local fishermen tether the boat and pull it back to shore taking the children in their arms and

bringing them ashore in defiance of the police and military who, at this stage, do not intervene to prevent them from being brought ashore.

- *What specific needs, vulnerabilities, and risks can you see arising in this situation and among this group?*
- *How could this have been prevented?*
- *Now that it is happening, what could we do?*

Group 4:

Following intense negotiations by the local community and humanitarian agencies, the authorities allowed refugees to remain in country A. Humanitarian agencies are not allowed access to them. They were taken to a warehouse in a nearby village managed by the Military who said that they will provide shelter, food and medicines. Some of the refugees you work with in the refugee camps in Country A come to you saying that their family members are among those who were on those boats and they want to be reunited with them. Only a senior member of the local administration and a WHO team of a doctor and a nurse are allowed to visit them once a week.

- *What additional information might we need?*
- *What strategies will you adopt to support this group?*
- *What kind of protection advocacy will you conduct and with whom?*