

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST No. 001/2017	
Project title and Identification:	Project Location:
NGO partner identification and support	Thailand
Brief Background of the Project:	
<p>Southeast Asia is a region characterized by a relatively low level of awareness about and receptivity to refugees and asylum-seekers. Only three countries have ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention and of those only one conducts status determination and extends protection in a fair and efficient manner. UNHCR has gradually shifted its focus away from formal ratification of refugee instruments to achieving temporary protection of persons of concern in the states with the largest asylum-seeker and refugee populations, based on non-detention and with lawful access to work, education and health, as set out in the Sustainable Development Goals recently adopted by the UN General Assembly, including all the states of Southeast Asia.</p> <p>UNHCR’s regional office covers 13 states (the ten ASEAN states plus Bangladesh, Timor Leste and Mongolia). It seeks an NGO partner ideally with knowledge of and members or affiliates in each country though the challenges in the states with the largest populations of refugees and asylum-seekers –Bangladesh, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia-- are perhaps the most pressing and each of these presents a different set of NGO partnership challenges which UNHCR hopes to resolve through this call for expressions of interest.</p> <p>In Bangladesh, UNHCR hitherto has not enjoyed access to the large population of “undocumented Myanmar nationals” (estimated by UNHCR at 200,000 persons though a formal census of the population has recently been undertaken by the Government of Bangladesh with results expected to be released in November 2016). The challenge for UNHCR and its NGO partners in Bangladesh is to overcome the historical obstacle of access and to be able to conduct and support protection interventions in key areas of need, such as gender-based violence, access to justice and livelihoods.</p> <p>In Malaysia, the Government has indicated its intention to create a joint task force to examine issues such as registration, risk assessment and legal access to work. More than 90 percent of the refugees in Malaysia are from Myanmar. Half or more have increasingly good prospects of voluntary return. The others, primarily Rohingya, do not. And they are joined by 50,000 to 70,000 more Rohingya who have not yet been able to register. Work rights are the number one priority for Rohingya and other refugees in Malaysia as working refugees are necessarily not in detention and better able to meet their and their families’ needs. UNHCR will continue building its partner referral network for service provision but needs to identify civil society partners willing to take a role in advocacy.</p> <p>In Thailand, the vast majority of refugees in the country (approximately 105,000) reside in the temporary shelters along the border with Myanmar. With the transformative changes in Myanmar, it is anticipated most of these individuals will return voluntarily once satisfied the time for return is right. In urban areas, UNHCR continues to register and undertake refugee status determination for asylum-seekers. The Thai Government recently announced it would explore developing a risk determination process itself. UNHCR would of course support such a transition and NGO expertise in RSD and asylum-seeker support will be at a premium. This may help resolve the problem of arrest and (potentially indefinite) detention of asylum-seekers and refugees in Thailand. UNHCR will maintain its advocacy on this issue including, possibly, through the litigation of child detention cases, and in the identification of alternatives to detention and will work closely with NGO partners with interest and abilities in this area.</p>	

Indonesia has nearly 14,000 refugees. Through funding arrangements with Australia, IOM rather than UNHCR is the entity most resourced to deal with refugees. UNHCR works closely with it. A particularly difficult issue is unaccompanied minors, for whom there remains a strong deficit of appropriate shelter. UNHCR's most pressing need in Indonesia is the opposite of its situation in Malaysia, it needs to identify NGOs able and willing to provide services to refugees. During the May/June 2015 Bay of Bengal "crisis" which saw approximately 1,000 Rohingya refugees disembarked in Aceh, a surfeit of NGOs arose. Many --even most-- have disappeared and provide no pool of competent, conscientious civil society partners to work with.

In addition to the challenges in individual countries in the region, UNHCR is looking for a partner which can complement its efforts at the regional level. UNHCR's focus is on two governmental organizations – ASEAN and the Bali Process. Neither has shown much receptivity to civil society organizations though a recent event on pathways to employment for refugees organized by the Regional Support Office of the Bali Process provided a central role to the private sector. The private sector and civil society more generally are a critical advocacy partner for refugees, not to mention job and healthcare providers. UNHCR wants very much to improve its understanding of and collaboration with private sector and civil society organizations, including those active on anti-slavery and anti-trafficking efforts. It seeks an NGO partner that shares its views on the role the private sector and civil society can play and, more importantly, with the insight and energy to enhance cooperation in this area.

Overall, therefore, in 2017 and later, UNHCR's Regional Office in Bangkok is looking for an NGO partner ideally also based in Bangkok knowledgeable about NGO capacities throughout the region but particularly in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia, and with the private sector and civil society throughout the region. It is looking for a partner that shares its vision to increase the protection available to asylum-seekers and refugees in the region, with a focus on practical rather than doctrinaire approaches. It is seeking a partner that belongs to or maintains a network of contacts with refugee advocacy and service-provider organizations. The partner must be rationally and efficiently structured, have a clear vision, an implementable strategy and a focus on impact, including the ability to measure it.

Goal/Objective, Expected Outcome and Main Activities for 2017:

- a) Assist UNHCR RO Bangkok in identifying NGO partners for collaboration on the key protection needs set out above in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia
- b) Work with UNHCR RO Bangkok to develop a joint regional advocacy strategy for refugees
- c) Help build the capacity of NGOs in the region, particularly those involved in the private sector, to achieve fuller recognition and realization of refugee rights

Intended Population of Concern:

Refugees and asylum-seekers and other persons of concern under the refugee mandate in Southeast Asia. Please note that some of the relevant displaced communities are also stateless or include individuals who are at risk of statelessness. A separate call for expressions of interest will be made in respect of potential regional partnerships on stateless populations (including migrant, refugee and "in situ" stateless groups) and including addressing the risk of statelessness amongst persons of concern to UNHCR under the refugee mandate.

Project Period [estimated start and end dates of project]:

January – December 2017

Submission Deadline:	Date Decision Results to be Communicated to Applicants:	
31 October 2016	30 November 2016	
Selection Criteria		
<i>Choose relevant criteria</i>	Criteria Description	Assigned Weighting %
✓	Sector expertise and experience: the required specific skills, sector specialists, knowledge and human resources.	30%
✓	Project management: ability to deliver project objectives, accountability mechanisms and sound financial management, taking into account the audit results of the previous UNHCR-funded projects, past performance and the external audit of partners' financial statements, where applicable.	25%
✓	Experience working with UNHCR: global and/or local partnerships including knowledge of UNHCR policies, practices and programmes, including an understanding of and ability to work within UNHCR's funding limitations and associated inherent risks. Partners that have three consecutive qualified audit opinions for UNHCR-funded projects may not be considered.	25%
✓	Contribution of resources: evidenced and documented contribution of resources to the Project in cash or in-kind (e.g. human resources, supplies and/or equipment) by the partner that are presently available (or potentially mobilized by the partner) in order to supplement UNHCR resources.	10%
✓	Cost effectiveness: level of direct costs and administrative costs imposed on the Project in relation to project deliverables.	10%

Issuing UNHCR Office
Contact Address

Full name and title, Head of Office
Name of UNHCR Office
Date

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5 October 2016