

Building the future through Community Sponsorship of Refugees – comparing experiences and learning from each other

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Enabling Community Sponsorship: National Governments, and IOs & NGOs

Role of IOs and international NGOs *By IOM Italy – delivered by Anna Giustiniani*

This document accompanies the slide describing the wave of thoughts triggered by the request of the organizers to provide inputs to the discussion on the ways International Organizations can support the implementation – and growth - of community sponsorship schemes.

We decided to start from the underlining **principles** guiding our day to day to work; those principles being the very same ones that guide the other stakeholders working in the field.

Such principles are:

- 1) All interventions should be **beneficiary centered**, ensuring also the participation of the beneficiaries themselves in all phases of the process
- 2) **Protection** should also be mainstreamed in all steps of the process
- 3) In order to reach the maximum potential of the scheme it is key that all stakeholders work by **complementing each other**
- 4) Also, to ensure credibility in the process, its **transparency** and clear indication on who does what it is fundamental, also in view of the **accountability** towards potential beneficiaries.
- 5) All of the above, by following a **whole of society approach** in which the private and public sectors, work together with IOs and Civil Society Organizations by respecting all the same norms, values and principles.

IOs benefit from the **neutrality** that is inherent to their nature; IOs work with the private sector, the civil society alike. With this in mind, we focused on those **activities** that we do or we can implement that will eventually contribute to the **sustainability** of the scheme/s.

When it comes to IOM and the possible support to Community Sponsorship, activities are:

- 1) **Facilitating migration**: ensuring beneficiaries travel safely and in dignity from one country to another; because of its presence in many countries, IOM can also facilitate liaison with national authorities at both ends.

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- 2) **Humanitarian interventions:** in the countries where refugees reside, often affected by crisis, IOM's support to the local communities is key to ensure that those who do not participate in the community sponsorship can still make their living.
- 3) IOM is actively involved in **community engagement** activities, both in the countries of origin of the beneficiaries and in the countries of destination; the role of communities is central in both instances, as only by working with communities one can aim at more inclusive societies.
- 4) IOM is also actively engaged with **capacity building/training activities** in collaboration and addressing the other stakeholders working in the field. One area of particular interest is the support to mentors – a dedicated toolkit has been developed together with *Consortio Communitas, Caritas* and available [here](#). Within the tools available are also those aimed at avoiding (mentors/volunteers) burnout and manage stressful situations.
- 5) IOM can also support the scheme by advocating for it with decision makers and by contributing in policy and legal frameworks development, for a system that while necessarily based on flexibility should also be “backed up” by policies and norms.

To respond to the initial question, conditions enabling the growth and reinforcement of community sponsorship are only possible if all different stakeholders do their part and work together.

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