

EU-PASSWORLD

WIDENING COMPLEMENTARY PATHWAYS LINKED TO
COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP

EU-PASSWORLD Working Group on Identification, Referral and Matching



Summary Report

‘Setting the Scene’: first meeting of the Working Group

20-21 October 2022 (online)

The first meeting of the **EU-PASSWORLD Working Group on Identification, Referral and Matching** took place online across two half-days on 20-21 October 2022.

The meeting brought together 43 invited participants working in complementary pathways across 17 countries both within and outside of the EU. Participants included technical experts working on implementation and those working in policy and advocacy, and were invited based on their specific expertise and experience in identification, referral, and matching.

This report provides an overview of the meeting’s objectives in the context of the Working Group’s programme of work for 2022-24, and summarises the expert presentations and discussions that took place over the two half-days of the online meeting. Links to presentation slides are provided throughout (where used/available), and the agenda and participant list are included as Annex A and Annex B, respectively.

This report was drafted by Rachel Westerby and Alessia Perricone, consultants contracted by ICMC Europe to coordinate and lead the Working Group in close cooperation with ICMC Europe, the [Share Network](#), RefugePoint and Caritas Italy.

Co-funded by the European Union’s Asylum,
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REPORT FROM DAY 1

Thursday 20 October, 14-17h

PANEL 1: EU-PASSWORLD & THE WORKING GROUP

Thursday 20 October, 14.15h

a. Objectives and activities of the EU-PASSWORLD project, in the current EU and global policy context

Daniele Albanese, Caritas Italy

The Working Group is implemented in the framework of the EU-PASSWORLD project. **Daniele Albanese of project lead Caritas Italy** presented the project, its key objectives and activities, and the wider EU policy context for complementary pathways and sponsorship within which it is implemented.

EU-PASSWORLD aims to strengthen the linkage between community sponsorship and complementary pathways as a crucial nexus both to enhance refugee integration and significantly scale the number of refugees

arriving via complementary pathways. The project is implemented during 2022-24 by a consortium of 11 state, civil society and faith-based partners, and includes specific activities to expand labour and education pathways in Belgium, Ireland and Italy.

Albanese highlighted the new momentum for complementary pathways and sponsorship prompted by successive recent refugee crises, pointing to positive policy developments at EU and national level and innovative new tools and approaches. He also pointed to the need to maintain a focus on quality when considering how to scale programmes and practices, including in the area of identification, referral and matching.

b. Introduction to the Working Group

Rachel Westerby, EU-PASSWORLD consultant

Rachel Westerby (EU-PASSWORLD consultant) presented the Working Group's Terms of Reference and programme of work for 2022-24.

The Working Group is led by ICMC Europe and the [Share Network](#), in collaboration with RefugePoint and Caritas Italy. It is established under the 'fostering community engagement' strand of the EU-PASSWORLD project, which aims to systematise referral and community support and contribute to the wider knowledge base for complementary pathways linked to sponsorship.

During 2022-24, the Working Group will:

MAIN PROJECT OUTPUTS



Designing of targeted policies and implementation framework for Labour and Education Sponsored Pathways in IT, IE and BE

Initiating and strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships (govts, CSOs, international orgs, universities, businesses) for Labour and Education CPs in IT, BE and IE

Piloting of policies and innovative practices in the 3 countries, including recommending on innovative financial opportunities for self-sustainability

Developing of methodologies and tools for local communities' engagement in CPs applicable across countries

EU and international research and exchanges to leverage lessons learned and consolidating EU's leading role on the global stage Community Sponsorship and Complementary Pathways will be CS and CPs throughout the proposal



- Facilitate exchange, discussion and reflection amongst key stakeholders working on identification, referral, and matching.
- Define a comparative framework in identification, referral and matching practices in the context of complementary pathways linked to sponsorship, including identifying best practices and their outcomes.
- Publish a report on identification, referral and matching best practice in complementary pathways linked to sponsorship (spring 2024).

Working Group participants are drawn from those working in the area of complementary pathways, with specific expertise in identification, referral, and matching. Westerby emphasised that participation is flexible, and will vary depending on expertise relevant to the topic of specific Working Group meetings.

The Working Group Terms of Reference are included as Annex C to this report.

Programme of Work 2022-24

Date	Working Group
21-22 October	Setting the Scene (online)
30 January 2023	Humanitarian visas and corridors. Identification, referral, pre-departure information, and matching partnerships: Lebanon refugee situation in focus <i>Hosted by the Share Network</i>
14 February 2023	Education & labour mobility in focus (online) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistics and practicalities • Outreach in countries of asylum • Eligibility criteria • Visa approaches
27-30 March 2023	Technical session in Kenya <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The refugee context • Pathways, partnerships and operational implementation • Training • Community engagement
September-October 2023	Extended family reunification and Humanitarian Admission in focus (online) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humanitarian admission: identification, referral and outreach • Eligibility criteria • Matching (alternative available pathways)
February-March 2023	Final report and recommendations: presentation to the Working Group (Brussels)

CONSULTANT PRESENTATION: SYSTEMATISING PATHWAYS FOR REFUGEES

Thursday 20 October, 14.40h

Alessia Perricone EU-PASSWORLD consultant

While the EU-PASSWORLD project focuses on strengthening education and labour pathways, the Working Group draws on practice and approaches for identification, referral, and matching across complementary pathways.

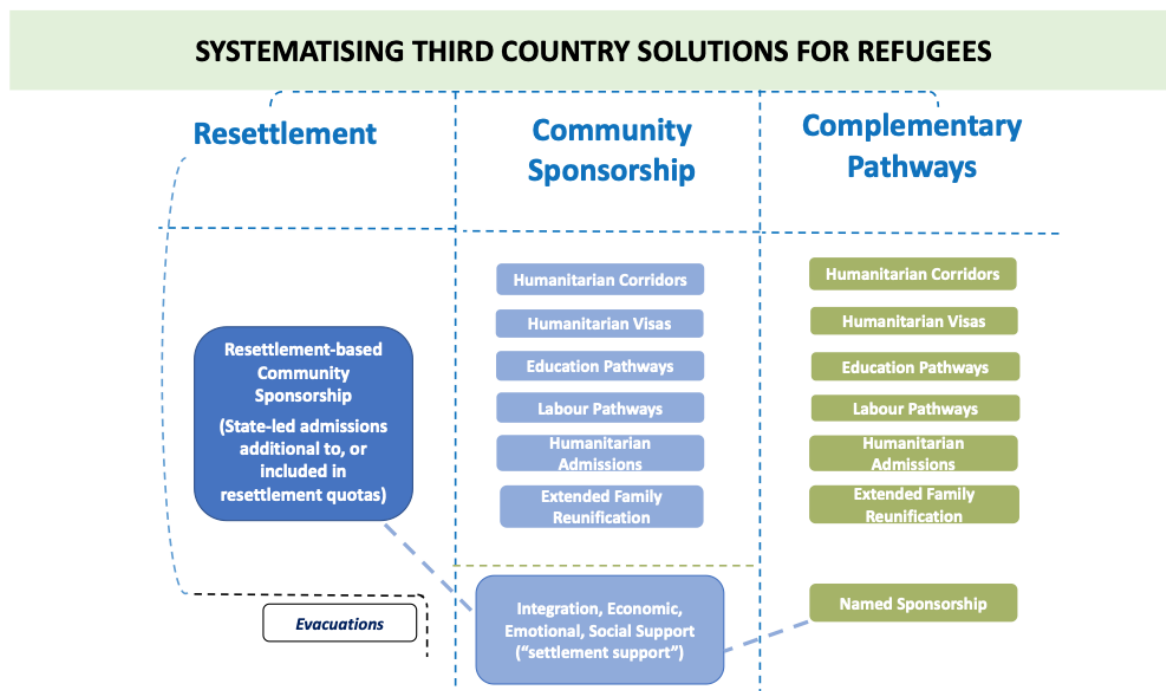
To provide a framework in which to situate the work of the Working Group, **Alessia Perricone (EU-PASSWORLD consultant)** presented a systematisation of third country solutions for refugees, covering definitions, the role of community sponsorship, and typical examples of existing programmes and models within the EU and globally.

Resettlement is a state-led admission program which UNHCR defines as “the transfer of refugees from a country of asylum to another state (third country) that has agreed to admit them and

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ultimately grant them permanent residence”. Complementary pathways can be both state-led and non-state led, and include all legal pathways that allow the lawful entry and stay of persons in need of international protection to a third country.



Third country solutions can also be systematised according to their different admission rationales:

- Needs-based (resettlement, humanitarian visas, humanitarian corridors, humanitarian admission).
- Qualification and skills-based (education and labour pathways).
- Rights and/or relationship-based (extended family reunification).

Complementary pathways are implemented as standalone initiatives (additional protection places) or within resettlement programmes (as part of national resettlement quota commitments).

Perricone highlighted that there is no common global definition of community sponsorship.

Within the EU, community sponsorship is considered as a tool to engage receiving communities in supporting refugee reception and early integration (settlement), in the context of resettlement and/or complementary pathways. Community sponsorship can also be a standalone pathway, via which sponsors nominate ('name') an individual and support their entry or stay in the third country ("named sponsorship").

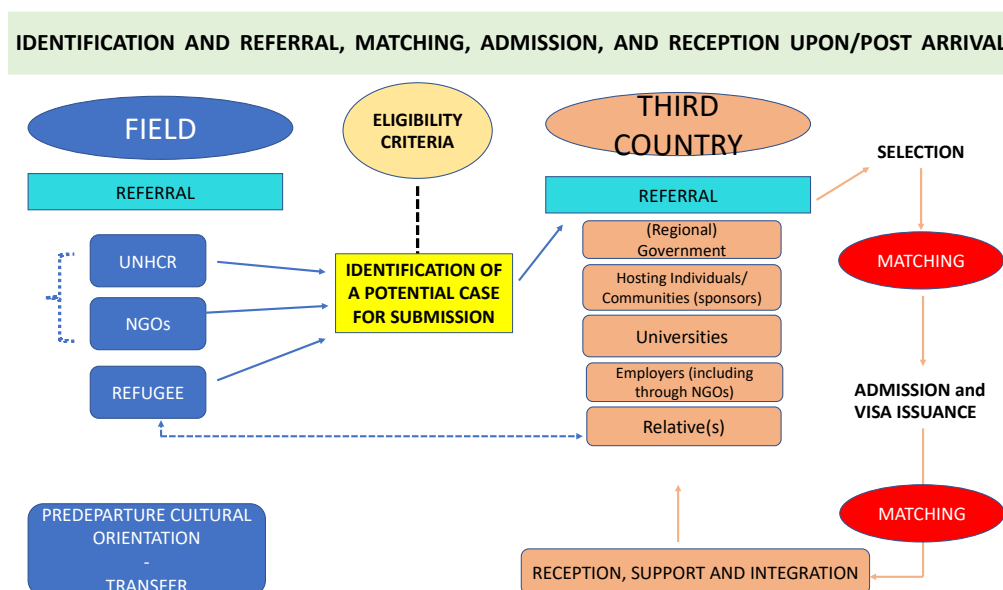
For the purposes of the Working Group, community sponsorship is a tool to support admissions, when communities and individuals are involved in the reception, support and integration of refugees arriving through resettlement and/or, other pathways (settlement support).

Unlike Canada, European programmes do not generally include a naming component, some programmes allow the diaspora and family members to apply for admission and stay for their relatives in the context of humanitarian admission programmes .

Perricone moved on to highlight the addressed key processes and stages of identification, referral and matching in the context of third country solutions. She highlighted how activities in this context vary widely according to the specific programme and/or pathway in which they are implemented, and how



different tools and practices are developed according to specific operational country contexts. Nonetheless, third country solutions share common features and approaches:



- All apply specific criteria established to determine the eligibility of potential refugee beneficiaries.
- Referral tools and processes are developed by those organisations tasked with implementing identification and referral ('field referral pathways').
- Referrals follow two broad pathways – community/organisation-based referrals, developed by UNHCR and/or NGOs in collaboration with community-based actors; and 'self-referrals' (applications) by refugees or their family members living in a third country.
- Referral and subsequent case profiling leads to the identification of a case for submission, which in turn (where the case is selected for admission) leads to matching to the local community.
- Identification and referral can occur in one step (simultaneously), where referrals contain all the required information to establish that the criteria for submission are met.
- National authorities in third countries are always responsible for issuing visas and residency documents.

Perricone set out the mapping and stakeholder consultation work ongoing in the framework of the Working Group. She highlighted the key priority of mapping and analysing how cases identified in the field are subsequently referred and submitted to actors in countries of asylum that are responsible for selection and matching cases to available third country solutions ('third country referral pathways').

In subsequent plenary discussions, participants highlighted the complexity and diversity of the referral, identification and matching activities necessary to ensure to refugees benefit from third country solutions, and the challenges for this work across the varying operational contexts presented by countries of asylum.



PANEL 2: PRINCIPLES OF IDENTIFICATION, REFERRAL AND MATCHING

Thursday 20 October, 15.30h

Martin Anderson, RefugePoint

Valentina Rossi, UNHCR Mozambique

Scoping identification, referral and matching

- ‘Identification, referral and matching’ are not just an ‘access point’ to complementary pathways. They should instead be understood to refer to the complex and wide-ranging set of activities that goes into ensuring a refugee arrives on a complementary pathway.
- Identification, referral and matching activities in countries of asylum vary widely. They are impacted by factors such as location and access to rights of refugee populations, local infrastructure and capacities, and the requirements of specific complementary pathway programmes.
- In this regard, several case management activities are required to allow to refugees practical access to complementary pathways, from the referral stage to the departure, thus making such processes often challenging, and in need to be streamlined.

Identification, referral and matching activities

- For pathways based on ‘self-referral’ (labour and education), the aim of identification, referral and matching activities is to ensure refugees access complementary pathways as independently as possible. While some refugees can independently complete the complex steps necessary to meet the requirements of specific pathways, many require support in order to do so.
- The extent of the support provided to ‘self-referred’ refugees varies according to their individual skills/experience, capacities, access to rights and geographical location. Organisations implementing this support must be flexible and adaptable.
- Successfully implementing complementary pathways requires extensive advocacy, particularly in the early stages of establishing a programme (such as advocating with the British Council to enable refugees in Kenya to access accredited language testing).
- Country of asylum logistics are a key challenge for identification, referral and matching across complementary pathways, and organisations implementing programmes on the ground assist refugees with access to IT equipment, a stable internet connection and office space to complete interviews.

Refugee-centred approach

- A refugee-centred approach encourages individual agency and focuses on refugees as capable self-starters. Support for refugees at the identification, referral and matching stage must balance

RefugePoint is a U.S. NGO working on third country solutions for refugees around the world, including resettlement, labour mobility, family reunification and the U.S pilot sponsorship programme launched in 2021.

Mozambique was selected for the first time in 2022 as a target country for the Italian UNICORE humanitarian corridors programme. While selection is carried out by universities, the **UNHCR Mozambique country office** plays a key coordinating and logistics role in identification, referral and matching for the UNICORE programme in Mozambique.

Key Principles for Complementary Pathways

UNHCR Key principles for identification, referral and matching of refugees in complementary pathways:



- Protection and Durable solutions;
- UNHCR role:
 - Coordination throughout the process;
 - No identification and referral based on vulnerability criteria;
- Self-reliance and meaningful engagement of refugees;
- Multi-stakeholder multi-sectoral approaches.





refugee independence and enhancing refugee self-reliance with providing assistance and support where needed.

- ‘Refugee-centred’ is generally accepted as a programme design principle, but the discussion focuses too heavily on the needs of employers, sponsors and receiving communities.
- Complementary pathway processes are often not adapted for refugees. For labour and education pathways, for example, standardised application processes mean refugees are often asked for documents that they cannot provide.

‘Refugee incredulity’

- There is a lot of disbelief amongst refugees pathways that complementary pathways are real and can result in tangible opportunities for them. If this is a common feeling amongst refugees actually engaging with complementary pathway programmes, then the level of disbelief must be higher amongst wider refugee communities. Clear that much remains to be done to adequately inform communities about complementary pathways and manage expectations.

CONSULTANT PRESENTATION: RESULTS OF THE WORKING GROUP SURVEY OF STAKEHOLDERS IN IDENTIFICATION, REFERRAL AND MATCHING

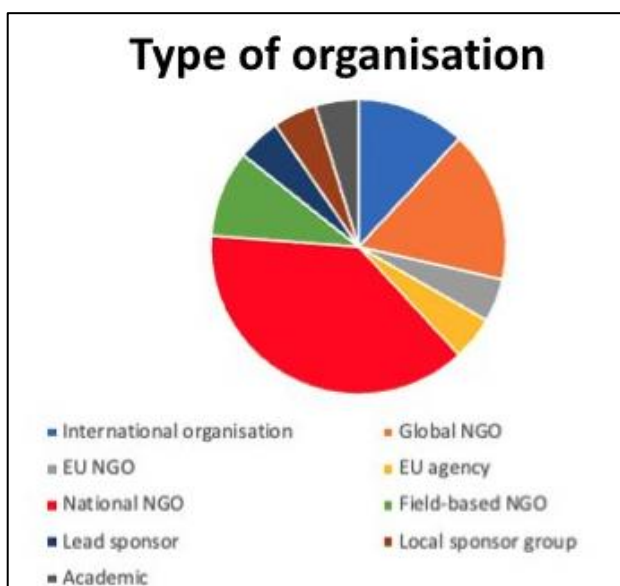
Thursday 20 October, 16.15h

[Rachel Westerby EU-PASSWORLD consultant](#)

Launched in September 2022, the [Working Group online survey](#) aims to establish the level of stakeholder knowledge and experience concerning complementary pathways, tease out key debates and inform the priorities of the Working Group going forward. 42 responses had been received to the 13-question survey by the time of the first Working Group meeting, which remains open for responses, and the key results to date were presented to Working Group participants.

Who responded?

- **Type:** biggest response from national NGOs in receiving countries (40%), followed by NGOs working on complementary pathways at global level and in the field, followed by NGOs working at EU level and international organisations. Smaller numbers from EU agencies, academics, and lead and local sponsor groups in receiving countries.
- **Country of work:** top 3 respondent countries were the UK, Ireland and Italy, with national responses in smaller numbers from a further 9 Member States and Switzerland
Relatively strong representation from outside the EU (US, Canada and Egypt), NGOs working at a global level and international organisations.
- **Experience:** range of experience across complementary pathways, most commonly community sponsorship, labour and education pathways. Slightly more experience of UNHCR referrals than referrals from NGOs/refugee self-referrals.

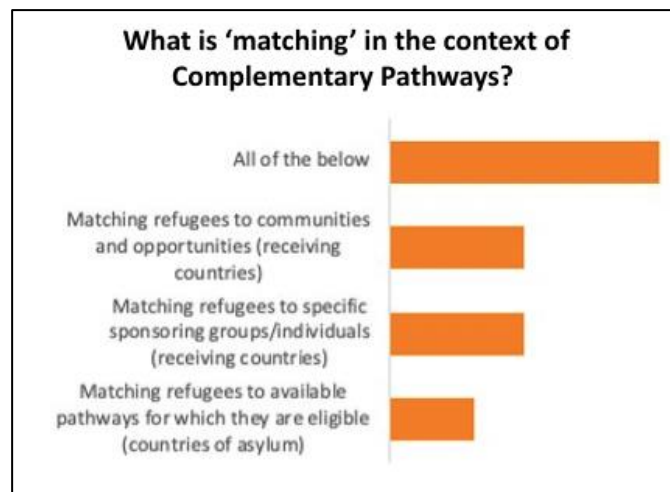


Complementary pathways: stakeholder views

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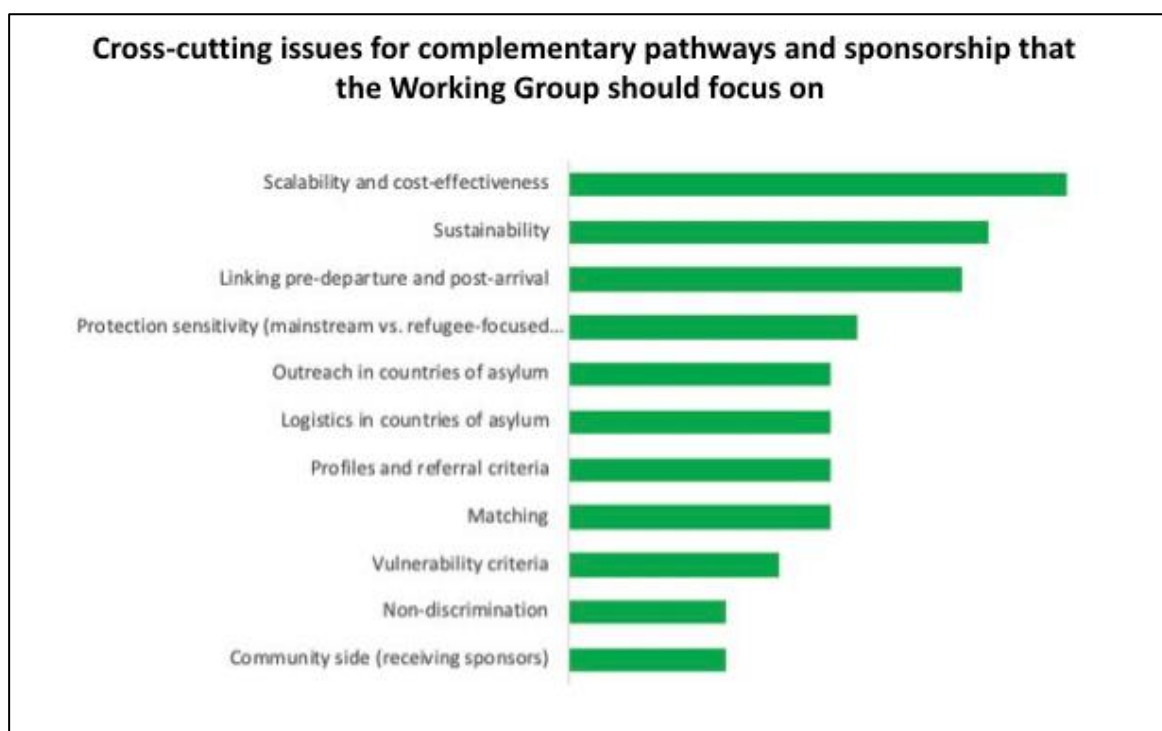


- **Community sponsorship:** responses were more or less evenly divided between defining community sponsorship solely in terms of reception and integration, and a broader definition of sponsorship as a mechanism to expand solutions provided for refugees by receiving countries. Very few sponsorship as a pathway in its own right.
- **Matching:** slight preference for defining matching with reference to receiving countries, although the majority indicated that all definitions apply (including matching refugees to available pathways for which they are eligible in countries of asylum).



Shaping Working Group priorities and activities

- The majority of responses indicated a partial understanding of identification, referral and matching processes in the context of complementary pathways.
- Community sponsorship and labour pathways were the two most commonly selected pathways that respondents thought have the most potential for growth in the coming period (both in terms of number of refugees arriving and the number of countries that might engage).
- Nearly 75% of responses highlighted expectation management as the key challenge for identification, referral and matching practice in the context of complementary pathways, closely followed by coordination amongst stakeholders, a lack of experienced partners/partnerships and restrictive eligibility criteria for specific pathways.
- Responses on cross-cutting issues that the Working Group should concentrate on in the coming period aligned with the planned focus on scalability, cost-effectiveness and sustainability.



EXPERT PANEL:

PATHWAYS IN PRACTICE (IDENTIFICATION, REFERRAL AND MATCHING)

Friday 21 October, 9.10h

Moderator: Irene de Lorenzo-Cáceres Cantero, Refugee Hub

Day 2 of the Working Group meeting opened with an expert panel during which practitioners described their experiences of how identification, referral and matching play out in practice in the context of different complementary pathways for refugees.

All presenters set out the main features of the programme/pathway they work on, how identification, referral and matching mechanisms work in practice, the partnerships that support these mechanisms and the roles of different stakeholders, and useful tools and resources.

Interventions were presented in two blocks, describing the main features of each programme. Plenary discussions following each block focused on four central questions, the key discussion points for which are summarised below.

Block 1: Humanitarian Visas and Corridors and Humanitarian Admission & Extended Family Reunification

Humanitarian visas and corridors

[Soledad Andre, Fédération de l'Entraide Protestante \(Lebanon\)](#)

Giulia Gori, Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy (Italy)

Humanitarian admission & extended family reunification

[Tessa Cornally NASC \(Ireland\)](#)

Block 2: Labour and Education pathways

Labour pathways

[Holly Asquith, Talent Beyond Boundaries \(UK\)](#)

Education pathways

[Marco Borracetti, University of Bologna \(Italy\)](#)

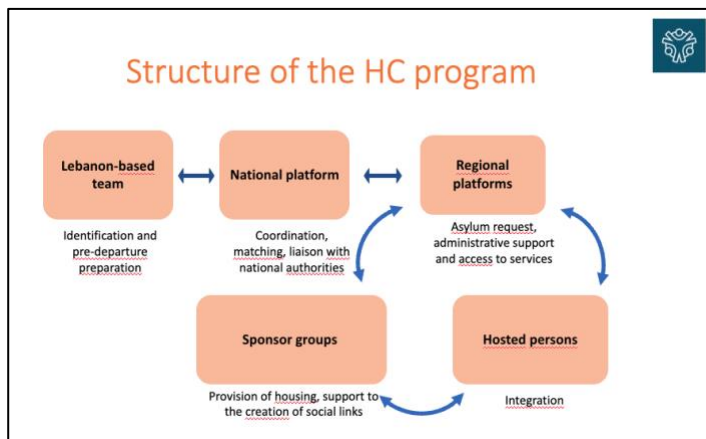
Graziella Gaglione, University of Sapienza (Italy)

1. What are the key challenges for identification, referral and matching that you have encountered in your specific programme/pathway?

- **No 'one size fits all' approach:** Identification, referral and matching activities vary widely, across pathways and programmes, and within programmes.
- **Complex/narrow referral criteria:** In terms of formal criteria relating to vulnerability, refugee status and nationality, and informal criteria relating to family size vs. available housing in the receiving country. For organisations implementing complementary pathway programmes in countries of asylum, complex/narrow criteria are challenging to adhere to in terms of identification and difficult to explain to refugees and local referral partners.



- **Establishing programmes in ‘new’ countries of asylum:** Where organisations have an existing operational base in a specific country of asylum, existing infrastructure and partnerships can be mobilised in support of establishing new complementary pathway programmes. Where this does not exist, establishing effective new programmes requires significantly more preparatory work.
- **Logistics in countries of asylum:**
 - **Obtaining required documents:** Obtaining identity or other required documents from embassies or home countries creates multiple challenges for refugees and the organisations assisting them. These challenges are compounded when changing and/or volatile circumstances in countries of asylum or home countries cause the temporary closure of



Soledad Andre, Fédération de l’Entraide Protestante (Lebanon), describing the humanitarian corridor program in Lebanon

embassies or other government offices.

- **Matching:** Effective matching depends on obtaining additional information from refugee beneficiaries, most often by carrying out interviews. Online interviews are impersonal and often do not produce information of sufficient quality or depth, and are also limited by factors including unstable internet connections and the geographical location of refugees.

- **Communication with beneficiaries:**
 - **Expectation management and accountability:** Complementary pathway programmes involve decision-making by multiple institutions and stakeholders. It is challenging to explain to refugees where decision-making responsibility sits within the programme they are engaging with, and when/if advocacy by organisations in countries of asylum is appropriate.
 - **Duration of decision making processes:** Decision-making by authorities in receiving countries is often lengthy and subject to delays. Communicating case progress to refugees is hindered by an absence of systems to update stakeholders in the country of asylum on the progress of individual cases.

2. What have been the key successes of your programme/pathway in relation to identification, referral and matching?

The infographic, titled "TBB'S GLOBAL PROGRAMS:", features a photo of a group of people wearing face masks on the left. On the right, it lists the following programs:

- AUSTRALIA:** Skilled Refugee Pilot Labour Agreement, 200 primary applicant places.
- CANADA:** Economic Mobility Pathways Project (EMPP) Phase 2, 500 primary applicant places.
- UNITED KINGDOM:** Displaced Talent Mobility Pilot (with Home Office), 100 Skilled Worker visas; Healthcare Pilot (with Dept of Health and Social Care), 200+ nurses.
- UNITED STATES:** Program to relocate skilled refugees (in development), Goal to assist 100 primary applicants.
- EUROPEAN UNION:** Displaced Talent for Europe (DT4E) Pilot Program, 250 primary applicant places.

 At the bottom, it notes "In the pipeline: New Zealand".

Holly Asquith, Talent Beyond Boundaries (UK), describing TBB’s global programmes, partnerships and key statistics

- **Multi-stakeholder collaboration:** The varied and complex nature of identification, referral and matching tasks means complementary pathway programmes are more effectively implemented by partnerships that spread the workload across organisations. Presenters offered multiple examples of effective multistakeholder collaboration for identification referral and matching within the programmes they

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implement, within countries of asylum and between countries of asylum and receiving countries.

- **Local partnerships:** Local organisations and associations in countries of asylum, including refugee-led organisations, have extensive knowledge of refugee populations and communities that can be mobilised in support of identification, referral and matching. Presenters gave multiple examples of innovative partnerships with local organisations that are currently in place within the programmes they work on, and highlighted the particular value of this approach when establishing programmes in ‘new’ countries of asylum.
- **Eligibility criteria & flexibility:**
 - **Referrals:** Presenters highlighted the advantages of diverse referral routes, in which NGOs and other organisations can make referrals alongside or in place of referrals by UNHCR. Diverse referrals can also enable continued access to refugee populations in instances when registrations by UNHCR are not permitted or are suspended by authorities in countries of asylum.



Afghan Admission Programme: Family Relationship

A national of Afghanistan, currently living in Afghanistan or who fled to Iran, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan or Tajikistan since 1 August 2021;

A close family member of the proposer e.g., Grandparent, Parent, Child. No family units.

At risk to their freedom and safety as a result of the recent changes in Afghanistan;
Of good character and with no criminal convictions;

Have no current or previous involvement in any organisations or activities regarded in Ireland as being of a criminal or terrorist nature;

Not eligible for refugee Family Reunification

- **Informal criteria:** Presenters noted the advantage of not formalising flexible informal selection criteria in order to better take advantage of changing programme capacities. In programmes where housing capacity in receiving countries creates informal criteria for family size, for example, larger families can be referred at points when housing capacity becomes available.

Tessa Cornally NASC (Ireland), describing the main criteria to be eligible for the Afghan Admission Program in Ireland

3. What opportunities exist to expand the programme you’re working on? What support would you need to scale up identification, referral and matching mechanisms?

- **Investment in partnerships and coordination:** Resettlement has a well-established identification and referral infrastructure in countries of asylum around the world, whereas complementary pathways are in most contexts fairly new initiatives. Expanding identification, referral and matching activities for complementary pathways requires investment in partnerships, including training, capacity-building and coordination structures, and in outreach capacity to find new partners.
- **Increased capacity to disseminate information to refugee communities:** Complementary pathways are complex and relatively new, and awareness amongst refugee communities in countries of asylum is low. Expanding identification, referral and matching activities in a sustainable way requires building awareness and creating trust among communities, which in turn requires resources to create capacity to carry out this work.

Strengths, Criticalities and Added Value

Strengths:
Local network and support from several partners
Selection for academic merits and evaluation of skills for the job market

Criticalities:
Documents & Legal Status;
Academic Background and alignment; Language

Added Value:
Experience to manage emergencies
More attention to some group of students
New Approach to Students’ Needs
New Approach in the Job Placement



Marco Borraccetti, University of Bologna - UniBo (Italy), describing key statistics, selection process, partnerships, and promotion of the UNICORE project (Ethiopia-UniBo)



4. What role can community sponsorship play in your programme/pathway?

- **Increasing capacity:** Increased engagement of community sponsors in countries of asylum expands the capacity of complementary pathway programmes to receive refugees. It is crucial that there is ongoing investment in identification, referral and matching to create capacity that can be mobilised as and when sponsor engagement increases.
- **Emergency response:** Sponsorship can help to ensure complementary pathways are part of protection responses to emergency refugee situations, particularly when identification is approached creatively through a broad set of stakeholders. A key example provided during the panel was the July 2022 reception of a group of 70 Afghan women cyclists in Italy, identified via an Italian sports journalist who was able to provide all information needed for referral and matching.

Beneficiaries and benefits of UniCoRe	
Beneficiaries	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students that have been granted refugee status in Ethiopia • are in possession of a first cycle degree from a university in Ethiopia • Grade Point Average of at least 3.0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal entry in Italy with visas for study • support in pre-enrolling at the Embassy of Italy in Ethiopia and related procedure • flight tickets • scholarship and accommodation • engagement in the local student life and community • socio-legal, medical and psychological assistance • promoting the process of job placement

Marco Borraccetti, University of Bologna - UniBo (Italy), describing benefits that beneficiaries in need of protection receive as part of the program

PARALLEL BREAKOUT GROUPS: SCALING UP COMPLEMENTARY PATHWAYS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR IDENTIFICATION, REFERRAL AND MATCHING

Four moderated parallel breakout groups led participant reflections on the challenges and opportunities for expansion for individual complementary pathways for refugees, in the current EU and global context.

Breakout 1: Humanitarian Visas and Corridors

Moderator: Daniele Albanese (Caritas Italy)

Key challenges for identification, referral and matching for this pathway:

- Delays caused by ‘bottlenecks’ in identification, referral and matching processes in countries of first asylum.
- Local impact of delays linked to case processing in receiving countries, in particular on the transparency of complementary pathways and trust/goodwill amongst refugee beneficiaries and communities.

Key successes for identification, referral and matching for this pathway:

- NGOs are working successfully on identification, referral and matching for complementary pathways in an increasing number of countries, including in emergency situations such as Ukraine.
- NGO involvement has broadened the range of partners and stakeholders engaged in identification, referral and matching for complementary pathways. The involvement of local partners in particular can help leverage support for complementary pathways in countries of first asylum.



Opportunities to expand this pathway, and support needed to scale up identification, referral and matching:

- Flexibility is key to expanding complementary pathway programmes to new countries and refugee situations, in which vastly differing contexts and capacities affect the type and nature of identification, referral and matching activities.
- Expanding partnerships to include more local associations and organisations that are already engaged with refugee communities in countries of asylum will enhance the quality of identification, referral and - in particular - matching. This will in turn help to build trust amongst refugee communities in relation to the fairness and transparency of complementary pathway programmes.
- The European Commission has allocated funds to support complementary pathway programmes, via the Asylum, Migration & Integration Fund (AMIF) for 2021-27, and several Member States have applied for funding to support programmes for Afghans from 2022.

Current and potential role of community sponsorship within this pathway:

- While sponsorship can expand capacity, programmes must be mindful of sponsor fatigue, particularly given the strong and ongoing EU public engagement in receiving and supporting refugees from Ukraine.
- Sponsors should not be allocated too much responsibility for matching, to reduce sponsor stress and ensure programme efficiency.

Breakout 2: Humanitarian Admission & Extended Family Reunification

Moderator: Rebecca Einhoff (UNHCR Germany)

Key challenges for identification, referral and matching for this pathway:

- Limited set of organisational partners with experience of implementing identification, referral and matching activities for complementary pathways. The many new partners with little or no experience in this area require training and capacity-building, which are largely not taken account of in budget allocations and implementation timetables of pathway programmes.
- Rapid proliferation of very narrow pathways with increasingly more specific identification criteria, often linked to national legal frameworks in EU Member States - meaning:
 - Identification is increasingly about trying to squeeze complex realities into very narrow requirements.
 - Organisations in countries of asylum find it difficult to understand programme requirements, build institutional knowledge and expertise and accurately inform refugee communities about programme opportunities and requirements.
 - Challenges for building awareness of complementary pathways amongst refugee communities in countries of asylum and presenting programmes as fair and transparent, due to referral criteria complexity.
- Where family reunification programmes use heightened vulnerability criteria, organisations in countries of asylum struggle to identify refugees who meet both family links and vulnerability criteria.
- It is challenging to maintain clear common definitions and understandings of humanitarian admission and family reunification in relation to global refugee protection, when both are



increasingly being implemented as hybrid evacuation programmes that are partially or entirely aimed at non-refugees (evacuation of those with protection needs direct from their home country).

Key successes for identification, referral and matching for this pathway:

- Humanitarian admission and family reunification programmes have significantly contributed to the number of refugees arriving via complementary pathway programmes to date, supported by extensive identification, referral and matching.
- An increasing number of institutional stakeholders that were previously reluctant to engage in complementary pathways are now committed partners and supporters. Advocacy should concentrate on ensuring commitments are translated into tangible programme and resource commitments.
- Experienced partners in countries of asylum (such as RefugePoint in Kenya) are actively sharing successful practice, tools and expertise, via initiatives such as learning visits and seconding expert staff to strengthen the casework capacity of new actors in identification, referral and matching.

Opportunities to expand this pathway, and support needed to scale up identification, referral and matching:

- Multiple new programmes with ever narrowing criteria are not scaleable. Efforts to expand and scale programmes should rather concentrate on making existing frameworks more inclusive and accessible.
- Diverse partnerships can support improved and expanded identification, referral and matching, where they are well managed and coordinated. Existing partnerships in countries of asylum make a hugely positive difference for implementing identification, referral and matching activities in new pathway programmes. Where these do not exist, developing and solidifying new partnerships requires sustainable resourcing and investment, in management and coordination structures and training and capacity-building for local partners.
- Advocacy:
 - Progress on developing the global systems, processes and policies required to scale complementary pathways would be faster if there were a global advocacy lead (as UNHCR for resettlement).
 - Effective advocacy unblocks bottlenecks and obstacles for complementary pathways. Advocacy skills are not always present in organisations working on the ground in countries of asylum, and investment in dedicated advocacy roles is required to build bridges between the practitioner and government/international actor level.
- Monitoring and evaluation are crucial to ensuring that programmes can use prior experience to improve over time, but institutional commitments remain limited. In some instances, family reunification programmes continue to be designed in a way that places unnecessary and unrealistic burdens on both beneficiaries and receiving families, despite prior experience. There is a clear need both to create capacity for those working on the ground to contribute to reflections on how programmes could improve, and to allocate resources for monitoring and evaluation and subsequent advocacy.

Current and potential role of community sponsorship within this pathway:

- In some instances, family reunification programmes require significant financial and housing-based contributions from receiving families, compounded by limiting/removing arriving family members. Sponsorship could potentially provide additional resources and capacity to address this issue.



Breakout 3: Labour pathways

Moderator: Moderator Alessia Perricone (EU-PASSWORLD consultant)

Key challenges for identification, referral and matching for this pathway:

- Employers set unrealistic timescales to receive applications from refugees, given the technical, legal and geographical challenges they face to submit them.
- Lack of reliable digital access for refugees to submit applications and undergo interviews in countries of asylum.
- Qualification recognition processes vary across receiving countries, are often lengthy and bureaucratic, and do not reflect the additional challenges faced by refugee students and jobseekers in obtaining required documents.
- Many programmes are impacted by severe delays in obtaining visas.
- Refugees are highly sceptical of labour pathway programmes, in particular the seriousness of offers of employment from overseas.

Key successes for identification, referral and matching for this pathway:

- Cooperation between implementing NGOs in countries of asylum and national authorities in receiving countries, for example via a dedicated national desk for visa and admission processes for labour pathways.
- Increasing institutional and political interest and commitments to labour pathways for refugees, particularly in the context of sector-specific labour shortages in the EU.

Opportunities to expand this pathway, and support needed to scale up identification, referral and matching:

- Labour pathways can expand by becoming more inclusive with regard to transferable skills of refugees otherwise lacking required prior experience and/or qualifications.
- Build on promising practices in cooperation with national authorities in receiving countries to streamline visa and admission processes.
- Explore options to engage in employers in contributing to visa, documentation, flight and initial accommodation costs incurred by refugee applicants.

Current and potential role of community sponsorship within this pathway:

- There is a lot of potential to expand the common definition of ‘sponsor’ to include employers and companies in fundraising, which would expand programme capacity and build awareness and goodwill in relation to labour pathways amongst employers and potential colleagues of refugees. Involvement of the companies/employers.

Education pathways

Moderator: Rachel Westerby (EU-PASSWORLD consultant)

Key challenges for identification, referral and matching for this pathway:

- Embassies and consulates are in many cases newly involved in issuing visas and associated documents for complementary pathways, but often lack the information, guidance and support they need to carry out this role effectively. National authorities should be far more proactive in communications with and support for embassies and consulates, in particular when establishing new pathway programmes.



- Assessing the motivation of refugee students is far more nuanced than checking tangible individual aspects such as required qualifications or language ability, and for refugee students, assessments must include considering if an individual has the resilience and personal capacities to move to another country and complete a demanding study programme. Accurate assessments depend on personal contact and discussion, but a lack of stable digital access in countries of asylum mean online interviews often do not provide sufficiently in-depth information.
- Universities implementing education pathway programmes receive large numbers of applications, meaning most are restricted to a single online interview with prospective refugee students.

Key successes for identification, referral and matching for this pathway:

- Flexible and creative communication with refugee communities in countries of first asylum, including notifying communities of calls for applications for education pathways ahead of their launch, using social media and communication tools and apps used locally by refugees, and holding community-based information sessions.
- Developing standard operating procedures for actions by all stakeholders in the event of a student abandoning a course of study post-arrival, including organisations working on identification, referral and matching in countries of first asylum (UNICORE programme).
- Collaboration with UNHCR operations in countries of asylum (outreach in camps, organising community meetings, supporting and coordinating refugee travel to UNHCR offices to submit applications and undergo interviews).

Opportunities to expand this pathway, and support needed to scale up identification, referral and matching:

- Education pathways are already highly selective, and expanding these pathways in large part depends on engaging more universities in offering scholarships for refugee students.
- programmes to ‘new’ countries of asylum requires effective partnerships, networks and organisational capacities in the country of asylum. Partnerships and infrastructure which require ongoing investment in order for programme expansion to be sustainable.
- Local associations have access to and knowledge of refugee communities, existing networks with key stakeholders and access to infrastructure in countries of asylum, all of which can support effective scaling up of identification, referral and matching activities where partnerships are established and adequately resourced.
- Former refugee beneficiaries of education pathways are an expert resource for programme design. Establishing structures and allocating resources to engage them in this work will help make programmes more effective and sustainable, and build trust and awareness amongst refugee communities.
- Establishing minimum targets for the number of visas to be issued by national authorities to refugees accessing education pathways, both to prompt government actors to achieve these targets and to guarantee a volume of beneficiaries as a basis for planning identification, referral and matching activities.

Current and potential role of community sponsorship within this pathway:

- Sponsorship could play a role in addressing factors in receiving countries that block expansion of education pathways, such as a lack of affordable student housing.
- Sponsors could be mobilised to play a specific supportive role in gaps between academic years, where relatively high rates of course abandonments occur.

