



NANSEN DRAFT SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

Nansen mandate is to guarantee access to international protection to all those in need of it. By the very nature of this mandate, Nansen employees will regularly come in contact with persons in a vulnerable position. Throughout all implementation activities, Nansen will apply the following Safeguarding Principles, to ensure empowerment, protection, prevention, proportionate responses, partnership and accountability and hence safeguard persons at risks.

1. A humane, person-centred, rights-based and solution-focused response to the needs of asylum seekers and refugees

Asylum seekers and refugees should be seen as individuals first and foremost; with the same rights as nationals to be listened to and to have their needs identified and appropriately responded to, with understanding both of their current situation and of their future aspirations. In the case of children and young people this means viewing the child as a child first, acting in their best interests and taking account of their wishes and feelings.

2. Respect for cultural identity and experiences of migration

Asylum seekers and refugees are not a homogenous group; they come from a wide range of countries, in different circumstances, and have diverse abilities and skills. Providing good quality socio-legal care hinges on positive regard for cultural identity, the diverse experiences of migration, and the capacity of staff to translate this principle into practical action.

3. Non-discrimination and promotion of equality

To be treated positively, with regard to the possibility of discrimination, and to receive the same treatment as national citizens. This means that the role of Nansen workers is to ensure that asylum seekers and refugees are properly supported and their socio-legal needs met.

4. Decision-making that is timely and transparent and involves people, or their advocates, as fully as possible, in the process

Unnecessary delays in decisions about the provision socio-legal support care are avoided and the process is transparent with a demonstrable commitment to involving asylum seekers and refugees and their advocates in the process. A clear process that details assessment, eligibility criteria, involvement of advocates and processes for appeal will be clearly laid out.

5. Promotion of social inclusion and independence

Working to promote inclusion and support the autonomy of asylum seekers and refugees in Belgium or through the process of returning home is related to the task of socio-legal care. It implies working with different scenarios (staying in Belgium/returning home) to plan for the future and facilitating self-organisation.

6. A holistic approach

Promoting the rights of asylum seekers and refugees is highly unlikely to be achieved by one organisation alone. The complexity of individual circumstances and histories demands robust and well developed partnership working across organisational boundaries at both strategic and operational levels.



7. Ensuring effective communication

Key elements for good practice in working with interpreters with asylum seekers and refugees are:

- Developing a good relationship between the interpreting service and the service provider. This means building up working relationships with local interpreting agencies in order to gain a better knowledge and understanding of each other's work.
- Ensuring that interpreters understand the situation of asylum seekers and refugees and the context for service delivery.
- Securing the help of the most appropriate bilingual co-worker in liaison with the interpreting agency.
- Negotiating and clarifying roles so that practitioners and interpreters work well together and build the confidence and trust of asylum seekers and refugees.
- Briefing and debriefing for the interpreter in order to clarify any issues and develop a better understanding of an individual's needs.
- Maintaining continuity of bilingual co-workers, to enable asylum seekers and refugees to feel safe, build up trust and avoid replication of information-giving.
- Reflective practice for both practitioners and co-workers to enable them to reflect on the emotional impact of working with asylum seekers and refugees.

8. Advocacy

Advocacy is needed at both an individual level and a community level to:

- increase the understanding of the social care needs of asylum seekers and refugees
- increase choices and access to appropriate provision
- empower individuals and facilitate participation in the decision-making process.