Terms of Reference

Associate Refugee Status Determination (RSD) Officer

UNOPS International ICA Specialist

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is offering a full-time Associate RSD Officer within the Azerbaijan Protection team in Baku, Azerbaijan or home-based/remote due to COVID.

UNHCR is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. Every year, millions of men, women and children are forced to flee their homes to escape conflict and persecution. We are in over 125 countries, using our expertise to protect and care for millions.

**Title:** Associate RSD Officer

**Duty Station:** Baku, Azerbaijan

**Duration:** Up to 31/12/2020

**Contract Type:** International ICA Specialist (IICA1)

**Closing date:** 02 September 2020

**Start date:** September 2020

**Organisational context**

Having thorough knowledge of the “Procedural Standards for RSD under UNHCR’s Mandate” and other guidelines and standards governing UNHCR’s mandate Refugee Status Determination (RSD), the Associate RSD Officer is responsible for conducting RSD interviews to determine eligibility for refugee status, undertaking country of origin (COI) and other research related to the claim, as required, and drafting RSD assessments, including exclusion assessments if required, as well as drafting notification of decisions. The Associate RSD Officer provides counselling to asylum seekers on UNHCR’s RSD procedures, including on remote processing. The Associate RSD Officer may also process RSD appeals, and contribute to the development of tools and other measures to enhance the quality and efficiency of RSD decision-making.
The position

As of 6 July 2020, there were 817 asylum seekers (406 Registration Groups) pending mandate RSD in Azerbaijan.

The asylum seekers that will be assigned to the Associate RSD Officer mostly originate from Afghanistan.

Following UNHCR's decision to disengage from mandate RSD in Azerbaijan, UNHCR CO Azerbaijan and the national asylum authorities (State Migration Service) agreed on a Join Action Plan aiming at clearing applications registered with SMS prior to 1 July 2020 (cut-off date). The Associate RSD Officer will therefore assist UNHCR CO Azerbaijan in clearing the current mandate RSD backlog in accordance with the specifications of the Joint Action Plan.

Mandate RSD will only be conducted for those asylum-seekers who have applied for asylum in Azerbaijan prior to 1 July 2020, who have been finally rejected in the national asylum system, but whose claims nevertheless indicate international protection needs.

With a view to effectively clear the existing backlog, cases will be processed based on the following order of priority:

- Cases with specific needs regardless of date of registration.
- Cases in accordance with date of registration (starting with the oldest).

This process will be implemented in accordance with the Interim Standard Operational Procedures for Case Management during COVID-19, which complement the applicable Office SoPs for as long as the sanitary situation persists.

It is expected that most of the RSD interviews will be conducted by the Associate RSD Officer in a remote manner.

Duties and responsibilities

- First instance

The Associate RSD Officer is expected to fully process four (4) first instance regular RSD cases per week, with RSD interview transcript and RSD assessment drafted and completed in one day.

- Appeal

    With Interviews
The Associate RSD Officer is expected to process five (5) second instance RSD cases per week, if RSD appeal interviews are needed.

Without interviews

The Associate RSD Officer is expected to process 15-20 paper reviews per week, depending on the complexity of cases.

A weekly tracking tool will be maintained to follow up on progress.

**Essential minimum qualifications and professional experience required**

The ideal candidate will possess:

- Master’s degree and 2 years of work experience or Bachelor’s degree and 3 years of work experience in International Refugee Law, International Human Rights Law; International Humanitarian Law; International Criminal Law; or other relevant field.
- Completion of the UNHCR RSD Learning Programme, as well as other relevant trainings (COI, Interviewing etc.)
- Minimum 2 years of UNHCR RSD experience working directly with procedures and principles related to adjudicating individual asylum claims. Thorough knowledge of the "Procedural Standards for RSD under UNHCR's Mandate" and other guidelines and standards governing UNHCR's mandate RSD activities.
- Experience in individual case management, counseling of asylum seekers on RSD, working with vulnerable or traumatized individuals.
- Ability to work independently and meet targets and deadlines. Knowledge of UNHCR's proGres database.
- Fluency and ability to conduct RSD interviews in Dari/Farsi language.
- High standard of written and oral English.

**Location**

The successful candidate will be based with the team in the UNHCR Baku, Azerbaijan or home-based/remotely due to COVID.
Conditions

International ICA Specialist Contract up to 31 December 2020 and the start date is in September 2020. It is a full-time role with working hours starting from 9.00am to 5pm Monday to Friday (40 hours per week) but will be determined if time zone difference.

To apply

Interested applicants should submit their letter of motivation, Personal History Form (PHF) and CV to azebahr@unhcr.org indicating Associate RSD Officer in the subject of the email.

Personal History Forms are available at PHF Form/ Supplementary Sheet.

The UNHCR workforce consists of many diverse nationalities, cultures, languages and opinions. UNHCR seeks to sustain and strengthen this diversity to ensure equal opportunities as well as an inclusive working environment for its entire workforce. Applications are encouraged from all qualified candidates without distinction on grounds of race, colour, sex, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity.

Please note that UNHCR does not charge a fee at any stage of its recruitment process (application, interview, meeting, travelling, processing, training or any other fees).