

Police interaction session
PS Jamia Nagar
24 February 2016

There is no domestic law or national policy for refugee protection in India. Refugee issues are dealt with on an ad hoc basis such as the Foreigners Act 1946, the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920, and the Passport Act, 1976 that governs their entry, stay and departure from the country. Owing to their legal status of being refugees/asylum seekers, these PoCs faces protection issues and hurdles in accessing legal procedures due to language barriers or perceptions of local populations including from the local authorities. In such situation, it becomes imperative to mitigate protection risk face by PoCs by making them aware on legal procedures and Indian laws so that they are empowered to initiate engagement with police and authorities in case of need or crisis. The sensitization programme for police aims to minimize the gap of communication between Refugees and authorities (police) and empowering refugee communities to gain access to legal system on their own and to attain the comfort level to interact with police.

In this backdrop, SLIC conducted the awareness/sensitization programmes at police stations at Jamia Nagar on 24 February 23016. SLIC was represented by Adv. Fazal and Smita Singh. During the programmes, community representatives were introduced to the police. The role of UNHCR as an international refugee agency was briefed alongside SLIC's role as a legal partner of UNHCR and the services provided to PoCs in legal matters including those services provided by other UNHCR partners. Plight of the PoCs in the host country and the protection issues they faced were explained and the reason to protect refugees from deportation to their country of origin. SLIC requested police for their cooperation in cases involving refugees in future. Contact numbers including that of the beat officers and community representative were exchanged for future reference and police assured cooperation during any eventuality in future.