



# PRAESIDIUM

*Strengthening reception capacity in  
respect of mixed migration flows*

# Lampedusa on the Map



# PRAESIDIUM in phases

- **August 2005:**  
Ministry of Interior invites the Italian Red Cross (CRI), IOM and UNHCR to establish a permanent presence in Lampedusa
- **Autumn 2005:**  
CRI, IOM and UNHCR negotiate with MOI terms of reference
- **November 2005:**  
MOI submits application for funds under ARGO budget line
- **March 2006:**  
Start of the project in Lampedusa
- **June 2007:**  
Praesidium II creates a roving team to follow up on Lampedusa activities and monitor landings in Sicily
- **May 2008:**  
Praesidium III extends the interagency intervention to the south of Italy and Sardinia.

# PRAESIDIUM: who's who?



## Co-funded by:

- EU Commission (ARGO budget line)
- Italian Ministry of Interior

## Jointly implemented by:

- UNHCR
- IOM
- Italian Red Cross



# Objectives of UNHCR in Lampedusa

- Development of an integrated interagency approach (MOI, UNHCR, IOM, CRI, etc.)
- Better understanding of the sea arrivals phenomenon in the lower Mediterranean sea.
- Additional information on the asylum procedure from potential asylum seekers
- Increased awareness about protection by border officials / staff of the reception centre

# The reception cycle (1)

## Arrival at the pier

- A 'warning system' informs all humanitarian agencies about arrivals. UNHCR, IOM and CRI reach the pier.
- Migrants are rescued and escorted by Coast Guard or Tax and Customs Police to the pier. The medical NGO MSF performs a first check up.
- Women, minors and families are separated from the rest of the group.
- UNHCR collects basic information and gives general orientation.



# The reception cycle (2)

## Arrival at the reception center

- Migrants are transferred to the reception center .
- Transportation is granted by the management of the center, '*Lampedusa Accoglienza*'
- Upon arrival a specific medical check up is performed to detect eventual contagious diseases
- Field officers of the three organisations inform the migrants on the identification procedure
- Following the pre-identification, *Lampedusa Accoglienza* staff distributes personal kits (clothes, hygienic items, phonecards, etc.)



# The reception cycle (3)

## Identification

- **Pre-identification:**

Each individual is to provide personal details to the immigration police. A picture is taken against a white background. All registered migrants are issued an identification number. Self-declared unaccompanied minors are separated: their age will be ascertained later through X-Rays.

- UNHCR, IOM and CRI are not authorized to take part in the identification procedure, but are able to monitor the process by staying in a close range.

- **In-depth identification ('foto-segnalamento'):**

The in-depth identification is performed by the 'scientific department' of the police. Additional pictures and fingerprints are taken. All personal information is filed, stored in a data-base and shared with immigration authorities in other EU countries (through EURODAC system)



# The reception cycle (4)

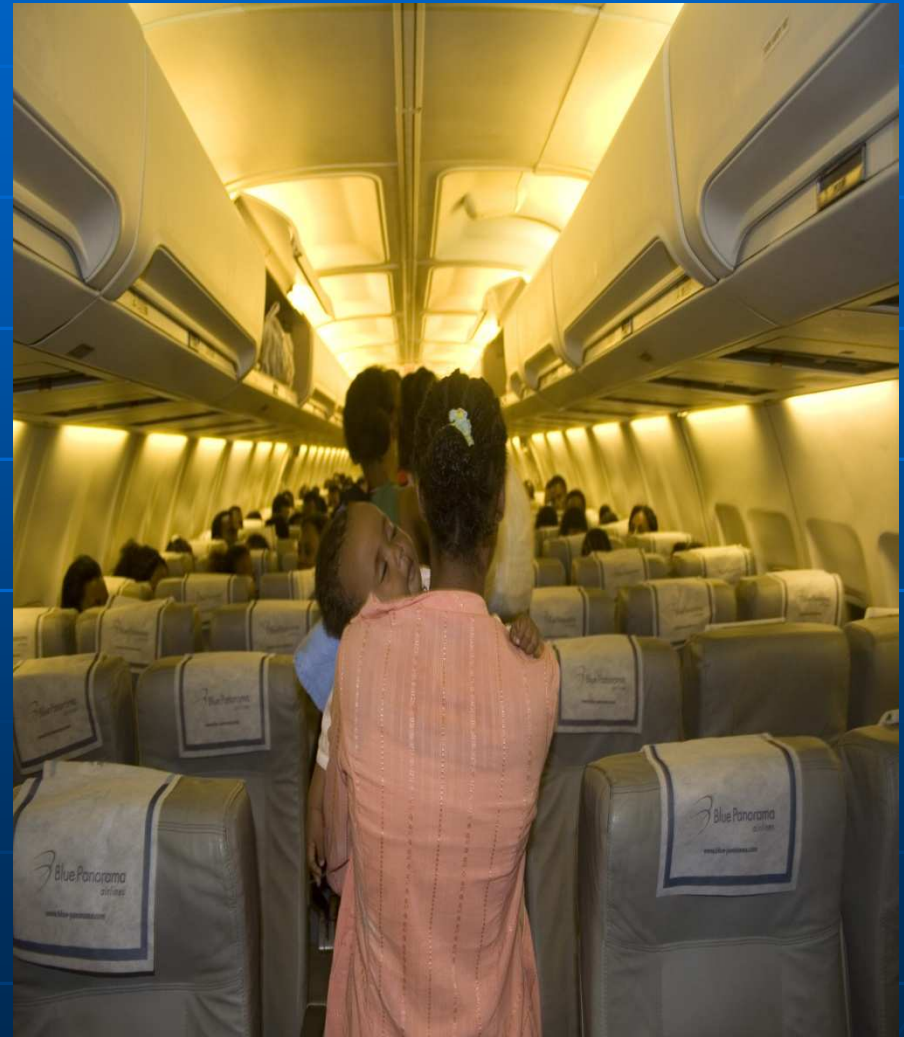
## Stay at the center

- Accommodation is separate for males, women and minors. Family units are given the possibility to meet regularly during their stay.
- Migrants hosted at the reception center receive three daily meals.
- Guests of the center have access to the health assistance made available by *Lampedusa Accoglienza*. Individual cases are referred to the local health center for specialized medical assistance.
- Social workers, psychologists, cultural mediators and interpreters are present at the centre.
- The stay is supposed to be rather short (2/3 days). However, migrants may remain for longer periods.

# The reception cycle (5)

## Departure

- Special flights are organised to transfer migrants to other centers on the Italian territory.
- Migrants to be transferred to Sicily are escorted by ferry to Agrigento, where they will be further distributed. Among them are UAMs.
- Before the departure, UNHCR reminds the migrants of the possibility to apply for asylum in the next reception centers.



# Protection Concerns

- **Interception/interdiction at sea:**
  1. actual risks for human lives
  2. refoulement
  3. SAR vs. interdiction
  
- **Libya not a safe third country for asylum seekers**
  1. police abuses (e.g. detention conditions)
  2. human rights violations
  3. SGBV
  4. deportations
  
- **Effective access to the asylum procedure**
  1. Information on the possibility to apply for asylum
  2. Rejection/expulsion
  
- **Most vulnerable categories:**
  1. Women
  2. Children
  3. Survivors of shipwrecks

# UNHCR activities in Lampedusa (1)

- to receive migrants upon arrival at the pier
- to liaise with local authorities engaged in rescue operations (Coast Guard and Tax and Customs Police)



# UNHCR activities in Lampedusa (2)

- to provide information on asylum
- to conduct individual and group counseling
- to collect COOs and COTs information



# UNHCR activities in Lampedusa (3)

- to identify extremely vulnerable cases
- to refer specific protection concerns to roving team in Sicily & UNHCR representatives in the territorial commissions
- to facilitate submission of applications for asylum to the competent authorities



# Sea arrivals: asylum in figures

**Total number asylum seekers in Italy  
in 2007: 14,000**

**Asylum applications from persons  
who arrived by sea: approx. 50%  
(57% gained some form of protection)**

**In 2007 sea arrivals in Italy were 20,000.  
Out of them, 12,000 arrived in Lampedusa.**

# Lampedusa arrivals 2007: main nationalities

| Country   | Males | Females | Minors |
|-----------|-------|---------|--------|
| Eritrea   | 1,544 | 295     | 188    |
| Morocco   | 1,712 | 143     | 98     |
| Palestine | 998   | 1       | 426    |
| Tunisia   | 1,046 | 9       | 50     |
| Iraq      | 301   | 3       | 248    |
| Nigeria   | 539   | 162     | 36     |
| Ghana     | 609   | 17      | 50     |
| Egypt     | 386   | -       | 215    |
| Sudan     | 308   | 4       | 12     |
| Ethiopia  | 176   | 129     | 44     |



# Protection impact

- Preventing refoulement
- Early identification of protection concerns
- Facilitation of submission of asylum applications at early stage (1170 applicants in 2007)
- Increased awareness from competent authorities on asylum related matters
- Referral of extremely vulnerable cases to roving team in Sicily / territorial commissions
- Study visits/fact-finding missions

# THANK YOU

