Dear Chairperson,

This intervention reflects a diversity of views among NGOs.

The section, **meeting needs and supporting communities**, now presents a solid basis for improving refugees’ and host communities’ socio-economic conditions, while calling for increased support for host countries. The role of national systems is crucial and these must remain inclusive of refugees. Stronger mainstreaming of age and gender, specific sub-sections on children and social cohesion are positive, although youth could be better reflected. A paragraph on refugees with disabilities should be included to ensure their meaningful inclusion. We also note that most SDG references have disappeared. We hope this does not retract our collective ambition to ensure refugees are not left behind.

We appreciate that the text now underlines the importance of needs-based humanitarian assistance. However, we highlight that the “primacy of country leadership and ownership” sometimes conflict with humanitarian principles. Guaranteeing humanitarian actors can work independently remains crucial. The compact should also emphasise refugee communities’ ownership, alongside country ownership.

We welcome the focus on improving **education**’s quality and capacities. However, the GCR fails to articulate how to close the financing gap. To this end, NGOs propose to undertake a global costing exercise to improve learning outcomes for refugees and hosts. Moreover, the compact should rapidly increase support to countries committed to including refugees in national education plans. These measures should also look to remove safety- and gender-related barriers to education, thus allowing, for example, children with disabilities and girls to continue their education. Facilitating scholarships for refugees should also be encouraged and students should be allowed to travel.

**Jobs and livelihoods** now incorporate positive elements. However, access to work permits, skills certification, and freedom of movement need to be guaranteed to allow refugees to contribute to local economies. NGOs also support the call to close the technology gap but this go with reinserting language on access to technologies and connectivity for refugees.

Recognition of refugees’ economic potential is a key recent development but it must not lead to more exploitation. We therefore call for increased references to respect labour standards. Access to safe and lawful work must also go with information and training to move refugees towards self-reliance.

We welcome additions on **health** although we stress the importance of securing refugees’ right to basic healthcare including by removing obstacles to access such as lack of documentation or interpretation. Several NGOs renewed their call to include sexual and reproductive health care, particularly as part of life-saving medical care for SGBV survivors.
We note a strengthening of sections on gender and children. Addressing barriers to women and girls’ participation and leadership is vital. Preventing child marriage and preventing domestic unpaid labour is paramount. We also welcome the sub-section on children but encourage renaming it “children and youth” to also consider young people’s needs. Refugee children and youth deserve protection on par with nationals. Efforts must also be made to ensure family unity at all times.

Under accommodation, energy, and natural resource management, we stress that in providing housing to refugees, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation measures must be considered. Refugees must also be included in local disaster management plans and simulation exercises. They must also be supported to adapt their livelihood strategies to slow onset disasters.

Under food security and nutrition, we welcome gender and age-responsive food assistance. However, we must improve social protection for refugees, and allow them to invest in productive activities. Refugees should be included in national social safety nets rather than in parallel services.

Under civil and birth registration, children’s fundamental right to birth registration should be underlined and efforts made to ease registration processes. States should also be called to remove discriminatory nationality laws that contribute to statelessness and to accede to Statelessness Conventions.

Finally, we welcome the new subsection on social cohesion. These must go beyond sports and cultural activities to address racial discrimination and xenophobia.

A detailed version of this intervention is available on icvanetwork.org

Thank you.