Leave No One Behind: A Commitment to Address Forced Displacement
NGO brief for the High Level Leaders’ Round Table

This brief is intended to inform discussions with stakeholders leading up to, and during the High Level Leaders’ Roundtable (HLRT) ‘Leave no one behind: A commitment to address forced displacement’. Led by Asylum Access, with inputs from the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and Save the Children, coordinated by ICVA, this brief has been shared widely amongst ICVA’s membership and is based on a foundation of collective NGO experience and analysis.

Context

NGOs welcome the Secretary General’s commitment to comprehensively addressing forced displacement and ensuring that IDPs, stateless persons and refugees are included in 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (2030 Agenda).

NGOs acknowledge that forced displacement is a complex problem with political and development dimensions that need immediate attention to facilitate long-term solutions. We also support the development of a new international cooperation framework framework on responsibility-sharing for refugees to the extent that it can improve the respect, protection and promotion of the rights of displaced persons.

This HLRT represents a key opportunity to set out a concrete plan for international cooperation and to realize the rights of every person who has been forced from his or her home. Unless we address the issues the forcibly displaced face in transit, origin, and destination we will not achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), much less stay true to the global pledge to “leave no one behind” set out in the 2030 Agenda.

Key NGO messages for this High Level Leaders’ Roundtable

The five proposed core commitments for the High Level Round Table (HLRT) are aligned to the Secretary General’s (SG’s) Agenda for Humanity Report, which, in summary call for:

1. A new approach to addressing forced displacement which meets both immediate needs, reduces vulnerability and improves resilience, self-reliance and protection of refugees and IDPs;

2. Safe, dignified and durable solutions for refugees and IDPs, working towards a 50% reduction in internal displacement by 2030;

3. Stronger support to countries and communities hosting displaced populations;

4. Collective efforts towards a Global Compact in responsibility-sharing for refugees;

5. Upholding the institution of asylum and the principle of non-refoulement with stronger implementation of national, regional and international laws and policy frameworks to improve the protection of refugees and IDPs.
In relation to the core commitments listed above, NGOs stress the importance of the following key messages for action by Member States, the UN, NGOs themselves and all actors engaged in humanitarian action:

1. **Solutions for refugees and stateless persons must include access to meaningful legal status.** Legal status should increase and improve access to freedom of movement, labour markets, education and health care on a par with host communities.

2. **Displacement is a development and human rights issue, and should not be seen solely through the lens of service provision.** As such, access to housing, education, work, health services for displaced people and the ability to control their lives should be incorporated in all cooperation frameworks, as well as in development plans, national policies, domestic legislation and budgets.

3. **Alternative pathways must always enable people fleeing persecution and conflict to seek safety without penalization.** All actors are urged to preserve the right to seek asylum, and protection from *refoulement*. Addressing forced displacement requires leadership and political courage: border securitization, detention and offshore processing are not acceptable solutions.

4. **New frameworks and collective outcomes are encouraged, and must improve the respect, protection and promotion of the rights of displaced persons.** With due regard for protecting the space for principled humanitarian action, NGOs call upon all humanitarian actors to strive towards a common set of goals for host governments, the UN system, the World Bank and civil society to achieve meaningful solutions for the displaced.

5. **NGOs call upon States to commit to a permanent distribution system for resettlement places, alternative and expedited pathways in case of large movement, and full and predictable financing.** Such a framework should incorporate and implement the clear rights and duties described in the 1951 Refugee Convention, the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions, its Protocol and other relevant human rights agreements.