UNHCR-NGO-IFRC\(^1\) Reference Group – Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework

Terms of Reference

1. Background

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 71/1 (the *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants*) requests UNHCR to initiate and develop a Comprehensive Refugee Response (CRR) for situations involving large movements of refugees, in close coordination with relevant States and involving other relevant stakeholders. The CRR is based on a recognition of the ongoing relevance of the 1951 Convention, human rights and international humanitarian law. It is a framework that requests all actors to look beyond the humanitarian field, to address root causes and seek solutions in countries of origin, transit and destination. The declaration is instructive in requesting a multi stakeholder approach and consultations. Future refugee responses should involve: local, national and regional authorities and organizations; other UN agencies; international organizations; development actors; civil society; academia, media; the private sector; refugees and the host communities.

Meaningful engagement with NGO partners, RC/RC societies and other key stakeholders, including refugees and hosting communities, is key for a successful application of the CRR. For this reason, UNHCR is establishing a UNHCR-NGO-IFRC Reference Group to facilitate consultation with its hundreds of NGO partners at global, regional and local level. To ensure fair and equal representation, membership of the UNHCR-NGO-IFRC Reference Group should, ideally, be limited to NGO consortia and networks, whose role will be to channel inputs from their members as well as disseminate useful information on the process.

2. Objectives

It is envisioned that the UNHCR-NGO-IFRC Reference Group will:

- Actively contribute to improving comprehensive refugee responses by identifying existing gaps and proposing alternative solutions, from the perspective of UNHCR, NGOs and affected populations. These gaps can relate to programmatic responses (such as using more development approaches, inclusion etc.) as well as process-related issues (such as NGO coordination, more effective and innovative financing mechanisms etc.).
- Channel information on UNHCR’s CRRF related missions, consultations and initiatives in case study countries to broaden NGO audience.
- Channel regular NGO or IFRC inputs, reactions, comments and proposed orientations on the CRRF / Global Compact on Refugees.
- In line with one of the principal thrusts of the CRR, namely to increase the range of actors in refugee responses, the NGO and IFRC representatives will make proposals to reach out to new partners such as community-based groups (youth groups, faith-based organization etc.) and also how to strengthen participation in the implementation of the CRRF / Global Compact on Refugees of, and accountability to refugees and persons of concern.
- Measure progress in the rolling out of the CRRF in case study countries, including sharing proposals and actions to enhance greater inclusivity and ownership of the process by local actors, and bringing forward additional opportunities in the rolling out of the CRRF.

\(^1\) Representing National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies worldwide
✓ Develop and present inputs, based on lessons learned from the CRRF implementation, NGO experience and advocacy, (ex. annotation of examples of good practice for Annex 1 of the New York Declaration). These inputs will feed into the consultations of Member States leading to the formulation of the Global Compact on Refugees.
✓ Develop complementary advocacy initiatives in support of adopting the Global Compact on Refugees by the UN General Assembly toward the end of 2018.

3. Membership

The UNHCR-NGO Reference Group will include one representative from:

✓ CRRF Team;
✓ UNHCR Partnership Section;
✓ International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA);
✓ InterAction;
✓ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC);
✓ European Council for Refugees and Exiles (ECRE);
✓ Asia and Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN);
✓ MENA Civil Society Network for Displacement (CSND);
✓ Grupo Articulador Regional del Plan de Acción de Brasil (GAR);
✓ African NGOs Platform;
✓ Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS)
✓ Rapporteur of the 2017 UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations, during 2017.2

Other NGOs will be invited to join targeted meetings, on an ad hoc basis, to provide specific expertise.

4. Methodology

✓ There will be regular consultations between the CRRF Task Team and the NGO community through this reference group; additional meetings can be called whenever necessary, through the existing NGO forums (e.g., monthly NGOs-Task Team meetings);
✓ It will be the responsibility of the consortia, networks and groups to channel inputs from the NGOs and, to the extent possible, affected populations/communities and report back to their membership on progress made, in field locations (case study countries and others) as well as at HQ level through the relevant UNHCR-NGO coordination mechanisms.

5. Timeline

The reference group is established for an initial period covering the years 2017 and 2018. The reference group will meet on a monthly basis or more frequently if necessary.

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2 This year’s overall theme of the Consultations will be the CRRF.