

**NGO intervention on Programme of action: Areas in need of support (Part III.B)**

**Agenda item 3**

Dear Chairperson,

This intervention reflects a diversity of NGO views.

NGOs welcome a more balanced text, further linking Parts III.A and B. However, we regret that in shortening the text, critical details have been lost on human rights standards and age, gender, diversity and disability considerations.

On **reception and admission**, we deplore the removal of references to mixed movements. Designing appropriate responses requires to acknowledge this critical operational reality. Otherwise we risk leaving a gap between the two compacts, side-lining human rights and protection of many displaced. Moreover, providing adequate protection and assistance to refugees often requires proper reception mechanisms, access to efficient refugee status determination and referrals within mixed movements.

Host and transit countries should receive support to guarantee adequate *reception arrangements* and facilities, equipped for diverse vulnerable populations, including children.

*Early warning, preparedness and contingency planning* help manage early stages of displacement and are crucial for effective refugee responses. However, we note that important elements, including scenario-building exercises and contingency planning, have been lost. Given the importance of the prevention agenda, these should be reintroduced.

Under *safety and security*, we commend the objective to uphold human rights and protection standards. Yet, we caution that the reference to counter-terrorism may adversely impact their application.

On *registration and documentation*, States also need support to properly inform new arrivals about asylum processes. This includes translation and information dissemination in formats sensitive to AGD considerations. Moreover, quality registration must also remain accessible on a continuous basis to record evolving details, needs and vulnerabilities. This is best done through multi-stakeholder engagement, strengthening referral mechanisms and data protection.

States may also need support to identify, screen and refer *people with specific needs* to services which are child- and youth-friendly, and gender-, age- and disability-responsive. We call for non-custodial and community-based alternatives to detention to include adolescents and youth. Moreover, detaining children is always a violation of their rights.

NGOs welcome details on the *Asylum Capacity Support Group* and stand ready to support. However, to respond swiftly to requests, the Group will need core resources, independent of voluntary contributions.

On **Meeting needs and supporting communities**, the spirit of ‘leaving no one behind’ should continue to guide the compact despite reduced SDG references. We wish to specifically highlight the following concerns:

- On *education*, we urge re-emphasising quality education. This requires predictable and multi-year funding to help implement national education plans inclusive of refugees. We also regret that language on barriers to accessing education, particularly faced by girls, has disappeared.
- On *health*, we call for re-introducing reference to facilitating refugees’ access to primary, secondary and tertiary care. Several NGOs also renew their call to include sexual and reproductive health care, particularly as part of life-saving medical care for SGBV survivors.
- Under *children and youth*, some important elements on children have been lost. In particular, we must invest adequate resources in strengthening child protection skills of all actors and the GCR should facilitate cross-border collaboration in child protection and continuum of care.

Under *jobs and livelihoods*, we commend the inclusion of decent work and reiterate the need to respect labour rights. On *food security and nutrition*, we also encourage support for States to include refugees in their social safety net programmes. We also welcome a more developed *tolerance and peaceful co-existence* paragraph, but reiterate the need to combat racial discrimination and xenophobia.

On **solutions**, we reiterate concerns related to the voluntary repatriation section. Having recently seen disturbing levels of push-backs and returns to insecure and unstable contexts, NGOs call for language detailing explicit actions to prevent *refoulement*.

We again welcome the three-year strategy on *resettlement*. This is an urgent priority as the number of resettled refugees has dropped drastically. As we work to increase responsibility-sharing, States must urgently step-up resettlement quotas including with new countries.

Finally, while *other local solutions* may be welcome when they increase temporary legal stays backed with fundamental rights, we worry that pursuing second-best options may gradually dismantle durable solutions frameworks. Other local solutions – just as complementary pathways – should add to, and not come at the expense of, durable solutions.

A detailed version of this intervention is available on [icvanetwork.org](http://icvanetwork.org)

Thank you.