

**NGO statement on Agenda item 2:**

**Draft indicators for progress towards the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees**

Dear Chair,

This statement has been drafted through a wide consultation with NGOs and attempts to reflect the diversity of views within the NGO community.

**General comments**

We would like to thank UNHCR for the opportunity to provide suggestions on the proposed indicators for the GCR. We consider these indicators key to ensure GCR-induced change and impact. It is important to avoid conceptualizing the indicators as a menu of options that States and UNHCR operations may – or may not – choose to report on. Rather, they should be considered required reporting for all refugee situations; where States are unable to do so, UNHCR should do so on their behalf. While it is understood that State ownership of the GCR is critical, if UNHCR does not continue to play a global oversight, coordinator, and standard-setting role the GCR's long-term impact will probably be minimal. As a group, we would like to make the following overall recommendations to a revised and enhanced set of GCR indicators.

1. **Include access to asylum and *non-refoulement* as a precondition for effective measurement.** The scope of the current indicator framework is limited to detected and recognized refugees. As there is no measurement related to effective access to asylum and *non-refoulement*, a significant proportion of undocumented refugees or asylum-seekers will be excluded from the scope of the GCR. We recommend including indicators to ensure the GCR becomes a framework covering *all* asylum-seekers.
2. **Include physical and psychological integrity and safety as a measurement.** None of the proposed indicators measures freedom from violence. However, physical integrity is a precondition for refugees to become self-reliant or to return in safety and dignity. We recommend addressing this important omission.
3. **Focus on quality/outcomes rather than quantity/outputs.** Most of the proposed indicators define an output measurement quantifiable in *numbers* of programmes or interventions, benefitting *numbers* of refugees and host communities. We recommend introducing more outcome-oriented, people-centred indicators, for example indicators that will measure effects on refugees' and host populations' ability to access and enjoy rights without discrimination. This may also relate to host countries' refugee integration programmes, including basic educational opportunities during their stay in temporary asylum shelters. In this regard, the GCR monitoring framework should align its outcomes and indicators to the SDGs so that refugees and host populations can be taken into account in national development plans and compared with each other, based on the principle of leaving no-one behind.
4. **Clarify definitions with reference to existing rights-based frameworks.** Several terms used in the proposed set of indicators may be interpreted differently if not well-defined. Contested meanings may question the credibility of reporting, and thereby undermine accountability. It is for example not commonly agreed when an individual return is safe, voluntary and *sustainable* (indicator 4.1.b), when an emergency response plan is *comprehensive* (indicator 1.2.a) or what *access* to education implies (indicators 2.3.a+b). The indicators should be based on a shared understanding of collective outcomes, which are mentioned in the GCR text but not yet defined. Indicators and collective outcomes should be based on established refugee rights and draw on existing benchmarks for

achieving solutions to displacement<sup>1</sup>. We suggest producing a glossary where all terms are defined with reference to established rights-based frameworks and/or guidance.

5. **Add concrete targets.** In line with the SDG agenda, the GCR monitoring framework should propose concrete, time-bound, refugee-specific targets to achieve both the SDGs and GCR objectives. At a minimum, the framework should provide guidance on how each country could develop national targets for refugees in the medium term in line with SDG targets set for their own populations. Data collected towards national targets could then be aggregated across all countries to show global progress.
6. **Identify data sources and the responsibility for collecting data.** While needed to be specified elsewhere, it is crucial that indicators provide guidance for how data will be collected and by whom (and what the residual role of UNHCR is). Without this clarity and transparency around data sources, the indicators may simply not be reported upon, or in a very inconsistent manner with weak accountability and limited effect as a result. We recommend establishing a set of overall guidelines for data collection and analysis in the next iteration of the indicator framework.
7. **Disaggregate at a minimum by age, gender, disability and length of displacement.** None of the proposed indicators suggests disaggregation by critical categories such as gender, age, disability and length of displacement (or duration of the assistance provided to refugees). We suggest data disaggregation to ensure adequate sensitivity to the diverse needs and challenges of different groups of refugees and members of the host community. GCR indicators should also reflect diversity. For Objective 3, for example, indicators should also be reported by country of asylum and country of origin.
8. **Include indicators that can measure the implementation of a multi-stakeholder and partnership approach, including refugees' access to decision-making.** As recognized in the GCR, a comprehensive refugee response commands a multi-stakeholder and partnership approach. We recommend incorporating references to multi-stakeholder approaches throughout. For example, measuring the contributions of NGOs and refugees, with gender equity and consideration to age and diversity, in national CRRF secretariats would be one multi-stakeholder indicator under Outcome 4.3 on good governance.

NGOs are looking forward to further engaging in the design of the GCR indicators.

Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> These would draw on the Durable Solutions Indicator Library developed through a three-year inter-agency process under the leadership of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, as well as the International Recommendations for Refugee Statistics which were endorsed by States at the 49th Session of the UN Statistical Commission. In addition, we recommend States and UNHCR draw from NGO-led suggested indicators, including the Refugee Response Index, the Self-Reliance Initiative and the Minimum Economic Recovery Standards.