

NGO statement for GRF Follow-up Briefing of 11 June 2020

- Thank you for giving the opportunity to NGOs to express, collectively, their perspectives on the follow-up to the Global Refugee Forum, six months down the line.
- NGOs **appreciate UNHCR's continued GRF engagement**, particularly through this kind of meetings and the regular release of information, analysis and documentation, including the **long awaited Outcome Document**.
- While we find the document useful, NGOs **expected a more detailed analysis**, particularly reflecting on the GRF additionality, the pledges' content and focus (thematically and regionally) as well as the impact of the initiatives launched at the Forum.
- Pledges on Statelessness could also be further detailed (at least referring clearly to the [High-Level Segment on Statelessness: Results and Highlights](#) document issued last month.
- We also find the **focus on AGD and the meaningful participation and leadership of refugees to be rather limited**, especially given the emphasis on these themes at the GRF itself and their critical importance for more inclusive and effective responses.
- However, we note that the process is ongoing and understand that a deeper analysis is planned, particularly on **matching and prioritizing pledges**. We welcome details about this exercise and how NGOs and refugees can be associated. Can UNHCR elaborate on how it is matching different GRF pledges, according to which criteria and whether it has identified priority pledges by country or theme?
- We fully agree with the document's conclusion: **"there is no room for complacency"** and **"much remains to be done"**. In this perspective, **NGOs are actually at work implementing pledges**. To give a few illustrative examples:
 - The **Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative** – a community of practice including NGOs, governments representatives, UNHCR, academics, and the private sector – **pledged to reach over 250,000 refugees with self-reliance programming** over the next two years. Last month, a major milestone was reached in pursuit of that goal, with the launch of the [Self-Reliance Index](#), the **first-ever global tool to measure the progress of refugee families on their journeys to self-reliance**. The virtual launch event was attended by 300 participants from around the world, and the tool has already been downloaded by almost 300 unique users. Subsequent, specialized launch events are ongoing, leading up to World Refugee Day.
 - In the East and Horn of Africa, the **Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS)** has invested in supporting members, humanitarian and development partners and authorities with stocktaking to understand the steps needed to operationalise pledges made at the GRF. With members and partners, **ReDSS developed post GRF country-level engagement strategies** focused on how to take forward pledges and support engagement in policy and programming informed by evidence including the [ReDSS GRF Briefing Paper - Advancing Multi-Stakeholder Solutions](#) (December 2019) and [ReDSS Ethiopia - Towards a common research agenda in Ethiopia - A research synthesis paper to inform the implementation of the GCR](#) (March 2020).
 - NGOs have also followed-up on their pledges to support meaningful **refugee participation and leadership**, working with refugee-led organizations and networks. In particular NGOs joined the [meeting organized in May](#) by the [Global Refugee-led Network](#) to follow-up with the signatories to the pledge on meaningful participation (including States, NGO and private sector); update on progress in implementing the pledge and discuss the collective way forwards.

- With regard to the **Roadmap**, NGOs consider this should include a **systematic and predictable approach, identifying regional and national architectures for follow-up**. A document, detailing the various steps, mechanisms and engagement options should be developed collectively, including with refugees. We also **suggest that all UNHCR Regional Bureaus are clearly involved** in the process, organizing meetings with stakeholders on the GRF Follow-up similar to the recent meeting organized by the Regional Bureau for the East, Horn of Africa and Great Lakes.
- NGOs also welcome UNHCR efforts in **tracking pledges** and encourage all pledging entity to contribute to this **perfectible and evolving accountability mechanism**. We also request clarifications on the **process and timeline for producing the first GCR monitoring report**, based on the Indicators Framework, in 2021. Could UNHCR also explain how it works to reflect this in the High Commissioner's Annual Report to the UN General Assembly this year?
- On the GRF initiatives, we **welcome the efforts to implement the Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways**, despite the difficult context, and the release of a **new document on the [Asylum Capacity Support Group](#)**, which we still need to analyze. NGOs remain eager to engage with UNHCR and other actors on the work of the ACSG. Further **details on the Support Platforms** would be appreciated. We understand the three Support Platforms are now considering different options for how they might be able to engage and would welcome details on **how NGOs can contribute**.
- NGOs welcome the improvements and additions made to the **Digital Platform** since February and wonder whether this could be the basis for a **global community of practice**, as once hinted at by former Assistant High-Commissioner for Protection, Mr. Volker Türk.
- To conclude, NGOs highlight the need to **mobilize Global Compact arrangements in the COVID-19 response**, including through channeling much needed additional resources to NGOs. We appreciated the meeting organized with NGOs in May on the "Follow-up to the GCR and GRF in the current COVID-19 context". We also appreciate that **NGO inputs were included** in the updated UNHCR paper on "[The role of the Global Compact on Refugees in the international response to the COVID-19 pandemic](#)", especially highlighting the **importance of facilitating access to durable solutions**, even in the current context.
- In this perspective, reiterating the **importance of working on solutions throughout the response**, we wonder how this will feature at the [High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges](#), given its focus this year on the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for the protection and resilience of refugees and people who are internally displaced or stateless.
- Thank you.