



## Protection capacity co-sponsoring group meeting UNHCR Headquarter, 16 September 2019,

**Participants:** Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, European Union, Finland, France, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United States (online); Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (online), Asylum Access (online), Children on the move (online), Global Refugee-led Network (online), International Council of Voluntary Agencies, International Disability Alliance (online), Intersos, Save the children, Settlement Services International (online), UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR's Global Youth Advisory Council, UN Women (online), Women's Refugee Commission (online).

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### Agenda

- 1) Where things stand on co-sponsorship
- 2) Pledges examples
- 3) Discussion on the High-Level Panel for the Global Refugee Forum
- 4) Agenda item and spotlight events
- 5) Outreach plan to get pledges

#### 1) Where things stand on co-sponsorship

##### UNHCR

- Welcome better balance between Member States (MS) and civil society in the group. At the last meeting we had 2-3 MS and 15 civil society representatives.
- A good number of confirmed co-sponsor on Protection capacity – 6 confirmed MS and 15 civil society – is accessible on [UNHCR's website](#) including MS such as Finland, Belgium, Morocco, Turkey, Switzerland, United States.
- It would be great to have more MS. Any support to UNHCR and feedback from civil society and MS to achieve this would be appreciated.
- However, while the possibility of adding new co-sponsor to the Protection capacity group remains open, this is not a priority. The most important is to start working with all stakeholders in identifying and developing concrete pledges. This might also lead other to join the group.

##### UN Women

- Will the co-sponsor list on Protection capacity close at some point?

##### Sweden

- It is a sound approach to start working on pledges.
- If this group/alliance continues after the Forum. How you envisage maintaining momentum? Will there be meetings after the GRF for ex.?



## **International Council of Voluntary Agencies**

- Fully support to focus on pledges now but we would like also to highlight the lack of host countries presence, particularly from Africa, not only in the Protection capacity group. As Daniel Endres said at the last briefing, those start can still participate even if they are not formal co-sponsor. They could be observers. We could also reflect on how to involve/reach out to them in developing pledges. They should be associated one way or another otherwise there is a big imbalance.
- What kind of joint and match pledges we can call on?

## **France**

- Could we think of this group as a “group of friends”, which could also be maintained following the Global Refugee Forum?

## **UNHCR**

- This is a continuous process, which should not end in December with the Forum. This type of coalition/group would continue after the forum, involving a variety of actors (States, NGOs, development actors, refugees, etc.).
- We have the same type of spirit to have a “group of friends”.
- We do not have an answer yet about the process post-GRF but it will be probably linked to the GCR implementation/tracking system of pledges into which we will fit. This is a critical question though, on which the GRF team should reflect more broadly.
- In different co-sponsoring group meetings, we have host countries attending. Those meetings are opened to everyone and not only to confirmed co-sponsors.
- In some way for the Protection capacity co-sponsoring group, we would like to have pledges on support to strengthen protection in host countries in the spirit of burden- and responsibility-sharing.
- Another area could be to have South-to-South countries pledges.

## **2) Examples of pledges**

### **UNHCR**

- We circulated pledges examples by e-mail.
- Thanks for comments received. We received several feedbacks and some feedback fit better in Solutions.
- An updated version will be circulated, with at least comments from UN Women but we don't envisage much more work on this document. We need to focus on country specific pledges or Civil Society pledges rather than on finalizing a perfect document with examples.
- The idea of examples is to show the type of pledging that stakeholders can make and adjust, or to provide multi-stakeholder examples that you need when you reach out to other actors to generate pledges.

### **UN Women**

- Our suggestions made was not to include all the thinking and the sub-themes under Protection capacity, but we developed a series of highlights/guidance under the sub-themes, focusing on gender equality.



## European Union

- Linking to the comment from ICVA, we do need host countries on board, but to achieve this we should avoid putting the focus solely on pledges. We should remember that we also need good practices in the discussion. We can build on existing good practices, making sure that we match the list of pledges to good practices and needs of host countries.
- We cannot yet announce any formal co-sponsoring because we are still waiting for the European Union Commission to settle in but we are happy to follow the discussions.

## Women's Refugee Commission

- Under Jobs and Livelihoods theme, WRC developed criteria on what constitutes good practices. Maybe we could consider a paper like that on Protection capacity?

## Turkey

- Agree to include good examples and think to draft a separate list of good examples. Given our hosting of large number of refugees, we would like to contribute to this list.

## UNHCR

- A number of stakeholders have produced guidance on pledges, e.g. the Age, Gender and Diversity Tip Sheet and the Children Protection Tip Sheet.
- Additional guidance will be shared by e-mail. We will identify Focal Points to whom to send whatever guidance document is relevant to this group and can be used in outreach.
- On showcasing of good practices, we foresee a marketplace, side events, webpages. This is indeed an important part of the conversation and we need to turn our attention to good practices as well. What is a good practice that merits showcasing is a question we need to tackle as well.
- Now the number one priority is to finalize the panel because we need to send invitations. So we propose to put good practices on the agenda of our next meeting. We can think of a paper along the lines proposed by WRC.
- We can have a running list of good practices. There will also be an online system.
- Stakeholders have the opportunity to submit good practices [online](#), it will be important to discuss together around that.

### 3) Discussion on the High-Level Panel for the Global Refugee Forum

#### UNHCR

- Our session is confirmed on 18 December morning. We are in parallel with Education High-Level Panel. It can be discussed to see if it can be changed. If we have a lot of overlap in terms of co-sponsors, it might not be good to have those in parallel.
- UNHCR doesn't want a classic panel; we want a message reflected at our panel with:
  - 1) Age, gender and diversity, including disability need to be mainstreamed throughout. This is one of the core elements the co-sponsoring group wants to see. The gender



element has to be reflected in all speeches. Finding speakers and examples that will reflect the thinking on leaving no-one behind.

- 2) Reflect the vision of matching: UNHCR would like speakers to reflect what the Forum is all about, that all international community needs to come together. It is not just a matter to change policy, laws, it is a matter to doing that with the international support.
- 3) Would be good to “tell a story” rather than having a juxtaposition of individuals speaking, we would have a story about the refugee cycle told through the interventions: refugee experience upon arrival, emergency, preparedness, RSD, to inclusion, participation.

- On the panelists, we think of having as first speaker a refugee and hear his/her experience. We have a number of refugee co-sponsors (UNHCR Global Youth Advisory Council and Global Refugee-Led Network), and they could support UNHCR in identifying a refugee – with disability to include the diversity component – which will highlight the issue of inclusiveness.

Continuing with the refugee cycle, we would then turn to emergency response and preparedness covered by an NGO representative. Then two Member States (including host States and maybe “donor” State?) could talk about protection response and legal frameworks including on sexual and gender-based violence and child protection.

NGO consortium could help identify best NGO speaker; UNHCR look for guidance, proposals. Our sense is that NGOs have been effectively engaged in supporting States in reception and admission. However, we don’t know yet how much we need to follow protocol, i.e. can we have an NGO speak before a State on a panel?

- Other ideas: demonstrate partnership on the panel – for instance, how Member States value civil society organizations, how civil society organizations engage with States?
- The key element is can we find ways to hear about the refugee cycle, who will speak to what in the context of sensitivity.

#### **Canada**

- Good to look from the refugee perspective, then having an NGO and States speakers.

#### **Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network**

- Like the idea of a story being told through the panel. Great if you could demonstrate partnerships between the panels, showing how Member States value the NGO work and how NGOs worked with Member States for instance; showing how partnerships work in practice.

#### **France**

- Important to have refugee voice. Also States since in the end, we provide protection. Panel could not be only on partnership but show what the partnership is bringing.

#### **Turkey**

- Agree with previous speakers, good examples of Burden- and responsibility-sharing should be reflected. Looking into the option of donor State in addition to refugees, NGOs and host State.



### **Save the children**

- We could have “Davos style”, with key questions asked to panelists to speak about the various issues. Civil Society would be able to speak to many aspects in such a context.

### **Sweden**

- “Davos style” is a good idea but we’ve had panels like this before. These are good as long as question is not limiting the interventions. Often panelists have more to share but they are constrained by the questions asked.

### **UNHCR**

- We could flag the partnership theme in addition with Age, Gender and Diversity theme, and the participation, inclusion and matching ideas. It is a core element to see who can be invited and speak about partnership.
- “Davos style” is popular but it is also very scripted.
- Important to ensuring that key considerations are reflected. And count on the Assistant High Commissioner on Protection to moderate the panel. We are lucky that we have the new AHC-P who will be able to pull out the story from what she hears rather than having it scripted. We can count on her in the moderation to clarify the story for the audience.

### **Global Refugee-Led Network**

- Appreciate the idea to have a refugee representative speaking first about his/her experience, however, refugees have different experience, entering through Turkey is different from entering in Italy for instance. Everyone has his/her own experience. How will UNHCR handle that? Whole of society is also important.

### **Global Youth Advisory Council**

- Agree that we have to capture refugee voices in Protection capacity theme. We are interested in the idea of story-telling.

### **UNHCR**

- We understand the difficulty and the challenge of refugee representation and will work with the two networks. The point raised in terms of diversity of experience is valid and need to find a pragmatic way.
- We then all agree we should have a refugee voice and they should open the panel.

### **Finland**

- Storytelling plan is good. Having the AGD lens is a very good approach as well as including refugee participation support and refugee with disability.
- On the format, there is the panel and then the Q&A, how much will it allow for a dialogue?

### **Colombia**

- It is fine to have a storytelling, but it seems the catalyzer moment is missing.
- From the floor you will get formal statements.



- We have to look forward to seeing changes and how we can gather support for hosting countries and those who will host refugees in the next years. This is one of the Forum challenges. We have four years to structure something to help rather than showing good practices from the past.

### **Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network**

- Agree with Colombia that we need a catalyzer moment. It is good if panelists can pledge during the Forum and highlight joint pledges, could be an inspiring way to motivate the room.

### **Asylum Access**

- The ideas are good. What will and won't endorse is important, Mexico could be a Member State speaker, in 2015, 3000 people received asylum in Mexico and this year it is 50 000 people, so it has grown a lot.
- Speaking to Asylum Access colleagues in Mexico, there is still a deportation problem. There might be a call for action there.
- Mexico is thinking on making a pledge. Asylum Access is working on that.
- Caution to not use refugees "just to tell the story". Refugees should also be involved in shaping policies, in a decision-making process. Bring refugee leaders active in a context; representatives of what is being done.

### **Sweden**

- Is there an update on the Asylum Support Capacity Group?

### **Australia**

- Beyond the ACSG, do you have a sense about formal international protection? How will it feature in the session?

### **Global Youth Advisory Council**

- FYI, we pledge with UNHCR our support on strategic leadership and technical assistance with a youth perspective, including capacity building working with youth and we will add the partnership component.
- We are creating a Tip Sheet on youth and it is in a process to be finalized.

### **UNHCR**

- There will be a 30 mins panel, then 90 mins of statements/Q&A/discussion.
- Four speakers would be a good number on the panel.
- During the discussion, there will be an opportunity to make pledges.
- Protocol will be observed because it is a General Assembly event.
- Indeed, we need to strike a balance in the panel in a manner that is looking forward, not just backward.
- None of the protection challenges can be addressed in a short period of time, identifying the gaps, resolve it and identify the partnership that could have come to move forward takes time. Protection capacity is addressed in longer term. Find a mix of good practices that reflect partnerships, gaps identified, and the move forward would be great for the Forum.



- UNHCR would like to see during the Forum that there are ways to resolve refugee crises if we have a sense of burden- and responsibility-sharing.
- In terms of the audience, we won't have a list of speakers congratulate themselves, we would like to hear support is needed in X area and we will pledge, we heard XX gaps and we pledge our support to address those gaps.
- UNHCR hope they can turn to NGOs to see whether an NGO speaker could be found, and discuss should NGOs speak together on emergency and preparedness or something more linked to the broader response / institutional response.
- On refugee participation, the story telling is not just about the refugees experience but to understand how their participation impacts positively the refugee response. Ideally to speak about refugees' influence thanks to participatory engagement and reflect on the values of their voices, their strengths.
- We would like all multi-stakeholder to cover participation and inclusion. Preparedness and emergency response is usually covered by the civil society, for the legal framework we thought that a Member State speaker could do this and highlight protection response and strong national institutions. All this is about strengthening protection capacity, not only protection.
- On Mexico, UNHCR will not comment if Mexico would be a good speaker although this seems to be an option well worth pursuing. We also have the Asylum Support Capacity Group with the outcome that has to be finalized to have a separate spotlight on that, but because it is critical, we thought a Member State could speak about asylum, it could be strengthen. What are the gaps, what are the matching and who can support?
- The ACSG is actually not a group. We clarify that because it is not meant to be a core group of States but more a coordination mechanism to support asylum capacity.
- Example: currently a State bilaterally approaches a State to strengthen protection, but it is not coordinated with a vision. The ACSG will help to have a vision.
- UNHCR tries to get a better taste of who is doing what when a refugee crisis happens. States have to be part of the process of identifying the gaps.
- From that, would like to have a growing pool of expertise and funding that could be matched.
- Asylum Support Capacity Group is a matching mechanism helping States identifying gaps and identifying technical and funding needs.
- Work in progress to try to identify the pool.
- It is linked with pledges and matching.
- We will have a separate meeting in October on the ACSG.
- We will hear concrete – although not spontaneous – pledges from the podium during the Forum. Stakeholders should come with the vision of making pledges.
- A reminder: there is High-Level dialogue and other opportunities to present ideas, i.e. spotlight sessions. 30mn is ambitious to cover all of this.

#### **4) Spotlight events**

##### **UNHCR**

- On the spotlight events, we have no choice to work on one event on the Asylum Support Capacity Group, ideally on 17 December.



- Other ideas of spotlight events could be shared by e-mails with UNHCR. There is a template on [UNHCR's website](#) where multi-stakeholder have to put their ideas for spotlight sessions and the deadline is to send it is 30 September.
- Good practices examples are available online.

### **Women's Refugee Commission**

- Is there a space for cross-cutting issues in the spotlight events?

### **UNHCR**

- There is a space for cross-cutting issues and it could be on Age, Gender and Diversity, on various protection themes.

## **5) Outreach plan to get pledges**

### **UNHCR**

- We are keen on moving forward in identifying concrete pledges. We have been working with Bureaus to identify pledges and gaps to fill or support some States would be ready to provide.

We have done an outreach and identified some areas where States might be interested. We now have a huge matrix of possible pledges from all range of countries. We have also done a review of supported Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations that have already been accepted by States. We thought useful to match the 2 mechanisms in support of States. If a State has committed to implement a UPR recommendation, it could make a similar/corresponding pledge at the GRF. That would help us in gathering the support needed for those States. We have two pages of States with which we can do an outreach. We will work actively with UNHCR country offices on that. Co-sponsors could lend support to this. Be clear that it is a working progress to help us, it is for States themselves to make pledges, it is not to impose pledges and recommendations. We will share it with the group to see what outreach you can do.

### **Asia Pacific for Refugee Rights Network**

- Concerns on having pledges only every four years, how do we avoid this scenario? Could we invite people to make pledges on ongoing basis. How do we end up not reducing commitments?

### **UNHCR**

- Indeed, we should make sure we do not limit ourselves. Maybe the GRF Team can look into this. We can have specific pledges on a yearly basis. But because we talk about Protection capacity, it is a type of pledge that requires long term investment for impact. For instance, adopting 1951 Refugee Convention for a Member State is not a "one-off" but requires a medium term.
- Plus, let's not forget that every two years, there will be a high-level meeting.

### **Next steps, to do as soon as possible:**

- Refugees networks to look for a refugee speaker. Amanda is UNHCR focal point.



- NGO colleagues brainstorm together and have a proposal for an NGO speaker.
- All of participants to think through some options as speakers including Member States and shared their ideas with UNHCR.
- Next meeting, we will have discussion on good practices and have ideas on the second spotlight event.