



Notes: Third Solutions GRF co-sponsorship group meeting

22 August 2019

Participants:

- Act Alliance, Asia Pacific Refugees Rights Network (online), Australia, Canada, Danish Refugee Council, Denmark, Egypt, Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (online), International Catholic Migration Commission, Indonesia, International Olympic Committee & Olympic Refugee Foundation (online), International Council of Voluntary Agencies, Ireland, Iran, Jesuit Refugee Service, Lebanon, Norway, Norwegian Refugee Council, Pakistan, Refugee Council, RefugePoint, RET International, Settlement Services International (online), Talent Beyond Boundaries (online), Thailand, UN-Habitat (online), United Kingdom.
- UNHCR panelists: Emad Aziz Sedrak, Mamadou Dian Balde, Amr Marei, Sweta Madhuri Kannan, Maja Pedersen.

Agenda

- Brief overview of the current thinking regarding the Global Refugee Forum
- Discussion on third country solutions for refugees
- Discussion on voluntary repatriation, reintegration and local integration and solutions
- Discussion on the High-level session on Solutions
- Conclusion and next step

Short summary of what we discussed at our last meeting:

- Maintain comprehensive approach to Solutions (no piecemeal approach), and at the same time, organize in-depth discussions on sub-themes: 1) third country solutions 2) voluntary repatriation (volrep), reintegration, local integration, local solutions.
- Ensure no overlaps between Solutions and other GRF prioritized themes; work on complementarities.
- Need for concrete outcomes that will help advance Solutions.
- Maintain a proper balance between thematic and geographic, situational approach.
- Financial support should be a priority, as well as the engagement of non-humanitarian actors (including peace, development actors, etc.).
- Participation of major host countries is critical.
- UNHCR to host bilateral meetings to progress and maintain momentum over the fall.

Brief overview of the current thinking regarding the Global Refugee Forum

- Held at the Palais des Nations, there will be a maximum of 24 spotlights sessions on **16 December**. Guidance is available [online](#) on UNHCR website. UNHCR will **gather proposals** until the **deadline of 30 September** and will provide feedback by mid-October on proposals. The spotlight sessions are an opportunity to showcase multi-stakeholders models, situations of engagement, good practices.
- There will be a speakers' corner at lunch break during the three days. Each speaker will be given 7 minutes to speak.



- On 16 December evening, a private sector event will be held, to bring together CEOs and also SMEs. UNHCR is interested in having participants feedback. How can private sector be more engaged?
- During the GRF, in parallel, there will be events in Geneva city, including a football match to demonstrate the power of sport in protection and inclusion.
- On 17 December: the UN Secretary-General will be present, followed by an opening plenary focus on Burden- and responsibility-sharing, a private lunch for High-level guests, in parallel there will be spotlight sessions, a speakers' corner and space for bilateral meetings and a press conference room. In the afternoon, a focus on a High-level dialogue and broadening the base, Solutions and Comprehensive responses in action; then statements from the floor.
- 18 December will start in the morning with two High-level dialogue sessions in parallel on Education and Protection capacity, followed by Jobs and livelihoods, Energy and Infrastructure.
- Followed by a lunch with women and leaders from South Sudan.
- Afternoon: we will look at what a whole-of-society approach looks like, dialogues on inclusive societies, with refugee co-sponsors and statements from the floor.
- In summary, on 17-18 December, multi-stakeholders have several opportunity for showcasing through spotlight sessions, speakers' corner, marketplace, etc.

Discussion:

RefugePoint:

- How do you envision the difference between side events on 16 December and spotlight sessions on 17 and 18 December?
- Do you have a timeline for pledges?

RET International:

- About the process prior to the event, what are UNHCR expectation and plan to engage refugees, to provide feedback? And what we can do?

Denmark:

- Do you have thoughts on including refugees in each co-sponsor group?
- Any possibility to secure speaking slots?

International Council of Voluntary Agencies

- ICVA received questions from NGOs on how to register to the Forum, how can NGOs participate in the Forum, etc. It would be useful if UNHCR could indicate on the dedicated webpage how NGOs can register for the Forum.

Norway

- What will happen after the deadline of 30 September? Will you try to coordinate and merge proposals so that all interested can engage? Please don't just erase and organize a competition between stakeholders but highlight what can be done jointly.
- On the spotlight session, it is a creative exercise?
- On the size of the delegations, what is the limitation?

UNHCR:

- We should avoid having the same discussions over 3 days but we see the first day (16 Dec) as a space to allow for more actors to contribute and intervene.
- Actors should come forward asap with pledges, have joint pledges, matching. It will be an opportunity for UNHCR to see overlap and links between the themes.
- 17 and 18 December agenda is very packed.
- UNHCR is working on refugees' inclusion and participation through the Global Refugee Led-Network which is planning a consultation on 19 September in Istanbul, Turkey and another consultation in October.
- UNHCR also works with the Danish Refugee Council on refugee inclusion and UNHCR issued guidance on multi-stakeholders at national and regional level.
- We have faced obstacles in identifying refugees for co-sponsoring groups, if actors know refugees that would suit, please share suggestions with UNHCR.
- There is also a link through the regionalization of UNHCR-NGO consultations: e.g. 7-9 September: regional protection roundtable in Bangkok. UNHCR is working with APRRN on this. 10-11 September: UNHCR-NGO regional consultations in Johannesburg.
- There will be a speaking slots list made and shared.
- Additional information on the size of the delegations will be provided as well.
- On 3 September during the informal briefing on the Global Refugee Forum, more information on the delegation size will be provided.
- On coordination of spotlight sessions, it makes a lot of sense. Look for coherence and we appreciate this should not be a race but an inclusive approach.
- On the registration for NGOs to the Forum there is a set of key criteria, which will be shared soon.
- UNHCR invites all stakeholders to include refugees in the co-sponsor process.

Discussion on third country solutions for refugees

See the matrix planning.

UNHCR:

- The 3-year strategy on resettlement and complementary pathways and the Global Refugee Forum goals are easily aligned, it is about more: more refugees, more actors, expanding access to third country solution.
- The 3-year strategy was launched at the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement in July.
- The 3-year strategy is embedded in a broader 10-year strategy.
- The three pillars are link to the GCR and the Global Refugee Forum work.
- The planning matrix shared by UNHCR is built on the 3-year strategy. When we look at the structure (more actors, more places, better protection quality), this a potential and a challenge.
- The idea of the matrix is to help stakeholders structure a process on who needs to do what, based on the outcomes and the key areas and the pledges that we are seeking in the lead up of the Forum.



- Looking at the key outcomes and the priority areas, we ask for your thoughts.
- Column on network is key: Need to be coordinated but not suffer death by coordination. how can the co-sponsor group bring more? What can we do to achieve these specific goals? Who would lead on what? Who will mobilize on what?
- There are areas of particular challenge and opportunities within the employer sector, cities and influential actors outside of humanitarian actors. Building sustainability is about leveraging desire from some of those groups to do more to help refugees and benefit from dynamism and talent refugees can bring to our societies.

Discussion:

International Council of Voluntary Agencies:

- Could you explain how the co-sponsorship group is connected with the global action plan of the 3-year strategy?
- Where would fit the engagement with countries of origin?
- We should try to be careful not to have the co-sponsorship group slip with one sub-group with countries of origin and one sub-group with resettlement countries.

UNHCR:

- Planning to have a boarder session introduction to the 3-year strategy during ExCom to all Member States to ensure they see advantages, including host countries. Good information sharing, good logistics, complex legal issues with complementary pathways and how you can empower refugees, sessions including with ExCom side events.
- The idea is to see how this co-sponsor group can inject energy in implementing the action plan, rally on pledges rather than planning activity.
- Some pledges will also be on capacity building, financing, etc.
- It is sometimes hard for governments, NGOs, private sector to develop meaningful multiyear plans. What pledges we can make to have a multiyear plan?
- It is hard for governments and NGOs to be locked in meaningful multi-year commitments. What kind of pledges stakeholders can make that is multi-year?

Norway:

- The planning matrix is a good starting point.
- As we start thinking on how to formulate pledges, for those already doing something asked for in the planning matrix, how can we transform this into a pledge? E.g. what we do on integration.

UNHCR

- Ideally, twin government and other players in the societies on access to employment, civic participation, etc. Some countries have robust legal framework, the idea is not to pledge on what you are already doing, but integrate refugees and host communities in the process.
- We can also think of engaging the ATCR chair (this year Canada).
- Think of the risk and potential, thinking with employers without segment thinking.

- When you look at the strategy and the third goal there is a lot of idea for new approaches on adopting a whole-of-society approach.

As we break out in **three** sub-groups, we will all have the following key questions for discussion, looking at key pledges, network and key actions: Is it comprehensive? Is there something to add? Are any key/relevant pledges missing? Should any pledge be removed? Who can be the champion of each priority area? Mobilize others for pledges? What are the actions this group can do? Are there any other meetings or events to leverage?

Group restitution on 1: More actors:

- Discussion on complementary pathways, what do we mean by complementary pathways, ideas of additionality to resettlement, some of ways in which it can be operationalized, existing migration pathways, integration pathways that refugees can benefit from E.g. labor, family reunification.
- Building capacity of emerging countries, new initiative that UNHCR and IOM is developing (CRISP), not only about new complementary pathways but existing complementary pathways as well.
- We looked at how we can include new countries and agreed on two actions: 1) how include new and emerging countries in the co-sponsorship group? and 2) through the Annual Tripartite Consultation on Resettlement chair.
- Discussion on CRISP and on how important it is to provide support.

Group restitution on 2: More places:

- Two sub-areas: existing program and development of complementary pathways.
- The potential role of non-State actors should be stressed more, for instance on the private sector.
- There might be a role for non-State actors including NGOs to monitor.
- Pledges should include non-State actors, private sector, NGOs and host countries.
- On key actions, agreed to engage with countries to expand their programs but also matching contributions for employment schemes for instance.
- On complementary pathways, it would be good to make sure that barriers are identified but addressed too.
- Looking at good practices. Long term plan with the 3-year strategy.
- Refugees should be involved in the network column. Can we have refugees that work on pathways programmes?
- On the pathway discussion, it might be helpful to breakdown the pathway into employment, education for instance.
- On family reunification, this is very challenging for States but would be useful if some Member States can say that they are working on family reunification.

Discussion:

Norway:

- Norway is thinking about pledging under more places but there are limitations on multi-year commitments and the timing until the Forum might not be ideal for States.

- We need ambitions here. Need formulation of expected pledges that will be realistic so the bar is not put too high.
- Complementary pathways are temporary in nature, so what happens when it ends and refugees cannot return? Safeguard and legal measures ensure there is a second step?

UNHCR:

- States limitations are understandable.

Group restitution on 3: Better protection quality:

- Discussion of the Spotlight session. Content can be focused on 1) Which areas of focus should we have for this spotlight event and 2) Do the areas presented in the draft concept reflect those areas of focus?
- Format can be focused on how we can make the session more interactive.
- During the last meeting, we agreed to have two spotlight sessions, one on complementary pathway and resettlement and one on voluntary repatriation and/or local solutions, local integration.
- We have a lot to learn on complementary pathways, we could have a State that has been implementing a complementary pathway, why it has done it and how.
- In the spirit of the multi-stakeholder approach, important to highlight some of the partnership to expand complementary pathways and resettlement. What are the advantages to be a diverse group to expand resettlement and complementary pathways?
- Importance of cities and municipalities.
- The spotlight session should inspire participants and focus on how we can galvanize support for the 3-year strategy.

Discussion:

RefugePoint:

- One concept is the idea of refugee self-reliance, where does it fit? In the side event, or the spotlight session?

Pakistan:

- Pakistan draws attention on prevention and addressing displacement root causes. UNHCR has a mandate to advocate in that regard and a space can be found under the Solutions theme.

Danish Refugee Council:

- Would like to see a spotlight session on increasing refugee participation, how can it be done?

UNHCR:

- Great idea to include refugee self-reliance and think to link it with Jobs and Livelihoods.

- UNHCR is facing operational and referral mechanism challenges for refugees participation, UNHCR will have to improve capacities of partners.

Discussion on voluntary repatriation (Volrep), reintegration, local integration and local solutions

See the matrix planning.

UNHCR

The five key outcomes are:

- 1. Promote enabling conditions for voluntary and dignified repatriation and return,
- 2. Support countries of origin to receive and reintegrate returnees,
- 3. Support returning refugees and IDPs,
- 4. Promote laws and policies enabling local integration and local solutions,
- 5. Support local integration and local solutions initiatives.

Danish Refugee Council

- Difficulty to select one of the key outcomes for groups discussion, ideally it is a response with both capacity. Suggest merging key outcomes for the groups discussion as follows Group 1: 1,2,3 and Group 2: 4,5.

Indonesia

- Difficulty to select one of the outcomes too.

Algeria

- What is the meaning “political support”?

Egypt

- We shouldn't reinvent the wheel. AU has worked on post conflict resolution. Could we add this instrument? Acknowledge other existing ones.

International Council of Voluntary Agencies:

- It would bring added value to the work of the co-sponsorship group on Solutions and beyond the group, to define what we mean by Local Solutions. One suggestion would be to develop, through a multi-stakeholder approach, a paper similar to [UNHCR keys considerations on complementary pathway for admission of refugees to third countries](#), on what are the local solutions, what are the objectives and what are the protection safeguards, etc. Bring clarity can help mobilize pledges.

UNHCR:

- On key outcomes: 1 can still stand alone in one group, one group merge 2 and 3; and one group merge 4 and 5.
- On a paper on local solutions it is a valid point, something that we could reflect and include in some manner on 16 December.
- On political support, we leave Member States to create enabling conditions for refugees. Member States can help UNHCR to refine what should be done.

Group 1 restitution on:

- 1. Promote enabling conditions for voluntary and dignified repatriation and return.
- Overlap risk between Solutions and other thematic groups and difficulties to focus on area asking for pledges on Solution specifically versus pledges on Education, Energy and Infrastructure, Jobs and livelihoods that will contribute on questions around returns.
- We could have for instance jobs/skills or education initiatives specifically focused on returns, how those will be separate and no overlapping too much with Solutions?
- Attention to questions around Solutions and return, a sensitive topic, quite difficult to move forward and it is not like other topic like (e.g. Education).
- A sense to be more specific and delegations can explain what solutions are, what voluntary repatriation are, etc.
- Reference or lack of reference to legal definition. Updating guidance, refugees should be aware and informed about voluntary repatriation.
- Who can support on that? We need to reach out to countries of origin who are absent of this room, the group needs to know what their needs are.
- More work has to be done on what we want in the group and what we can feasibly attain.
- In terms of key dates in the planning matrix, there a lot of key dates to add notably reference have to be made to the 2019 African Union theme.
- Voluntary repatriation is linked with Arrangements for burden- and responsibility-sharing theme, peace actors. Political, security, technical elements to consider too.
- Suggestion to be more specific and look at the GCR itself.
- Need to make linkage with examples, e.g. Afghan solutions, Nairobi Declaration, etc.
- Measuring progress, there is another work stream to measure the GCR itself, in line with the four objectives of the GCR.

Danish Refugee Council:

- Experiences from the past on voluntary repatriation can help to bring the discussion forward. Experience in Somalia and the integration of IDPs for instance.

International Council of Voluntary Agencies:

- How to engage countries and regions which are not present? It would be good to have a strategy. Africa and Latin America for example are absent today.
- ICVA is interested in helping to see the publication of the revised handbook on voluntary repatriation happen. ICVA could, for example, co-organize a workshop around this. The guidance would be very useful for the Forum and after the Forum.

Group 2 restitution on:

- 2.Support countries of origin to receive and reintegrate returnees,
- 3.Support returning refugees and internally displaced persons.

- There were concerns on how we can stay on solutions without stranding in other areas; how we will be able to work on Solutions while we see overlaps/links with Jobs and livelihoods and the other themes.
- The group wondered what is meant by 'political support'. Mentioned in the matrix under 1. and 2. but not 3. Under 2., it is probably structure for government transition, how political structure should be shaped to organize solutions, etc.
- Looking at cooperation in general with capacity building, development peace building.
- For the key outcome 1. Enabling conditions for voluntary and dignified repatriation and return, the group is not sure if it fit in key outcome 2. and 3.
- Key pledges sought: lot of possibilities to resolve land disputes, reconstruction, etc. Reconstruction not just physical but also for reintegration.
- In terms of network, we are looking at the revised handbook on voluntary repatriation, useful guide. It would help having a structured discussion.
- We observe a lack of consultation with refugees. They should be involved from the start. Talked about role of diaspora, beyond remittances, for investments, etc.

Act alliance:

- For the next meeting, it would be useful to identify some specific return situations, current or previous, what has been done well and what can be replicated.

Group 3 restitution on:

- 4.Promote laws and policies enabling local integration and local solutions,
- 5.Support local integration and local solutions initiatives.
- On key pledges: pledges are good but need for more targeted pledges:
 - We are looking for pledges that will link with refugee qualification, pledges around training civil servants on asylum legislation, health consideration, NGOs could help in bringing the capacity.
 - Pledges should look at out-of-camp and refugee rights to work, developing new financing mechanisms linked with the Poverty Alleviation Coalition active in Jordan, Colombia and Cameroon to lift refugees out of poverty, within the local communities.
 - Pledges linking with refugee voices: actors working on Solutions could involve refugees.
 - Pledges on access to bank accounts, credits linked with other co-sponsorship groups. There is a need for coherence.
 - We should not forget the role of Sports and link with International Olympic Committee for instance.
- Need for developed multi-stakeholder's strategy, packaging all together with costed plan, getting inspiration of Uganda experience in Education.
- In terms of promoting law and policies, peer-to-peer support could be great.
- Actions: need to target specific actors, based on actions and on evidence.
- Think about outreach for selection of actors, who and how to do that and work in coherence with other co-sponsor groups.
- Actions could target States, refugees and host communities, development actors.

- Looking at States which already adopted new laws, there could be champions and advise others. Also sub-national actors that are playing a key role in local solutions and local integration could be targeted. Mentioning again the role of sport and financial actors too.
- Events to add is IGAD's event in September; the African Union 2019 theme, especially November meetings, MIRPS planned in Mexico soon, a multi-stakeholder event in November in Brazil, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) summit event in September – including refugees in the SDGs.

UN Habitat:

- Peer-to-peer dialogue at national level for local solution is crucial.
- Local authorities need to be focused on the out-of-camp idea.
- We need social cohesion projects which include communities.
- Urban planners could be used to promote housing solutions, enabling environment for economic development, etc.

Algeria:

- The group found overlap and it could be useful to refine it maybe.

Asia Pacific Refugee Right Network:

- Wonderful to hear about meaningful participation of refugees.
- What we didn't hear is the mention of age, gender and diversity (AGD) engagement through the whole process. There have been rich interventions around AGD, encourage to think around the pledges with AGD.
- Looking at multi-year pledging when it is possible, engaging new actors, new messaging, we are focused on December but we have to think on 2023.
- Discussion about challenges linked to overlaps between co-sponsorship groups: important to think in terms of constructive dynamics and linkages, mutually beneficial approaches rather than in terms of competing overlaps.

International Council of Voluntary Agencies:

- To repeat again, ICVA will be happy to help better define what are local solutions, organizing an event and/or working on a similar paper to the key considerations on complementary pathways will be useful for the pledges.
- On the events, there will be an ExCom side-event on (re)integration as the basis of Solutions.
- Agree on the necessity to find constructive/positive linkages between groups.

Highlight on spotlight sessions

UNHCR:

See the spotlight session template shared by UNHCR for:

- Spotlight 1 on voluntary repatriation on 18 December.
- Spotlight 2 on local solutions and local integration on 16 December.



Best practices to share in terms of reintegration, for instance provide info to IDPs and refugees or having a State who provide best practices of IDPs and refugees getting access to property.

Do you have idea of other thematic of focus?

Algeria:

- In trying to have a clear picture on what the spotlight will look like, it would be great to have a simulation of that. We want moderation, find something around that before we reach the Forum.

Norwegian Refugee Council:

- There is a room to put the spotlight on complex challenges, barriers that people face to repatriate voluntarily, how people overcome barriers and have access to services.

Act alliance:

- There are lot of topics, consideration of the time and the format.

International Council of Voluntary Agencies:

- Glad to see that IDPs are considered in the discussion. ICVA also wonders whether this group could consider stateless people. Is there a scope for statelessness to be considered in this group, maybe with the understanding that the Ibelong Campaign is about ending statelessness, so about bringing the ultimate solution?

UNHCR:

- At this stage preference to keep the group focused on IDPs, refugees, and returnees.
- There will be a High-Level segment on statelessness at ExCom.

Discussion:

[Unidentified speaker:]

- On the basis of what we discussed on the spotlight sessions, what do you consider would be the appropriate framing of the discussion of the High-Level session?
- Linked to this and considering the time available (30 minutes), what should be the two or three areas of focus we want to highlight during the session?
- How can we ensure the session prevent a comprehensive and non-siloed approach to Solutions given the diverse sub-themes we have? What should the format of the session be?

Egypt:

- Can you elaborate on what is a “Café style” discussion?

UNHCR:

- “Café style” are discussion around tables.
- We are open to other suggestions.

International Council of Voluntary Agencies:

- Would there be a possibility to better highlight of the Solutions architecture. How complementary pathways can lead to durable solution for example? Would there be room for discussion on e.g. a regional scheme or broader level with country who will come with pledges on local integration for refugees after completing complementary pathways?

Algeria:

- Ted talks format will be useful.
- At the Forum, there will be officials, refugees, with different views and language, a right balanced should be respected.

Conclusion from UNHCR:

- Proposal for next steps:
 - We will update the matrix, particularly on voluntary repatriation, local solution and integration since it benefited from less years of experience than the one on third country solutions.
 - This group will aim to speak on voluntary repatriation and local integration beyond standards setting, charting a way forward.
 - At regional level we have very examples, for instance IGAD, Nairobi Declaration, Solution Strategy for Afghans. SSAR has included commitments and pledges. Other examples in ECOWAS, etc. In other places it was more linked to comprehensive responses.
 - We need some countries to share experiences. 1-3 large refugee situations, providing examples, maybe at our next meeting.
 - Need to ensure complementarities, not overlaps.
 - Engaging country of origin and development actors, ensuring complementarity with Jobs and livelihoods, Education, Burden- and responsibility-sharing groups.
 - Dates are missing in Africa, Asia, Latin America: help UNHCR to update the key dates.
 - Further explaining need on the challenges faced in displaced situations.
 - We will share the summary of the meeting and updated material and please come back with any comments.
 - Voices of refugees and refugees as co-sponsor is key to consider.
 - UNHCR is ready for bilateral meeting, make sure it is concrete and tangible.

International Council of Voluntary Agencies:

- Deadline for the spotlight session is 30 September, so it might useful to meet before the end of September, around mid-September.

UNHCR:

- Next meeting: mid-September notably to discuss specific experiences with solutions that could link to spotlights sessions.

Norwegian Refugee Council:

- We should try to reach out the countries of origin if they can bring their ideas through presentations. Good way to reach out those absent in the room.



UNHCR:

- There is also the importance of engaging new and emerging RST countries. Their experiences can inspire others on 3rd country solutions.

Denmark:

- Appreciate the AGD mention. This is an important dimension.

International Council of Voluntary Agencies:

- FYI, a number of NGOs have produced a two pages [AGD tip sheet](#).

Canada:

- Appreciate gender considerations.