**Forced Migration Working Group**

ICVA’s Conference Room, 26-28 Avenue Giuseppe-Motta
14 March 2019 (15:00-16:30)

**Participants:** APRRN (online); Buddhist Tzu Chi (online); Christian Aid (online); ICMC; IDMC; INTERSOS (online); IRC; Japan Platform; Oxfam; Paso Libre (online); Plan International (online); Save the Children.

**Agenda:**
- Discussion on GCM (Stephane of ICMC and Christian of ACT Alliance will provide inputs)
- Discussion on GCR / GRF, particularly work ahead of the first Preparatory meeting
- Discussion on an NGO letter to ERC on the High-Level Panel on IDPs
- AoB including a debrief on UNHCR Standing Committee

1. **Discussion on GCM**

**Overview by ICMC and ACT Alliance**
- GCM implementation process is much less clear and more complex than GCR. At national and regional levels, we have little idea what is going on. GCM does not define regional mechanisms.
- Level of engagement eventually depends on the countries. Some countries have signed GCM knowing they will not be serious about implementation. Other countries are serious but there are no funds, for example, Philippines. GCM implementation will require upgrading government capacity to respond. There are very few countries where there is a national implementation plan.
- At the international level, there is less urgency than GCR. The International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) is only due in 2022. Co-facilitators for the IMRF are Spain and Bangladesh. President of the UN GA appointed the two countries to look at the formula for the IMRF. They are organising consultations to define the best formula for the IMRF.
- The position of the civil society is that the IMRF needs to be interactive.
- Believe that the formula should be close to what happened in the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). Although need to be cautious that we do not end up separating civil society from Member States.
- There was a meeting between the two co-facilitators and the civil society. Found them engaged and open to proposals from civil society. But at this stage nothing is emerging about the formula of the IMRF.
- GFMD meeting this year will be held in Quito and will be focusing on GCM implementation. GFMD sees itself as making an important contribution to GCM implementation. The fact that there is a GFMD every year would be good to keep States in check.

**Structures related to GCM**
- IMRF is comparable to the Global Refugee Forum. It is an intergovernmental body tasked with following up on the implementation of GCM. The UN Migration Network, on the contrary, is an internal UN mechanism to coordinate the work of UN agencies on migration.
• Will have to evolve mechanisms to channel inputs to the UN Migration Network. Civil society needs to come up with ideas to do that. Advocated for civil society to be represented in each working group.
• Current ToR mentions that civil society can be invited at the discretion of the Chair.
• The UN Migration Network feels under pressure to deliver concrete results. That means their focus is on smaller six-months to two-year projects. So, some of the discussions should be around putting markers so we have both short and long pieces of work.
• Another issue that will come up is around funding, particularly how the Trust Fund will be used. Some pledges have been made (a group of 15 countries came forward). But need to be careful that funds are solicited for all GCM objectives. There are attempts to basket issues based on GCM objectives, so that each basket receives a similar funding amount.

Trust Fund
• The Trust Fund is contemplated by the GCM and is meant to be a start-up fund to provide support to governments to implement the GCM. Since governments will have new tasks and responsibilities and developing countries will not have the resources required to implemented these, there is a start-up fund. It is like a classical UN Trust Fund. Project proposals can be made by UN agencies and NGOs can act as implementing agencies but cannot apply directly for funds.
• The goal will be to have three million dollars for each basket for the first year. In awarding those funds, because of restrictions around UN fund, it needs to involve more than one UN agency as well as other stakeholders.
• Could UNHCR access the Trust Fund with a view to funding activities in line with the GCR?
• A Committee is reviewing the disbursement modality, but it has to be in line with the ten guiding principles of the GCM. So, for UNHCR to be able to access the Trust Fund, it will need to link to mixed situations or complementary pathways.

Role of Action Committee
• Is the Action Committee still organising and coordinating joint NGO advocacy around GCM?
• Action Committee brings together a number of NGOs around GCM and has some legitimacy. It is very informal and does not speak on behalf of the whole civil society.
• Currently reflecting on various models to facilitate civil society work on GCM. A light structure is emerging to facilitate the work of civil society and will give voice to the various groups. On migration, civil society is not ready for a strong civil society Secretariat yet.
• For the Action Committee, it is a transition process this year, and the remit of the work is changing. Now it is focusing on a long-term timeline and how it can more effectively facilitate NGO participation and involve NGOs not in Geneva in working groups.
• That said, Action Committee should still be the place where NGOs can get information related to GCM.
• ICVA and ICMC are co-conveners of the Action Committee.

Civil society meeting (04 April)
• On 4 April, there will be a meeting between the IOM DG and civil society at the UN Migration on Network’s Secretariat. It is open to all civil society and in this context with so many NGOs it might be difficult to have a structured dialogue. The Secretariat was not keen on having a preselection.
• As to the format of the meeting, there is an open invitation, with a restriction of 110 places. But there will be call-in facility. Civil society will get a draft to comment on the structure of the meeting.
• The Action Committee is preparing a joint proposal for the UN Migration Network and other NGOs will also be contributing.
• On the outcome of the April 4 meeting, what would be a good outcome for civil society?
• Would be good to get a message that this is not only a meeting but part of a process to institutionalise the GCM. Would also be useful to get timelines for defining working groups.
• There will be a period and following that will have a better idea of which parts are moving, on which civil society can give ideas.
• Next FMWG could have an update on this. Could have that in the agenda next time.

Pledging template for IMRF
• Are there talks about developing a pledging template for IMRF?
• Two weeks ago, made the proposal to have a template. Suggested it would be interesting to explore the pledging system of the GCR as a way to engage governments.
• In GCM, States made clear they do not want to have any structure for follow-up. So, how do you get States to acknowledge that there is a problem. Believe that the pledging system could be great. Following the suggestion, the co-facilitators said they have taken note.

Regional implementation of compact
• Civil society needs to focus on national and regional implementation. Not a lot of thinking has gone into it, so scope for inputs.
• This is a grey area at the moment and where there is scope for inputs. In Latin America, civil society is the most logically organised and would recommend NGOs in Latin America to try to already have some initial discussions with regional mechanisms and take initiative.
• Mexico has taken an integrated approach to implement the two compacts together. There is a big regional initiative to leverage funding for Central America. The new government is very determined to go forward with that.

360 approach to compact implementation
• Apart from efforts to try to have a 360 approach on the Trust Fund, are there are any other mechanisms to maintain the 360 approach on GCM to keep a more balanced view?
• GFMD is a place where migration can be discussed in an open and transparent way; all other mechanisms relate to the SDG agenda. One of the objectives of SDG 10.7 is directly related to migration and if you link it to all development goals, this is a place where you can have a 360 approach.
• The World Health Assembly is also having a discussion on migration. There is a fight if we use the GCM language or not. Need to think of the not so usual spaces to discuss migration where civil society could be positioning itself.
• Ten years ago, only ten UN agencies had an interest on migration. Today, there are at least 36. At the same time, three UN food agencies based in Rome are having an interest in the interlinkages between food insecurity and displacement and this became a big part of their agenda. Trend is to see migration everywhere and important to capitalise on it.
• Since the GCM text was agreed and there was a media campaign with some countries pulling out, even those countries who signed on to the GCM are starting to have
reservations. In this regard, a bit concerned that in Geneva there is no institutional space where GCM is being talked about.

- IOM Dialogue and the Human Rights Council are not focusing on GCM this year because of all kinds of political dynamics. The Platform for Disaster Displacement is having problems with Australia. Need to keep engaging with interlocutors to identify spaces in order to keep the discussions on GCM alive.
- Civil society can try to help shape demands on GCM. How do we become propositional so there is a base level of support that can be build up on GCM?

2. **Update on GCR (ICVA overview)**

**Factsheets**
- UNHCR indicated that they plan on issuing GCR thematic factsheets (e.g. GCR and statelessness; GCR and IDPs; GCR and climate change, etc.).
- ICVA asked whether and how NGO inputs may be integrated in those factsheets. It seems the idea had not really been considered.
- However, the door is not necessarily closed. Should NGOs wish to contribute to specific factsheets or suggest themes for factsheets, suggest NGOs either get in touch with UNHCR usual thematic focal points; or make use of the contact details indicated on para. 9 of the [Roadmap towards the Global Refugee Forum](#).
- Do not hesitate to contact ICVA should you think ICVA can be of assistance in this perspective. Note that time is short, as UNHCR’s plan is apparently to start issuing factsheets in about 2 months (see ICVA notes on the 4 March meeting).

**Written contributions for GRF preparatory meetings**
- On 4 March, UNHCR also indicated the possibility of submitting written contributions for the GRF preparatory meetings.
- We asked whether last year’s modalities apply and were told that, so far, the idea is not to upload written submission online.
- Those would be purely intended to share information/ideas bilaterally with UNHCR.
- As such, written contributions might not be approached through a public advocacy perspective. Should you wish to submit written contributions, those can be sent to: hqgrf@unhcr.org

**MIRPS/solidarity conference**
- At the Standing Committee last week, during a side event on the CRRF in Central America (MIRPS), UNHCR and Mexico’s delegate (currently chairing the MIRPS) announced their intention of holding a Solidarity Conference for the MIRPS countries to raise attention and responsibility-sharing needs.
- The plan (TBC) would be for a Solidarity Conference in Geneva, a day before the GRF in December. The Solidarity Conference might lead to the creation of a “Friends of the MIRPS” group.

**Next meeting with UNHCR**
- ICVA is in contact with UNHCR for a second meeting with Ms. Perveen Ali in mid-April, which should coincide with the release of the pledging template/guidance. Dates to be fixed keeping in mind the Easter Break.
At the same time, UNHCR will also hold meetings with States, by regional groups (as they did on indicators 2 weeks ago).

Workstreams
- ICVA has not received more clarity on UNHCR’s workstreams on the GCR.
- However, gather that part of the long list (over 20) seems to be linked to the fact that those also encompass internal adjustments within UNHCR seen as necessary to implement the GCR (how divisions approach the GCR, etc.).
- There are also a number of workstreams associated to engagement with each actor (governments; private sector; NGOs; FBOs, etc.), and workstreams around concrete GCR arrangements (RST strategy, ACGS, indicators and measuring the impact of hosting refugees, responsibility-sharing arrangements, including GRF, Support Platforms, etc.).
- There also seems to be thematic workstreams (probably linked to the thematic factsheets).
- Do not have clarity on focal points, but it seems that those are relatively easy to guess most of the time (e.g. RST unit for the strategy; RSD unit for the ACGS; etc.).
- The workstream with the least information so far seems to be the one on Support Platforms, although hear that UNHCR may share information in April-May on this.

Annual Consultations
- The third day of the Annual Consultations will be devoted to the GRF.
- During the third day, there will be an element of information provision, especially for NGOs not fully aware about GRF, but it also foresees an active approach towards facilitating collective reflection among NGOs on pledging. If the third day could set up momentum and dynamics towards collective work around a number of pledges, that would be useful.
- The Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement are also scheduled to take place just before the Annual Consultations.

Discussion

Themes for pledging
- During the previous meeting on the GRF, UNHCR put a focus on the list of themes. Their big priority was to select themes around which to structure the Forum. When will NGOs have the opportunity to provide feedback on those themes.
- The GRF preparatory meeting on 29 March as well as the one later in June would present opportunities in the official process. The meeting with GRF team that ICVA plans to organise could be another opportunity.
- Pledging template will be structured around GCR themes mentioned in the Annex of the Global Refugee Forum: Pledges and Contributions Preliminary Considerations document. NGOs interested in influencing the themes should get in touch with the GRF team.
- Sense was that they would still make some cut. It was as a first step in the joint advocacy effort pushing for important themes to get pledges. This could be highlighted in the joint NGO statement to be delivered at the first preparatory meeting.
- Pledging template will be all encompassing. There are two elements: how to better organise and compartmentalise the whole approach and there the approach was how we can have flagship themes that will be strong ones and are low hanging fruits. The second element was showcasing in order to increase responsibility sharing and pledges on that. This could be linked to the idea of champions.
• Don’t think UNHCR is looking at champions for each of what we have in the Annex but TBC.

Format of GRF
• How can we avoid the Forum turning into a classical exercise where everything is pre-cooked and inject a lack of predictability? As NGOs can we influence the outcome of the agenda? The Forum appears more like the 50th anniversary of the Refugee Convention.
• The GRF is indeed modelled on 2011 Inter-Ministerial Conference. And predictability is the objective of the Compact and is geared towards pre-cooking.
• How can we influence the process? The official process to influence is the preparatory meetings. But NGOs should also try to influence outside of Geneva.
• Other complexity is that you have those broad themes when you talk about pledges at the global level, but pledges will also have to take into consideration national and regional aspects; currently there is no process for that.
• Encourage NGOs to get in touch with UNHCR’s regional offices to establish the kind of conversations we have here, and influence UNHCR thinking on pledges and gaps. This would then shake up the tree in Geneva.
• Two days is not a lot of time for a Forum of this magnitude and the fact that this is Ministerial level does not help matters.
• Can we move towards a format where you have different formats for interaction? What is the consideration being given to side-events at the GRF? In a state-managed environment, where one group of States talk to civil society, not sure we will get much.
• Having in mind that the GRF needs to be a Ministerial level Forum with multi-stakeholder participation, GFMD model may not be best as civil society and States discuss on different days. If we go for a model that separates the two, NGOs may not be in favour of that.
• If we are making pledges and contributions, then we have more legitimacy to be part of the follow-up process.
• Another way is to reinforce that NGOs have been supporting the Compact, but at the same time, come back on the protection dimension by trying to push for protection dividends and thus challenge the status quo and the smooth riding UNHCR is hoping to get.
• In addition to the suggestion to reach out to UNHCR offices, would be useful to contact UNHCR thematic and sectorial departments like health and education and involve them in the discussion. Some focal points not fully up to speed with regard to the pledging process.
• Child protection person on UNHCR is actively engaged on child rights so need to put them in the loop and think of pledges together.
• Thinking about education, we had this big high-level UNGA event with several stakeholders to present the Global Plan for Education. This is the kind of mapping we need from the sector to fill gaps. How can we reactivate that plan and match it to the pledging format? In an ideal world, we would like to have gap analysis in each refugee situation. Would it be NGOs role to show that at the Forum?
• See the format of the GRF as the High Commissioner’s Protection Dialogue with a mix of interventions where civil society will have value in showcasing good practices. Showcasing will be added value.
• Pledges will be pre-cooked. There won’t be any surprises. The new thing will be showcasing.
• If we are serious about the multi-stakeholder approach, NGOs will have to make pledges. This could be technical and policy pledges. The Annual Consultations could be useful to
show UNHCR what kind of pledges NGOs are planning. It would be useful if NGOs at the Annual Consultations can say we are ready to do that and invite others to work together. There will be six months to build momentum.

- UNHCR is still considering various possibilities for contributions to the GRF. Identification of gaps is necessary but have heard also from UNHCR that they don’t want States to come with a shopping list. UNHCR wants States to come and make pledges. This can be an opportunity for NGOs to show the way.
- Need to also think about the realm of possibilities here. Pledges can be financial and can be in partnership with other NGOs. It could also be a group of NGOs pledging to develop advocacy to call for support for specific country or refugee situation.
- Need to show what NGOs can do. For example, if Norway is coming with a pledge for teacher training, how can we match their pledge. There is a need to think about how to organise that once we are clear about the structure of the pledges.
- One way to approach the Forum would be to convene donors before the GRF. That’s a way to convince donors to contribute.

3. NGO letter on High Level Panel on IDPs

- Idea is to revive the interest in the High-Level Panel on IDPs. A letter was sent to the SG by several States last June but since then nothing much has moved. Christian Aid and other actors are thinking of acting to revive the process.
- Met with Norway and discussed the idea of the High-Level Panel, and Norway indicated that it could be useful to write to Mark Lowcock in order to bring momentum.
- A draft letter has been developed, and now asking NGOs if they want to sign on to it. NGOs interested in signing on to the letter can contact Ruth Jackson from Christian Aid rjackson@christian-aid.org. Deadline for sign on is next Thursday.
- Letter is high level and is about lending support to the idea of the Panel.
- This can then open the door to more public action. Letter is high level and is about lending support to the idea of it and then we will delve into details.
- Do we have some intel if the message needs to change? Wondering if the letter should be accompanied with other communication measures. Are we changing our strategy and what are we expecting this letter to change?
- It is about lending our support to the initiative and demonstrate to Mark Lowcock that there is interest. The idea is to give momentum to organising the High-Level Panel.
- There is a separate discussion if there needs to be public messaging. First, the idea is to write to Lowcock and see at a later stage if there is need to have a vocal campaign.

4. AOB

- ICVA is often asked how useful and impactful the NGO statements are. Received email from OCHA requiring clarification about the IDP point in the NGO statement on GCR for the March Standing Committee.
- Message in quotes: “From the OCHA side, we were keen to better understand the following point made in relation to IDPs: “NGOs continue to regret that the Compact does not sufficiently consider IDPs, although many of its provisions are consistent with IDP responses and can be applied in those contexts.”
- “Was this meant to refer to the approach (inclusive, comprehensive, whole of society) and principles set out in the compact being equally relevant to preventing, responding to and resolving internal displacement or is it with regard to coordination structures, and
application of the CRRF to IDP situations? We’d clearly be concerned with the latter. It would be helpful to know what the thinking was”.

- There were a number of reasons not to include IDPs in the GCR. CRRF is operational and definitely where you have mixed situations you cannot differentiate the response.
- CRRF in most countries comes with a CRRF secretariat. This would challenge OCHA’s coordination role. And this comes at a moment when UNHCR is saying that the Compact can apply to IDPs as well. These are turf wars.
- CRRF at the beginning was detached from IDPs but with the Somalia case, it was clear that IDPs were also involved.
- CRRF will now be implemented in all large-scale refugee situations. Don’t know how this will quickly translate on the ground.
- Also, something about the spirit of the GCR. This is relevant in IDP context. Should it lead to a discussion with OCHOA, would NGOs be interested?

**SCOM**
- Was there an announcement during the SCOM that Ms. Kelly Clements will go to Uganda?
- ICVA will share notes from SCOM including on regionalisation, GCR and reactions on partnerships.