



## Forced Migration Working Group

Online

26 January 2021 (11:00-12:30)

**Participants:** Act for Peace, Asia Pacific Refugees Rights Network, Church World Services, Good Neighbors International, Lutheran World Federation, International Catholic Migration Commission, International Rescue Committee, INTERSOS, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Médecins Sans Frontières, Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam, Plan international, RefugePoint, Save the children, Women's Refugee Commission, World Vision.

### Agenda:

1. **2021 Planning and priorities**
2. **Clarifications/exchanges on UNHCR-NGO consultations in 2021**
3. **Discussion on our collective approach to UNHCR governing bodies**

#### 1. 2021 Planning and priorities

- **Welcome your suggestions and priorities.**
- ICVA priorities (work of Jerome/Loise) in 2021: NGO statements coordinated at UNHCR's governing body, Standing and Executive Committees (dates shared with NGOs in the Events Agenda document).
- For the next Standing Committee, we suggest coordinating seven statements on *International protection and durable solutions in the context of a public health emergency; Regional update on Africa* (covering the three new Regional Bureaux in Africa: West and Central Africa; East and Horn of Africa; Southern Africa), *the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, MENA and Strategic partnership including coordination*.
- NGO Executive Committee side event organized by ICVA and NGOs. We will come back to it during the spring but start thinking on what we should focus on. We need to start thinking and preparing well ahead of time.
- ExCom Conclusion. Two agenda items to be worked on by States and UNHCR, the first one is on the *International protection and durable solution in the context of a public health emergency* and the second one is on *Mental health and psychological support*. Our understanding is that the first will be the focus of this year and the second one will be the focus in 2022. ICVA's usual work is to ensure a space and engagement that allows for NGO inputs. As a State-led process, it is dependent on the ExCom Rapporteur, this year: Gregor Schotten, German mission in Geneva. We will see how this ExCom Rapporteur will engage with the NGO community for inputs. We will have a discussion with UNHCR on the topic.
- We anticipate several meetings with UNHCR leadership and NGOs.
- At global level, there will be no UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations this year, partly due to a decision from UNHCR to alternate to global and regional consultations. In 2021, there will be Regional Consultations organized by each Regional Bureau.
- At global level, the Annual Consultation is replaced by UNHCR-NGOs monthly consultations that will happen ten times this year.
- We had several tasks disrupted due to the pandemic last year, the work related to the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Global Refugee Forum (GRF). We made a [two-year pledge](#) which is linked with our project with OSF and we have planned to issue papers, organize workshops around the themes of those papers and related to the GCR implementation. The publication and workshops are not yet done, we need to deliver and focus on it this year.



- Tied with the mid-term review of the GRF in Geneva (c.f. [virtual consultation](#) tomorrow on the roadmap and proposed orientations for the GCR indicators report).
- Very little space for additional activities then, so we will need to use time strategically. One option is to start again working on the High-Level Panel (HLP).
- We plan to continue to organize a few NGO meetings with Member States. It is appreciated from both sides, we will try to do it in a planned manner, relying on your suggestions. One follow-up could be with the NGO briefing on IDP camps' closure in Iraq. We are in discussion with NGOs involved last year to see if there is a need for a follow-up meeting.
- A discussion with the U.S. mission in Geneva could take place too, around the new administration, what dynamics can start. We will keep you informed.
- We will continue engagement with the WB-UNHCR Joint Data Center *inter alia* related to the Advisory Group and see if we engage with other actors, e.g., InterAction.
- We will have an exchange on the Nansen Award, each year the UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award honours individuals, groups and organisations who go above and beyond the call of duty to protect displaced population, on 9 February at 11:00am with ICVA, Norway Mission and UNHCR. This will also be an opportunity to exchange on priorities and expectations for 2021 with the Norway Mission. The conversation with Norway could cover GCR/GRF implementation leading to the mid-term review in December; the HLP and IDPs, COVID-19 pandemic, etc. You are very much welcome.

#### **INTERSOS**

- Vaccination issues are one of our priority. Displaced population are one of the most vulnerable group. Should we develop advocacy to UNHCR on this issue?

#### **ICVA**

- We suggest contacting our colleague Jeremy Wellard, Head of Humanitarian Coordination as the topic is dealt with at ICVA in relation to IASC.
- Agree that the vaccination issue will be a priority this year, the question is the value-added to involve Forced Migration area without duplicating work.
- One approach we can have is with our approach to UNHCR, in relation to its governing bodies and the monthly consultations.
- UNHCR is also not the only actor we can engage with. We could also go deeper on what we can focus on as FMWG, without duplication of what ICVA colleagues do.
- Another important topic of this year in addition to the above comment is access to territory and the right to seek asylum.

#### **Lutheran World Federation**

- Have we received the workplan on the HLP? Wondering if the vaccination issue could be related to their workplan.

#### **ICVA**

- We have not yet received the workplan. In November we had a meeting with the HLP, and George mentioned the Panel wants to add COVID-19 to their work, so it must be featured in the workplan. We can re-share December note. [[HLP workplan released since then](#)]

#### **International Rescue Committee**

- Our priorities are first to look at advocacy during and post-COVID-19, we are concerned that not a lot of lessons have been learned, e.g., about funding reaching the implementing partners. We would like to seize opportunities to push on strong reforms on funding. The



main forum to do that is the Grand Bargain. June 2021 is the five years of the Grand Bargain and the end of its original mandate. We are hearing that some UN agencies would like to put it down. We are trying to push, if it ends, that the most transformative workstreams of the Grand Bargain which are localization and quality financing are taking forward. **Let me know if you want to contribute to this discussion.** Time is for political decisions and not only technical work.

- Second, accountability and transparency. We hope to come up with a shadow report on the GCR and GRF pledges. We will concentrate on some countries: Horn and East of Africa where we have more capacity than elsewhere, **if you are interested in joining efforts or covering another region, let me know.** It is important to present an alternative work because there is not a lot of transparency, there is a second CRRF report that has been circulated to States and not to NGOs. We are concerned that upcoming events will be cosmetics. Plus, GRF Indicator Report will be out at the mid-term review in December 2021, meaning we will not have it before the launch.

#### ICVA

- The main avenue related to the Grand Bargain will be the Humanitarian Financing Working Group. The connection with our work might be through NGO statements at the StandCom with an agenda item in September on funding.
- **On Forced Migration, if you have ideas and want to develop it, in a collaborative way, the FMWG is the space, ideas could be developed with members, with us.**
- We encourage you to share any webinar/reports or any other material/events you would like that we spread to the members or to NGOs broadly.

#### International Catholic Migration Commission

- Have you seen the GCR Indicator report and what are your thoughts?

#### International Rescue Committee

- The Indicator report should be launched at the mid-term review in December. So, we might miss all the work in the lead up to the mid-term review. We may wonder how deliberate this is, to minimize criticism from NGOs?
- From colleagues in the field, no one knows about the CRRF, civil society is not included in national coordination mechanism. The GCR is not making a major impact on the ground.

#### ICVA

- Tomorrow's virtual consultation is an opportunity to ask questions regarding the indicators report and express collectively that it will be good to have a timeline.

#### Save the children

- Save the Children's priority will be to follow/influence where possible the High-Level Officials' meeting, with a focus on education.
2. **Clarifications/exchanges on UNHCR-NGO consultations in 2021**
- The focus of the Consultations this year will be at regional levels. Each Bureau will organize consultations this year, sometimes with ICVA colleagues in regions. At Geneva level, we will not be involved in the collaboration and the development of the regional consultations.
  - We will however be involved in efforts to try to ensure there is coherence between the regional consultations and then with the global level. Not having a top-down approach, regions should come with the focus. Although the process and participation are not yet



defined at regional levels, in 2022, the Annual Consultation will be linked and informed by the regional consultations.

- There should be a reporting from the regional consultations at ExCom in October 2021. Not yet defined how this will be done.
- The regional consultations may address one or two topics jointly. There is a process to select the themes at regional levels and a survey should have been shared to get NGOs' sense of the focus.
- In relation to the regional consultations, our (Jerome/Loise) role at global level is only to help in the circulation of information to NGOs and work on a connection with the Annual Consultations.
- On UNHCR-NGOs monthly consultations, it re-starts tomorrow on climate action topic. What the UNHCR's Framework on Climate Action is, how can NGOs engaged, what collaboration can be developed. One follow-up will be to transfer the conversation to a more practical and regional level, linked with the regional action plans of the Framework.
- The concept is based on [the weekly consultations](#) of last year, but the focus would not be only on COVID-19. The idea is to have useful conversations anchored in the possibility of having follow-up actions, feed into a process, review a policy.
- The next meeting will be organized at the end of February with Filippo Grandi and Ignacio Packer with the objective to discuss our priorities in 2021. We will try to have a clear agenda and communicated in advance.
- One objective is to try to move away from the Q&A style with NGOs providing inputs.
- We keep flexibility with the themes, but we hope to share with you a list of themes.
- There will be a UNHCR webpage dedicated to UNHCR-NGOs monthly consultations with elements around participation, objectives and hopefully the themes in advance.
- We know the timing of the monthly consultations (starting at 2pm GVA time) is not ideal for the Americas and Asia regions but it is the least bad option. Having another time slot would either fully exclude one region or require doubling the sessions which is not possible.
- About participation and questions, we have noticed that UNHCR speakers, very frequently address the questions we raised in advance when registering and/or during their interventions/presentations. It is also a way to shape the discussion and the exchanges.
- There was an effort to synthesize the notes, starting from the last consultations in December (fewer sections, an executive summary, major points arising from speakers, from the discussion, follow-up on action points and the references made during the consultation).

#### **Oxfam**

- As you will not be involved in the NGO consultation process, could you please share your advice for INGOs to engage at the regional level?

#### **Islamic Relief Worldwide**

- Last year, we started engagement with UNHCR and Faith-Based Organization (FBO). A task force of FBOs is now in place, will be largely focused on themes, communicating around protection and welcoming the strangers.
- UNHCR Partnership and Coordination Section (PCS) was clear that FBOs are part of the regional consultation. They shared a list of UNHCR contacts that will lead the regional consultations. I will share to ICVA the list and you could re-share it to NGOs if UNHCR agrees.

#### **ICVA**

- PCS can help, advise the regional bureaus but do not have any influence on the regional consultations and cannot drive it.



- Regarding Oxfam's question, staff in the region will be involved. Sometimes staff in capitals have a regional portfolio. The issue might be that communication is not reaching the adequate staff.
- One aspect on the regional consultation is several consultations are not necessarily restricted to UNHCR and NGOs and it is more a whole-of-society approach.

#### **APRRN**

- I hope we, as a WG, might be able to ensure that NGOs are represented at the Geneva level - especially in the absence of the Annual Consultations. Without the Consultations, input to GVA will come filtered through regional bureaus. In order to maintain our direct line to GVA Policy makers, ensuring as much representation as possible will be important, even beyond the statements and submissions.

#### **Lutheran World Federation**

- We have not heard any news from colleagues at the country level on the regional consultations.
- Will Africa have three regional consultations?

#### **World Vision**

- There must be an overarching ToR, an overall concept note paper of the consultations, and accountability, that guides the UNCHR Consultation especially if there is ambition to link to 2022? Do we know who this sits with? It should surely outline the purpose of the Consultation for their own donors that have metrics to meet. Can NGOs work to influence this rather than much further downstream when we push for themes or one refugee on a panel with one week to go?

#### **ICVA**

- To APRRN: good point that we will relay. One answer is that the Monthly meetings will offer an opportunity to engage with Geneva/HQ level from the regions.
- We have worked with UNHCR Partnership Section on a quick guide with few parameters on the monthly consultations. We hope the information will be made available to you regarding objectives, approach, participation and a list of the themes. We are in at the stage to finalize it, waiting for PCS review, that could serve as a model for an overall concept note.
- The problem to develop an overall concept note is that there is no entity to do that, PCS will not do it. It is an element of fragmentation that NGOs were afraid of.
- In Africa, as far as we know, there will be three regional consultations.

#### **Lutheran World Federation**

- Since the decentralization, there have been very few instances when Bureaus have reached out to NGO partners so I can foresee the need for us to proactive in following this up to ensure NGO inputs are taken in especially in finalizing topics.

#### **AOB**

#### **ICVA**

- For agenda 3. Discussion on our collective approach to UNHCR governing bodies (e.g., Standing and Executive Committees), we will organize a separate meeting on the topic due to a lack of time.
- UNHCR 80<sup>th</sup> Standing Committee. There is a high number of statements because of the focus on the five regions in March StandCom. All agenda items are an opportunity, there is no obligation to cover everything, but it will be odd if not all the regions are covered. If some of



you or your colleagues based in regions would like to take the lead, it is welcome and important, it is a collective approach.

- Encourage you to complete the FMWG survey about the work we do on Forced Migration and try to understand better your engagement. The results will be shared at the next meeting.