



Exchange with UNHCR on the Global Refugee Forum High-Level Officials Meeting

11 March 2021

Speakers:

- Perveen Ali, Head, Global Compact on Refugees Coordination Team
- Nicolas Fasel, Senior Statistician, Global Compact on Refugees Coordination Team / Global Data Service
- Jérôme Elie, Head - Forced Migration, ICVA

Participants:

- About 50 NGO staff.

Agenda:

1. Opening intervention from UNHCR
2. Update on the roadmap to the High-Level Official's Meeting
3. Communications
4. Overview of the Indicators Framework process
5. Discussion of potential role for NGOs in the stocktaking process
6. Exchange

1. Opening intervention from UNHCR

- Slide 3: The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) has four key mechanisms for follow-up: 1) The Global Refugee Forums (GRF) held every four years; 2) An annual report that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees delivers to the General Assembly; 3) High-Level Officials Meeting (HLOM) every two years after every GRF; 4) The GCR indicator report, every two years. The first report will be launched in November 2021 ahead of the HLOM.
- Slides 4 & 5: The purpose of the HLOM is to take stock of progress and maintain momentum towards the achievement of the GCR objectives around easing pressure, enhancing self-reliance, expanding access to solutions and supporting conditions for voluntary repatriation. Taking stock is part of an ongoing process.
- Last year, there were events at regional levels, by co-sponsorship groups and quarterly updates around the implementation of pledges and initiatives.

2. Update on the roadmap to the High-Level Official's Meeting

- Stocktaking events will take place at regional, thematic, and stakeholder levels. Each Regional Bureau will organize regional stocktaking opportunities. The purpose of stocktaking events is to see how far we have come, where challenges are, in particular regarding the pandemic, and where we want to go.
- The HLOM (14-15 December) is planned to be in a hybrid format, in person at the CICG in Geneva and virtual.
- Slide 6: The main priorities for the year will be:
 - 1) advance the implementation of pledges: A lot has been made and a lot remains to be done, especially to implement pledges with an age, gender, and diversity (AGD) lens. We need to specify several pledges. Some pledges made by different actors were general, e.g. around Education or Financing but not specified or directed toward specific refugee situations. We need to analyze where those can be channeled to make a difference. Financial and policy pledges need to be matched; material and technical pledges also need to be implemented.



2) Broadening the base of support: We need to bring new actors to the table and push for additional funding, a particular challenge. We need to find new ways to secure funding. We also want to make sure national arrangements in place are strengthened and reinvigorated, and we can develop new ones, when possible. We want to encourage further engagement in the Support Platforms at regional level.

3) Identification of areas in need of further support. Those areas in need of further support will be the frame for the pledging guidance for the next GRF.

- Slide 7: There will be specific stocktaking opportunities throughout the year. We only have a preliminary agenda at this stage.
- On a regular basis, we will send an update to all the different stakeholders to update on the agenda worldwide and how to be engaged in different places.
- The [January virtual consultation](#) focused on the general approach to the HLOM and the indicators report.
- [NB: On 28 April, there will be an informal consultation on the proposed programme for the HLOM.]
- End of June, there will be a briefing on the preliminary outcomes of the stocktaking and pledges updates.
- October: second round of updates on pledges and at the end of October a briefing on the modalities and the programmes for the HLOM will take place.
- 14-15 December: HLOM. We are looking at how to structure the programmes and modalities, e.g., side events in the week leading up to the HLOM. Different options are on the table and we **welcome suggestions**¹.

3. Communications

- Slide 8: on communication. Good stories and examples shedding light on how the GCR makes a difference. We will share information on the [Digital Platform](#). **We welcome your stories and good practices**, e.g. if you have content of pledges fulfilled that could make a good source of communication, share it with us.
- We also want to identify mobilization opportunities around stocktaking events, conferences, and webinars. We are maintaining an internal calendar of events. Please **inform the GRF team if you are planning an event. We could think of how we can work together to amplify information.**
- We want to collect and share information about progress. **We encourage NGOs to update on progress on the dashboard, wherever possible.** We will share regular updates through external newsletters, to build interest and more understanding. If you have ideas of stories or news or other information, please contact us.

4. Overview of the Indicators Framework process

- Slide 9: GCR indicators report's objectives are to measure progress under the four GCR objectives. This should help us measure and identify directions of additional pledges for the next GRF.
- The [GCR indicators framework](#) was published in July 2019 after a series of consultations with different stakeholders. The framework is the backbone of the report.
- Slide 10: complementing the framework with other relevant indicators and data is possible.
- In terms of timeline, 2016 to 2021 is the timeframe we will consider.

¹ To do so, please contact the GRF Coordination Team at: hqgrf@unhcr.org



- The primary objective of the indicators report is also to provide country analysis. There will also be more analysis on country operations.
- The report will also provide guidance, recommendations based on the evidence, the data to analyze.
- Slide 11: several indicators relate to ODA. It is the first time a comprehensive survey on identifying the resources provided to refugees and host communities is happening and relates to a pledge made at the GRF. The survey is on a voluntary basis.
- Work still needs to be done to clarify the methodology for those indicators.
- Data collection for those indicators is ongoing. We hope to have most of the data available during the first half of the year. **Any suggestions are welcome.** Interest in complementary data; analysis of available data produced are welcome. The framework would be revisited as the work progresses, and we will see the gaps and the need for additional indicators after the release of the first report.

5. Discussion of potential role for NGOs in the stocktaking process

- Slide 12: ideas suggested are at the level of brainstorming and **we welcome suggestions.**
 - Participation in regional and thematic stocktaking events:
At this stage, too early to provide a list or calendar but important idea is to flag that there will be regional and thematic stocktaking events.
In this perspective it means for NGOs:
 - Being proactive and engaging with UNHCR Bureaus in regions.
 - Organize your own events among NGOs and with other actors and communicating around it, e.g. APRRN and APNOR organized an [event](#) last week, ICVA and INTERSOS organized [a webinar](#) on INTERSOS fulfilled pledge. Those events are important to flag and see how cooperation can happen.
 - Sharing information about your initiatives, with the UNHCR GRF Team. ICVA can help share information on the stocktaking events that are going to be organized.
 - Integrating stocktaking in UNHCR-NGO consultations? A question mark here as this is more related to the regional consultations:
 - The process of defining themes for regional consultations is ongoing, you might have seen surveys. So, we cannot say those will be platforms for stocktaking exercises though there may be discussions on GRF but not necessarily mentioned as a stocktaking event.
 - At global level, around the middle of the year, we plan to organize one of the Monthly NGO Consultations to focus on the HLOM, with objectives of giving more information about the process and opportunities in the lead up of the HLOM.
 - Standalone event to identify key recommendations for the HLOM outcome documents?
We are thinking about ways to have NGO recommendations feed into the HLOM outcome document, on a model similar to the link we had last year between the Annual Consultations and the HC Dialogue. We are also in very initial discussions with the Partnership and Coordination Service to organize a meeting in the fall, which could serve to capture such recommendations.
 - Specifying and implementing pledges: The meeting we are planning with the Partnership and Coordination Service in the fall should also be an opportunity to:
 - discuss/showcase how NGO pledges are being fulfilled;
 - work around bringing clarity to pledges that are broad and general as a way to help in the implementation, possibly around matching. **Happy to get your thoughts on this and on other mechanisms to help specifying and implementing NGO pledges.**



- Mapping opportunities for matching NGO pledges with policy pledges: Matching is an important ongoing task. UNHCR has invested a lot of work into this since 2019.
 - With the reminder invite, we included a [matching infographics](#) that provides details about the aims and process of matching.
 - It would be useful to **get your thoughts on how to include NGO pledges into this matching exercise**, what can be the role of NGOs here and in particular, **how NGOs pledges could be matched with policy pledges**. ICVA could help this thinking through. For example, expertise of NGOs on asylum capacity could be matched with policy pledges around asylum. It might require that we develop an analysis of policy pledges.
- Updating on pledge progress through the dashboard:
 - Straightforward but important point as it is part of accountability. There will be calls to update on the status of pledges that will be available on the dashboard. In relation with the dashboard, we advise to have a look regularly because there is often updated information that could be useful for your engagement, broadly and in relation to the HLOM.
- Sharing ideas for multi-stakeholder engagement in the HLOM to achieve specific outcomes:
 - There is an interest in hearing ideas from NGOs about the HLOM meeting itself or the dates before, **your thoughts about modalities, how it might be organized**. This may be based on previous experience, e.g. how the GRF was organized in 2019 and the various modalities used, such as the Speakers Corners.

6. Exchange

Uganda INGO Forum

- Thank you for identifying these opportunities for engagement. Has the possibility of holding an NGO/civil society side event (even if virtual) to the HLOM been considered or discussed?

Women's Refugee Commission

- Glad to hear that AGD is considered to be taken into consideration with the pledges implementation, to hear there is a space for an AGD stocktaking event and glad to engage.
- UNHCR does not have a Senior Gender Advisor, still of great concern and hope to see a substitute and see how gender is being taken forward.
- When might we be able to see the GRF review done by the external consultant? Several lessons learned would apply to the HLOM.
- Could we find ways to modify pledges? Even though we did a lot of advocacy around AGD ahead of the GRF, it would be great for the next update for the pledges to start tracking pledges related to AGD but currently it is very difficult.

European Network on Statelessness

- Statelessness needs more attention, and it does not fit clearly with the indicators report. It would be good to know ideas on modalities to assess progress and make sure it is integrated in stocktaking events.
- At the HLOM, will there be opportunities for new pledges – in particular from Asia and MENA regions that did not make too many pledges on statelessness in 2019?
- Beyond the HLOM, we would like to see statelessness more integrated in future work.
- Appreciate the idea of having a series of virtual side events before the HLOM.
- Is it expected that thematic stocktaking will be done globally/regionally or a combination of both?



UNHCR

- To WRC, we would like to mainstream the AGD approach, we tried to focus on it in the lead-up of the GRF, but we need something that signals it more clearly and prominently. We are considering a way to update the submission form of a pledge, so pledging entities can indicate directly how they are taking AGD considerations into account. There is also an internal AGD analysis that has been done of the existing pledges. It is a timely opportunity to take stock how those pledges being implemented and where we might be able to advance on some of them.
- The lessons learned exercise paper from the external consultant is [available online](#) and primarily focused on preparations for the next GRF. One potentially relevant point is that the GRF in 2019 was a mobilization exercise, with new stakeholders to the table to make it inclusive and in doing so the strategic direction was challenging to manage but we have a solid base of stakeholders and have an opportunity to advance towards strategic outcomes.
- We are looking at different formats for the HLOM to reach the three outcomes around broadening the base of support, implementation of pledges and addressing gaps in the future, e.g. we could have specific panel events, spotlights focused on thematic areas, or highlight on a different thematic area.
- We appreciate the suggestion for having a dedicated civil society event in the fall where the recommendations coming out could feed into the HLOM.
- On statelessness, it needs to be integrated into the HLOM and a stocktaking event in the third quarter of this year is in preparation, but the dates and the format are TBC.
- On the virtual side events in advance of the HLOM, it is probably the most realistic approach. 14-15 December are Tuesday and Wednesday so we can also consider having a series of events on Monday 13 December.

Oxfam

- A side event on local civil society organizations' GCR contributions could be a useful idea.

Act Alliance

- Could we get additional information on the whole matching mechanism. It will be good to get a better sense before December on how to improve the matching and what matching has or has not happened already.
- On the stocktaking events, what would be a good format to ensure we have a stocktaking not only looking at indicators and what comes out from the different themes but that gives us opportunities for political discussions, one of the main impetus. The aim of the GRF was to generate more political will. There was a lot of visibility and yet some of the trickier political issues suffered a bit from that. Wondering whether it would be possible to make sure that during the preparatory process and/or during the meeting itself there could be some space to have open discussions between stakeholders?

Danish Refugee Council

- We emphasize the need to ensure meaningful participation of refugee-led organizations, both in consultations and at the HLOM itself. We would be happy to discuss further and support as applicable.

International Rescue Committee

- On the timeline for the release of the indicators report: at the last consultation in January, it was announced around December, which might be too late. We would need a few weeks to



digest the learning from the indicators report. Could you also clarify the timeline for the release of this gap analysis mentioned in January to understand where there might still be unmet needs that GRF pledges could address?

- Could you clarify what is happening with the impact measurement exercise? I understand from the World Bank that the exercise has stalled for now.
- The original GCR indicators document says that the Joint Data Center would contribute to providing access to data, especially refugee data and national surveys. Do you have any additional information on the role that the JDC is playing in gathering and analyzing data for the GCR indicators report?

UNHCR

- On ENS question, it is envisioned that the thematic stocktaking will happen at the global level, even if few dedicated stocktaking for specific themes might happen in regions.
- On matching, we had less than a year to prepare for the GRF in 2019 and it was not realistic to facilitate significant matching in advance. A number of key donors were at different phases of their budgetary cycles that did not correspond directly to the GRF and were not in a position to make very specific commitments. In the past year, we have worked hard with a number of key donors and prioritized our focus on matching financial and policy pledges where possible, we are currently working bilaterally with donor States and host country to bring them together.
- We identified 80 matches already because they were mutually reinforcing, were already specific to a particular country, theme, or in support of a particular policy. A lot of our work is around validating those matches and making progress.
- The next step is to look at other support pledged – beyond financial support as well as on the partnership side – to see how those could be matched at country level in support of those policy pledges. **It would be very good to have a brainstorm with NGOs on how this could happen. Our offices in the field could also help to facilitate those conversations.**
- On the analysis of where the gaps are, we will have two years in front of us until the next forum to secure a number of matches in advance. We will have the benefit of extra time to align some of the work with the budgetary cycles of financial donors for example.
- To match pledges, WRC mentioned we could use a mechanism or an approach to mainstream AGD or what's being used for the Asylum Capacity Support Group as suggested by ICVA. There are different ways to facilitate matching more concretely for pledging entities for the next forum.
- About stocktaking and having space for discussions with States, it is an important piece, and we have thematic stocktaking at the global level, hopefully this will be an opportunity and we would like the HLOM not only have a series of statements but also opportunities for dialogue and exchanges.
- On the meaningful participation of refugees, we have a whole taskforce within UNHCR working on how best to engage refugee-led organisations and refugees in our processes. We are in the process of **developing guidelines on refugee engagement in global processes and events**, and we are trying to involve refugees and refugee-led organizations in the stocktaking processes and at the HLOM. **We welcome ideas.**
- Indicators reports will be released every two years. The first report will be released on time for the HLOM this year.
- On the indicators and the JDC role, there is a very close collaboration between the World Bank and UNHCR on data on forced displacement and it is also contributing to the development of the implementation of GCR indicators framework. The focus is on the integration and the data collections on forced displacement by national statistical systems.



There is a special focus on national statistical offices, relevant for a number of GCR indicators especially those related to poverty.

International Rescue Committee

- Could we know what are the 80 pledges mentioned?

ICVA

- Is there a background analysis developed on matching pledges that can be shared with NGOs?

Good Neighbors International

- About the matching mechanism at national level, GNI has been engaged in its collective joint pledge with the Korean government but it is difficult to match the pledge because of the vagueness and very large commitment, which brings difficulty in follow-up. One of the core targets for the HLOM should be pushing government and NGOs to commit to their own pledges and it is very important to do that across the year so we can engage better.
- Which UNHCR focal points could we contact at country level to engage together with NGOs?

InterAction

- The NGO value add in this whole stocktaking process is our ability to ground progress and the extent to which the GCR, the pledges and the mechanisms have made a transformative impact on the daily lives of refugees. Good NGO examples at the GRF were NRC side event on MIRPS, Asylum Access side event on the Jordan Compact which included local civil society actors.
- Glad to hear UNHCR openness for NGOs dialogue vis-à-vis Member States.

Save the Children

- Would like to hear about the AGD mainstreaming which is important to assess as well.
- Encouraging matching pledges or its analysis is very useful indeed. Is there any analysis you can share with NGOs?
- On stocktaking events, the funding cycle is an issue, but we need to push more on political will and pledges that could be made.
- Few pledges were made on child protection. We recently had UNHCR support through an event from the Initiative on Child Rights. We hear the constraints of not calling for new pledges at the HLOM but is there scope for new pledges or not?
- Hope to continue to build on refugee meaningful participation for the HLOM.

ECRE

- Is there a mechanism to monitor the implementation of pledges rather than self-reporting mechanism?

UNHCR

- On advancing pledges implementation at domestic level, the best is to provide you with the name of the GRF focal point in our office at country level: **reach out to UNHCR GRF Team.**
- On new pledges, we are certainly not discouraging new pledges, and recently we have received 15 new pledges from 5 different stakeholders including States, but this year, we need to make sure we make progress on the commitments made. We have 1400 pledges, including those made at the statelessness segment that needs follow-up and the majority of those still needs to be fully implemented.



- Part of this stocktaking is also to identify where the gaps are, and child protection is certainly one of the gaps. The key recommendations for the HLOM could highlight such areas in need of more support.
- On pledges around refugee participation, we have had a few preliminary discussions on how we could advance, and we were thinking of having a meeting with those pledging entities that made specific pledges around refugee participation to see how they are implementing their pledge, where the challenges are, how we could support and facilitate that. **Welcome NGOs engagement on how we can potentially advance on that.**
- The mechanism to monitor pledges is the dashboard, we will also have the GCR indicators report, and the reports of the stocktaking sessions done at the thematic and regional levels will be made available on the website. Internally, we monitor the development of implementation of pledges in a more granular way.
- For the outcomes on making progress on pledges implementation, we encourage all pledging entities to make progress on implementing their GRF commitments in the lead-up to December.
- We are developing an infographic that will capture some of the key priorities for the High-Level Officials Meeting, and we will share it.
- In June, during the UNHCR briefing with all stakeholders to update on the preliminary outcomes of stocktaking, there will be opportunities to identify gaps that are emerging.
- It would be good to have a more **dedicated conversation around NGO pledges made that could support the implementation of host countries policy pledges**. We have a list of the key policy pledges made by host countries [*shared since then by ICVA by e-mail*], that might be a good starting point to see where some of the pledges that your organizations made could potentially align. Then we could have discussions on how best to facilitate the match that could happen at country level. If we could succeed in developing and identifying some matches this year, we could showcase those and give them visibility in the lead-up to the HLOM as well as at the meeting itself. It would demonstrate the whole of society approach and highlight the different roles that each stakeholder group can play in supporting the implementation of inclusive policies.
- A report on measuring the impact of hosting, protecting, and assisting refugees was recently finalised, with a focus on education. Echoed that data disaggregation by AGD is at the center of the work on indicators.

ICVA

- There is a lot to do in terms of follow-up and thinking of other conversations we should organize, e.g. having a dedicated discussion on matching.