

Thematic discussion five (15 November 2017): Issues that cut across all four substantive sections of the comprehensive refugee response, and overarching issues

Panel Two: How can we ensure a whole-of-society response to large movements of refugees and protracted situations? (13:00 – 15:00)

Panelist: Emmanuel Shangweli, Director TCRS, Tanzania.

Introduction:

Madam Co-Chair, Dear Panelists and participants,

The idea of a **'whole-of-society'** is a **key aspect** of the ongoing discussions on the Global Compact on Refugees; it is also at the center of the New York Declaration

The New York Declaration calls for a **global collective responsibility** in addressing large movements of refugees, **multi-stakeholder approaches, dialogues, and alliances.**

- ⇒ Essentially, the New York Declaration tells us that innovative approaches to refugee response should be based on **partnership and cooperation**. One of the main premises is that refugee responses require **collective and concerted approaches among broader coalitions of actors to deliver on more sustainable, predictable responses** to refugee movements.
- ⇒ Tanzania has been a host to refugees and asylum seekers for over five decades, the first wave of refugees was from Rwanda in 1959. It was at that same year that, The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) a humanitarian and development diaconal arm of the church started the first Country Program in Africa after Europe and Palestine. That Program is known as TCRS and since then TCRS has responded and has been an implementing Partner of UNHCR through all refugee waves that followed, the latest been the April 2015 of Burundian Refugees.
- ⇒ TCRS represents other National NGO's responding to refugees in the Tanzania National Steering Committee; this presentation represents the views of National NGO's focusing on "whole-of-society" as a key aspect of the ongoing discussions on Global Compact on refugees.

We are delighted to share the following key points;

- (1) It is important to consult refugees and the communities that host refugees from the start to see how best to implement the various aspects of the CRRF. **ensure refugees and host communities have access to decision-making and become empowered as actors**: if we are to better respond to people's needs, we have to include them in the process, not at the end, but at all stages of the process
- (2) Equally important is to engage regional, district, and local authorities hosting refugees in the implementation of the CRRF in Tanzania. They are among the best placed to understand the refugee response, have had experiences of receiving refugees in the past and local authorities do know what are the challenges to be addressed in their own districts. In other words, we need to bring the CRRF to Regional and Districts i.e to Kibondo, Kakonko and Kigoma etc.
- (3) One of the main premises behind the CRRF is that the response to refugees requires a collective and concerted approach: what is being referred to as a "whole of society" approach. In the Tanzanian context it means bring none traditional actors who normally respond to refugee, like the Churches, Mosques, Women's groups, Tanzanian business companies, and academia to also respond and give advices, closely listening to the voices of refugees and their

host communities. But this way of working in Tanzania will require new ways of operating and thinking to be able to step outside of the usual humanitarian approaches to refugees. In addition we need to do a good mapping of the key stakeholders in Tanzania and find the ways to give them the opportunities to engage, if this is done well it will minimize confusions, complaints and will trigger faster, efficient and effective responses.

- (4) Getting the “whole of society” approach engaged in responding to refugees will need a significant investment of time and resources. We must create the incentives and finding the necessary arguments and leverage to local Tanzania citizens to see the benefits of hosting refugees.
- (5) Is inclusive of, not limited to UN refugee operational plans and funding appeal where it links National and local humanitarian and development plans and strategies, in other words, Refugees in the National development plans.
- (6) Invest in the resilience of refugees and local communities to address poverty and lessen Aid dependency.
- (7) Lastly but not least, We highly appreciate that UNHCR appreciates the contribution of FBO’s and local NGO’s and we urge UNHCR to continue her commitment of empowering local NGOs, give them the capacity, ability and space as local NGOs knows the local context very well, are rooted, and are cost efficient.

Thank you, merci.