

## 2021 UNHCR Annual Consultations with NGOs

### REGIONAL NGO CONSULTATIONS IN THE EAST, HORN OF AFRICA AND GREAT LAKES REGION

#### *Session on Operationalization of the Global Compact on Refugees, 29 June*

#### **Background note**

This year's UNHCR Regional Consultations with NGOs, organized by UNHCR Regional Bureau for the East, Horn of Africa and Great Lakes region in collaboration with ICVA, will focus on 'Localization of humanitarian action and engagement with communities in the COVID-19 context' as the cross-cutting theme.

The Regional NGO event will focus on three main areas:

- i) Localization
- ii) Operationalization of the Global Compact on Refugees, and
- iii) Climate Action

This background note outlines the objectives, structure and expected outcomes for the second day of the event, 29 June, of the Regional NGO Consultations. In the morning of the second day we will focus on the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and take stock on progress made by NGOs and organizations led by Refugees and other Persons of Concern on the implementation of pledges made at the 2019 Global Forum for Refugees (GRF). This review of the progress, challenges, and the areas to be reinforced will shape the substance and implementation of both current and future pledges, support, partnerships, and initiatives to strengthen international cooperation in refugee responses. This will assist translating the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) into concrete actions to improve the lives of refugees and the communities that host them.

Success under GCR is assessed in terms of progress towards the achievement of its four objectives, namely: (i) ease pressure on host countries; (ii) enhance refugee self-reliance; (iii) expand access to third-country solutions; and (iv) support conditions in the country of origin for return in safety and dignity. The GCR identifies Refugees and other Persons of Concern (PoC) as a key stakeholder group in recognition that comprehensive responses to forced displacement are most effective when they actively and meaningfully engage those they are intended to protect.

The main vehicles for follow-up and review under the GCR include the Global Refugee Forums (GRF) held every four years, High-Level Officials Meetings (HLOM) held two years after each GRF, the biennial GCR indicator report, and the High Commissioner's annual reporting to the General Assembly. The first GRF was held in 2019, and the first HLOM will take place on 14 and 15 December 2021 in a hybrid in-person/virtual format at the International Conference Centre (CICG) in Geneva.

The first [GRF in 2019](#) has generated more than 1,400 pledges and a number of initiatives (support platforms, clean energy challenge, national arrangements, asylum capacity support group, global academic interdisciplinary network, and 3-year strategy on resettlement and complementary pathways) from States and other stakeholders towards the GCR objectives. Some are already being implemented, while others will take more time, as they require legislative changes, the development of new instruments or additional resources to support their implementation.

## Objectives

As a key objective of this meeting we would like to give the NOGs the opportunity to take stock of their engagement and progress in implementing their pledges made at the GRF applicable to the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region (EHAGL). NGOs and PoC-led organizations are powerful agents of protection and change through their capacity to support local communities and fill service and assistance gaps.

The meeting will also focus on the forced displacement financing architecture in the region since the first GRF, using country case studies from Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. An interactive session, co-chaired with the [Regional Durable Solution Secretariat \(ReDSS\)](#), will present an opportunity for NGOs to showcase their progress, and share some of the challenges and opportunities vis-à-vis GRF pledges. The session will also contribute to the preparations of the High-Level Officials Meeting on the Global Compact on Refugees on 14 and 15 December 2021.

## Guiding Questions

- What are the main achievements of NGOs vis-à-vis the pledges made at the 2019 GRF?
- How can local NGOs and PoC-led organizations be further empowered to meaningfully engage in coordination mechanisms at local, national and international levels?
- How can NGOs support the capacity building of PoC-led organizations, as well as the development and implementation of pledges by organizations led by PoCs?
- What are the main challenges faced by NGOs in implementing pledges, and how can UNHCR support in addressing these effectively?
- What are the lessons-learned in engaging with and empowering refugees and other PoCs in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- How can the partnerships between UNHCR and NGOs be further strengthened to enhance effectiveness of humanitarian responses? What are the opportunities for joint advocacy?

## Structure

29 June 9.30-12.30 (with a 30 min break):

- **Setting the scene:** presentation of the progress achieved towards the operationalization of the GCR in the EHAGL region; overall progress regarding the implementation of the GRF pledges; High-Level Officials Meeting (UNHCR).
- **Presentation of ReDSS study:** Financing for solutions to displacement – re-thinking the forced displacement financing approach in the East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes region (ReDSS).

Coffee Break 10.45-11.00

## Consultations

- **Panel discussion:** Three NGOs will present progress made in vis-à-vis the implementation of GRF pledges. This will be followed by a facilitated discussion by ReDSS discussing some of the guiding questions (ReDSS and NGOs).
- **Consultations with participants:** we will discuss some of the guiding questions using online tools and an open group discussion (UNHCR).
- **Closing remarks:** to present the main outcomes of the sessions and set the way forward (UNHCR).

## Outcomes

The general outcomes of the day will be captured in the overall report on the NGO consultations, and should lead to an enhanced understanding by UNHCR of the support needs of NGOs on issues related to coordination, financing, and advocacy. In addition, session summaries will be prepared to allow for detailed, thematic-specific outcomes to be captured. Finally, a stocktaking report on NGO pledges will be prepared to collect and reflect the specific outcomes related to this day. This stocktaking report will inform the December 2021 High Level Official Meeting (HLOM) which will take place on 14 and 15 December 2021.