HIGH-LEVEL
OFFICIALS
MEETING

supported by

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Outcomes of the High-Level Officials Meeting
2021

Table of Contents

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO. *Joy and hope as Central Africans return home. © UNHCR/Adrienne Surprenant*

FOREWORD

by UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi

The first ever High-Level Officials Meeting (HLOM) was held under the shadow of a challenging global situation, punctuated by the fast-spreading COVID-19 pandemic, which forced a last-minute change from an in-person to a fully virtual meeting. It reflected the uncertainty of today's world, the lack of clarity on the future – even the near future – and a vulnerability that can affect us all.

Despite the pandemic, coupled with the challenges of conflict and the climate emergency that have driven record numbers of people from their homes, more than 1,500 senior government officials, refugees, private sector representatives, and other stakeholders participated in the meeting with positivity and, as described by the Swiss co-host, a 'can do attitude'. This demonstrated clearly that the extraordinary international commitment and support for refugees we saw at the

first Global Refugee Forum continues today. Fifty-eight new pledges were made at the HLOM, complementing the nearly 1,600 pledges already made in an effort to operationalise the Global Compact on Refugees. Similarly, a series of high-impact initiatives were announced on connected learning, innovative financing, private sector investment, and climate action.

All, however, is not perfect. Despite many extraordinary efforts made by many large host countries, the global protection environment remains deeply concerning. And while progress has been made in our collective response to refugee flows, the same cannot be said for mitigating the drivers of displacement. The climate crisis has intensified, and current conflicts continue to grow, while new conflicts have erupted. International cooperation and political solutions are needed today more than ever.

Yet they often seem further than ever from our reach and are punctuated by division, including in the Security Council. All the while, the number of the world's forcibly displaced has continued to grow at an alarming rate. The COVID-19 global pandemic has worsened already dire situations of the most vulnerable. As a result, socio-economic inequalities have widened to the detriment of people who have been displaced.

This underscores how much remains to be done to realise the vision we jointly agreed under the GCR. Participants at the HLOM emphasised that while many refugee hosting states are making bold, progressive policy shifts, international support to implement these in refugee and refugee hosting communities is lagging behind. As echoed by many, there is a need to diversify and broaden the base of support, foster synergies between humanitarian and development funding, and identify innovative approaches to financing for refugee situations. There were calls for greater engagement and cooperation between humanitarian, development, and peace actors to expand opportunities for voluntary return, and to support returnees in countries of origin as well as refugees and their communities in host countries. Many recognized that long-term investments will continue to be essential to the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts. Stakeholders were urged to redouble efforts to increase resettlement opportunities

and complementary pathways. Moreover, we heard how refugee self-reliance, through inclusion in national systems, has proven beneficial for both refugees and hosting communities. Sustained investment in inclusion remains crucial.

Advancing in these areas requires that the spirit of solidarity is sustained as we approach the next GRF in 2023. Driven by the lessons learned since the first GRF, and by the findings in the GCR indicator report, a series of informal consultations will be held to ensure that new pledges and commitments are needs-driven, additional, and quantifiable. The consultations will be guided by the twenty recommendations and proposed actions outlined within this document, reflecting inputs made by States and stakeholders throughout the last year.

The next GRF in 2023, is fast approaching, and it is clear that while much has been achieved, we must go even further and faster. I am confident that together, we can do this. The momentum we have built will pave the way to translating the commitments and ambitions of the global compact into concrete action in support of those we serve and those who generously host them.

Filippo Grandi
United Nations High Commissioner
for Refugees

Introduction

The first High-Level Officials Meeting (HLOM), mandated by the General Assembly through the GCR affirmed in 2018, was held on 14 and 15 December 2021 as part of the process of building a long-term framework for engagement of States and other actors in refugee situations. The event provided an opportunity for senior government officials and representatives of relevant stakeholder groups to take stock of progress and maintain the momentum towards achieving the objectives of the GCR to expand support, self-reliance, and solutions. Participants identified progress, challenges, and where further engagement is needed to increase support, self-reliance, and access to solutions for refugees and other persons of concern, taking into consideration the challenges posed by the pandemic. The HLOM was structured around three priorities: expanding support through responsibility sharing; advancing the implementation of pledges and initiatives; and identifying recommendations for the future. The preparatory process and the HLOM resulted in 20 key recommendations. These recommendations are further elaborated in the outcome document and will serve as the basis for preparations, planning, and eventual commitments for the next GRF in 2023.

Key Recommendations from the High-Level Officials Meeting

Cross-cutting recommendations

1 Implement current GRF pledges and develop new ones to address identified gaps and needs.

2 Enhance access to international protection.

3 Reduce statelessness.

4 Make better use of combined humanitarian, development, and peace capacities to achieve the GCR objectives.

5 Build attention to climate change into how we do business.

6 Facilitate more systematic, inclusive, and meaningful refugee participation.

7 Enhance the data available to support effective action and investment in refugee situations.

8 Strengthen private sector engagement in support of the GCR objectives.

GCR Objective 1: Ease pressure on host countries

9 Intensify efforts towards more equitable burden and responsibility sharing.

10 Increase development financing in support of refugee situations.

11 Provide more flexible, predictable, and multi-year funding for refugee responses.

GCR Objective 2: Enhance refugee self-reliance

12 Increase social inclusion for refugees.

13 Increase economic inclusion and access to livelihoods.

14 Expand access to quality primary, secondary, and higher education.

15 Provide refugees with healthcare through strengthened national systems.

GCR Objective 3: Expand access to third-country solutions

16 Increase the volume of resettlement opportunities for refugees.

17 Build additional complementary pathways to third-country solutions.

For detailed actions in support of these recommendations, please see **"Key recommendations and follow-up actions for the 2023 GRF"** in this document.

GCR Objective 4: Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity

18 Mobilise more resources in support of voluntary return.

19 Strengthen the planning and implementation of voluntary return.

20 Improve cooperation to address root causes and build peace in countries of origin.

BURUNDI. *Refugees return home from Rwanda.* © UNHCR/Will Swanson

Preparations for the High-Level Officials Meeting

In preparation for the HLOM, regional, thematic, and stakeholder stocktaking events and GRF pledge and GCR initiative updates were conducted throughout the year, and five global preparatory roundtables were convened towards the end of the year to bring the outcomes of these events to the global discussion. Over 1,800 participants took part in the five roundtables, which focused on the GCR indicator report, financing, partnerships, self-reliance, and solutions. Speakers and participants were asked to reflect on what has been achieved and what remains to be done. Each **roundtable** had an average of 300 participants connected online. The **GCR indicator report**, launched as part of the **first virtual preparatory roundtable** to help frame the subsequent ones, demonstrated that while tangible progress has been made towards the GCR objectives, significantly more equitable and predictable burden and responsibility sharing is needed both now and in the years to come.

Regional, Thematic, and Stakeholder Stock-taking

Stocktaking was conducted throughout the year identified both progress and the areas where more efforts are needed, particularly in light of the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Stocktaking was conducted either through standalone events or integrated into other events or processes. The stocktaking process revealed both progress and the extent of the challenges faced in pledge implementation. The challenges most consistently identified related to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 with education access having been delayed or paused, some commitments towards refugee jobs and training stalled, and voluntary repatriation, resettlement, and complementary pathways slowed down as a result of border restrictions and closures. Despite these challenges, many of the pledging entities adapted and innovated, demonstrating a continued spirit of international solidarity and the GCR in action.

As reported throughout the various stocktaking events, the pandemic has shown that it is essential to support **inclusion and self-reliance**. This has been facilitated through contributions from international financial institutions and development actors, **UN agencies**, **local authorities**, and refugees in the frontline response to the pandemic. The GRF pledges dashboard confirms that partners (the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisations (GAVI), Global Fund, UN Agencies) significantly stepped up the inclusion of refugees in the health response, including in country preparedness and response plans. The stocktaking highlighted progress in the implementation of pledges towards access to **education** and technology and connectivity to enhance learning.

In the area of **protection**, the stocktaking showed there was notable progress in the implementation of the pledges focused on **gender-based violence (GBV)**. Progress in **child protection** was made through legal reforms. More efforts are required to ensure that pledges are developed and implemented through an **age, gender, diversity** (AGD) approach. Progress was made towards resolving major situations of statelessness, such as by establishing Statelessness Determination Procedures (Chile, Colombia, Côte

d'Ivoire, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine) and adoption of national action plans (Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Georgia, Madagascar, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda). Enhanced financial support to many host countries that pledged in these areas will be critical to further progress. Building upon the high-level engagement by Member States and other actors on the **Three-year strategy on resettlement and complementary pathways,** there is a need for a clearer commitment to multi-year resettlement programming. There have been promising initiatives to improve access to **complementary pathways and family reunion** (labour mobility by Canada, Australia, and the UK), and more are needed from States to scale-up third country solutions in terms of admission numbers, eased administrative requirements, increased financial support, and enhanced support for community sponsorship.

Despite the constraints referenced by pledging entities in **Europe,** including the pandemic, procedural challenges, and delays in resettlement and other complementary pathways, several countries made significant headway in implementing their commitments towards reception, resettlement, other third-country solutions, and local integration, including Moldova, Belgium, Finland, and Italy. Notable improvements were made by Georgia, Switzerland, and Norway in national legislation on inclusion, asylum, or overall protection. Great strides were also made on the prevention and reduction of statelessness by Malta, North Macedonia, Portugal, Montenegro, Albania, and Bulgaria. Spain and Italy made significant advancements in the implementation of pledges towards community sponsorship and by way of a dedicated humanitarian corridor.

In **the Americas**, the stocktaking exercise found that despite the constraints identified, including political instability, changes in government leadership, and growing anti-refugee sentiments, countries made significant progress in implementing their commitments towards reception, resettlement, third-country solutions, and local integration, which is central to protection, including in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic.

For **the Asia Pacific,** notable progress was witnessed in improving overall protection and inclusion policies and laying the groundwork for more solutions opportunities, despite the outbreak of two major emergencies in the Afghanistan and Myanmar situations. Countries in the region progressed on their pledges towards the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus approach (Japan, Republic of Korea) and responsibility sharing, including under the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees Support Platform (SSAR). The Platform's Core Group – under the leadership of the European Union (EU), which extended its chairmanship role through 2022 – adjusted priorities in line with the new reality in Afghanistan, while continuing support for refugees in major hosting countries and investments towards eventual solutions. Multiple countries took action to prevent and reduce statelessness, including in relation to inclusive census process (Tajikistan, Turkmenistan), access to birth registration and statelessness determination (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan), and eventual access to naturalisation (Philippines). Despite border closures linked to the pandemic, countries made progress toward implementing pledges towards the Three-year strategy on resettlement and complementary pathways (Japan, Republic of Korea) and improving access to asylum through law and policy developments (Republic of Korea, Thailand).

In **Southern Africa**, several countries made headway in implementing their commitments to strengthen protection capacity – including in the areas of birth registration (Democratic Republic of Congo), statelessness (Democratic Republic of Congo, Namibia and Madagascar), shelter (Malawi), solutions (Zambia), energy and infrastructure (Zambia), and climate change (Mauritius).

For **the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes,** despite the constraints referenced by pledging entities, including the pandemic, connectivity issues, limited data, conflict, and political insecurity, several countries made important strides in pledge implementation. Somalia's adoption of a national durable solutions strategy is a clear demonstration of the kinds of comprehensive approaches to solutions needed in today's context. Notable progress was reported in inclusive policy pledges made by Djibouti, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda. While travel restrictions, lockdowns, and complex political climates hindered large-scale voluntary repatriation, it is notable that pledges for returns to Burundi, the Central African Republic, Cameroon, and Mali were nonetheless implemented or in progress.

For **West and Central Africa,** despite the constraints referenced by pledging entities, several countries reinforced their inclusion policies in the areas of health, education, livelihoods, social protection, protection, and solutions, including in Liberia, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, and Côte d'Ivoire.

For **the Middle East and North Africa,** a number of countries stepped up to provide refugees and persons in refugee-like situations with solutions in the area of education (Egypt), the same primary health care services, and protection through registration and documentation (Morocco), and a strong multi-stakeholder approach, particularly involving **NGOs**, cities, and academics, was used to advance protection and solutions in the region.

AMERICAS

Total number of pledges **239**

22% are fulfilled

52% are in progress

2021

33 new pledges

14% of new pledges globally

83% are updated

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Total number of pledges **70**

20% are fulfilled
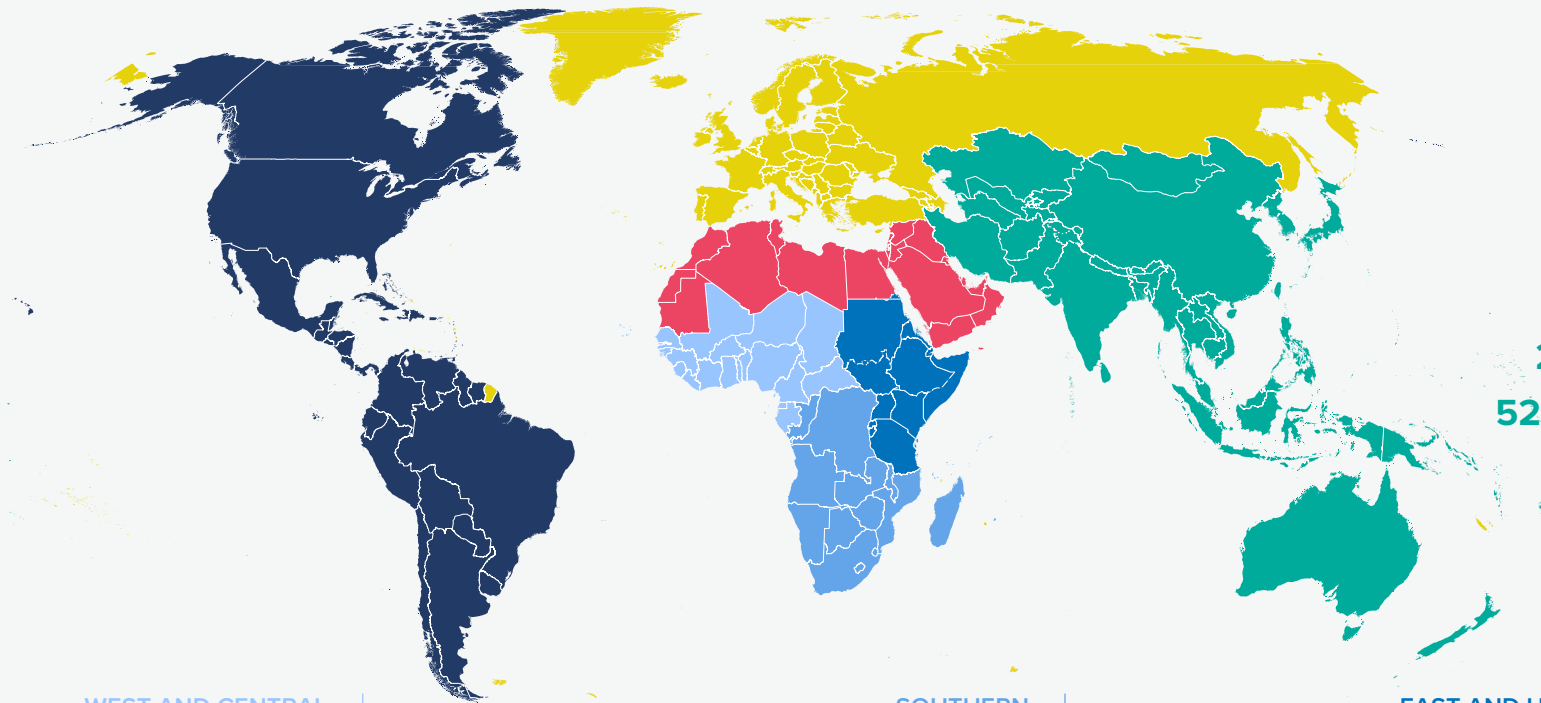
42% are in progress

2021

13 new pledges

6% of new pledges globally

60% are updated

EUROPE

Total number of pledges **465**

39% are fulfilled

53% are in progress

2021

115 new pledges

50% of new pledges globally

77% are updated

ASIA PACIFIC

Total number of pledges **130**

22% are fulfilled

52% are in progress

2021

13 new pledges

14% of new pledges globally

83% are updated

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Total number of pledges **146**

15% are fulfilled

27% are in progress

2021

19 new pledges

8% of new pledges globally

87% are updated

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Total number of pledges **152**

NO fulfilled pledges

17% are in progress

2021

15 new pledges

7% of new pledges globally

73% are updated

EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA AND GREAT LAKES

Total number of pledges **118**
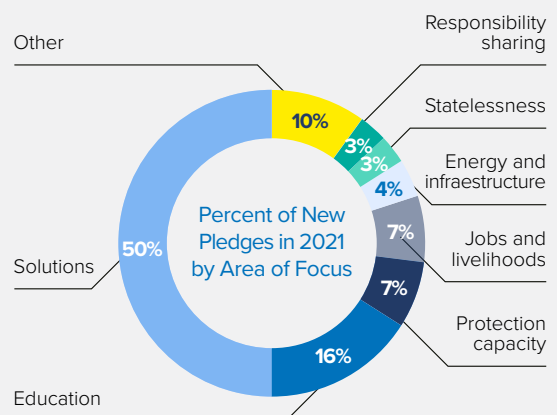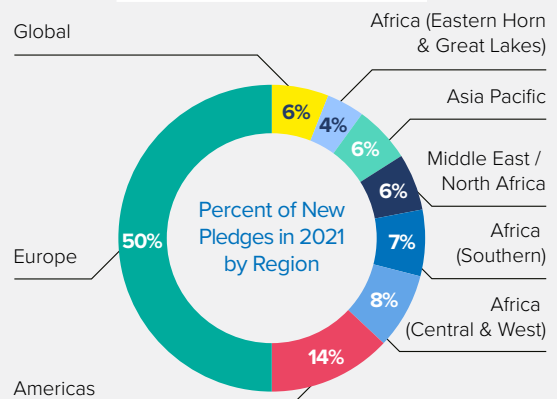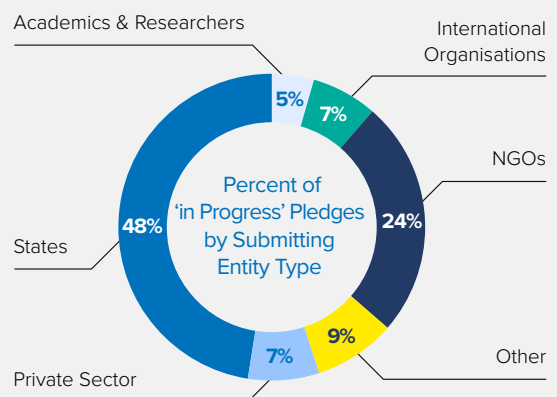
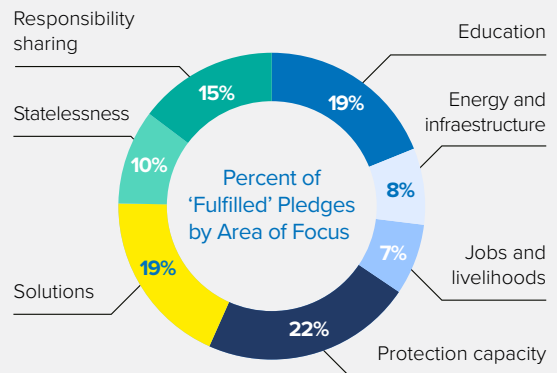**3%** are fulfilled

56% are in progress

2021

9 new pledges

4% of new pledges globally

70% are updated

Updates on GRF pledges

As of the end of 2021, UNHCR received updates on the implementation of 821 of the GRF pledges, 75 per cent of which were reported as in progress and 162 fulfilled. In addition, 231 new pledges were submitted through the **GRF pledges dashboard**. UNHCR also worked with government and other partners to facilitate matching, or the pairing host country policy pledges with pledges of financial, material, and technical support for their implementation. Matching can contribute to meaningful responsibility sharing and effective implementation of pledges. The stocktaking process and statements at the HLOM underscored a need for upscaled engagement by donor States and other partners to support matching.

The match between **Rwanda** and **Denmark** was among the first made after the 2019 GRF. Denmark made a financial pledge of USD 1.5 million to support the jobs and livelihoods project (tea plantation) pledge made by Rwanda to benefit 1,883 households, 728 of which are refugee households, over a three-year period. As GRF co-convenors leading by example, **Germany** provided financial and technical support to the energy pledge made by **Ethiopia**. Equally, through its Energy Solutions for Displacement Settings (ESDS) programme, Germany is supporting **Uganda**'s energy pledge to establish the Sustainable Energy Response Plan (SERP). Germany further matched **Turkey**'s education pledge to increase access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions for refugees and host community children. Through a EUR 3.1 million contribution to UNHCR, **Belgium** is supporting the pledges made by **Uganda** in the areas of WASH and health.

The **Asylum Capacity Support Group (ACSG)**, a GCR initiative, is a promising tool for **pledge matching** to improve the asylum systems of host countries. Matches made under the ACSG include: 1) **New Zealand** to enhance the country of origin information (COI) capacity in **the Philippines**; 2) the **European Asylum Support Office** (as of January 2022 known as the European Union Agency for Asylum) and **Niger** to develop a pilot bilateral cooperation to enhance asylum and reception capacity in Niger; 3) **France** and **Chad** to focus on the implementation of the new law on asylum in Chad and to strengthen its asylum capacity; 4) **France** to support **Niger** to reform its asylum framework and conduct a self-assessment of capacity gaps; 5) **Canada** to assist

Percent of 'Fulfilled' Pledges by Area of Focus

- Responsibility sharing: 15%
- Education: 19%
- Energy and infrastructure: 8%
- Jobs and livelihoods: 7%
- Protection capacity: 22%
- Solutions: 19%
- Statelessness: 10%

Percent of 'in Progress' Pledges by Submitting Entity Type

- Academics & Researchers: 5%
- International Organisations: 7%
- NGOs: 24%
- Other: 9%
- Private Sector: 7%
- States: 48%

Percent of New Pledges in 2021 by Region

- Global: 6%
- Africa (Eastern Horn & Great Lakes): 4%
- Asia Pacific: 6%
- Middle East / North Africa: 6%
- Africa (Southern): 7%
- Africa (Central & West): 8%
- Americas: 14%
- Europe: 50%

Percent of New Pledges in 2021 by Area of Focus

- Other: 10%
- Responsibility sharing: 3%
- Statelessness: 3%
- Energy and infrastructure: 4%
- Jobs and livelihoods: 7%
- Protection capacity: 7%
- Education: 16%
- Solutions: 50%

To date, UNHCR received updates on more than

820 pledges

Over ¾ of updates were made in 2021

75% of pledges are in progress

6% are in the planning stage

Almost **20% of pledges** reported - 162 pledges - have now been fulfilled since the Global Refugee Forum.

231 new pledges were received in 2021. Around **60% focused on Solutions** and **20% on Education**

Mexico in strengthening its ability to produce COI and registration capacity; and 6) **Denmark** to support **Kenya**'s asylum system with a DKK 10 million (USD 1.5 million) contribution.

Through the International Development Association (IDA) refugee sub-window/window for host communities and refugees, the **World Bank Group's (WB)** engagement aligns with **16 GRF pledges** made by the following host countries: **Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Djibouti, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, and Uganda** in various sectors, including education, health, social protection and jobs, social sustainability, and inclusion. This showed how many areas of cooperation to advance inclusive policy were already well underway as a part of the GCR process and functioned effectively, if not formally, as matches. More than 80 such examples of the alignment of GRF pledges made by governments and other stakeholders, which could function as matches, have been identified.

Progress on GCR Initiatives

Notable progress was made in operationalising the three **regional support platforms** launched at the first GRF to mobilise support. Support Platforms are an example of the GCR in action – key to facilitating greater solidarity and responsibility sharing through channelling and organising financial, political, and strategic support to host governments and countries of origin in an organised and coherent way. Lessons learned since their launch in 2019 show that it is essential that the Platforms focus on generating international support for concrete outcomes for refugees and host communities, which is critical to sustaining credibility as well as engagement from host countries, countries of origin, regional organisations, and a broad and active membership from across the international community. Another key learning is that the Platforms are most effective when they are flexible and focus on activities and actions at the country level that can drive change for returnees, refugees, and their hosts. This flexibility

and principled pragmatism have proven to be essential, especially in countries such as Afghanistan. A fourth Platform is envisaged to be launched to address the Central African Republic refugee situation.

The Clean Energy Challenge broadened the base of partners engaged in energy provision for refugees. Norway implemented its energy pledges. Germany extended its support for WASH and energy infrastructure, the Smart Communities Coalition for its Innovation Fund, and Uganda for progress on its sustainable energy plan. Under the initiative of the **Global Platform for Action (GPA) on Sustainable Energy in Displacement Settings**, UNITAR and UNHCR are coordinating efforts to concretise matching of energy pledges made by donors and development partners with host countries, including Chad, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda, and Zambia.

The Asylum Capacity Support Group (ACSG) facilitated important aforementioned matches focused on the revision of national asylum legal frameworks and setting up simplified asylum procedures (see **here**). Of the 50 State pledges in relation to developing or strengthening national asylum/refugee status determination (RSD) capacities, 11 are offers of support, pointing to the need for more State pledges offering support in this area.

The **Three-Year Strategy (2019-2021) on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways** translated the GCR's vision into a global plan for action to increase resettlement and complementary pathways spaces, expand the number of engaged countries and actors, and improve the availability and predictability of third-country solutions for refugees. While the Strategy constitutes a roadmap from 2019 to 2021, it will continue to provide a blueprint to advance third-country solutions beyond 2021 – aiming to reach 3 million refugees by the end of 2028. Multi-year planning and funding are critical to laying the groundwork to achieve this.

The **Global Academic Interdisciplinary Network (GAIN)** facilitated important progress on teaching, research, and academic solidarity with refugees. Key highlights of 2021

include the development of the **UNISTAR curriculum** for university staff to promote effective inclusion of refugees in their systems, the expansion of the **De Mello Chairs model** to the Dominican Republic and Ethiopia, and the collaboration with The World Academy of Sciences-UNESCO and Scholars at Risk to coordinate placement of Afghan refugee scholars and students outside of Afghanistan. GAIN also worked closely with the Local Engagement Refugee Research Network (LERRN) and International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM) to ensure meaningful participation of refugee scholars in research on forced displacement.

Preparatory Roundtables

A series of **five preparatory roundtables** was held in the lead-up to the HLOM, starting with the launch of the **Global Compact on Refugees Indicator report,** which provided the evidence base to frame the discussions at the subsequent roundtables and the HLOM. Despite challenges around data availability and quality, there was broad consensus that the GCR indicator report established a solid baseline and concrete benchmarks to inform follow-up to the GCR and pledging guidance for the next GRF. The session echoed that effective tracking of burden and responsibility sharing requires better capacitated and more inclusive data processes. Available data show pressing needs for greater burden and responsibility sharing through more flexible and predictable funding, opportunities for solutions, measures for the self-reliance of refugees and host communities, and better coordinated humanitarian and development programming.

Following the launch of the GCR indicator report, a virtual roundtable on **financing** for refugee situations was held. Despite an upward trend in financing for refugee-hosting countries with lower incomes, there was a consensus that more funding is necessary to address the growing needs associated with the rise in refugee populations, the proportion of refugees living in protracted situations, and the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a need to diversify and broaden the donor base and contributions; foster further synergies between humanitarian and development funding, actors, and interventions; strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships; scale up innovative approaches; and mainstream data collection and evidence on both financing for refugee situations and on self-reliance of refugees and host communities.

The virtual roundtable on **partnerships** explored the critical role of enhanced collaboration, through current and emerging multi-stakeholder partnerships, including innovative national and regional arrangements, towards greater responsibility sharing. The session reaffirmed the value of the whole-of-society approach, localisation, inclusion, and continued efforts, through new or strengthened partnerships, at enhancing self-reliance and protection, drawing upon examples from the private sector, sports organisations, the legal aid community, refugee-led organizations (RLOs), United Nations agencies, local authorities, States, and other actors.

The virtual roundtable on **self-reliance** reaffirmed the importance of inclusive approaches to education, livelihoods, and health, and exemplified tangible progress towards their implementation in several countries. Refugees are best placed to speak about their predicament, needs, and aspirations for the future, which must be considered in creating conditions for long-term peace. However, overall progress was slowed considerably by the pandemic. The GCR indicator report demonstrated that more international aid is needed to strengthen the self-reliance of refugees and host communities, as well as their access to vaccines against COVID-19. The roundtable further highlighted the importance of ensuring protection frameworks are in place to enable self-reliance. AGD considerations need to be mainstreamed in all relevant data, programming, and GRF pledge areas. Close to half of the refugee population are children, and there is a need to scale up birth registration, child protection, access to education, and other children's rights, including participation in decision-making affecting their lives.

The virtual roundtable on **solutions** highlighted that more collective efforts and actions are needed by States and other stakeholders to attain durable solutions for refugees in both new and protracted situations. The importance of the whole-of-society approach to finding solutions was underscored. More States were encouraged to demonstrate leadership and provide resettlement and complementary pathways. Access to third-country solutions needs to be improved through flexible arrangements as well as removing some of the procedural barriers in place to allow, for example, meaningful access to family reunification and other regular pathways. More predictable collaboration between humanitarian and development actors was urged to bring integrated development approaches to local integration as well as voluntary return and reintegration in countries of origin.
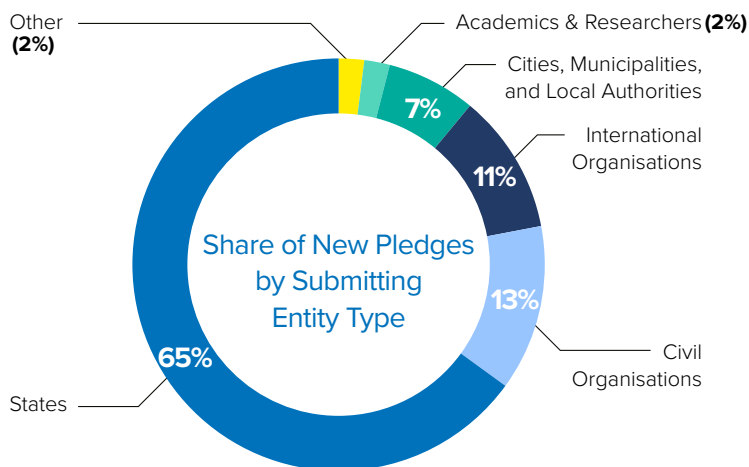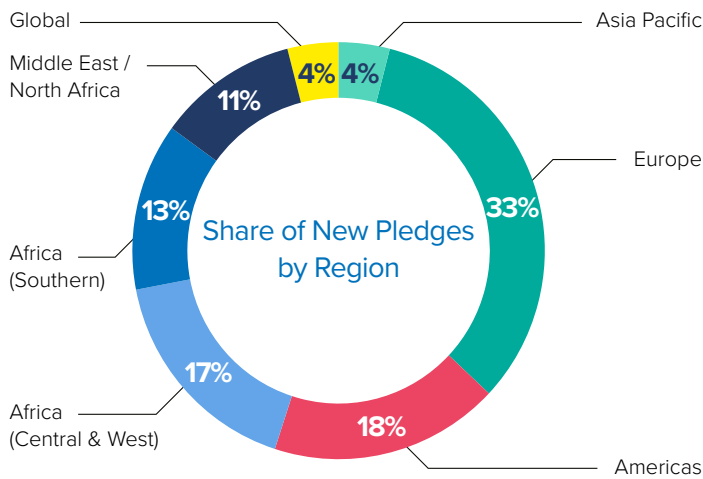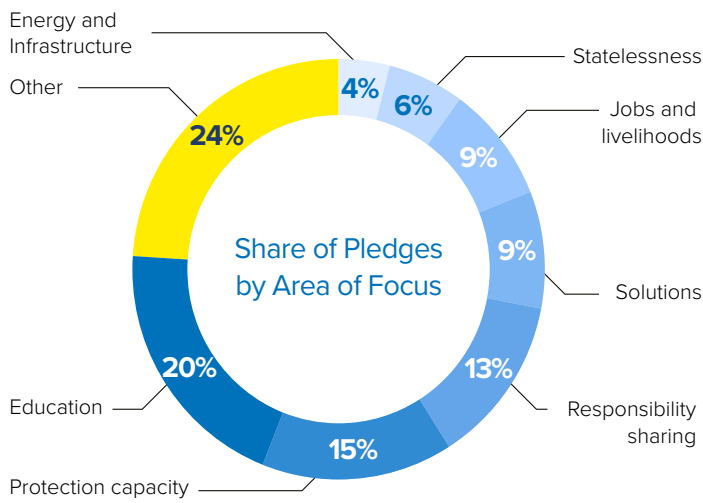
SWITZERLAND. *High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi chairs the High-Level Officials Meeting taking place virtually in Geneva on 14 and 15 December 2021. From left to right: H.E Ms. Shara Duncan Villalobos, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative of Costa Rica; H.E. Mr. Jürg Lauber, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Switzerland; Mr. Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees; Ms. Ellen Hansen, Head of Governance Service, UNHCR. © UNHCR/Mark Henley*

Overview of the High-Level Officials Meeting

The HLOM was held virtually and featured a series of panels, spotlight sessions, interventions by States and other stakeholders, and side events, culminating in a number of concrete **recommendations**. It attracted over **1,500 online participants**, including senior officials, private sector representatives, and other stakeholders. More than **130 refugees** were invited and made strong calls to increase the involvement of refugees in decision making that affects their lives and futures. Since the first 1,400 pledges announced at the first GRF in 2019, 231 new pledges were made, including **58 new pledges and initiatives** announced at the HLOM. In addition, some **350 of submissions of content** highlighting good practices, progress, and recommendations in relation to the GCR were included in the HLOM **virtual space**.

Share of Pledges by Area of Focus

- Energy and Infrastructure — 4%
- Statelessness — 6%
- Jobs and livelihoods — 9%
- Solutions — 9%
- Responsibility sharing — 13%
- Protection capacity — 15%
- Education — 20%
- Other — 24%

Share of New Pledges by Region

- Global — 4%
- Asia Pacific — 4%
- Middle East / North Africa — 11%
- Europe — 33%
- Africa (Southern) — 13%
- Africa (Central & West) — 17%
- Americas — 18%

Share of New Pledges by Submitting Entity Type

- Other (2%)
- Academics & Researchers (2%)
- Cities, Municipalities, and Local Authorities — 7%
- International Organisations — 11%
- Civil Organisations — 13%
- States — 65%

1,500
online participants

More than
130 refugees
were invited to participate

350
content submissions
on the HLOM virtual space

58 new pledges
announced at the HLOM

Panels

Three panels were convened focusing on key priorities for the HLOM. The first panel, "**Expanding support through responsibility sharing**", considered progress made towards broadening the engagement of States, the private sector, and development and other actors, which is critical to achieving the goals of the GCR. Panellists reflected upon how to bring more actors to the table, facilitate innovative approaches to partnership and solidarity, and leverage national and regional arrangements, such as the support platforms, to mobilise greater support and outcomes for refugees and host communities.

The second panel, "**Advancing the implementation of GCR pledges and initiatives**", explored specific examples of progress in implementing pledges and initiatives in key thematic areas and detailed how support could be further galvanised. The panel demonstrated significant and concrete progress in pledge implementation and a great commitment from partners to the objectives of the GCR. The importance of the HDP nexus and the need for increased financial support were mentioned by many of the panellists. Numerous examples of the HDP nexus in action were shared, such as UNDP's toolkit in Central America to assist the inclusion of refugees in local development plans and provide opportunities for more jobs, and the Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan in Response (3RP) platform co-led by UNHCR and UNDP.[1] Several actors now have a specific focus on forced displacement in their own strategies. Furthermore, Global Partnership for Education (GPE) COVID-19 response mobilised USD 500 million for education response plans that support refugees in Cameroon, Chad, and Kenya. The graduation approach to alleviating poverty was implemented in 46 countries and benefitted 45,000 people. The need to rebuild the global system to expand access to third-country solutions was highlighted, with aim of reaching 3 million refugees by the end of 2028. The United States of America committed to build back its resettlement capacity and infrastructure and focus on complementary pathways.

The final panel, "**Recommendations for the future**," identified where future action is needed to address challenges, gaps and opportunities, including through the further implementation of current pledges; the development of new pledges, including joint pledges, that could be announced at the next GRF; the cultivation of new partnerships and engaging new actors; and strengthened engagement in refugee situations. Recommendations were made with a particular focus on refugee and youth engagement, the private sector, and the need for upscaled international solidarity, in particular in support of hosting countries. To encourage the private sector to engage more effectively, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), through its joint initiative with UNHCR, works to design bespoke programmes that will bring out the strengths of private sector partners. Colombia called for enhanced international support to its commitment to protect and grant access to essential services for Venezuelans as a collective responsibility. There was a strong call for a whole-of-society approach, which unlocks the unique skills set and expertise of the various stakeholder groups with a focus on refugees, the private sector and hosting countries. In addition to engagement by a wide range of stakeholders, there was a strong call for complementarity of the interventions of the various groups. Given that new needs continue to emerge, commitment was reaffirmed to support efforts which help save lives and assist with protection, inclusion, resilience, and solutions for refugees. The EU affirmed its continued and increased commitment through asylum and 60,000 places for resettlement and humanitarian admission in 2021 and 2022, as well as through its target of 10 per cent of its nearly EUR 80 billion Global Europe Instrument (2021-2027) to be dedicated to asylum and migration, which will allow for bilateral support and the promotion of solutions through regional approaches.

Spotlight Sessions

During the HLOM, four spotlight sessions were held, starting with a session on **Support Platforms** on 14 December , which highlighted the progress made by the **three Platforms**. It demonstrated that solutions – the focus of the Support Platforms – require a combination of political engagement, financial support, and technical expertise. It further drew attention to the partnerships and collaboration at the centre of the Platforms – notably the engagement of host countries, countries of origin, and donors – which are crucial for mobilising the political will to make advances on solutions. The

---

1 The 3RP is a strategic, coordination, planning, advocacy, fundraising, and programming platform for humanitarian and development partners to respond to the Syria crisis. It comprises one regional plan, with five standalone country chapters covering **Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt,** and engages over 270 partners. (**3RP Syria Crisis – In Response to the Syria Crisis**)

PAKISTAN. *Trailblazing disabled refugee fights to remove education barriers.* © UNHCR/Saiyna Bashir

Support Platforms have proven to be among the most tangible expressions of burden and responsibility sharing since the GCR was affirmed.

The **SSAR Platform** faced a shift from a traditional focus on voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration, to also address the major (internal) displacement caused by the crisis in August 2021, while maintaining and increasing the support for the major hosting countries. The Core Group, at both the global and the country levels, worked in close coordination with local partners to provide solutions and basic services for the existing refugee population, while ensuring assistance and protection of internally displaced people and returnees, as well as the communities hosting them in Afghanistan, through area-based programming in the Priority Areas of Return and Reintegration (PARRs).

Through the Nairobi declaration, the **IGAD Platform** shifted the discourse from repatriation as the only acceptable solution for Somali refugees towards a more nuanced approach with other pathways such as inclusion. The platform has served as a useful mechanism to highlight refugee contributions to local economies and helped foster key multi-stakeholder partnerships and coordination at regional, national, and local levels. Additionally, it has been instrumental in galvanising a regional approach led by Governments in partnership with other actors for solutions, as in Sudan and South Sudan Solutions Initiative.

The **MIRPS Platform**, as a key regional actor for strengthening protection, mentioned their working groups as one of the mechanisms which are crucial to identifying common challenges and recommendations

for implementing policies and programmes designed to address forced displacement. Furthermore, they announced that over USD 110 million of financial support, mobilised during their Solidarity Event in June 2021, were transferred to international humanitarian organisations and civil society organisations working in the region.

"The role of the GCR in climate action and displacement", held on 14 December, took stock of progress made and outlined areas for potential engagement moving forward. Panellists acknowledged that climate, environmental degradation, and disasters increasingly interact with the drivers of displacement, heightening pre-existing vulnerabilities, conflict, and displacement, and it is necessary to tackle these challenges. It was agreed that climate action significantly contributes to achieving at least three of the GCR's four overall objectives: ease pressures on host countries, enhance refugee self-reliance, and support conditions in countries of origin or return in safety and dignity. The success of the GCR is therefore closely linked to the commitment to climate action in refugee situations. As part of the panel, the **Refugee Environmental Protection (REP) Fund** was launched – a new innovative financing initiative that will significantly strengthen and scale up reforestation and clean-cooking programmes in climate-vulnerable, refugee-hosting communities worldwide by providing the long-term resource commitments and technical capacity to address these needs.

"The three-year strategy on resettlement and complementary pathways" on 15 December focused on good practices and areas where future

action is required to address challenges. Panellists considered opportunities for growing resettlement and complementary pathways in responding to refugee situations. The session outlined that COVID-19 does not need to slow down pathways for refugees, and resettlement is and must remain the key lifesaving tool to protect those most at risk. It was agreed that family unification remains a critical activity to ensure families are not separated. It encouraged efforts at identifying creative solutions to resettlement including through remote interviews. It also stressed that innovative partnerships and financing are essential to enable refugees to access pathways offered to them.

 "**The role of the GCR in the medium to long-term response to the COVID-19 pandemic**", held on 15 December, examined the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on refugees and forcibly displaced persons' rights, protection, and access to livelihoods/income, food security, health, and education. The session presented some of the efforts deployed to address these challenges, such as strengthening health systems in refugee hosting areas, providing psycho-social support, advancing sustainable inclusion of refugees in national health systems, addressing the mid to long-term socio-economic impacts of the pandemic, using cash-based assistance to respond to basic needs, and ensuring that the learning needs of the most marginalised are addressed. The session concluded that despite all the difficulties and the stress test that COVID-19 pandemic created for advancing the GCR, there had been many positive examples of adaptation. The pandemic also reinforced the need for the inclusion of refugees in state services and vaccination programmes. It led to increased collaboration, advocacy, promotion of rights, streamlining of essential services, whole-of-society approaches, and greater support for localised responses prioritising protection.

Side Events

On 13 December 2021, side events focused on four of the key stakeholder groups identified in the GCR (sport organisations, the private sector, refugees, and academics) were held. In total, the side events were attended by around 1,300 persons and included the following:

"**Advancing refugee self-reliance through sport**" explored how sport serves as an effective and innovative medium to strengthen and advance refugee self-reliance. Panellists shared their experiences in effectively using sport in the areas of education, livelihoods, local integration, and protection. The session also aimed to inspire further collaboration across stakeholder groups. It demonstrated how sport entities can be part of the solution by increasing employment opportunities for refugees in the sport eco-system. The event showed that sport serves as an important medium to create pathways to education as well as to enhance the ability for refugee children to learn. It has been shown to improve attendance, student engagement and attention, and psychosocial well-being. The main challenges faced included the lack of funding, gender discrimination, balance between competition and well-being in sport, gathering data and evidence on the use of sport for refugee self-reliance, and regulations and paperwork for hiring refugees. Panellists concluded that sport should be considered as a component of programmes to achieve refugee self-reliance, protect refugee youth and children and enhance their well-being, and facilitate inclusion and local integration.

"**Inclusion, impact, innovation: How investing in refugees yields growth and opportunity**" focused on private sector pledges and commitments and underlined some key challenges in supporting refugee economic integration and self-reliance. Panellists explained that refugees bring great value to businesses and societies. For instance, refugee employees have high retention rates, are resilience experts, and make companies more diverse, innovative, and attractive for consumers that are more prone to purchase from brands that support refugees. The main ways in which the private sector can contribute to the refugee cause are through advocacy; donations; providing innovative products, services, and know-how; and supporting inclusion, employment, and entrepreneurship among forcibly displaced populations. With refugee situations becoming more protracted and development challenges growing, financial inclusion, vocational training, and technical assistance are key to reducing bottlenecks. Actions that go beyond immediate humanitarian assistance and represent a longer-term commitment from the private sector are equally important. The key recommendations made were to clarify expectations, including where and when to intervene, and enable the environment for more private sector interventions, and to provide more opportunities for the private sector to engage through financial instruments, such as blended finance, that de-risk investment and encourage companies' active participation in refugee-hosting areas.

"**Meaningful refugee participation**" focused on how people with lived experiences as forcibly displaced

persons and other persons of concern (PoC) can be involved in policy discussions. RLOs can lead responses that concern refugees and not just be consulted during or after actions have been taken. UNHCR announced the 2022 NGO **Innovation Award**, which focuses on women-led organisations, and shared a new grant agreement for organizations led by person of concern that has been piloted in 15 operations. "Nothing about us without us" was a strong message throughout. A gap identified by the RLOs was that out of 1600+ GRF pledges made, only 69 – less than 5 per cent – have a focus on meaningful participation, with 63 of these pledges made by displaced persons themselves. There are also gaps and barriers to access to quality education, economic opportunities, and resources, such as internet connection and legal registration of organisations led by persons of concern. Despite these challenges, several RLOs demonstrated how they mobilised political will around meaningful participation, unlocked funding opportunities for refugees, and created effective mechanisms to engage refugees in design and implementation of policies. A need for more practical and effective responses through multi-dimensional, multi-disciplinary, and intersectional responses was identified by participants. Main recommendations included: more inclusive, flexible, and direct funding to RLOs; simplified, transparent, and equal partnerships with RLOs to increase their technical capacity; higher investment in RLO leadership and engagement in data collection and analysis; increased refugee participation (up from 2 per cent) at the 2023 GRF, taking into consideration AGD; institutionalisation of refugee representation in UNHCR's Executive Committee through an RLO seat and/or refugees as advisors to State delegations; strengthened efforts at the local level to implement refugee participation in humanitarian and development interventions; more entities joining the 2019 GRF refugee participation pledge (17 entities have already signed on); and strengthened women's leadership, including through business training opportunities for women-led organisations. More than 40 actors expressed interest in joining a multi-stakeholder coalition to promote meaningful refugee participation in the lead-up to the next GRF in 2023.

"**Translating principles to practical action: Academic solidarity #WithRefugees**", focused on **academia** and noted the importance of recognising and building on the talents of refugees. There are promising examples of solidarity, including the expansion of the De Mello Chairs model to different countries and innovative fellowship and research schemes to respond to emergencies. However, solutions for the estimated 10,000 scholars and scientists looking for safety and dignified work in their fields of expertise still remain to be found. Employment pathways for these academics will contribute to solidarity, responsibility sharing, and solutions.

Linked Events

In connection to the HLOM, multiple linked events were held in December 2021. The event "**Meaningful participation of young people in the stocktaking and future design processes of the GRF**", built upon the outcomes of a series of youth consultations held around the world in 2021 and called for more investments in youth leadership and youth-led initiatives. Panellists agreed that youth need to be invited to local consultations, including with local authorities, private sector partners, and education institutions, and to be included regularly and systematically in needs assessments, project design, implementation, and monitoring. Access to quality education, employment, and entrepreneurship opportunities were identified as primary concerns of youth. Yet, there are considerable barriers to access these, including access to the internet and reliable information, e.g., on scholarship opportunities. The panellists encouraged the international community to bring together partners that champion youth leadership, initiatives, and participation in forced displacement contexts and elevate refugee youth voices, increase visibility, facilitate initiatives, and invite youth to participate and engage.

"**Displaced women and girls in the North of Central America and Mexico: Using the MIRPS framework to protect, assist and empower**" focused on how gender-based violence (GBV) has reached alarming levels globally, particularly in North and Central America, and continues to be a major driving force for displacement with disproportionately impacting girls, women, and LGBTIQ+ persons who can be even more at risk while on the move. As the chair of the MIRPS support platform, Canada committed financial, technical, and political assistance to helping Central American nations and Mexico manage their challenges with forced displacement and migration. Canada's feminist foreign policy and international assistance policy address international protection needs and human rights of refugee and migrant women, girls, and LGBTQI+ individuals. Many MIRPS nations have established national action plans and measures to protect women and girls. The Honourable Sean Fraser, MP, announced on behalf of The Honourable Harjit Sajjan, Canada's Minister of International Development, a new initiative to empower and protect women and

MALAYSIA. *Refugee organises a peer support group for fellow Somali women.* © UNHCR/ Patricia Krivanek

girls in Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, including a commitment of CAD 10 million over four years to work with the IOM and UNHCR in assisting women who have been forcibly displaced, addressing the roots of irregular migration, and helping women voluntarily and safely return to their home countries.

 "**Age, gender, and diversity**: **Ending discrimination in refugee responses**" shared a framework for an appropriate AGD approach. Panellists called for an AGD approach to all refugee responses, which is essential for effective humanitarian responses, ensuring that no one is left behind, and helping to address the barriers that individuals may face in realising their rights and accessing services. A set of tools was introduced, including an updated **AGD tip sheet for pledges**, an **AGD matrix tool,** and a **video on AGD and intersectionality**. Panellists commended pledging entities, including States, such as Mexico, Australia, Denmark, and others, who incorporated an AGD approach in their pledges and in practice. Additionally, UNHCR works with other stakeholders to include the voices and concerns of LGBTIQ+ communities. The event also identified gaps in the AGD approach: 70 per cent of the total GRF pledges made no reference to AGD. The panel recommended utilising the tools shared to implement a sustainable intersectional AGD approach throughout all responses, to encourage States and other pledging entities to reassess their pledges to make AGD aspects visible, and to take into consideration the needs, priorities, and meaningful participation of persons of concern and any other diverse characteristics.

 "**The GCR Three Years On: Translating Cooperation into Concrete Responses to Forced Displacement**" provided an engaging and candid exchange on the successes and challenges in implementing the GCR. Panellists put forward recommendations to support host countries in the form of multi-year grants, rather than loans; invest in education and skills both in host and third countries to enhance refugee self-reliance; ensure predictable third-country solutions and therefore, enhanced responsibility-sharing with low and middle-income countries, through increased resettlement and alternative pathways; and repatriate refugees through greater attention to conflict resolution, lifting sanctions for unhindered humanitarian assistance, and funding. It was further highlighted that faith-based actors and religious institutions are a key gateway to inclusion and support of host communities. Panellists also mentioned that the private sector is playing an increasing role in the humanitarian response. The Afghanistan crisis triggered an unprecedented degree of support in the form of commitments to refugee-inclusive policies and refugee employment. Finally, they stressed the importance on focusing on the HDP nexus and the crucial element of peace: "Without peace, what can we really solve?"

Several HLOM education side events were held in conjunction with the **RewirED Summit**, from December 12 to 14, hosted by Dubai Cares and the United Arab Emirates. The Summit engaged global stakeholders in action-oriented dialogue to 'rewire education' for a prosperous and sustainable future for all. UNHCR-

led education side events included a dialogue, "**Emerging Models for Higher Education in Conflict**", that highlighted the need for sustainable financing, expanded access, skill-building, and refugee-driven and participatory models. The UNHCR-led Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG) convened a session, "**COVID-19 Pathways for the Return to Learning**", sharing tools and guidance and hearing from refugee youth about their experiences of learning disruptions and pathways back to education. A session, "**Funding for Impact**", was held in which the GRF Education Alliance members pitched investments for catalytic transformation of education in emergencies, highlighting areas not yet covered by GRF pledges, and areas in need of greater investment. Investment areas include teacher training, girls and women's education in Africa, funding the EdTech "missing middle", refugee inclusion and refugee-led programming, and free and open-source resources, and language. Finally, **RewirED hosted the launch** of the **Refugee Connected Education Challenge**, culminating in a call to action for all stakeholders to work together to address the digital divide facing refugee learners and to join the Challenge by making clear and measurable GRF commitments to bridging the gap.

New pledges and initiatives

Initiatives Launched at the High-Level Officials Meeting

- The Strategy for Environmental Sustainability in UNHCR's Operational Responses

- Refugee Environmental Protection Fund

- IFC-UNHCR joint initiative on Private Sector Solutions for the Displaced and Their Hosts

- The Connected Education Refugee Challenge

While the HLOM was not framed as a pledging conference, 58 new pledges were announced by States, NGOs, faith groups, sports organisations, private sector actors, and local authorities over the two-day event. These included commitments by the United States of America and Belgium to increase resettlement places and other pathways for refugees. There were also new pledges to tackle the issue of statelessness, including the United States of America's commitment to adopt a determination procedure to give those without a

nationality in the country a legal status and greater rights. Other initiatives on statelessness were announced by Iceland, Belgium, Burundi, and Eswatini. Further pledges in the areas of financing, civil documentation, asylum capacity support, and access to education, health care, and other services were made by Austria, Burundi, the Netherlands, and Kyrgyzstan. With the support of the Cities Alliance, the cities of Arua and Koboko in Uganda pledged to increase the participation of refugees in the improvement of access to public services and livelihoods opportunities for refugees. Gabiley, Somalia pledged improved health and education services, and Kalobeyei, Kenya pledged strengthened national service delivery systems, increased socio-economic opportunities, and sustained investments in people's skills and capabilities.
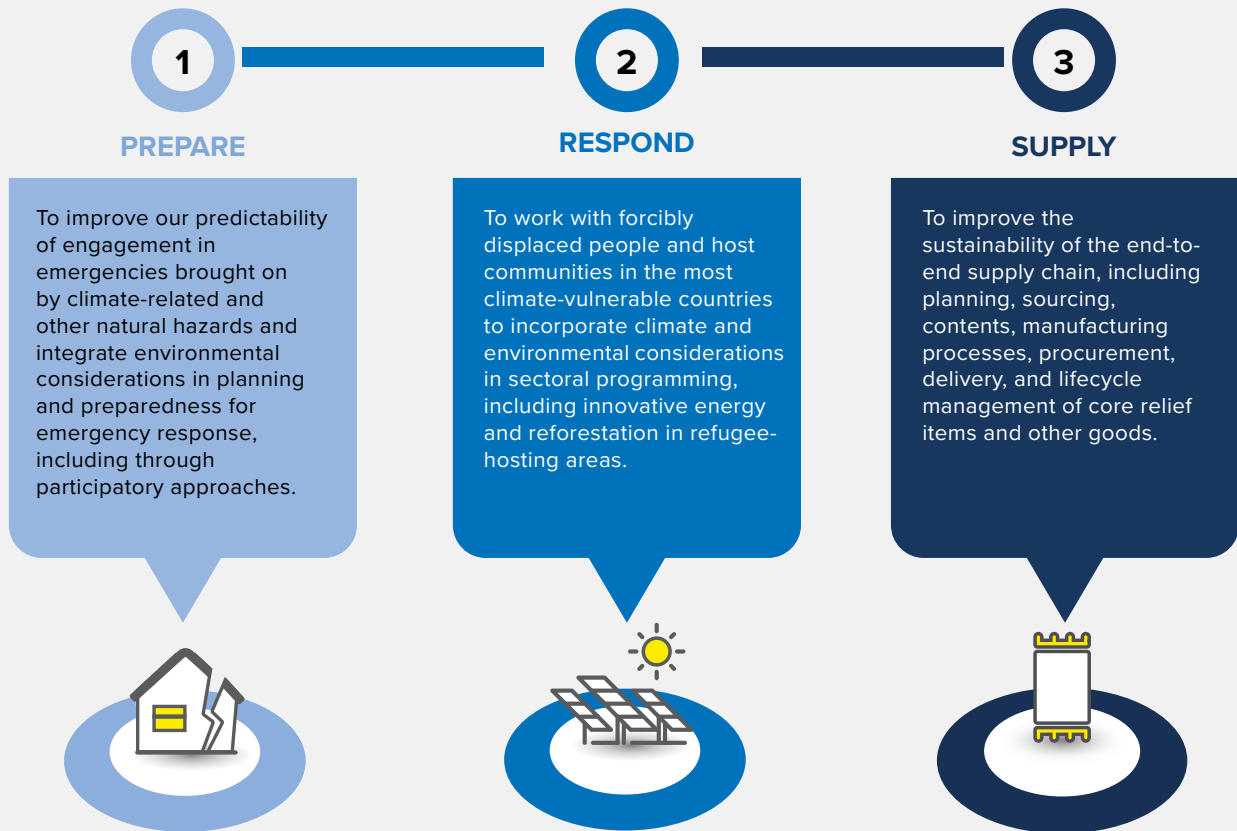
UNHCR launched the **Operational Strategy for Climate Resilience and Environmental Sustainability 2022-2025** to mitigate the impact of the climate crisis on the people we serve, strengthen their resilience to climate-related and other environmental risks – including by preserving and rehabilitating the natural environment in displacement settings – and minimise the environmental footprint of its assistance. This strategy is grounded in the **Strategic Framework for Climate Action**, launched earlier in 2021, and aims to operationalise its second Pillar of Action – Operations. This will feed into the realisation of regional Climate Action Plans that will ground these ambitions in context-specific needs and realities. It recognises the need for urgent action in three major areas: 1) Prepare and respond; 2) Respond and deliver; and 3) Supply and deliver. The strategy set out the expected outcomes in these areas and specific activities and initiatives that UNHCR will implement over the next years.

UNHCR also launched **the Refugee Environmental Protection (REP) Fund** to invest in impactful reforestation and clean cooking programmes in climate-vulnerable refugee situations around the world. The Fund aims to plant tens of millions more trees and enable hundreds of thousands of refugees and their hosts to access clean cooking solutions over the next decade. In doing so, it will link refugees and host communities to global carbon markets, empowering them to become part of the global movement to combat climate change.

The IFC and UNHCR launched a **joint initiative on Private Sector Solutions for the Displaced and Their Hosts** to facilitate the participation of businesses as partners and investors in economic opportunities for refugees and their host communities.

Operational Strategy for Climate Resilience and Environmental Sustainability **2022-2025**

The strategy recognises the urgent action required in three major areas:

1

PREPARE

To improve our predictability of engagement in emergencies brought on by climate-related and other natural hazards and integrate environmental considerations in planning and preparedness for emergency response, including through participatory approaches.

2

RESPOND

To work with forcibly displaced people and host communities in the most climate-vulnerable countries to incorporate climate and environmental considerations in sectoral programming, including innovative energy and reforestation in refugee-hosting areas.

3

SUPPLY

To improve the sustainability of the end-to-end supply chain, including planning, sourcing, contents, manufacturing processes, procurement, delivery, and lifecycle management of core relief items and other goods.

UNHCR actions are structured around **two** key approaches:

Recognise forcibly displaced and their hosts as **agents of change**

Strengthen resilience and **protect** forcibly displaced and their hosts from the impact of climate change and environmental degradation.

The Connected Education Refugee Challenge was launched, calling on governments, the private sector, and partners to commit to close the digital divide faced by displaced learners. With long-term or frequent school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the ever-changing landscape of crises being faced by refugees around the world, refugees, who were already struggling to access education, are amongst the hardest hit. As the world turned to digitally supported education to provide continuous learning opportunities during the pandemic, the vast majority of forcibly displaced learners and their host communities were left out. It is critical to accelerate efforts to ensure refugee-hosting schools and classrooms are not left further behind. The goal is to ensure refugee-hosting schools and communities are meaningfully included within all global and national connectivity and digital learning programmes planned between now and 2030.

JORDAN. *Refugee doctors contribute to the COVID-19 response.*
© UNHCR/Meshal Alfayez

Key Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions for the 2023 GRF

Twenty key recommendations were identified as a part of the stocktaking in the lead-up to and during the HLOM. Following is a summary of the areas for action related to each of these recommendations. It reflects inputs by States and other stakeholders during the regional, stakeholder, and thematic stocktaking events and processes, virtual preparatory roundtables, side and linked events, spotlight sessions, panels, the HLOM plenary discussion, and the GCR Indicator Report.

Cross-cutting recommendations

Recommendation 1: Implement current GRF pledges and develop new ones to address identified gaps and needs.

- **Concretise broad pledges that remain in progress;** ensure that global, regional, and thematic pledges are channelled in support of specific refugee situations to advance the GCR objectives.

- **Adapt and innovate pledges where necessary to address changing needs**, including to address the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic on refugee and host communities.

- **Match and align financial, material, and technical pledges with host country policy pledges** to

ensure this positive political will results in changes in the lives of refugees and host communities and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- **Report on progress made towards pledge implementation** to enable sharing of learning and allow for better tracking of progress and coordination between existing and new pledges.

- **Ensure that new pledges are needs-driven, quantifiable, additional, sustainable, inclusive, AGD-sensitive, and aligned with the GCR indicators.**

PROMISING PRACTICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT ACROSS THE FOUR GCR OBJECTIVES

The Republic of Korea invested USD 37.7 million in the expansion of refugee support under their HDP Nexus Strategy and is taking measures to make its development cooperation and humanitarian assistance more conflict-sensitive.

Private sector pledgers converted or supplemented loans to refugee entrepreneurs with **grants**, helping them weather the effects of the pandemic on their business; expanded support for **digital education/ connected learning/digital literacy and digital skills programmes;** and made substantial **cash and in-kind contributions** of essential items.

The Global Cities Fund is the Mayors Migration Council's response to the unmet needs of local authorities as they support refugee, internally displaced, and migrant communities. It provides local authorities with direct financial and technical support for projects to realise the goals of the global compacts.

The **Geneva Technical Hub** launched by Switzerland draws upon a cutting-edge Swiss expertise to scale up solutions in the areas of renewable and clean energy, sustainable water supply, and waste management.

The World Bank Group and UNHCR, enabled by funding from the **Joint Data Center**, are closely cooperating on **research on statelessness data** in Central Asia and a **Comparative Livelihoods Study** in Malaysia.

In response to the Afghanistan crisis, interagency partners launched a **joint Refugee Response Plan (RRP)** to support host governments in their efforts to promote resilience, in line with the objectives of the **SSAR.** The 2022 RRP has broadened its focus to target registered refugees, Afghans of other statuses, the communities hosting them, and potential new arrivals – with a view to strengthening burden and responsibility sharing and easing the pressure on countries of asylum, in particular Iran and Pakistan.

The **Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) organised a Pledge to Reality (P2R) regional conference** in October 2021 to take stock of pledge implementation in the region and elaborate a roadmap for the implementation of remaining pledges with an envisaged adoption of the roadmap by Member States in 2022 and the possible establishment of a Regional Support Platform.

Recommendation 2: Enhance access to international protection.

- **Provide asylum and access to territory, which are key to responsibility sharing.** Externalising asylum and protection obligations can compromise the safety of those in need of international protection and heavily impact refugee-hosting countries. Externalisation arrangements run counter to the spirit of the GCR.

- **Develop refugee and asylum laws, policies and systems that are in line with international standards.** Border restrictions need to be managed in a manner that respects human rights and refugee protection standards and considers the use of quarantine and health checks. Access to refugee status determination (RSD), documentation, and registration needs to be prioritized by Governments.

- **Provide expertise and resources to develop or strengthen national asylum systems** and RSD capacities under the framework of the Asylum Capacity Support Group (ACSG). There are currently more needs than offers of support.

- **Ensure proper documentation for refugees, asylum-seekers, and returnees through dialogue and collaboration between countries of origin and countries of asylum.** Documentation is essential to self-reliance, solutions, and protection. Access to and recognition of documentation remain a major challenge to effective integration of refugees and their access to services in host countries and countries of origin.

- Strengthen and extend national child protection systems to include refugees.

PROMISING PRACTICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT - PROTECTION

PILnet and the global legal community surpassed their pledged commitment of over 127,000 pro bono hours by 30 per cent in 2020. They mobilise, connect, and support global and local legal actors to address the legal needs of those affected by displacement, and increasingly work with refugee-led initiatives to identify and design solutions to these legal needs.

In line with the objectives of the **Support Platform for the SSAR**, a document renewal and information verification exercise (DRIVE) was completed by Pakistan and UNHCR in 2021, yielding comprehensive socio-economic data for a total of 1.25 million Afghan refugees and issuance of over 700,000 biometric smart cards, which will enable improved programming in Pakistan and support solutions for refugees.

The Center of Excellence was established in Cape Town in **South Africa** following pledges made by the International Association for Refugees and Migrants Judges and supported by the Judiciary Institute for Africa to train judges and other law practitioners.

Parliamentarians shape public opinion through discourse and law-making, which profoundly affect persons of concern. UNHCR and the **Inter-Parliamentary Union** established a strategic partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding to galvanise support from parliamentarians to increase awareness of and implement pledges towards the GCR and the *#iBelong* Campaign to End Statelessness.

Recommendation 3: Reduce statelessness.

- **Develop and strengthen systems for the identification and protection of stateless persons** in line with international standards.

- **Provide financial support for statelessness-related programming.** Pledges show that a great number of governments are committed to addressing statelessness; however, financial constraints have impeded progress in a number of areas, including resolving existing major situations of statelessness (nine pledges); removing gender discrimination from nationality laws (seven pledges); acceding to the UN Statelessness Conventions (25 pledges); and establishing Statelessness Determination Procedures (25 pledges).

- **Increase efforts to reach the objective of the *#IBelong* Campaign to End Statelessness by 2024** through the ratification of relevant legal instruments, removal of discrimination that leads to statelessness from domestic laws and policies, and early action to prevent new cases of statelessness from arising.

- **Broaden the base of support to accelerate progress in addressing statelessness** by highlighting the connection between statelessness and the efforts to achieve the SDGs and noting that statelessness can affect outcomes in a wide range of other areas.

- **Mainstream and integrate priorities to protect stateless people and prevent statelessness in the GCR process.** Statelessness can be a cause and consequence of displacement [GCR, para.83]. Ending statelessness is a long-term and complex undertaking, which is highly dependent on political will and susceptible to setbacks – including in periods of crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, that can divert attention and either slow or reverse progress.

- **Develop flexible new approaches and the use of technology by national governments and municipalities to ensure access to birth registration**.

PROMISING PRACTICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT – STATELESSNESS

Mozambique, Rwanda, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines, and Turkmenistan put mechanisms in place to reduce statelessness.

Chile signed both statelessness Conventions.

Costa Rica passed a law on nationality, asylum, and statelessness, which enabled 140 persons declared stateless to apply for naturalisation.

Recommendation 4: Make better use of combined humanitarian, development, and peace capacities to achieve the GCR objectives.

- **Enhance cooperation and coordination between political, humanitarian, development, and peace actors to support refugees, returnees, stateless persons, and host communities,** with protection needs at the centre of programming and development.

- **Strengthen coordination of humanitarian assistance, development, and peacebuilding efforts and between local communities and governments** to ensure that persons of concern are included in national development plans.

- **Improve reporting and analysis across engaged development actors**. Gaps and blind spots prevail in addressing forced displacement, which could be minimised with better coordination between and within other partners, hosting countries, and non-governmental partners.

- **Ensure more predictable collaboration between humanitarian, development, and peace actors to bring integrated approaches to solutions,** including local integration, inclusion, and voluntary return and reintegration in countries of origin.

UNDP supports the development of the capacities of community security working groups, civic actors and humanitarian partners in conflict-affected settings and supported the establishment of a network of Ambassadors of Peace in contexts of internal displacement.

Japan implemented a technical cooperation project for the resilience of refugee-hosting communities and infrastructure in Uganda to help local governments and communities maintain the harmonious co-existence of refugees and host communities, and to strengthen the local governments' capacity.

Recommendation 5: Build attention to climate change into how we do business.

- **Reframe our narrative to recognise and address climate change as a risk multiplier,** driving displacement and making life harder for those already forced to flee. The impacts of the climate crisis are particularly profound in conflict-affected and fragile contexts where many displaced populations are hosted and may exacerbate tensions between communities, trigger displacement, worsen living conditions, and/or hamper return for those who have already been displaced.

- **Innovate to develop responses that enhance the resilience of refugees and their hosts to climate change** and limit negative impacts of climate change on people's safety and security. Prevent new and secondary displacement and ensure the protection of those forcibly uprooted as a result of the climate crisis. Innovation and new partnerships are essential to enable responses at sufficient scale to address the growing challenges and adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change.

- **Provide funding for environmental protection, habitat restoration, land rehabilitation, and agroforestry** to avoid or reduce the negative environmental impact of humanitarian interventions. This includes a commitment by all agencies to prioritise responsible climate action at all levels of the organisation.

- **Invest in sustainable energy in refugee-hosting areas to promote access to electricity and connectivity,** which are crucial to enabling refugees to access information, their rights, and learning opportunities, while significantly reducing protection risks. This includes supporting humanitarian agencies working in the context of displacement to meet high upfront costs of moving from fuel-based to renewable energy.

- **Engage displaced persons in community-led disaster prevention and preparedness and in**

identifying, designing, and supporting solutions that are culturally appropriate, and leverage effective traditional and indigenous adaptation practices, which must be at the centre of the humanitarian response.

Recommendation 6: Facilitate more systematic, inclusive, and meaningful refugee participation.

- **Include refugees in GCR follow-up at all levels (local, regional, and global)**, including GRF pledge follow-up and development, measuring progress against the GCR indicators, and the implementation of the various GCR initiatives.

- **Increase refugee representation** at the 2023 GRF and in other global processes.

- **Provide direct, flexible funding for refugee-led organisations (RLOs).**

- **Address barriers to refugee engagement, including through equal partnership approaches,** to ensure that refugees and RLOs have the support and opportunities to participate in the policy discussions that affect them, recognising that they often play a leadership role in responses.

- **Apply approaches to the reception and treatment of refugees that foster amicable and mutually beneficial relationships with host communities**, at the same time as safeguarding their rights.

- **Involve refugees in efforts to increase educational pathways and employment opportunities, freedom of movement, and access to documentation**, to ensure that these are efficient, comprehensive, and durable; where necessary, invest in capacity building to enable this.

- **Consider the specific needs, priorities, and capacities of different members of refugee populations to make interventions more effective.** This requires using an AGD lens and a focus on reducing discriminatory practices and unequal access to services.

Recommendation 7: Enhance the data available to support effective action and investment in refugee situations.

- **Systematise national and international data collection on refugees,** including on self-reliance for both refugees and host communities, and solutions.

- **Strengthen tracking of refugee financing by all stakeholders** in a manner that enables disaggregation and is systematically integrated in broader development financing tracking mechanisms.

- **Continue and extend efforts to build the evidence base on financing for refugee situations, self-reliance of refugees and host communities, and solutions** to track progress on GCR implementation and inform approaches.

- **Enhance synergies between modern and traditional data instruments to establish robust tracking mechanisms** that collect regular, reliable, and disaggregated data and support analysis by gender, age, and other diversity characteristics to help identify groups that are vulnerable, marginalised, or at risk of discrimination.

- **Strengthen capacities and efforts towards data collection and analysis disaggregated by age, gender, and diversity**, including making children more visible in national and UNHCR statistics, to ensure better inclusion in host country budgeting and service delivery systems.

- **Facilitate collaboration between refugees and host communities, national statistical offices, civil society organisations, and UN partners in data collection efforts** relevant to the GCR.

- **Facilitate access of local authorities to social and economic data on the refugees they host,** including data on access to basic services and protection for women, children, and other groups at higher risk of discrimination or vulnerability.

- **Facilitate participation of refugees in all relevant processes of data collection, analysis, and dissemination** to enhance accuracy and effectiveness and empowerment.

- **Engage the private sector in generating evidence** on how economic inclusion of refugees can benefit host communities to inform efforts in support of economic inclusion.

Recommendation 8: Strengthen private sector engagement in support of GCR objectives.

- **Engage across the spectrum of philanthropy, corporate social responsibility, and shared value creation**, including through job creation/skilling, support for entrepreneurship, contributions of knowledge and expertise, and the application of technologies and business innovations that can have multiplier effects in refugee-hosting areas (particularly in the areas of education, clean energy, and connectivity).

- **Address policy, legal, and regulatory hurdles that constrain market-based private sector engagement in refugee-hosting areas** that could reduce refugees' aid dependency and poverty levels, and ensure that private sector engagement is strategic, responsible, and benefits refugees and host communities.

- **Further develop and replicate innovative financing schemes** such as social impact bonds, bank guarantees, and entrepreneurial mechanisms, all of which can significantly ease pressures on host countries and enhance refugee self-reliance.

- **Strengthen the key enablers for piloting and scaling of promising initiatives with the private sector,** such as flexible funding; de-risking; platforms for sharing information on markets and business dynamics of refugee-hosting areas; and multi-stakeholder partnerships that leverage the respective strengths of government, humanitarian, NGOs, private sector, and development finance.

- **Scale up cash-based interventions** to catalyse private sector participation in refugee and returnee situations.

- **Develop programmes and initiatives that include refugees and host communities as integral parts of their core businesses and value chains,** recognising that refugees and host communities can be both consumers and contributors.

- **Enhance cooperation between the private sector and humanitarian actors to advance refugee rights, self-reliance, inclusion, capacities, and third-country solutions.**

- **Develop socio-economic integration mechanisms that respond to local needs and create trust** between the private sector and humanitarian actors.

GCR objective 1: Ease pressures on host countries

PROMISING PRACTICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT - FINANCING

The **Government of Colombia** announced on 8 February 2021 a **ten-year temporary protection status (TPS)** for over 1.8 million Venezuelans currently living in the country and those entering via official checkpoints over the next two years.

The **Social Impact Bond** demonstrates the type of social innovation and greater impact that can result from close collaboration between the public, private, and social sectors to address Colombia's most pressing social challenges, including housing.

SIDA and Kiva are successfully supporting **microfinancing** through crowdfunding and local financial institutions to facilitate refugee's self-reliance in countries such as **Uganda**.

The Prospects Partnership committed over USD 500 million to support refugee responses in eight countries, facilitating access to education, work, and protection and partnerships with international organisations (International Finance Corporation, World Bank, UNHCR, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and International Labour Organization (ILO)), resulting in 700,000 children and youth enrolled and 100,000 having completed education, 100,000 jobs supported over the past two years, and 250,000 loans and grants disbursed to refugees and host community members seeking to start their own businesses.

Recommendation 9: Intensify efforts towards more equitable burden and responsibility sharing.

- **Broaden the base of support beyond the main refugee-hosting countries, donors, and institutions;** develop innovative partnerships which leverage the complementary strengths of a wider group of actors to unlock resources and foster solutions.

- **Invest diplomatic and political capital to operationalise responsibility sharing across all refugee situations** and achieve more predictable and equitable engagement and address gaps identified in the GCR indicator report.

- **Strengthen investment, cooperation, and political engagement through the Support Platforms**.

Recommendation 10: Increase development financing in support of refugee situations.

- **Expand cooperation with bilateral development actors and multilateral development banks** to achieve adequate resourcing for national service delivery systems to include refugees.

- **Ensure diversified and flexible financial instruments for short-term humanitarian and longer-term development efforts.** Dedicated investments by development actors and diversified and flexible financial instruments, both in short-term humanitarian and longer-term development efforts, are needed to address the socio-economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and prevent further displacement.

- **Include refugees in national datasets, plans, and budgets,** so that they are included in from the benefits of development financing.

- **Identify and cost the extensions and improvements to national service delivery systems** needed to reach refugees to inform and make the case for development support.

- **Ensure that refugee-hosting localities are able to access financial support intended for them.**

- **Upscale financial and technical support for local authorities to include refugees, migrants, and internally displaced persons in the provision of their services** in line the **recommendations** made by over 200 local authorities at the stocktaking meeting held in September 2021.

Recommendation 11: Provide more flexible, predictable, and multi-year funding for refugee responses.

- **Scale up flexible, predictable, and multi-year development funding** benefiting both refugees and host communities, working with donors, technical agencies, international financial institutions, regional development banks, and the private sector, and using direct and public-private partnership modalities.

- **Increase sustained and flexible financial support for organisations led by youth, women, refugees, and local actors**, given their essential role and the paucity of funding for these groups (only around one per cent of global humanitarian funding supports refugee-led organisations).

GCR objective 2: Enhance refugee self-reliance

Recommendation 12: Increase social inclusion for refugees.

- **Support refugee and host community youth** to develop capacities and skills and maintain physical and emotional well-being through learning, sports, and cultural and other activities.

- **Scale up innovative approaches and strengthened partnerships to enhance socio-economic inclusion**, engaging the private sector, sports organisations, local authorities, parliaments, academia, the legal aid community, refugee-led organisations, United Nations agencies, International Organisations, States, and other actors.

- **Invest in capacitating local authorities and local civil society to support refugee integration, inclusion, and local solutions.** Local authorities and their civil society partners need resources to better scale and refine inclusive, community-based services and programmes. This also requires support to local platforms, local actors, and community volunteers, and drawing upon national response plans to help determine needs and priorities.

- **Scale up initiatives that tackle racism and xenophobia** and promote tolerance, inclusion, and diversity at the local level; and support local authorities to employ robust social inclusion approaches. Peaceful coexistence and social cohesion between refugees and host communities, are key to sustained self-reliance.

- **Realise the potential of sport to promote inclusion and protection.** If fully inclusive, locally driven sport initiatives can promote social inclusion can improve physical and mental health, build skills, enhance social cohesion, and achieve protection outcomes.

- **Engage and support universities to promote refugee self-reliance**, not only through scholarships and complementary pathways opportunities, but also through the provision of social services for refugees, such as legal clinics, healthcare, language courses, and psychosocial support.

- **Draw on local-level knowledge and expertise in refugee-hosting areas to inform national development plans** and ensure they are inclusive of refugees. It is recommended that local and regional governments participate in the process of defining national and international priorities.

- **Ensure an age, gender, diversity (AGD) approach to refugee inclusion**, to ensure that that the needs of all individuals and groups are considered. Thirty per cent of GRF pledges made an explicit reference to AGD or other diverse considerations.

PROMISING PRACTICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT - SOCIAL INCLUSION

Mauritania, Monaco, and the Philippines have continued to provide long-term solutions for refugees.

Nigeria made considerable progress in implementing its four pledges on inclusion of refugees and host communities, protection, access to durable solutions, and playing an active role in regional efforts.

Panama improved its legal framework to protect women.

In **Albania,** the adoption of a new asylum law provided better protection and enhanced refugee self-reliance.

Lima, Peru leveraged digital solutions by adopting a digital platform to assist Venezuelans and host communities in finding livelihood opportunities.

The **Global Refugee-led Network** in collaboration with **Asylum Access** published **guidelines** that would enable meaningful participation within the refugee response sector, noting that responses are most impactful when led by those most affected.

In **Ethiopia**, more refugee children received birth certificates following the government's pledges linked to the GCR.

# Recommendation 13: Increase economic inclusion and access to livelihoods.

- **Provide refugees the legal right to employment** to facilitate self-reliance. The right to work and access to employment opportunities are crucial to refugee populations developing resilience, living in dignity, and contributing to their communities. This requires appropriate registration and documentation of refugees and asylum-seekers to facilitate access to work and other public services. Employing refugees and the host community alike has the potential of raising refugees' income levels (and thus resilience), enabling them to contribute to the economies that host them; live active lives as employees, employers, producers, consumers, and taxpayers in host countries; and develop critical skills that will be needed should they be able to return to countries of origin.

- **Increase job and livelihood opportunities (including access to land) to facilitate socio-economic inclusion**. Several States have made

progress in opening their labour markets to refugees and need to continue efforts towards recognition of skills, inclusion in decent work and providing access to social protection programmes, and finance. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed challenges to refugees' economic inclusion, but also opened opportunities for innovations in digital work.

- **Provide targeted investments for inclusive national policies and approaches to jobs and livelihoods, to enhance** refugees' self-reliance and livelihoods and to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has increased refugees' vulnerability and need for access to decent work. Investments could be in certain value chains or sectors that are in particular demand, value chains linked to food security, or new and emerging opportunities such as digital and remote work. This also necessitates strong offerings of training and skills building to ensure that displaced and stateless persons have certified skills.

- **Ensure that age, gender, diversity, and disability** are focus areas for improvement, as they represent

Improving livelihoods of forcibly displaced persons and host communities through economic & financial inclusion
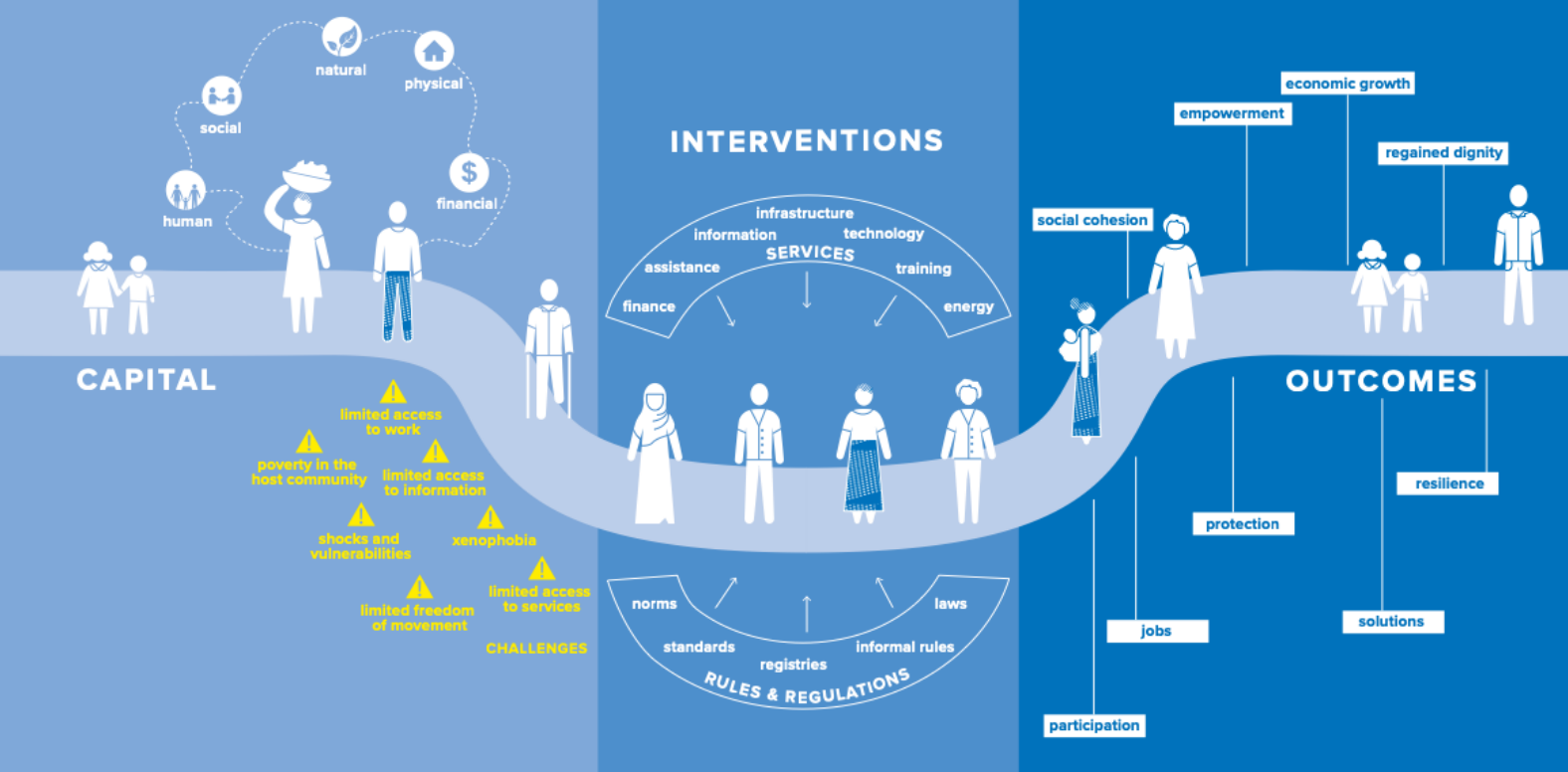
crucial issues in accessing livelihoods opportunities for many persons of concern.

- **Enhance collaboration with local institutions that provide tailored and contextualised livelihoods programming.**

- **Take steps towards facilitating better access to services for economic inclusion,** including through bank accounts (which ensure protection against theft), access to credit (ensuring resilience to shocks and building entrepreneurship), employment services, targeted information on how to access economies, mentoring, and ensuring alignment with other crucial services such as consumption support and access to health or energy.

- **Ensure that persons of concern are systematically included in all forms of social protection on par**

with nationals. Informal work is the most prevalent form of work in many refugee-hosting countries, which requires strong social protection given that many displaced and stateless persons are not protected by employers' contractual obligations.

- **Address barriers to accessing livelihoods and economic inclusion beyond labour law and economic activity** including, freedom of movement, access to documentation, recognition of qualifications, discrimination and xenophobia, poverty in the host community, and continued shocks and vulnerability.

- **Build the evidence base** to inform advocacy and support for economic inclusion.

PROMISING PRACTICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT – ECONOMIC INCLUSION AND ACCESS TO LIVELIHOODS

The **Danish Refugee Council** in Jordan and Uganda supported **the pilot refugee investment fund** to promote **self-reliance.**

Rwanda is including refugees in agriculture and business cooperation initiatives to enhance self-reliance. **Inclusion** in national programmes for social protection, recognition of skills, and freedom of movement are key to ensuring access to decent work.

The **Skilled Refugee Pilot Labour Agreement**, launched in Australia in 2021, is a strong example of how businesses and business leaders can harness the talents of refugees to address skills shortages, recognising that substantial levels of entrepreneurship amongst refugees are key.

Eswatini implemented a pledge to allocate arable land for refugees (1,000 hectares allocated and 198 hectares ready for use with water infrastructure in place) to increase self-reliance.

In **Jordan**, Syrian refugees receiving work permits under the Jordan Compact had higher monthly incomes and indicated fewer specific legal or physical protection needs than those without a work permit.

The **Poverty Alleviation Coalition** – a consortium of NGOs, UNHCR, and the World Bank Partnership for Economic Inclusion – have included more than 60,000 refugee and host community households across 20 countries in "graduation programmes" that help extremely poor households transition from aid dependency to self-reliance through a range of sequenced services tailored to the individual household (e.g., business grants, consumption support, mentoring, training, and financial inclusion).

Recommendation 14: Expand access to quality primary, secondary, and higher education.

- **Invest in all stages of the education cycle** to ensure current pledges can move forward and new pledges are made, particularly so that refugee learners are not left behind in the wake of COVID-19-related disruptions.

- **Explore and implement innovative approaches to learning, such as digitalisation and connected classrooms,** to counteract the impact of the pandemic. This has reinforced the utility of distance and blended learning programmes to achieve access to tertiary education for displaced students.

- **Encourage meaningful participation and inclusion of refugees in education** in the design, implementation, and review of education interventions; this also helps in transitioning to eventual livelihood opportunities.

- **Conduct 'education equity audits' to inform governments' pandemic recovery planning and address inequities faced by refugee students and educators**. These need to be carried out through participatory and collaborative processes, acknowledging that teachers and education personnel are best placed to assess the impact and help design solutions for rapid and inclusive recovery in education.

PROMISING PRACTICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT - EDUCATION

The **Instant Network Schools** (INS) provided support in 56 schools for the benefit of close to 130,000 students and over 1,200 teachers in six African countries. By 2025, half a million students and over 10,000 teachers will benefit from transformed classrooms in 300 schools.

In **Egypt**, the INS aims to digitalise 108 public schools to enhance education programmes for Egyptian, refugee, and asylum-seeker students by 2025. So far, 18 public schools have been revamped and equipped with the technology and connectivity needed to run INS classrooms and programmes. In parallel, since the spread of COVID-19 for the second consecutive year, the Egyptian Ministry of Education exceptionally permitted all refugee and asylum-seeker students with expired documents and residency permits to enrol in and attend public schools, pending renewal of their documents.

The Education Alliance made significant progress providing psychosocial support, strengthening the capacity of teachers and caregivers, the third-country scholarship programme, strengthening education in emergency situations, on-line learning, and the launch in January 2021 of the **Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies by Switzerland and partners**.

The **International Parliamentary Network for Education and UNHCR** worked with parliamentarians to support them in implementing country pledges relating to education, which resulted in **six recommendations** to parliaments on how they can ensure refugee inclusion in national education.

Canada signed an agreement with the University of Bayreuth to provide grants and scholarships for refugees.

The **University of Clermont Auvergne**, in **France**, committed to welcoming refugees through UNIV'R, (**Universities for Refugees**), a university corridors project.

Germany launched the Hilde Domin Programme, which supports students and doctoral candidates worldwide, who are at risk of being denied educational rights in their country of origin, to begin or complete study or a research degree in Germany.

In line with the SSAR, **Iran** continued to ensure access to public education for Afghan refugees.

Turkey made significant progress in providing access to education.

The Council of Europe launched the European qualification passport.

Cameroon provided access to education is free of charge, starting in January 2021, to ensure refugees have the skills to contribute to the development of host countries and countries of origin upon return.

Recommendation 15: Provide refugees with healthcare through strengthened national systems.

- **Include refugees in national health systems and policies.** This has proven effective and beneficial to advance the health and wellbeing of both host communities and refugees alike, including in the context of COVID-19. This requires greater support to host countries to further capacitate their health infrastructures to cope with growing pressures and expand social health protection schemes with facilitate refugee self-reliance.

- **Systematically integrate mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in humanitarian and development planning**. Forcibly displaced people have suffered disproportionately from the pandemic, which led to increases in poverty, worsening of mental health, reduced mobility, and decreased opportunities to participate socially and economically in host countries. MHPSS has a transformative capacity to change passive victims into active survivors and promote their ability to cope better in situations of hardship and uncertainty. It contributes to peace of mind and dignity while promoting greater refugee participation.

- **Encourage a more refugee-inclusive response to health emergencies, including refugee access to testing, treatment, and vaccinations for COVID-19**. COVID-19 vaccine delivery needs to be upscaled to low- and middle-income countries to ensure that refugees and other displaced populations are protected. COVAX was noted as a beneficial mechanism to facilitate this.

- **Take steps to enable refugees to join the regular health workforce.** Refugees have made significant contributions by providing health services in host countries as doctors, nurses, and community health volunteers. Several countries advanced legislation, and more work is needed to advance this across countries and professions to allow refugees to make a meaningful contribution to their host countries and enhance their self-reliance.

- **Expand adaptations made to health services, such as switching to tele-medicine and remote case management** to benefit and provide greater access to more vulnerable refugees.

PROMISING PRACTICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT - HEALTH

Ghana enabled refugees to access national health systems, including its COVID-19 response and social security system.

Despite, the pandemic, **Brazil** provided access to basic services to Venezuelans displaced abroad (64,000), including access to COVID-19 vaccines.

Costa Rica included 10,000 vulnerable refugees in its national health insurance scheme.

In the **Asia-Pacific region**, all countries included persons of concern in their national COVID-19 response, including for vaccinations.

The Philippines included refugees and stateless persons in its COVID-19 National Economic Recovery Strategy.

In line with the SSAR Support Platform, **Iran** continued to ensure improved access to public health services, including COVID-19 vaccinations, with 52 per cent of refugees (1.4 million persons) fully vaccinated.

The **Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria** is mainstreaming the systematic inclusion of refugees and other forcibly displaced populations in country funding agreements. In the response to COVID-19, it included refugee and internally displaced persons' needs in the IGAD region as well as a number of countries, such as Uganda, Chad, and Bangladesh.

Jordan provides healthcare to refugees through the Jordan Health Fund for Refugees (accounts supported by donors) to reduce the burden on the health system in Jordan. Refugees and Jordanians alike benefited from the aspects of the response to COVID-19 (free examination, treatment, and vaccinations), and 49,858 refugees received free vaccinations.

The Netherlands enabled a fast MHPSS response during emergencies through a Surge Support Mechanism. Since 2020, experts have been deployed to Chad, Egypt, Kenya, Sudan, and Uganda.

GCR objective 3: Expand access to third-country solutions

Recommendation 16: Increase the volume of resettlement opportunities for refugees.

- **Provide multi-year commitments and expansion of existing programmes for resettlement and family reunification,** which are critical to ensuring family unity and strengthening integration prospects.

- **Broaden the base of countries providing resettlement opportunities.** Resettlement must remain a key lifesaving tool to protect those most at risk.

- **Ensure that complementary pathways remain additional to resettlement and family reunification**, and do not substitute for resettlement.

- **Expand multi-sectoral partnerships to facilitate, promote and advocate for third-country solutions**, including through broader participation of States and other stakeholders, including faith communities/leaders, grassroots organisations, and businesses.

- **Encourage greater community sponsorship** to create meaningful connections between local communities, sponsors, refugees, and the resettlement, and build a resilient way to engage and support refugee resettlement.

Recommendation 17: Build additional complementary pathways to third-country solutions.

- **Expand education pathways in third countries** through concerted commitments by universities, financial support, and strong partnerships.

- **Provide pathways for displaced and host-community scholars to work in academia.** 10,000 scholars and scientists are estimated to be looking for safe and dignified work in their fields of expertise.

- **Develop labour pathways through policy changes and private sector engagement** to enable refugees to access regular migration opportunities through employment in third countries.

- **Contribute financial or in-kind support for actors who are developing admission pathways.** For example, donors can support academic institutions, NGOs, and refugees themselves to ensure more third-country admission opportunities are made accessible in a predictable and sustainable manner with adequate safeguards,

- **Review and adjust legislation and policies** that continue to pose barriers to refugees.

- **Develop initiatives to reduce or cover the costs often incurred by refugees** and their families for travel and other elements of the process.

- **Provide pro bono legal representation for refugees** who face legal obstacles.

- **Give greater priority to family reunification**.

- **Simplify the application process** and provide additional assistance to support refugees to use it.

- **Remove barriers to labour and education pathways** preventing many qualified refugees from accessing them.

PROMISING PRACTICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT – RESETTLEMENT AND COMPLEMENTARY PATHWAYS

France committed to establishing the **UNIV'R (Universities for Refugees),** an expansion of the current University Corridors project. This project will enable 50 French-speaking refugees living in a targeted first country of asylum to study for a master's degree (2 years) within a higher education institution in France.

France committed 5,000 resettlement spaces for refugees in 2022.

The **City of Zurich,** as part of an alliance of Swiss cities, signalled its willingness to receive and include more refugees beyond the currently agreed distribution system for Switzerland's increased refugee admission and resettlement quota of 1,600 for 2022-2023.

The EU made considerable efforts to provide additional resettlement opportunities for refugees with some 26,400 resettled between 2020 and 2021.

The United States of America committed to building back resettlement capacity and infrastructure and set a goal for 125,000 arrivals in 2022.

Costa Rica created complementary protection mechanisms for people who do not qualify as refuges but cannot return to their countries of origin (over 25,000 beneficiaries in the area of labour).

The **Global Task Force on 3rd Country Education Pathways,** launched in May 2020, was one of the new advocacy platforms and communities of practice created to adopt innovative processes in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The States-led **Family Reunification Network** was launched in late 2020.

Community sponsorship programmes were launched in in **United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, and Spain,** and are under development in **Argentina, New Zealand, Australia, Belgium, and the United States of America**.

Australia announced a two-year pilot furthering employment pathways for up to 100 skilled refugees.

Canada has an Economic Mobility Pathways pilot programme in place for 500 refugees and family members, which was increased to 2,000 after the HLOM.

The **United Kingdom** has put in place the Displaced Talent Mobility programme, which has so far brought 25 nurses to the country.

Canada, Finland, France, Iceland, Ireland, and Norway increased their resettlement targets.

SWITZERLAND. *Family reunited after children who crossed desert were captured in Libya. © UNHCR/Mark Henley*

GCR objective 4: Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity

Recommendation 18: Mobilise more resources in support of voluntary return.

- **Provide increased financing for governments and other stakeholders to support and enable voluntary return.**
- **Use the 2023 GRF pledging process to demonstrate and mobilise increased commitments of resources in support of voluntary return**.

Recommendation 19: Strengthen the planning and implementation of voluntary return.

- **Ensure return planning is based on protection standards and principles,** including ensuring that refugee returns are well-informed, voluntary, and take place in safety and dignity.
- **Plan and secure resources for reintegration measures** early on in any voluntary return process.
- **Ensure that returning refugees can safely access justice systems and legal support.**
- **Underpin voluntary return and reintegration with investments in national capacities and systems**.
- **Direct development investments into strengthening local economies and service provision systems** that serve both returnees and host communities.
- **Apply programmes and approaches that enhance social cohesion**, including area-based investments (rather than population-based investments).

PROMISING PRACTICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT – VOLUNTARY RETURN

Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, and South Sudan demonstrated a strong political will in support of returns, coupled with legal and policy frameworks, which need financial support for their implementation.

Regional frameworks, such as regional **support platforms, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Nairobi process, and South Sudan Solutions Initiative** are examples how regional and international actors can play a pivotal role in attaining solutions through return and reintegration.

The **SSAR support platform** has shown how Platforms can be flexible mechanisms to deal with a new reality, while continuing investments and efforts toward stability and eventual return to Afghanistan.

The **World Bank Group** demonstrated integrated development approaches to support reintegration.

UNDP has been scaling up in over 40 countries to support reintegration programmes in the communities of origin, including in the areas of access to justice, strengthening the capacity of local governments, and access to work and self-reliance.

Recommendation 20: Improve cooperation to address root causes and build peace in countries of origin.

- **Mobilise increased development and peace capacities to address root causes in countries of origin**; invest in post-conflict reconstruction to re-establish basic infrastructure and services and increase access to services, resources, and livelihoods). Development actors are central to assessing and responding to the mid- to longer-term development needs in areas of return.

- **Increase early investment in peacebuilding and conflict prevention** including demobilisation, de-mining, re-strengthening the rule of law, restitution of property, resolution of property disputes, reparations, community reconciliation, transitional justice, building inclusive and nationally owned political transitions; and research into past and present drivers of conflict / enablers of peace.

- **Strengthen the cooperation between political, humanitarian, development, peace, and financing actors** to prevent and resolve conflict, remove obstacles to return, and enable conditions favourable to voluntary repatriation and reintegration.

- **Ensure ongoing dialogue with communities** to inform policy, planning, and programming in situations of return and reintegration and foster conditions favourable to reintegration.

- **Strengthen and support the peacebuilding aspect of responses to refugee and returnee situations,** engaging with civil society, faith-based organisations, religious leaders and communities, and the peace arm of the United Nations to prevent tension and conflict and address root causes.

PROMISING PRACTICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT - ADDRESSING ROOT CAUSES AND BUILDING PEACE

Egypt's Aswan Forum is an example of how a multilateral effort towards including displacement considerations in broader peacebuilding efforts is critical to sustainable solutions.

The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) issued **a statement** dedicated to forced displacement and sustaining peace, reiterating its commitment to "help address, as appropriate within its mandate and though its country and regional engagements, root causes of displacement".

In 2021, **the Secretary General's Peacebuilding Fund** addressed issues related to displacement and host communities through an estimated 17 projects with a total budget of around USD 50 million.

In **Darfur, Sudan,** the PBSO, through a joint project with UNDP, UN Habitat, and UNHCR, works to resolve land disputes and supports consultations amongst community members, working with local governments and their land institutions to manage conflicts of land registration in more transparent ways, which are consistently highlighted as priorities by both internally displaced and host communities.

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, a PBSO programme supports the peaceful collaboration of the Twa and Bantu communities for voluntary return, as well as livelihoods work, dialogue, and collaboration structures between them.

Under the ambit of the Support Platform of the SSAR, interagency partners implement **the Community-based Protection and Solutions Programme Response** (Co-PRPOSPER) in 55 Priority Areas of Return and Reintegration to promote peacebuilding at the grassroots level through conflict-sensitive, HDP nexus programming, particularly in the sectors of health, education, and livelihoods.