

## Written submission

### Global Compact on Refugees: First Thematic Consultation

#### *Past and Current Approaches to Responsibility- and Burden-Sharing*

*This written submission supplements Canada's oral interventions delivered at the first Thematic Consultation on July 10, 2017.*

With the adoption of the New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants, the international community reaffirmed the principles of refugee protection and committed to an improved global response to large refugee movements rooted in more equitable responsibility-sharing. The development of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), including through the practical application of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and elaboration of a Programme of Action, provides a valuable opportunity for states to build on past and current experiences in order to forge a new way forward.

We wish to thank the UNHCR for inviting states to consider the key elements of past and current responsibility-sharing arrangements at the first Thematic Consultation. This discussion offered an important opportunity to reflect on the case studies presented, and to identify achievements, gaps, and lessons learned in relation to contemporary refugee situations and the pillars of the CRRF. These reflections provided a basis for all stakeholders to reflect on the varying and differentiated contributions that can be made towards responsibility-sharing arrangements, and on specific elements that could be included in the Programme of Action.

Canada is pleased to share its reflections in this regard. In particular, we wish to highlight three avenues by which to advance greater responsibility-sharing, which we believe will increase both the volume and efficiency of resources dedicated to refugee responses. The suggested approaches are grounded in increased collaboration and coordination at all levels, and are proposed for consideration in the Programme of Action:

#### **1) Increased use of whole-of-society approaches**

In Canada's experience, responsibility-sharing is best advanced through 'whole-of-society' approaches, which adds significantly to the effectiveness and sustainability of all contributions.

The GCR should elaborate and define the core elements that contribute to whole-of-society approaches, including concrete recommendations on how these may be implemented. From Canada's perspective, this includes:

***Fostering cross-sector engagement:*** Whole-of-society approaches should encompass and collaboratively engage the diverse and broad range of governmental and civil society actors, including but not limited to those from the refugee protection, humanitarian, development, stabilization and private sectors at the international, national and sub-national levels.

Structurally, whole-of-society approaches can be quite successful when built around horizontal structures that clearly define roles and responsibilities, outline core objectives and governance

arrangements, and share information in a timely and accurate way. Within government, the large-scale resettlement of refugees from Syria, Indochina, and Kosovo to Canada was made possible by the coordinated efforts of multiple federal organizations, through taskforces and enabling legislation and in collaboration with international, national, and local partners. More broadly, the UNHCR, the IOM, host governments, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments in Canada, corporate and community private sponsors, and NGOs all contributed to these initiatives, and brought the necessary goodwill, expertise and capabilities needed to ensure their success.

***Encouraging participatory approaches:*** Whole-of-society approaches should work with refugee and host communities, whether in countries of asylum or resettlement, to contribute to refugee protection and foster inclusion through participatory approaches.

To realize the effectiveness and sustainability that stem from refugee inclusion and empowered communities, whole-of-society approaches should ensure that multiple stakeholders are directly engaged in developing and implementing strategies for comprehensive refugee responses. In Canada's experience, private sponsorship programs and public informational and media campaigns have all helped to ensure the active participation of hosting communities in welcoming refugees and supporting their paths to self-reliance. Robust civil society activity has also proven essential for refugee inclusion, and may be encouraged through formal or informal partnerships, information sharing, and funding.

***Integrating gender equality:*** Whole-of-society approaches should ensure that the protection, inclusion and participation of refugee women and girls are fully considered and taken into account in shaping and implementing responses. Gender sensitivities should be mainstreamed across all refugee policies and programs in order to address the specific risks faced by women and girls and recognize their capacities and resilience in the face of adversity. Contextually appropriate and gender-sensitive programs and flexible legislative provisions can further help to harness the many assets, skills, and resources that communities and refugees may bring.

***Laying the groundwork:*** In order to mobilize such whole-of-society responses and achieve more predictable and increased international cooperation, the Programme of Action should include measures that foster the required resources, cross-sector contributions, collaborative engagement, and national and regional action plans needed to implement comprehensive refugee responses in emerging and protracted refugee situations.

## **2) Increased capacity for resettlement and complementary pathways**

Globally, we face a staggering shortfall in resettlement spaces. Even if relatively small in relation to the vast numbers of refugees being hosted, establishing and growing traditional resettlement programs, community sponsorship models, and complementary pathways are important means to provide protection to refugees without another viable durable solution and to demonstrate solidarity with, and ease pressure on, refugee hosting states. Canada believes that this important avenue of responsibility-sharing should be expanded by:

***Growing global resettlement capacity:*** Collectively, we need to increase the number of refugee resettlement spots available. Established and emerging resettlement countries should be encouraged to

contribute to global resettlement capacity through traditional resettlement programs and private or community-based sponsorship initiatives.

Private sponsorship has proven to be an important method for Canada to resettle refugees, dating back to its experience in resettling Indochinese refugees. At the time, Canada's newly launched Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) program helped to resettle over half of the 60,000 Indochinese refugees that arrived between 1979 and 1980, while efficiently providing for the material needs of incoming families. Even more importantly, it demonstrated how small groups of community members, much like host families in front-line countries, can help foster refugee protection and inclusion in new societies. In partnership with the UNHCR, the Open Society Foundation, the University of Ottawa, and the Radcliffe Foundation, Canada is now working to share its experience with private refugee sponsorship and increase refugee resettlement spaces globally through the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative.

In addition to these mechanisms, states should also explore ways to relieve pressure on global resettlement needs through the use of innovative complementary pathways, including labour mobility schemes, family reunification, or refugee scholarship programs, and by routing would-be resettlement cases through other immigration programs.

***Better coordination and knowledge-sharing on major resettlement initiatives:*** States should be encouraged to create spaces for established and emerging resettlement states to coordinate activities and share experiences and technical expertise, including through Core and Contact groups.

In Canada's experience, Core and Contact groups, which are established through the agreement of resettlement States and UNHCR, have provided important opportunities for advancing refugees' resettlement needs and ensuring coordinated, multi-annual approaches to resettlement. The Syrian Core Group,<sup>1</sup> for example, has offered a valuable forum for established and emerging resettlement states to share information, coordinate activities, and develop technical expertise and best practices. In coordination with this group, Canada welcomed over 37,000 Syrian refugees between November 2015 and December 2016, and is working to resettle an additional 10,000 Syrian refugees by the end of 2017.

### ***3) Increased coherence between humanitarian, stabilization, and development resources and actors***

Contributions of support for humanitarian assistance, stabilization programming, and development assistance are avenues by which actors can contribute in differentiated ways towards greater responsibility-sharing. Canada firmly believes that revised international approaches to providing assistance in protracted crises, including the New Way of Working and the Grand Bargain, offer critical opportunities for increasing refugee self-reliance, support to host countries, and possibilities to advance durable solutions. Increased coherence and engagement between humanitarian, stabilization and development interventions through joint analysis of needs and vulnerabilities and the development of

---

<sup>1</sup> The Syria Core Group currently consists of 29 member and observer states, including Argentina (observer), Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil (observer), Canada, Chile (observer), Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, Mexico (observer), Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland (observer), Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay, as well as the European Union, the International Organization for Migration, and UNHCR.

collective outcomes should be advanced, wherever possible and appropriate. To this end, Canada has been seeking to foster greater coherence among its humanitarian, stabilization, and development responses to the Syria crisis.

More specifically, Canada is taking a comprehensive and integrated approach to the Middle East, committing \$1.6 billion to the region along humanitarian, development, stabilization and military lines of effort. As part of this commitment, Canada is providing \$840 million in multiyear, predictable humanitarian funding to Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon, allowing humanitarian partners the flexibility to plan and respond to emerging needs. Canada is also delivering \$270 million in bilateral development programming for Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon to improve the resilience of local populations and communities to withstand, and recover from, the conflicts in those areas and to support a transition to stability and prosperity in the longer term. For example, Canadian development and humanitarian assistance is supporting increased access to, and quality of, education services to both refugee and host communities in Jordan, taking into account the particular situation of women and girls.

Canada strongly believes that working together to build more collaborative and innovative approaches to durable solutions, support for host communities, and increased self-reliance for refugees will enable a more predictable and comprehensive response to major displacement situations. At the same time, we must also acknowledge the limits of humanitarian action and development assistance, as well as resettlement and complementary pathways, and recognize the critical importance of finding political solutions to persecution and armed conflict.

Drafted: IRCC/Morgan  
Consulted: MHO, PVP, MGS, IOP, PRMNY, GENEV  
Approved: MHD

## Annex: Canadian Delegation Statement

### *As delivered*

Global Compact on Refugees: First Thematic Consultation  
“Past and Current Approaches to Responsibility- and Burden-Sharing”  
Geneva - July 10, 2017

Thank you Chair,

We welcome this opportunity to reflect on past and current responsibility sharing arrangements as we work together to fulfill our commitments to more equitable responsibility and burden sharing that will guide our way forward.

We commend the significant contributions of countries hosting large numbers of refugees, including those applying the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.

And we thank the panelists for sharing their experiences. Looking across these presentations we would highlight the following:

**First** is the important idea of the whole of society approach. The State Minister of Lebanon highlighted the importance of the role that local communities play, and other panelists also alluded to this. The whole of society approach is also relevant to donor countries and resettlement countries. Canada believes that this approach can contribute to generating positive political will. In our experience, a whole of society approach also leads to more effective and sustainable responses.

We hope that the development of the Global Compact for Refugees will provide an opportunity to further define what is meant by a whole of society approach and how we can implement it.

In this regard we stress that the whole of society approach must incorporate the protection, inclusion and participation of women and girls.

**Second**, with regards to resettlement and complementary pathways, we believe that these continue to be important avenues of responsibility sharing.

Capacity building and sharing of experiences can be helpful in this regard and we stand ready to share our experiences. It has been Canada's experience that sharing technical expertise enables a more predictable response through increased capacity and more active multi-stakeholder engagement.

**Third**, we appreciated hearing the examples of implementation of positive reforms in the humanitarian and development world from the panelists, such as the New Way of Working and the Grand Bargain. We believe we should be building on these examples of increased coherence between humanitarian, stabilization and development resources and actors through joint planning, analysis and implementation where possible. We recognize this takes time, and yet we strongly believe that the international community must work collectively and across mandates to effectively reduce vulnerability. This has been Canada's approach in our support to the response to the Syria crisis.

Working together, to build more collaborative and innovative approaches to durable solutions, will enable a more predictable and comprehensive response to major displacement situations.

Finally, we must also recognize the limits of humanitarian action and development assistance and the critical importance of finding political solutions to situations of persecution and armed conflict.

Thank you.