

Standing Committee presentation
Partnerships and coordination

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Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Introduction

It is a pleasure for me to be here with you to present you the item on partnerships and coordination.

This presentation will outline:

- Our general approach to partnerships, and actions taken to strengthen this approach
- Updates on partnership developments during the reporting period: multilateral; UN; Red Cross; NGO
- Our approach to coordination, and actions taken towards refugee and IDP coordination

UNHCR's approach to partnerships

The Deputy High Commissioner yesterday painted the broad outlines of our partnership approach.

Partnerships for UNHCR is a means of working together inclusively with all relevant partners towards a shared goal of upholding international protection for refugees and others of concern.

Partnerships must result in meaningful action for the people we serve. For that reason, UNHCR groups strategic partnerships with **field coordination**, ensuring that Headquarters agreements and policies actually work, accommodate ground realities, and meet needs.

We maintain relationships with some 1,000 partners, including NGOs, governmental institutions and UN agencies; and we channel 40 per cent of annual expenditure through partners.

Partnership approaches are grounded in:

- SDG 17: partnerships for the goals
- New York Declaration: in particular the CRRF, which is our new way of working
- Strategic Directions: which call upon us to strengthen and diversify partnership with a broad range of actors

UNHCR actions – restructuring to consolidate and focus

What have we done to strengthen strategic partnerships and coordination at UNHCR?

The UNHCR Headquarters review recommended consolidating partnership management and coordination in the organization. At 1 February 2018, a reconfigured Partnership and Coordination Service was established and is responsible for relations with humanitarian partners, including NGOs, as well as for steering UNHCR's engagement in inter-agency processes in the humanitarian context.

This change aims to ensure that we approach partnerships strategically and coherently, with a focus on operations, and to enable clear direction and leadership. A new Division of Resilience and Solutions was also established to guide the Office's engagement in solutions. This teams includes seconded staff from ICRC, IOM, OCHA, UNDP, WB, NGOs, UNICEF (expected).

To ensure that partnership approaches are coherent, strategic directions are set under Executive Office leadership, and through close teamwork between DRS, PCS and others.

Multilateral partnerships

Multilateral fora provide ideal venues to multiply efforts for refugees, through mainstreaming refugees in wider policies, and through building alliances and coalitions.

CEB/HLCP/HLCM

We contribute to the Chief Executives Board and its subsidiary bodies:

- CEB: HC an active contributor to SG's focus on **reinventing the UN** for the future
- HLCM, where the Deputy High Commissioner leads the initiative on **'duty of care'**
- HLCP, where it contributed to policy-making on **'frontier issues'**, such as automated weaponry, rising inequalities, the future of food/work, etc

IASC

We remain deeply engaged in the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). We have been a force behind **IASC reform** to lend it greater coherence and weight, notably through rationalizing structures (EDG and WG), and through supporting the newly established **'Deputies Forum'**.

UN system and Red Cross Movement

Turning to our UN and Red Cross partners, a few non-exhaustive examples of cooperation.

- **WFP**: We signed an MOU addendum on **cash assistance** and are elaborating one on **data sharing**.
- **With OCHA**, we continue to work closely on all aspects of coordination, joint endeavour and the IASC; and we hope to further cement our relationship with a Principals level bilateral later this month.
- With **UNICEF**, we held an intense senior level bilateral last year, and are working on including people of concern in development plans.
- With **IOM** we have enhanced collaboration in mixed movements and are developing standard operating procedures to identify and protect victims of trafficking
- With UNFPA, UNHCR negotiated an MOU, which was signed last week.
- With **OCHCR** we have led an inter-agency team on the "leave no one behind" programming principle to ensure it was reflected in the updated UNDAF guidance.
- With ILO, we are implementing our 2016 MOU
- **UNDP** and UNHCR conducted a joint review of their partnership in order to identify key strategic areas for common engagement. Efforts have also been made to increase the inclusion of persons of concern in UNDP's rule of law and governance programmes.
- We work closely with the **IFRC**, including as co-lead organizations of the global shelter cluster for internal displacement situations

- We deepened our collaboration with the **ICRC**, both on operational and doctrinal issues, building on comparative advantages, expertise and mandates.

Non-governmental organizations

NGOs, particularly national NGOs, are our lifeblood – they are on the frontlines of emergency assistance, and they tend the flame when the cameras have gone. I have just taken on the responsibility for strategic relationship with NGO as of 1 February, and am energized by my meetings and discussions with NGOs and their consortia thus far.

In 2017, we disbursed \$1.5 billion to over 1,000 partners, including approximately \$1.24 billion to over 800 national and international NGOs. This represents an increase of \$87 million compared to the previous year. UNHCR is committed to reaching its “grand bargain” target to provide 25 per cent of its programme expenditures to local and national responses; in 2017, we reached 21 per cent. Some \$699 million was provided to 826 local partners. **This is the highest number of local partners recorded by UNHCR.**

We also work closely with NGO partners on the **annual NGO consultations**, which last year brought together over 500 participants. This year, our theme is ‘putting people first’.

Financial institutions

UNHCR and the **World Bank** undertook 11 joint missions in 2017 to support the World Bank International Development Assistance (IDA) 2018-2020 refugee and host community sub-window. Eight countries, hosting 4.1 million refugees, are now eligible to access financing. UNHCR is an observer to the Steering Committee Meetings of the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF). To date, in just over 12 months of formal operation, the GCFF has mobilized \$400 million, supporting projects with concessional financing to the value of over \$1 billion.

In 2017, UNHCR strengthened its collaboration with the African Development Bank (**AfDB**), focusing on support to UNHCR projects in Cameroon, Niger and Zimbabwe.

Civil society

We are taking new steps with this group, including exploring partnerships with popular movements, refugee-led organizations, municipalities and faith based bodies.

The private sector

Private sector partners not only make vital financial contributions to UNHCR, but are key collaborators in developing innovative and cost-effective solutions for persons of concern. Non-financial contributions are varied and include in-kind contributions, expertise, pro-bono support, access to networks and centres of influence, and advocacy efforts.

Notable contributions in 2017 included – to name just two -- the **Vodafone** Foundation’s work with UNHCR on connected learning activities, and our longstanding partnership with **UNIQLO** has led to in-kind donations of nearly 5 million pieces of clothing for persons of concern in 16 countries, and the financing of livelihoods and skills training programmes.

UNHCR is an active participant in **WEF** activities, and is currently exploring the opportunities provided by the WEF platform to expand its outreach to interested enterprises.

Coordination

For UNHCR, coordination is how we exercise leadership and accountability for refugees in an inclusive manner, providing a platform for partners to contribute. The heart of our response is the Refugee Coordination Model, which operationalizes the international protection, enabling governments and organizations to work together and coherently to protect and assist refugees. A large and diverse group of partners is indispensable to making this work.

A key element of my Service's function has been to provide intensive support to field operations to enable them to establish optimized, inclusive and adapted coordination models.

We continued to work on joint regional planning and analysis and on national protection and solutions strategies developed under the leadership of Regional Refugee Coordinators. In 2017, UNHCR issued five regional refugee response plans, covering 19 countries. Regional Refugee Coordinators, responsible for leading operational coordination, planning and resource mobilization, were appointed for the Burundi situation and the South Sudan emergency, and extended for the Nigeria and Syria situations.

Through refugee response plans, host governments and UNHCR jointly coordinated the work of nearly 700 partners, with a combined budget of over \$3.6 billion, representing 55 per cent of all requirements identified by UNHCR and its partners. Of the \$3.6 billion raised, approximately \$2.38 billion was allocated to partners.

Partnering for internal displacement

UNHCR's strategic directions stress that IDPs form an integral part of the Office's response efforts. In 2017, we reviewed our engagement in IDP situations. The recommendations from this internal review are now being implemented, and at the same time, UNHCR is working with OCHA and other partners on ways to highlight the issue of internal displacement.

We are an active partner on internal displacement in the IASC, where we continue to lead the global protection cluster (GPC) and co-lead the global shelter cluster and the global camp coordination camp management cluster (CCCM).

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

Partnership is embedded in our Statute and imprinted in our DNA. Our revitalized posture should help us to push ahead with this signature approach.