Refugees’ inclusion and participation in Delegations

Guidance Note

UNHCR welcomes the inclusion of refugees in State and other stakeholder delegations to the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) 2023. Should refugees be included as part of your in-person delegation, please be aware that it is the stakeholder’s responsibility to:

- ensure that the refugees follow the event in a meaningful manner.
- inform UNHCR that refugees will be included in your delegation. UNHCR will organize activities with refugee delegates invited to the GRF both during and in advance of the GRF; other refugees participating in the GRF are welcome to join such activities, including a preparatory briefing on protection risks, logistics, and communications.
- ensure that refugee members of the delegation are registered in Indico (registration closes on December 1, 2023) and their letter of accreditation from the respective country/organization uploaded.
- cover the costs of and support arrangements for visa application and travel arrangements.

What are the General Meaningful Participation Considerations?

Protection Considerations

- Do no harm. Assess and prevent protection risks, which may range from misuse of personal data and verbal and written threats/harassment to interference in refugee/stateless status determination and resettlement, arbitrary detention, deportation, persecution, gender-based violence and discrimination, physical abuse, and other types of ill-treatment.

- Safe transportation and accommodation: Consider protection risks and communication barriers when arranging flights and stopovers for refugee delegates, particularly for people with disabilities, LGBTQI+ persons, women, and girls.

- Fulfil basic needs: Refugees might not be able to participate in events due to financial and/or practical barriers, including the risk of losing income/education opportunities, food insecurity, and lack of resources to afford childcare and shelter. As this should not be a barrier for participation, expenses should be fully covered and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) should be facilitated by the stakeholder including the refugee in their delegation, as needed.

Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) Considerations

- Promote Inclusive participation: Observe gender parity and address specific needs and capacities of refugees.

- Prioritize refugee-led approach: Where existing, engage local and national refugee-led structures to identify/support the identification of refugees to participate in the event.
Meaningful Participation Considerations

✓ **Manage expectations:** Clarify event outcomes and limitations with regard to timing and extent of the impact on the ground and maintain communication on the next steps and follow-up actions after the event. Participation is not a guarantee of immediate change.

✓ **Raise political awareness:** Ensure information on political sensitivities and terminology is shared to ensure respectful and diplomatic communication before and during the GRF.

✓ **Brief refugees on relevant subject matter prior to the meeting:** Including on the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Refugee Forum.

✓ **Recognize refugees as agents of change:** Refugees have independent advocacy voices. Support the inclusion of diverse perspectives of refugees in their interactions and engagement in preparation for and during the GRF.