

## **Summary of the Second Quarterly Preparatory Meeting for the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025**

*24 June 2025, 15:00-17:00 hours CEST – International Labour Organization, Geneva*

The second quarterly preparatory meeting for the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) Progress Review 2025, the second high-level officials' meeting (HLOM), took place on 24 June 2025 and focused on event preparations, progress on pledge implementation and overall stocktaking.

### **Opening remarks by Ambassador Akram Sa'ud Harahsheh, Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations Office at Geneva**

Ambassador Harahsheh co-chaired the second preparatory meeting on behalf of Jordan, one of the co-convenors of the Global Refugee Forum 2023. He emphasized the growing urgency of international solidarity in the face of rising global displacement and deepening funding shortfalls. Stressing the importance of sustaining emergency operations, he highlighted the importance of implementation of GRF pledges, with close to 600 pledges fulfilled and over 1,300 in progress. He expressed hope that the GRF Progress Review 2025, the second high-level officials' meeting, would serve as a moment for stocktaking, renewal of commitments, and course correction. Ambassador Harahsheh reaffirmed Jordan's commitment to the GCR process and called for predictable support to major host countries. He underscored that policy pledges must be matched with financial backing, and that the GRF Progress Review should help realign resources in line with international responsibility-sharing by identifying gaps, strengthening partnerships and ensuring "a space of action, results, and hope".

### **Opening remarks by Ms. Ruvendrini Menikdiwela, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection**

Ms. Menikdiwela acknowledged the deepening global crises of strained resources and multilateralism under pressure, and underscored the GRF Progress Review 2025 as a pivotal opportunity to reinvigorate international unity, deliver concrete impact, and take decisive action. She emphasized the GCR as a morally sound and strategically wise blueprint for a new form of multilateralism that continues to be relevant, referencing recent public support for refugee protection, as exemplified in [a recent global Ipsos survey](#). Ms. Ruvendrini also highlighted the potential economic contributions of refugees to their host communities, citing the example of Ukrainian refugees in Poland, who accounted for 2.7% of GDP in 2024. She called on stakeholders to lean into pledge matching and reaffirm their commitment to the multi-stakeholder pledge (MSP) framework as a means to better coordinate responses to forced displacement. Ms. Menikdiwela also stressed the importance of meaningful engagement with forcibly displaced and stateless people to shape the GCR policy process and expressed deep gratitude for Switzerland's support in this regard. Reflecting on the situation in Syria, she acknowledged the complex realities of return and reiterated the need for sustainable voluntary solutions that respect safety and dignity. Reaffirming that the GCR remains a guiding compass, she pointed to the GRF Progress Review 2025 as a moment to turn momentum into impact through political will and solidarity.

### **Update from by Mr. Nicolas Brass, Senior Policy Adviser and Head of the Global Compact on Refugees Coordination Team, UNHCR**

Mr. Brass provided a comprehensive update on preparations for the GRF Progress Review 2025, reaffirming that while the original event Roadmap was adapted due to a shifting environment, the process and preparations remain on track. He introduced the first preliminary mapping of programme themes, developed through consultations to date, and informed that further consultations, including with forcibly displaced and stateless people and their organizations, will shape the final agenda. The primary entry point for engagement in the programme is through the multi-stakeholder pledge framework, as there will be no call for proposals for side events. Member State engagement will also be facilitated by UNHCR's Regional Bureaux. A concept note will be issued shortly, which will contain more information on the GRF Progress Review and programme modalities.

Mr. Brass underscored the importance of stocktaking as both a backward- and forward-looking exercise, with regional, thematic, and country-level stocktaking ongoing (see the [stocktaking calendar](#)). He called on stakeholders to report on pledge implementation, emphasizing that there is no cut-off date for reporting, and that the second outreach campaign is planned for October 2025. Mr. Brass also reiterated the evolving role of the matching concept, presenting lessons learned to date, including emerging good practices. Stressing matching remains a priority, Mr. Brass presented key considerations for policy and financial pledgers to follow to increase instances of pledge matching. He announced the release of the third [GCR Indicator Report](#) in November 2025, which will inform discussions at the GRF Progress Review. While the ambition is to retain the inclusive, action-oriented spirit of the GRF, budgetary constraints will impact on the programme. Mr. Brass reaffirmed that meaningful refugee participation will be a central feature and called for continued collaboration to maintain momentum toward the four GCR objectives.

### Multi-stakeholder pledge (MSP) presentations

- 1. [Meaningful Refugee Participation Multi-stakeholder Pledge](#)**  
**Ms. Najeeba Wazefadost**, Chief Executive Director, Asia Pacific Network of Refugees, stressed that meaningful refugee participation (MRP) must remain at the center of the discussions leading to the GRF Progress Review 2025 and be embedded across the pledging process. She updated on the pledge leadership, which includes three new refugee-led organizations, and reported that the pledge workplan this year centers on three priorities: (i) mainstreaming MRP across all MSPs; (ii) monitoring progress of pledges under the MRP MSP; and (iii) collective advocacy to ensure MRP remains a central agenda. As some pledging entities lack clear understanding of what constitutes MRP, leading to varied reporting, she stressed the need for practical guidance, which the MRP pledge will develop.
- 2. [Achieving 15% Enrolment by 2030 to Expanding Refugee Access to Higher Education and Self-Reliance Multi-stakeholder Pledge](#)**  
**Professor Address Mauakowa Malata**, Vice Chancellor, Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST), reported on the 16 June convening of the [Global 15by30 Refugee Higher Education Conference](#) in Istanbul, with the Tertiary Refugee Student Network (TRSN) and pledge leaders. She reminded attendees that 109 pledges contribute to this MSP, including 27 State pledges. Prof. Malata updated on the newly launched [Each One Take One \(EOTO\) initiative](#), a global solidarity movement of universities that includes refugee learners through the pledge. She explained that MUST engages youth from Dzaleka refugee camp, sponsoring scholarships, launching bridging and mentoring programmes, and prioritizing refugee inclusion, and called upon other universities to join.
- 3. [MIRPS Multi-stakeholder Pledge – Strengthening asylum systems, integration, local governance and statistical inclusion](#)**  
**Ms. Tinoco Monge**, Minister-Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations in Geneva, shared that the 2025 MIRPS Regional Action Plan helps translate the four regional MIRPS pledges into concrete actions, yielding progress in strengthening asylum systems and the development of a regional model to assess vulnerabilities in collaboration with the Regional Conference on Migration. She also reported advancements in addressing internal displacement, such as enhanced capacity on data protection and analysis, and community participation, supported by the [“ABC on Internal Displacement”](#). On solutions, increased access to employment, training, financial services has been achieved, and new regional guidelines to address gender-based violence have been issued. Ms. Monge reported on a joint session with Colombia held on 16 May to take stock of MIRPS pledge implementation and strengthened coordination with regional processes such as the Chile Action Plan, the Quito Process, and the Platform on Disaster Displacement in the months ahead.
- 4. [Asylum Capacity Support Group \(ACSG\) Multi-stakeholder Pledge](#)**  
**Ms. Cindy Munro**, Minister-Counsellor (Migration and Refugee Affairs), Permanent Mission of Canada to the UN in Geneva, provided an update on the Asylum Capacity Support Group MSP. She reported progress towards pledges made at the GRFs in 2019 and 2023 and successful matching of nine policy pledges with support offers. This includes Canada’s partnerships with Mexico, through the Regional Asylum Capacity Building Initiative (RACBI), and Costa Rica, to meet their asylum

modernization goals; as well as new matches between France and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The [ACSG Portal](#), a key resource for knowledge exchange, now hosts 37 good practices, while the [Dialogue Platform](#), launched to address common global asylum system challenges, has held six events with three more planned for 2025. Canada made four pledges on asylum capacity building and protection and completed a [mapping on asylum adjudication needs across the Americas](#) to guide further capacity building. Canada called on States and stakeholders to implement outstanding pledges, foster new partnerships, and contribute expertise via the ACSG Portal and Dialogue Platform.

5. **[Accelerate and Better Leverage Humanitarian-Development-Peace \(HDP\) Nexus Approaches in Forced Displacement Settings Multi-stakeholder Pledge](#)**

**Mr. Ishida Toshifumi**, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Japan to the UN in Geneva, highlighted how the pledge has transformed into a convening platform which aligns with other GRF commitments in areas such as agriculture and climate action. The pledge's policy agenda has been advanced through six roundtables convened to build momentum, share good practices, and identify scalable models of HDP implementation. It has sparked momentum around alternative financing mechanisms, including outcome-based models, blended finance, and climate-linked investments. He concluded on the central objective of expanding the MSP network with more host countries, development banks, regional organizations, and private sector actors.

6. **[Economic Inclusion and Social Protection Multi-stakeholder Pledge](#)**

**Ms. Karie Diener**, on behalf of the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative, reported that the MSP group now supports over 280 individual pledges, including 88 from States. Nine States have made significant progress, with five adopting new laws and policies, such as Kenya's [Shirika Plan](#), [Ethiopia's Directive No. 1019/2024](#), and [Zambia's National Refugee Policy and Implementation Plan](#). She noted that at least 500,000 forcibly displaced and stateless people and host community members have been reached through programming, with private sector involvement in skills development and job creation. Pledge partners have hosted 13 learning events and completed 20 research projects, including three led by refugees. Ms. Diener shared stocktaking highlights, including: Mexico's Local Integration Programme placing 50,000 refugees in jobs with over 600 companies; Germany's Socio-Economic Inclusion Programme creating over 52,000 jobs; Inkomoko's USD 11 million investment supporting 30,000 small businesses Africa; and IGAD's policy progress. She emphasized the interconnected benefits of refugee inclusion, citing Brazil's [Companies with Refugees Forum](#), which expanded to 140 members and has helped employ over 12,000 refugees and migrants. Looking ahead, she underscored the importance of decentralized implementation and stronger evidence generation, while highlighting challenges around sustainable financing, recognition of refugee qualifications, and political/legal barriers.

**Discussion and interventions**

- **France** reaffirmed its commitment to the GCR and stressed the importance of international responsibility sharing and the need to act now on pledges made, citing as a success the match between France and the DRC. As *Avec Elles* Multi-stakeholder Pledge lead, France aims to mobilize other public and private partners for the protection and inclusion of refugee women and girls, and will convene a meeting on 30 June to review progress and mobilize support towards the GRF Progress Review.
- **Switzerland** stressed the importance of engagement across all four GCR objectives as we chart the path towards December and looks forward as Co-host to welcome delegations from across the globe. Expressing satisfaction that meaningful refugee participation is gaining increased attention, Switzerland noted the significant progress made when refugees are active participants rather than passive recipients, noting there is a long way ahead to ensure effective participation. Switzerland announced it would support 107 refugee participants in the GRF Progress Review 2025 and include a refugee expert as part of their government delegation, encouraging other States to follow suit. The participation of over 300 refugees was seen as one of the most notable outcomes of the GRF 2023, and Switzerland shared its hope for the same degree of participation in December.

- **Uganda** reaffirmed its commitment to the GCR, emphasizing that while not legally binding, it is the outcome of an intensive two-year consultation process involving States and stakeholders. Uganda stressed that while its policy pledges are progressive, they are only impactful when effectively matched with support and welcomed in this regard the update received on the pledge matching concept. Uganda highlighted its focus on self-reliance, including through pledging, and thanked Japan for consistent support in advancing agricultural initiatives that promote food security and self-reliance, encouraging other donors to follow suit. Uganda welcomed the GRF Progress Review title as a clear reminder that the meeting is about progress. Cautioning against the event becoming a procedural exercise, Uganda emphasized the need for sustained follow-up to ensure commitments are upheld.
- **Iraq** welcomed ongoing preparations for the GRF Progress Review 2025 and inquired whether clear benchmarks are in place to assess progress made in pledge implementation ahead of the event. Iraq also inquired if UNHCR plans to establish a joint review mechanism for pledges that would facilitate the exchange of lessons learned and best practices among different stakeholders.
- **The European Union (EU)** reported notable progress on its 2023 pledges, having fulfilled 5 out of 15, including on the Rohingya and Afghanistan situations, statistical inclusion, children's rights, and asylum space. Financial commitments were exceeded — for example EUR 95 million was disbursed to the Rohingya refugee situation, supporting self-reliance, child protection, and GBV prevention, and over EUR 500 million for Afghanistan to support women, children, and climate resilience. The EU also announced that a new livelihoods programme was launched, with humanitarian aid reaching 3.8 million Afghan refugees in Iran and 1.4 million in Pakistan. Its pledge on statistical inclusion was met, with EUR 5.6 million disbursed and continued support, notably through a new data programme in Sub-Saharan Africa. Support of EUR 300 million was disbursed for child protection in crises, and guardianship systems for unaccompanied minors were strengthened. The EU Asylum Agency supported Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia, and asylum capacity was reinforced in countries along migratory routes, including Libya, Morocco, and South Africa. The EU reaffirmed its commitment to the GRF process and its humanitarian pledges ahead of the upcoming GRF Progress Review.
- **Refugees Seeking Equal Access at the Table (R-SEAT)**, on behalf of the [Advisory Board](#) of Organizations led by Forcibly Displaced and Stateless Persons, highlighted progress in refugee participation since the GRF 2023, including engagement in pledges, state delegations, establishment of refugee advisory boards and contribution to UNHCR processes. R-SEAT however noted that participation remains fragile, especially amid global crises and shrinking humanitarian funding, rendering increased efforts to promote MRP more important than ever. They called for institutionalizing refugee participation, increased investment in RLOs, and ensuring displaced people co-lead solutions under the GCR as well as in emerging areas such as the sustainable responses approach. The GRF Progress Review 2025 offers a key opportunity for direct engagement, and R-SEAT urged stakeholders to embed refugee leadership at the core of humanitarian governance for responses that are more inclusive, effective and just.
- **[Action Network on Forced Displacement](#)**, a global network created as part of Germany's GRF pledges, brings together displaced women leaders from around the world to ensure feminist and inclusive responses to forced displacement. The Network highlighted the importance of young refugee women and girls' participation, often made more difficult due to language barriers, cultural taboos and norms, and lack of access to policy and planning processes, and called upon young refugee women to shape solutions. At the GRF 2023, the Action Network, together with partners (BMZ, WPHF, New Women Connectors, Lotus Flower) made a joint pledge to advance displaced women's participation and leadership, and it was announced that Sudan had been chosen as the 2025 focus country of the pledge. The Action Network called for increased focus on age inclusion, along with gender, noting that solutions designed for but not by refugee girls may not address their needs.
- The **United Kingdom** emphasized the impact of declining global funding on UNHCR, partners, and host countries, urging a more efficient and coordinated response to forced displacement. It highlighted the GCR as a key framework and the GRF Progress Review 2025 as a chance to assess progress and set priorities towards the GRF 2027. The UK called for addressing root causes, supporting safe voluntary return, leveraging GCR Indicator Report data, and stressed



continued momentum on MSPs and the essential role of development actors, including IFIs and the private sector. The UK noted it has fulfilled all 2019 pledges and two from 2023, with others in progress.

- **International Labour Organization (ILO)** spoke on the value of the UN Common Pledge and the role of Resident Coordinators in supporting host country commitments, as updated in a recent progress update meeting featuring several implementing UN Country Teams. ILO reaffirmed its support for the MRP MSP and its World Refugee Day call to stand with refugee workers for dignity and decent work. The ILO also announced the launch on 8 July of a lessons learned report from the Prospects Partnership on education, employment, and protection in eight countries, supported by the Netherlands with partners (including ILO, UNHCR, UNICEF, IFC, and the World Bank).
- **Last Mile Climate** reported on its Climate Action Partnership focused on combating deforestation in displacement settings by transitioning to clean cooking solutions. Citing Uganda as a key example, where heavy reliance on biomass has led to environmental degradation, it reaffirmed its pledge to reach 250,000 people with clean energy by 2027. It called on UNHCR and partners to support implementation efforts, helping Eastern Africa shift from biomass to renewable energy. Last Mile Climate also supports Uganda's Ministry of Environment in monitoring progress on their pledge on environment and clean energy, ensuring a coordinated response.
- **UN Foundation** updated on a stocktaking event convened on 16 June by the Group of Friends of Health for Refugees and Host Communities, with WHO and UNHCR, for the health inclusion and mental health and psycho-social support MSPs. Some 94 participants from governments, RLOs, UN agencies, NGOs, academia, and the private sector assessed progress, highlighted good practices, and helped shape the lead-up to the GRF Progress Review 2025. The UN Foundation echoed the call for action made at the event by Louange Koffi, refugee advocate and nurse in Ghana, who emphasized the need for culturally competent care and stronger community-led response models, building on new WB analyses.
- **RELON Kenya** emphasized that inclusive engagement enables more effective outcomes and called for centering the voices of those with lived experience, especially from the Global South. RELON Kenya emphasized that refugees must be equal partners in decision-making, with access to inclusive and culturally appropriate platforms to shape policy, programme implementation, and evaluation. Participation must be sustained, supported by capacity-building and resources, and be inclusive of marginalized groups. RELON Kenya also called for stronger partnerships with RLOs and accountability mechanisms to ensure impact.
- **Danish Refugee Council (DRC)**, a member of the core group behind the Global Legal Community MSP, led by PiINET, reported that worsening global conditions and shrinking funding streams are undermining legal aid for refugees, and forced some pledge members to close offices, limiting access to legal support and risking further closures. Ahead of the GRF Progress Review, the core group is reaching out to pledgers to assess the full impact. DRC called on all stakeholders to work with the legal community to sustain vital services for forcibly displaced people.
- **Brazil** welcomed the positive references to its work on asylum capacity building and economic inclusion. It highlighted ongoing efforts to enhance MRP and announced a new community sponsorship resettlement programme for Afghan nationals. Brazil aims to report on all pledges before December and reaffirmed strong support for the GCR as a key framework for responsibility-sharing and durable solutions amid record displacement and a deepening funding crisis.

### Responses and closing remarks by Ms. Ruvendrini Menikdiwela, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection

Ms. Menikdiwela acknowledged all interventions and expressed gratitude to all for their support to the GCR and its four objectives. Regarding MSPs, she recognized the progress reported as well as challenges faced, often linked to both lack of focus and funding. She noted that the GRF Progress Review agenda is yet to be finalized, and that priorities are still being developed together with all stakeholders. She reiterated the importance of re-naming the event the GRF Progress Review to more clearly reflect the content of the second HLOM. Other specific questions, such as Iraq's on benchmarking, will be addressed by the GCR Coordination Team. She also emphasized the critical

role of MRP, highlighting the contributions of several RLOs present in-person and online, and commended their advocacy.