



# OUTCOMES OF THE GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM PROGRESS REVIEW

2025

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Cover Photo:

Former refugee athlete, Zakia Khudadadi, at the opening of the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025.

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Mr. Barham Salih in Kakuma municipality for his inaugural visit as High Commissioner for Refugees.  
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## Foreword

The Global Refugee Forum (GRF) Progress Review, held from 15 to 17 December 2025, offered a timely opportunity to take stock of international cooperation on forced displacement in a world marked by sustained conflicts, rising displacement, growing political pressures, and increasingly constrained resources. In such a context, clarity of purpose, credible action, and collective responsibility are essential. The Progress Review highlighted that even under severe political and financial strain, multilateral cooperation remains relevant and capable of delivering results.

Since its affirmation in 2018, the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) has reshaped how the international community approaches cooperation, responsibility-sharing, and solutions to forced displacement. Through the GRF, it has become the primary framework through which States and other actors to share responsibility more equitably and sustainably, aligning humanitarian action with development engagement and durable solutions. These processes have provided tools that did not exist a decade ago, translating international solidarity into more concrete action, including changes in laws, policies, and systems that enable refugees to access protection, be included in national systems, and find durable solutions.

I acknowledge my predecessor, Mr. Filippo Grandi, whose leadership advanced this framework during some of the most challenging years in UNHCR's history. Under his stewardship, the GCR and the GRF evolved into practical platforms, grounded in delivery, accountability, and partnership. The Progress Review reflects the sustained engagement of States and other stakeholders committed to turning shared principles into practical outcomes through the current pledging framework.

Despite the advances made over the last eight years, the Progress Review highlighted persistent gaps, including uneven responsibility-sharing, declining predictable financing, and growing strain on major host countries. It also revealed a more fundamental risk: that hard won gains in protection, inclusion, and national system strengthening could be reversed if delivery capacity continues to erode. At the same time, solidarity remains strong. Partners signaled readiness to rethink responses to refugee and forced displacement situations and to shape more effective approaches.

The Progress Review reaffirmed the relevance and necessity of the GRF pledging process, particularly at a time of severe and abrupt funding constraints affecting humanitarian and development responses alike. The pledging process provides a practical mechanism to mobilize political commitment, align resources, and strengthen coordination, enabling partners to step in where others are no longer able. Pledges can, and have, driven tangible change across protection, inclusion in national systems, livelihoods, education, and solutions in third countries and countries of origin. The pledging process is therefore not only about implementation and impact, but also about operational coordination and complementarity, ensuring more resilient and sustainable responses in practice.

At the same time, the Progress Review made clear that credibility depends on delivery. The GRF pledging framework is not, and never has been, a numbers exercise. The true measure of progress is whether people are protected in practice, able to live in dignity and to rebuild their lives. Humanitarian support remains indispensable and lifesaving when needs are acute, but it must not become a substitute for rights, inclusion, and opportunity. Protection and solutions are inseparable responsibilities that must be advanced together.

This year carries particular significance as we mark the 75th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention. The Convention is not an abstract legal instrument. It is a promise, made in the aftermath of catastrophe, that people fleeing persecution would never again be left without protection. In a world where that promise is under strain, the GCR and GRF provide the means to help translate legal principles into practical cooperation. This anniversary is therefore not only a moment for reflection, but a test of international protection delivering in practice for people forced to flee and for the States and communities that host them. The Global Compact on Refugees is central to the collective response.

In a more volatile and contested world, our task is to use these tools with greater strategic clarity. Responsibility-sharing must be understood not as charity but as a matter of stability, predictability, and shared interests among States. It requires national leadership, sustained political engagement, and stronger collaboration with development actors, international financial institutions, civil society, the private sector, and refugees themselves, whose meaningful participation is essential to shaping effective and legitimate responses.

As High Commissioner, I reaffirm my full commitment to the Global Compact on Refugees as the principal vehicle for protection, solutions, cooperation, and accountability. The GRF continues to serve as a key platform for mobilizing States and partners around a truly whole-of-society response.

The concrete outcomes of the Progress Review, as set out in this document, provide a clear foundation for the work ahead. As we look towards the GRF 2027, we must both accelerate implementation and begin deliberate preparations for the next phase of pledging, including the development of new, credible, and transformational commitments that build on the multi-stakeholder pledge approach. Trust, political ownership, and measurable impact must continue to guide this process.

The Progress Review showed that collective action remains possible even in the face of political, financial, and operational pressures. Our shared responsibility now is to ensure that commitments become results, and that protection, dignity, and solutions are delivered in practice for refugees and the communities that generously receive and host them.

## **Mr. Barham Salih**

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



Participants take a group photo following the announcement of new signatories to the Global Alliance to End Statelessness at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025.

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## At a glance



**1,486**  
participants



**260**  
participants  
with lived experience of  
forced displacement or  
statelessness



**299**  
speakers  
(good regional/  
stakeholder balance)



**4 spotlight sessions**  
**6 strategic dialogues**  
**9 speakers' corners**  
**100% of side events**  
included refugee speakers



**~30**  
new pledges  
made/announced  
(valued at USD 1.37 billion)



**USD 2.6B**  
Value of disbursed pledges  
(up to the Global Refugee  
Forum Progress Review)



H.E. Mr. Oike Atsuyuki, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations Office at Geneva, at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025  
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H.E. Mr. Gustavo Gallón Giraldo, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations Office at Geneva, at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025  
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H.E. Mr. Akram Sa'ud Harahsheh, Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations Office at Geneva, at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025  
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Mr. Aggrey David Kibenge, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Uganda, at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025  
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Ms. Eléonore Caroit, Minister Delegate to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025  
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## Reflections from the GRF Co-hosts and Co-convenors

The GRF Progress Review 2025 served as a critical midway point between the last Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in 2023 and the next one in 2027, reaffirming the international community's shared commitment to supporting forcibly displaced and stateless people and their host countries. We, the Co-hosts – Switzerland and UNHCR – and Co-convenors – Colombia, France, Japan, Jordan, and Uganda – of the GRF 2023, appreciate that measurable progress has been made towards the four objectives of the Compact. This includes through notable pledge implementation across various sectors, expansion of private-sector engagement and development financing, and enhanced meaningful participation of refugees in policy-shaping and pledge development processes.

While the current humanitarian landscape is characterized by continued forced displacement, ongoing conflicts, and one of the worst financial crises of the modern era, tangible achievements reflect the power of multilateralism when it is both fit for purpose and for delivering results. The recent GRF Progress Review illustrated how real transformation becomes possible when political will, resources, and partnerships are aligned on the ground and supported by international initiatives.

The Progress Review was a sober but motivating reminder that ambition must be matched by action. We continue to call for pledges made under the GRF to be fully implemented, thereby maximizing their impact, and for the gaps identified to guide planning, preparation, and mobilization towards the third Global Refugee Forum in 2027.

“Protecting refugees is not just a moral aim but it’s also a shared responsibility. Strengthening capacities, supporting host countries, and investing in sustainable solutions are the goals of the Global Compact on Refugees. The GRF Progress Review has a simple ambition – we must go from pledges to results. This Review helps us measure progress made, adopt policies, and identify in realistic ways where our efforts must be changed.”

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*Mr. Ignazio Cassis, Federal Councillor and Head of the Federal, Department of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland*

“Forced displacement should not be managed as crisis but should be perceived as an opportunity to promote peace, multilateralism, and inclusion.”

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*H.E. Mr. Álvaro Ayala Meléndez, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Colombia*

“It is essential that diverse stakeholders collaborate to find sustainable and effective solutions. The multi-stakeholder pledge initiative is increasingly important as a framework for advancing cooperation.”

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*H.E. Ms. Toshimi Nishizaki, Ambassador for Humanitarian Assistance, Japan*

“The Global Compact on Refugees must remain our compass. It organizes international solidarity, shares responsibilities, and strengthens global stability. It builds on the 1951 Convention, a pillar of modern international law. This Compact sets a clear course for the international community. It strengthens our capacity to protect and welcome refugees in the long term.”

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*Ms. Eléonore Caroit, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, responsible for Francophonie, International Partnerships and French Nationals Abroad, France*

“The true measure of success for our shared responsibilities is in implementation – pledges alone are insufficient. Credibility is gauged by our ability to translate commitments into tangible results on the ground. Together, let us renew our pledges with action, bridge gaps with resolve, and build towards a more equitable future for refugees and hosts alike, aiming to renew commitments for our shared values.”

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*H.E. Mr. Akram Sa’ud Harahsheh, Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Jordan*

“More than ever, this GRF Progress Review in these tough financial times is not only important but extremely relevant to renew our collective support for forcibly displaced persons globally. We count on our donor partners to fund our refugee response with timely, flexible, and predictable funding to sustain inclusion of refugees in national systems. It is a global good.”

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*Mr. Aggrey David Kibenge, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Uganda*

## Overview from 2019 onwards

Today, the GCR finds itself at a critical inflection point. The achievements of the past seven years – thousands of pledges, the rise of multi-stakeholder coalitions, the sharing of good practices, and growing refugee inclusion across sectors – stand in stark contrast to a global environment marked by severe funding shortages, escalating displacement, and growing geopolitical fragmentation. Major host countries are under unprecedented strain, humanitarian budgets are contracting even as needs expand, and proliferating conflicts hinder the search for durable solutions. Despite this challenging reality, the GCR has cultivated a broad, varied ecosystem of actors – including national and local governments, civil society, refugee-led organizations, development banks, private companies, academic institutions, and philanthropists – that has more than doubled since 2019. The whole-of-society mobilization that has taken root since 2019 is now one of the GCR’s strongest assets: it has diversified responsibility-sharing, brought new financing models to the table, and proven that a multilateral approach is fit to respond in today’s world.

Over the past seven years, this broadened base of GCR stakeholders has contributed to building an effective toolbox through convening and contributing to events such as the Forums, Progress Reviews and High Commissioner’s Dialogues; the pledge mechanism and the results it has delivered; GCR initiatives like the Support Platforms; and communicating impact on the Digital Platform. And today, the GCR community stands

together, committed to refugee responses that are anchored in shared responsibility, global solidarity and meaningful refugee participation.

Two Global Refugee Forums have been convened in Geneva, helping to translate the Compact’s promise from principle to practice, bringing together thousands of participants from all regions of the world, including heads of state, ministers, multilateral agencies, businesses, civil society organizations, and an unprecedented number of refugee representatives and the organizations they lead. The Forums and other GCR milestone events have demonstrated that the Compact’s proposal for a whole-of-society response is not aspirational rhetoric, but a tangible, powerful force. States and other stakeholders have mobilized thousands of pledges to ease pressures on host countries, expand inclusion and self-reliance opportunities for refugees, and strengthen protection and durable solutions. Since 2019, some 3,400 individual pledges and 47 multi-stakeholder pledges have





Mr. Ignazio Cassis, Federal Councillor of Switzerland, welcomes delegates to the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025.

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been mobilized, representing significant financial, technical and political support, and demonstrating how States, civil society actors, cities, academia, and the private sector increasingly respond to forced displacement through collaborative frameworks rather than isolated commitments. Over the years, the GCR process has matured through continuous stocktaking and political engagement that bring the GCR's principles to broader global policy-making relevant to forced displacement.

Data and evidence have been central to these efforts, measured through the GCR Indicator Framework and biennial Indicator Reports. These tools allow all stakeholders to implement pledges and measure progress against the Compact's four core objectives: easing pressures on host countries; enhancing refugee self-reliance; expanding access to third-country solutions; and supporting conditions for sustainable, voluntary return. By the launch of the third [GCR Indicator Report](#) in November 2025, monitoring of the Compact had become more structured and system-wide, supporting evidence-based adjustments and revealing both progress and persistent gaps. Drawing on data from the [16 GCR indicators](#), it assessed achievements, remaining challenges, and how the Compact has impacted refugee responses worldwide. The report warned that hard-won gains are at risk due to declining funding and weakening international solidarity. It called for collective action, which, while not always perfect, deliver stronger outcomes.

The trajectory since the affirmation of the Compact tells a story of sustained political commitment and growing scale and impact, despite the, at times, discouraging discourse around refugee protection and policy. The GRF Progress Review 2025, the most recent milestone in the GCR's eight-year journey, reaffirmed that even amid unprecedented challenges, the Compact is an essential framework which complements the 1951 Refugee Convention, and that the international community sees as durable architecture to shape global refugee responses and policy on forced displacement. The GRF Progress Review was informed by the third GCR Indicator Report's key findings.

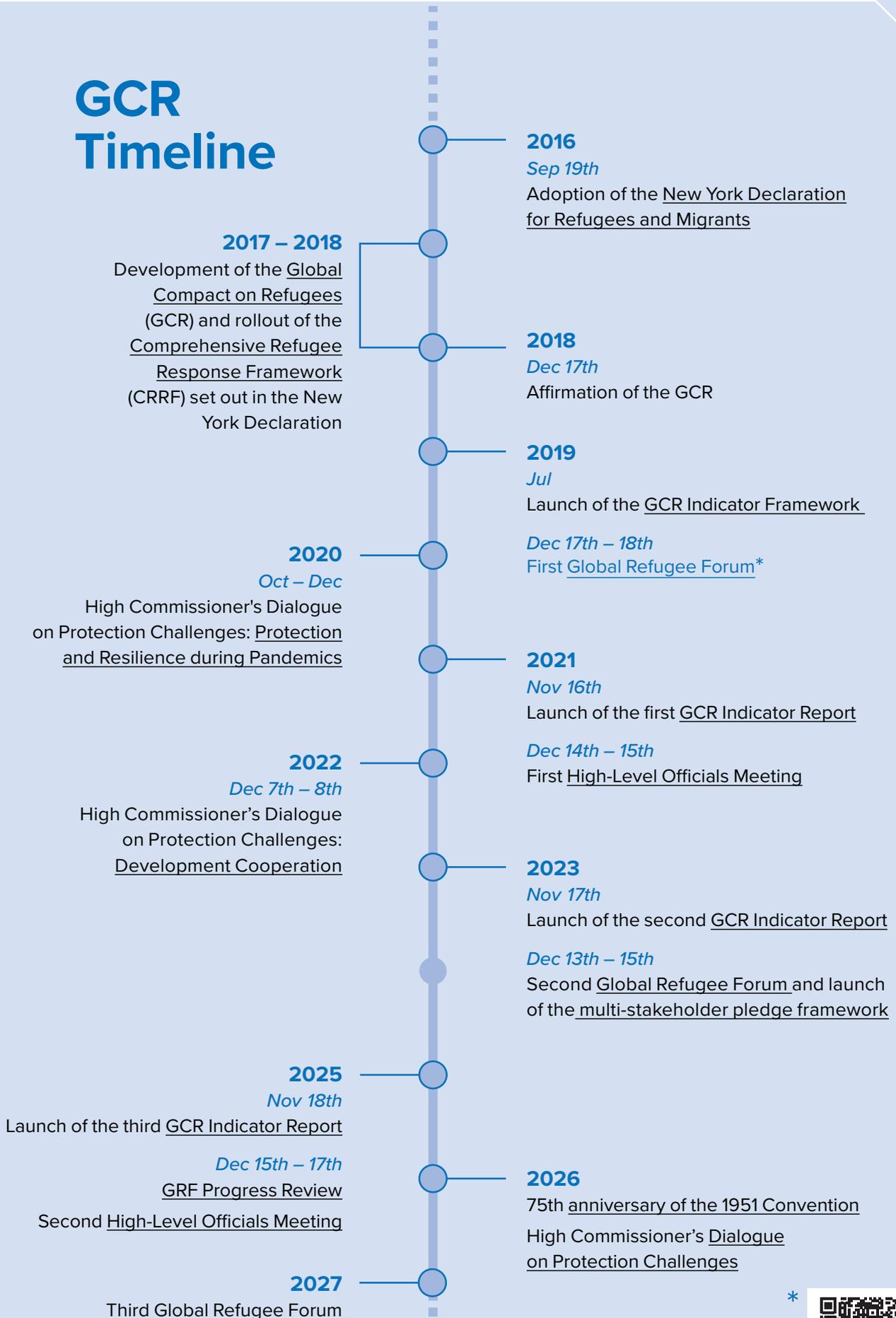
# Key findings from the GCR Indicator Report 2025

- ✓ Encouraging levels of support for refugees in low- and middle-income countries until 2023. However, overall funding declined in 2024 and is expected to fall further in 2025. Nonetheless, local partnerships are expanding.
- ✓ Responsibility-sharing improved until 2024, though disparities remained, with most aid coming from only a few donors.
- ✓ Legal access to work, public education, and freedom of movement for refugees have improved in some countries. However, progress remains insufficient. Persistent barriers and widespread poverty continue to hinder self-reliance for nearly half of the refugee population and limit the economic contributions refugees make to host communities.
- ✓ Resettlement reached a record high in 2024 before declining in 2025. Complementary pathways, particularly those for family reunification, grew between 2016 and 2023. However, third-country solutions still fall far short of global needs.
- ✓ Support for returnees remains disproportionately low, despite a sharp rise in returns. Barriers to durable return and reintegration remain persistent, making these efforts harder and less sustainable.
- ✓ The multi-stakeholder pledge framework, introduced at the GRF 2023, set a whole-of-society ambition. The stocktaking exercise, carried out in 2025, has confirmed its effectiveness in delivering tangible protection, inclusion, and solutions, despite funding and political challenges.
- ✓ While data availability under the GCR is improving, persistent gaps in nationally produced data, especially in areas related to inclusion, continue to hinder progress and are at risk of deepening, due to funding cuts.

“From the moment I walked through the streets toward the hall, with the intention of engaging in conversations about changing the lives of refugees, I knew why I had travelled such a long distance. Coming to meet people who share the same mind-set and passion for improving lives made the journey truly worthwhile.”

*Patricia Mudiayi, Whole World Women's Association (WWWA)*

# GCR Timeline



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# Key findings from the Pledge Stocktaking Report

In the lead-up to the GRF Progress Review, GCR stakeholders engaged in stocktaking at country, regional, and global levels to assess their progress in advancing the Compact's objectives and achieving impact through the implementation of pledges, as well as to highlight areas for course correction. The findings – consolidated in a set of 15 key takeaways in the [GRF Pledge Stocktaking Report 2025](#) and released in advance of the Progress Review – reflect tangible outcomes, implementation trends, and persistent constraints.

## Key cross-cutting findings include:

- ✓ USD 2.6 billion reported disbursed by State and non-State actors under pledges since GRF 2023, supporting outcomes across protection, self-reliance, gender equality, and regional emergency responses.
- ✓ Progress has been most visible where pledges are anchored in national systems and supported by coordinated partnerships, including in education, health, legal access, and economic inclusion.
- ✓ Multi-stakeholder pledges have emerged as effective platforms for coordination, system-wide efficiency, implementation, and scaling, especially where they combine policy reform, financing, and operational delivery.
- ✓ Declines in predictable and flexible financing are limiting the ability of national systems to absorb refugee inclusion at scale, particularly in major host countries.
- ✓ Ambitious host country policy pledges are often insufficiently matched with financial and technical support, slowing implementation.
- ✓ Regulatory and administrative barriers continue to impede progress on self-reliance and solutions, and age, gender, and diversity considerations are not yet consistently integrated across all pledges.

Together, these findings underscore the importance of improved matching, stronger engagement of development actors fostering the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus, and a sharper focus on quality, delivery, and impact as the GCR process advances towards the Global Refugee Forum 2027.

**“Refugees are not asking for special treatment, but for the space to contribute, when given access to education, skills, and opportunity, we move from dependency to leadership and become partners in building sustainable solutions.”**

*Ebuela Bushiri Isaac, Founder and Coordinator, Global Scholar Network*

# Progress on Global Refugee Forum pledges

## Objective 1 Ease pressure on host countries

USD 2.6B

disbursed from new pledges announced since GRF 2023

financial pledges by States, foundations, private sector, and sports

**Pledge implementation:**

3,440 pledges

- 20% fulfilled
- 45% in progress

2,588 pledge updates between December 2023 and December 2025

## Objective 2 Enhance refugee self-reliance

**Economic Inclusion and Social Protection**

- 10 countries adopted or strengthened laws/policies such as the access to formal employment
- 500,000 individuals reached

**Health / Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)**

- 11 out of 15 target countries saw substantial progress in improving access to equitable health services

**Education**

- At least 12 additional countries include refugees in primary and secondary education
- Refugee enrolment in tertiary education jumped from 6% in 2023 to 9% in 2025

**Statistical Inclusion**

- 9 new countries included refugees in national censuses
- More than 11 additional countries included refugees in national surveys

**Climate Action**

- 5 countries are including refugees in National Adaptation Plans, with two more underway

**Human Settlements**

- Progress in transitioning/enabling human settlements in 14 countries

**Connectivity**

- 6 States actively supporting refugee connectivity, with over 6 mobile network operators engaged

## Objective 3 Expand access to third-country solutions

152,000

family reunification permits issued in 2023

17 countries advancing community sponsorship

11 countries advancing machine-readable travel documents

19 countries continue to offer resettlement

## Objective 4 Support conditions in countries of origin for safe and dignified return

**Peacebuilding initiatives** advanced in Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Honduras, Iraq, South Sudan

Progress in **registration of land rights and resolution of disputes** in Burundi and Syria

**Investment in housing** for returnees in Syria

# Overview of the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025

The GRF Progress Review 2025 unfolded over three days of plenary debates, thematic dialogues, and an ecosystem of connected activities. As the moment envisaged to take stock of the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees, partners reviewed progress made through country, regional, and multi-stakeholder pledges, and discussed the strategic direction towards the next Forum in 2027. Bringing together some 1,500 participants from governments, UN agencies, local authorities, civil society, refugee-led organizations, development institutions, the private sector, academia, and philanthropy, the event underscored the whole-of-society approach that has taken shape since the Compact's affirmation in 2018. Together, participants examined results to date, shared emerging evidence and good practices, and confronted the gaps and challenges shaping refugee responses in a context marked by escalating displacement, climate-related pressures, and severely strained national systems.

The Progress Review opened with a high-level plenary session focused on Guiding Refugee Responses in a Changing World, which set the tone for discussions centred on collective responsibility and results achieved through pledge implementation. Throughout the event, a carefully curated programme, created in close consultation with GCR stakeholders, enabled both formal and informal exchanges across a range of formats. Plenary sessions highlighted progress, challenges, and policy priorities across GCR objectives through formal statements by States and other stakeholders.

Spotlight sessions were woven throughout the plenary proceedings as an important way to highlight pressing policy priorities through exchanges among high-level experts. Governments and private sector partners highlighted employment for displaced people as both a humanitarian imperative and an economic opportunity that strengthens resilience for refugees and host communities alike. Host governments repeatedly demonstrated the value of enabling inclusion in national health, social, and identity systems as a foundation for protection, resilience, and durable solution pathways. States and partners highlighted that sustainable returns must remain voluntary and safe, and successful reintegration should be grounded in community realities and the meaningful inclusion of returnees and refugee-led organizations. Panelists outlined the core elements required to sustain robust, fair, and efficient asylum systems that safeguard international protection and promote refugee self-reliance. These sessions set the groundwork for strong, cross-objective collaborations and follow up.



Exhibition at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025

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Speakers and attendees at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review, 2025.

© UNHCR/Antoine Tardy

In parallel, policymakers, operational actors, development partners, and refugee representatives came together for high-level discussions at side events centred on pressing themes. Events on resettlement and safe pathways highlighted shrinking opportunities for third-country solutions. They aimed to re-catalyze momentum in alignment with the OECD's recommendations to leverage existing mobility pathways, while those on financing for education and human settlements presented good practices for inclusion in national systems by development actors and host countries, against the high costs of parallel services. A session on refugee women and girls reaffirmed focus on preventing gender-based violence and expanding opportunities for women amidst the challenges facing the humanitarian system. Representatives of civil society and the private sector found a common cause around digital protection. They emphasized the need to ensure displaced peoples' access to the internet and digital services while preventing hate speech, misinformation, and other modern drivers of conflict and persecution. Events exploring UNHCR's strategic initiatives, the route-based approach and sustainable responses, took a heavily operational focus to encourage the move from theory to implementation. These events demonstrated how progress is being made across all these areas under the leadership of governments, UN agencies, and partners in civil society and beyond.

The GCR's whole-of-society approach was evident throughout the programme, with sessions that shone a light on various stakeholder groups, particularly those traditionally underrepresented on the international stage. The events on meaningful refugee participation and localization reinforced the need for power-sharing,



Mrs. Christina Li, Vice president at ANTA, announces their pledge on day two of the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025

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sustained financing, and institutional reform to move from consultation to co-leadership with displaced and host communities alike to address immediate protection needs and longer-term durable solutions. Cities and local governments were highlighted for their frontline role in responding to displacement and facilitating inclusion on the ground. Several events homed in on specific and situational contexts, including those on initiatives in the Americas and the situations in the Syrian Arab Republic and Sudan. These events, while emphasizing the unique dynamics of each context, shared a common focus on the alignment between humanitarian and development actors and the need to pursue solutions from the onset of displacement, during conflict, and throughout the reintegration process once conditions for return have been established. Discussions underscored the need for better alignment between global policy frameworks and national-level decision-making, stronger linkages between humanitarian assistance and longer-term development planning, and clearer roles for different actors to avoid fragmentation and duplication.

Strategic dialogues, introduced as a new, more interactive modality in 2025, created space for more candid, less formal exchanges among an extended roundtable of stakeholders. These dialogues explored topics ranging from difficult discussions on responding to the current financial crisis to a self-critical assessment of GCR mechanisms and their fitness for purpose as the humanitarian landscape undergoes dramatic shifts. The event on innovative financing explored how to scale alternative funding sources for refugee responses, reflecting the mounting pressures on global support systems. It featured a frank discussion on the pledge mechanism itself and how to make it fit for purpose in the current context, through a format that complemented more structured events. Events on the [Rohingya Multi-stakeholder Pledge](#) and the Lomé Dialogue in West Africa demonstrated the value of regional initiatives that bring in development partners alongside humanitarian actors to address protracted displacement.

The closing session of the plenary featured a range of speakers, with remarks from the outgoing High Commissioner, Filippo Grandi. He underscored the need to sustain momentum in implementing pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum 2023, highlighted the progress and challenges identified during the Progress Review, and emphasized the importance of strengthened responsibility-sharing and international solidarity as the process advances towards the GRF 2027.

**“Beyond representation, ARWNET embodied collective responsibility, reminding the global community that when women rise together, communities are transformed. This is more than participation. This is advocacy in action. This is women leading change.”**

*Cecile Losamandjo Pango, Chairperson, African Refugee Women-Led Network (ARWNET)*



Galal Yousif, a Sudanese artist who fled Khartoum as conflict erupted in April 2023, brings his powerful perspective to the Global Refugee Forum with his artwork.

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## ENSURING THE COMPACT REMAINS FIT FOR PURPOSE

As the primary framework for informing and guiding whole-of-society responses to displacement situations, the Global Compact on Refugees was designed to adapt to shifting geopolitical contexts and changing realities in forced displacement. Several strategic dialogues examined mechanisms for implementing the GCR in a manner that underscores its complementarity with the 1951 Convention, ensuring these tools are effective and relevant amidst the ongoing funding challenges and strains on the multilateral system.

### The Pledge Framework and Matching

Stakeholders reflected critically on the pledge process, emphasizing the need to strengthen implementation support, enhance peer learning, and improve transparency around progress and challenges. The multi-stakeholder pledge model was consistently identified as one of the strongest elements of the GRF architecture, serving as an effective vehicle for responsibility-sharing, enabling collaboration across the whole of society. The potential for matching continues to hold strategic value and appeal as a "smart shortcut" to accelerate the implementation of pledges, with broad agreement on the need to simplify the matching mechanism and reduce transaction costs.

Greater sophistication, flexibility, and political ownership of pledges were highlighted as essential if the Compact's pledge framework is to remain a meaningful driver for action. Partners stressed the need for pledges to have clearer scopes, timelines, and more resources to avoid undermining confidence in the GRF. All this must be paired with overcoming practical constraints to pledge development such as budget cycles, alignment with national priorities, and institutional mandates.



Attendees of the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review, 2025.

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## Support Platforms

Stakeholders affirmed how the GCR Support Platforms continue to add value by sustaining political attention, convening diverse actors, and aligning humanitarian and development efforts with national priorities. However, value is uneven across contexts, and Platforms risk losing momentum if political engagement does not translate into operational delivery and measurable results.

Support Platforms must articulate more clearly how they provide value and strengthen their delivery by ensuring political commitments are linked to operational plans, financing, and measurable results. Sustained engagement by States, development actors, civil society, and refugee-led organizations is essential to the effectiveness of the platforms, while host government ownership remains a prerequisite for long-term viability. Members noted that platforms should be periodically recalibrated to remain responsive to evolving contexts

while remaining anchored in the national priorities of host governments.

## The GCR Indicator Framework and Report

Partners underscored that urgent action is needed on the findings of the GCR Indicator Report 2025, highlighting the report's conclusion that meaningful progress on refugee inclusion is visible, but remains fragile. A consistent message from donors, regional organizations, and implementing partners was that data is not a technical exercise but a policy tool. A call was made for governments to include forcibly displaced and stateless populations in censuses, surveys and administrative data systems and use GCR indicators in evaluation and accountability mechanisms. The GCR Indicator Report remains a valuable tool for reporting on the progress towards the Compact's objectives, but more must be done to translate the evidence into policy and programming.

**“Returning to this international space two years after my first engagement made me look back and recognize how far we have come, from the communities of San Pedro Sula to the global advocacy tables.”**

*Juan Enamorado, Co-Founder, Warriors Zulu Nation Honduras*

The discussions and updates shared by GCR stakeholders showcased tangible progress across sectors, with around 300 speakers presenting stocktaking results, pledge implementation and challenges to be addressed across spotlight sessions, side events, and strategic dialogues. Overall, the Progress Review 2025 reaffirmed that advancing the GCR requires broad societal engagement, shared responsibility, and context-responsive programming. Its outcomes and stakeholder-driven discussions set the stage for intensified collaboration and scaled-up action ahead of the Global Refugee Forum in 2027, signaling a continued commitment to addressing refugee challenges through inclusive, resilient, and globally coordinated efforts. Cross-cutting all these discussions was the need for better alignment between global policy frameworks and national-level decision-making, stronger linkages between humanitarian assistance and longer-term development planning, and clearer roles for different actors to avoid fragmentation and duplication.



While the primary objective of the GRF Progress Review was to assess the overall progress on pledge implementation, the event also generated renewed political momentum. Approximately 30 new pledges were announced during dedicated pledging moments in plenary. Syria made its first-ever pledge under the GCR, committing to enable the voluntary, safe, and dignified return of refugees by working with international partners to rehabilitate infrastructure and essential services, an important endeavor that was matched by Germany. New and reinforced financial pledges were announced, amounting to total USD 1.37 billion, demonstrating sustained commitment to responsibility-sharing despite a challenging global financing environment. Ranging from substantial state contributions and targeted thematic support to the increasing engagement of private sector and new emerging partners, these commitments demonstrated continued solidarity with refugees and host communities, despite a challenging global financing environment, and reinforced the Compact's role as a catalyst for collective action.

Based on discussions across plenary sessions, side events, and strategic dialogues, GRF Progress Review participants called for a strengthened focus on implementation and delivery in the lead-up to the Global Refugee Forum 2027. Participants recommended prioritizing predictable and multi-year financing aligned with national systems in refugee-hosting countries; strengthening implementation support, peer learning, and transparency around GCR pledges to enhance accountability and follow-through; and institutionalizing the early and meaningful participation of refugees and host communities throughout policy design, implementation, and monitoring. The GRF Progress Review also underscored the need to deepen coordination across humanitarian, development, and peace actors, particularly in protracted and climate-affected contexts. At the same time, discussions highlighted that the value of new commitments will depend on strengthened implementation, monitoring, and accountability, and that the Compact's convening and stocktaking mechanisms should be further leveraged to facilitate partnerships, course correction, and shared learning to enhance pledge implementation.



His Excellency Mr. Saeed Al Eter, MBRGI Assistant Secretary General announces new pledge on day one of the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025.

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## DEVELOPMENTS IN MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

Contributions from multi-stakeholder partners during the GRF Progress Review highlighted the necessity of moving from short-term commitments towards a more institutionalized and systemic implementation of the GCR. Global networks of cities and local governments, academia, parliaments, faith-based institutions and interfaith alliances emphasized that the strongest results are achieved where inclusion is embedded in national and local systems, supported by sustainable financing, implemented through coordinated partnerships, and shaped by meaningful participation of people with lived experience of forced displacement and statelessness.

Cities and local governments stated that integrating refugee and IDP support into municipal and regional public systems is essential. Contributions from Koboko, Mexico City, Milan, Mopti, Nairobi, and Ramallah emphasized the importance of anchoring inclusion within existing local public structures and national policy frameworks rather than creating parallel systems. This approach was reinforced by global partners United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the Mayors Migration Council (MMC), highlighting the [Call to Local Action](#) coalition as a structured pathway for local and regional governments to contribute commitments towards the implementation of the GCR, with more than one hundred pledges mobilized to date. Fit-for-purpose financing emerged as a key priority, particularly for local actors. Stakeholders highlighted the importance of direct and flexible funding mechanisms, including models such as the MMC-led Global Cities Fund, which announced its intention to expand towards USD 50 million in support of city-led action, including new funding secured on refugee inclusion through sport, in partnership with the Olympic Refugee Foundation.

Academic partners emphasized long-term investment in strengthening evidence-based responses to forced displacement and expanding research and scholarship opportunities for people with lived experience. The Global Academic Interdisciplinary Network (GAIN), a GCR-mandated network of academic institutions worldwide, reported

progress on the [Multi-stakeholder Pledge Shifting Power – Advancing Localization of Research](#), which has secured additional multi-year funding of CAD 2.5 million from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, which was announced by GAIN member and refugee-led organization, R-SEAT.

Faith-based and interfaith alliance partners highlighted the importance of, and their continued commitments to, ensuring meaningful participation of people with lived experience, community-level protection, the humanitarian localization agenda and social cohesion initiatives. Members of UNHCR’s Multi-Religious Council of Leaders emphasized deepened engagement through this GCR-led signature initiative, positioning interfaith collaboration as a concrete operational asset to address root causes, reconciliation and peacebuilding. Community-led mental health and psychosocial support was another strong emphasis voiced by faith-based organizations as a practical and cost-effective foundation for protection and inclusion. The World Council of Churches (WCC), a founding member of the Global Alliance to End Statelessness, reaffirmed its commitments and announced a Letter of Intent in partnership with UNHCR for the establishment of a multi-religious funding consortium in support of efforts to end statelessness.

Parliamentary engagement was identified as an important pathway for translating GCR commitments into national legislation and policy reform. Progress reported by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), highlighted additional institutional and advocacy pathways for GCR implementation. Among IPU’s pledge updates were legislative follow-up on statelessness and refugee protection, including nationality law reform; accession to the Statelessness Conventions; and continued engagement through parliamentary roundtables, Assembly sessions, and structured cooperation with UNHCR within the context of the renewed Memorandum of Understanding.

Taken together, the results of pledge implementation, new commitments, and priorities identified going forward at the GRF Progress Review 2025 demonstrate that, despite an increasingly constrained global environment, the Compact’s multi-stakeholder approach continues to drive results, mobilize diverse actors, and reinforce responsibility-sharing. The event’s discussions, new pledges, and broadened participation laid a strong foundation for intensified collaboration and delivery. The Progress Review reaffirmed a shared commitment to protection, inclusion, and durable solutions and underscored that progress towards the Global Refugee Forum 2027 will depend not only on the volume of pledges, but on their quality and partnerships, the inclusiveness of processes, and the ability of stakeholders to adapt approaches in response to evolving challenges. By highlighting practical lessons, implementation gaps, and shared priorities, the Progress Review paved the way for more effective responsibility-sharing.



Participants of the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025.  
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## OVERVIEW OF GRF PROGRESS REVIEW 2025 PLEDGES

Major financial pledges included EUR 1 billion from Ireland over four years to address global hunger, USD 77.4 million from Japan to support UNHCR, and GBP 27 million announced by the UK to address food and LPG shortages in the Rohingya situation.

- ✓ The European Union also announced EUR 29 million in support of the Rohingya situation, complemented by Norway's contribution of NOK 10 million.
- ✓ Private and philanthropic actors also played a significant role, with pledges from the adidas Foundation (USD 5.27 million, 2024–2027), ANTA Group (USD 1.5 million in cash and in-kind support), Cardano Foundation (USD 2 million), Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives (USD 20 million), Qatar Charity (USD 10 million), and Sheikh Abdullah Al Nouri Charity Society (USD 0.5 million).
- ✓ Targeted thematic support was pledged by the Building Better Futures initiative for education (USD 15 million for DAFI scholarships), by Slovenia for GRF coordination (EUR 20,000), by Spain for gender-based violence prevention (EUR 1 million), and by Switzerland for digital protection (CHF 500,000).
- ✓ Refugees Seeking Equal Access at the Table (R-SEAT) announced that the Global Academic Interdisciplinary Network (GAIN) – of which they are a member – secured funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (CAD 2.5 million) for a project led by the Local Engagement Refugee Research Network as part of the Multi-stakeholder Pledge on Shifting Power – Advancing Localization of Research.
- ✓ In addition, Spain committed to increasing humanitarian funding to reach 10 per cent of total official development assistance, while the Grundfos Foundation signaled engagement through innovative funding models, underscoring the diversity of actors and approaches mobilized through the GRF framework.

**“One of the most emotional moments for me was speaking at the Syria official side event [...] Sharing the stage with speakers from the new Syrian Government, Qatar Foundation Charity, NRC, and UNHCR leadership felt surreal.”**

*Mustafa Alio, Co-Managing Director, Refugees Seeking Equal Access at the Table (R-SEAT)*



Speakers and attendees at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025.

© UNHCR/Antoine Tardy

## GRF PROGRESS REVIEW ECOSYSTEM

- ▶ The Speakers' Corner featured presentations from 11 people with lived experience of forced displacement and statelessness, offering a dedicated space to amplify their voices, share personal insights, and highlight realities that are often less prominent in more formal events. This format allowed for themes not covered in the main sessions to be explored in a lively and engaging manner, making it an essential part of the GCR event landscape. Recordings of these [presentations are available online](#), extending their reach and impact beyond the event.
- ▶ Linked events across Geneva and beyond created entry points for public engagement, expert dialogue, and GCR community-driven exchange. Independently organized by partners, including governments, academia, civil society, faith-based actors, the private sector, and refugee-led organizations, linked events broadened the Progress Review's reach beyond registered participants. Discussions on GCR-related topics, ranging from protection and self-reliance to education, health, legal identity, and solutions to statelessness, helped showcase practical efforts towards achieving the GCR's objectives. Highlights included refugee-led sessions at the [R-Space](#), the Korea Refugee Forum, Teachers at the Frontline, Child Rights and Family Reunification, and Solutions to Statelessness.
- ▶ At the venue, five curated exhibitions brought the Compact to life, transforming venue spaces into immersive areas for discovery and reflection and elevating the voices of forcibly displaced communities. A Geneva photo exhibition, Home of the Global Compact on Refugees, welcomed participants with powerful visuals tracing the Compact's mission and momentum, while paying homage to Geneva's



Made 51 exhibition at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025.  
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role as UNHCR's birthplace. Journeys of Hope, produced with Switzerland for UNHCR, offered an evocative timeline of UNHCR's protection and solutions work, complemented by interactive stories from people with lived experience of displacement. A striking collection by Sudanese refugee artists confronted viewers with the rawness of displacement and the resilience of culture and identity.

An international collaborative artwork organized by JICA and Artolution unified 66 canvases, painted by refugees in Uganda's Bidi Bidi settlement and by participants in Japan, into an arresting tapestry of creativity, solidarity, and cross-border collaboration. Finally, a Peace Tree invited attendees to add their own messages for peace alongside those of refugees, while a MADE51 pop-up store enabled delegates to meet artisans, learn the stories behind heritage craft, and support dignified livelihoods.

- ▶ The Digital Space returned to the GCR Digital Platform, featuring over 60 pieces of content from stakeholders, including reports, articles, videos and infographics. It provided an extra platform for stakeholders, giving visibility to those who may not otherwise have been able to participate in the event, and ensuring resources mentioned during discussions were readily available to all. The content lives on after the event and contributes to the wider GCR communications strategy on the road to the GRF 2027.
- ▶ Workshops were a new modality in 2025 that enabled the GCR community to maximize opportunities to leverage the convening power of the Progress Review for more targeted group discussions, such as a meeting of women refugee-led organizations with donor entities, a ceremony to sign up to the Global Alliance to End Statelessness, a meeting for the Core Group of the Support Platform for Sustainable Solutions for Afghan Refugees, and many more. These closed-door, small group settings allowed for more technical and partnership-focused discussions in a conversational format. The Progress Review also saw States and stakeholders holding over 100 bilateral meetings, a further example of the convening power of the Compact and its milestone events. Several good practices emerged from the workshop events, including a recommendation that the Global Internally Displaced People (IDP) Advisory Group should be engaged in the GRF process.

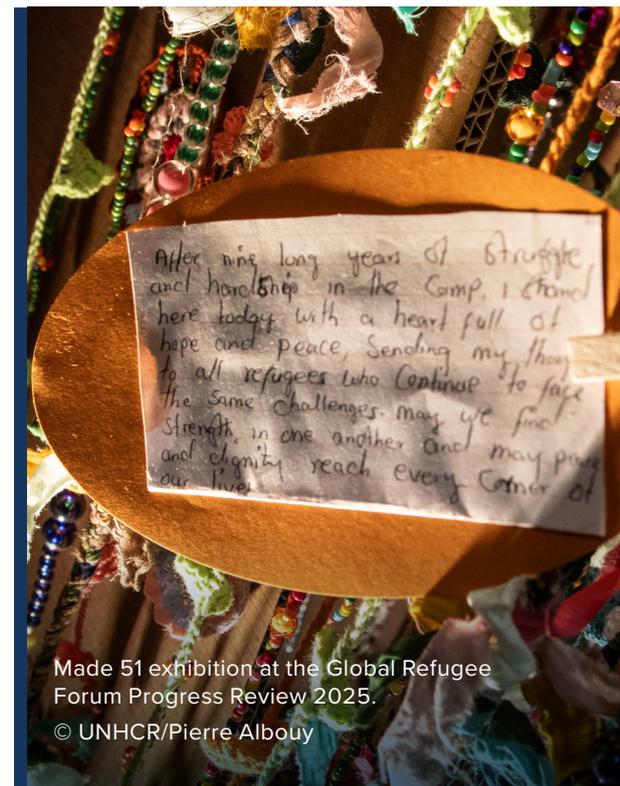
# Meaningful participation of forcibly displaced and stateless people

Building on the lessons learned from the GRF in 2023, which marked a turning point for meaningful refugee participation, UNHCR actively worked with forcibly displaced and stateless people in the lead-up to, during, and after the GRF Progress Review 2025, prioritizing sustained participation throughout the entire four-year GRF cycle while balancing age, gender and diversity and regional representation considerations.

## MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION HIGHLIGHTS ACROSS 2025

### Lead up to the GRF Progress Review

- ▶ 152 leaders with lived experience of forced displacement and statelessness completed a six-week training programme organized with R-SEAT, the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, and UNHCR.
- ▶ Organizations led by forcibly displaced and stateless people contributed to all GCR briefings.
- ▶ Over 50 organizations led by forcibly displaced and stateless people participated in consultations on the GRF Progress Review programme, informing the selection of topics and modalities.
- ▶ 160 forcibly displaced and stateless GRF Progress Review delegates participated in an in-person orientation day co-organized with the Advisory Board to the UNHCR Task Team on Engagement and Partnership with Organizations led by Forcibly Displaced and Stateless Persons.
- ▶ The Advisory Board led the drafting of the [Global Refugee Statement](#) with inputs from 96 organizations led by forcibly displaced and stateless people.
- ▶ Currently, 27 of the 47 multi-stakeholder pledges include engagement mechanisms for forcibly displaced and stateless people and organizations led by them (RLOs), 19 include pledges made by RLOs, and 9 benefit from RLOs as official co-leads of the pledge.



Made 51 exhibition at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025.

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UNHCR Advisory Board Member and Syrian refugee, Ms. Nour Jarrouj, speaks at the opening ceremony of the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025.

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## During the event

- ▶ 260 participants with lived experience joined the event in person, the highest percentage ever of participants with lived experience in GCR events (17.5 per cent out of the total number of 1,486 participants).
- ▶ Seven State delegations included refugee advisors who shared plenary and other speaking time.
- ▶ Ms. Nour Jarrouj, representing the RLO Moving Minds Alliance, delivered the Global Refugee Statement on behalf of the Advisory Board during the high-level opening plenary, calling on governments and international actors to move from rhetoric to concrete, well-funded action by making refugees equal partners.
- ▶ Ms. Zakia Khudadadi shared her journey as a former Afghan refugee and Paralympic athlete, highlighting the transformative power of sport and education in fostering resilience, equality, and hope for refugees in her remarks during the high-level opening plenary.
- ▶ For the first time ever, speakers with lived experience contributed their thematic expertise in 100 per cent of side events and spotlight sessions.
- ▶ A dedicated side event on meaningful refugee participation was organized with the co-leads of the [Multi-stakeholder Pledge on Meaningful Refugee Participation](#).
- ▶ In plenary, 14 speakers with lived experience presented pledge updates or announcements from the podium, amounting to 29 per cent of all speakers in the plenary programme.
- ▶ The Speakers' Corner space was dedicated to work and initiatives from leaders with lived experience from different regions, with 11 presenters in total taking to the stage.

- ▶ The R-Space, a refugee-led hub that ran in parallel to the Progress Review, provided room for dialogue and the sharing of community-driven solutions by affected communities.
- ▶ The closing plenary included a refugee dialogue with then-High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, looking at progress, challenges, and recommendations on the way to promote more meaningful participation.

## Feedback and the way forward

Following the GRF Progress Review 2025, UNHCR and participants with lived experience of forced displacement and statelessness undertook a joint evaluation to capture lessons learned and inform the path towards the GRF 2027, including through debrief sessions and surveys enabling participants to assess not only the scope of participation, but also its depth, quality, and impact. Participants widely acknowledged the significant progress made since the GRF 2023, particularly the increased institutionalization of participation through advisory mechanisms, inclusion in State and multi-stakeholder delegations, and expanded access to the GRF processes in general. At the same time, feedback pointed to a persistent gap between participation and influence, which will be a key priority to address in the GCR process moving forward.

For more detailed information about meaningful participation of forcibly displaced and stateless people in the GRF Progress Review 2025, [please consult this report](#).

**“I shared reflections on what genuine self-reliance looks like when refugees and host communities progress together, where refugees have pathways to education, skills, and livelihoods, and where national strategies move from rhetoric to implementation through inclusion, investment, and accountability. My call to action: Let us deepen national leadership and align partnerships so that refugee inclusion becomes a driver of economic growth, not a humanitarian afterthought.”**

*Louange Koffi, Founder and Executive Director, Ange Aide Foundation*



Ms. Rose Nyomo Daniel, Vice President, Network of Women with Disabilities (NWD) Nigeria reflects on the importance of civil society in supporting refugee and host communities.

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## Communicating progress

In the lead-up to and during the Progress Review, a wide range of social content, web stories, and explainers were published across UNHCR's platforms. These efforts, alongside two global press releases, contributed to the generation of over 900 pieces of media coverage. Throughout the event, UNHCR managed the real-time delivery of photo and video assets, ensuring that pledge announcements and high-level statements were documented and shared across all primary platforms as they happened.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

As part of the GRF Progress Review, social media products were created around cross-cutting themes on the key messages for the big moment. Across global channels and leadership accounts 77 messages and multimedia assets were prepared and delivered, including signature pieces from the opening and closing ceremonies. To centre refugee voices and allow for a social-first content series, UNHCR orchestrated an on-site programme titled Tiny Mic, Big Message. The format used a miniature microphone with UNHCR branding that allowed refugees and supporters of the refugee cause to send their bite-sized messages to the world. A cluster of these videos was issued during and in the immediate aftermath of the GRF Progress Review, and others were published in the following weeks and months to expand the reach of the series and extend the life of the content. On external social channels, 263,000 posts mentioned the Progress Review.

## GOODWILL AMBASSADORS

The GRF Progress Review 2025 opened with a compelling speech by Afghan refugee Paralympian and UNHCR high profile supporter, Zakia Khudadadi, former Afghan refugee Paralympian, setting the stage for the event.

During the Nansen Refugee Award ceremony, held on the second day of the Progress Review, Goodwill Ambassador, Cate Blanchett, delivered the opening remarks, while Goodwill Ambassador, Leanne Manas, served as MC for the performance-filled evening. Highlights included a dance piece by former refugee and high profile supporter, Ahmad Joudeh, and musical performances by Ukrainian refugee, Maria Sur, and Congolese-Swedish singer, Toussaint Chiza.

Goodwill Ambassadors and high profile supporters also participated at a private sector partnerships donor reception – with an opening speech by Leanne Manas – as well as in a high-level donor lunch at the Palais des Nations. Cate Blanchett interviewed the outgoing High Commissioner in a flagship segment for a BBC Christmas special with wide reach and coverage.



Nansen Refugee Award winners pose with UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, UNHCR Global Goodwill Ambassador, Cate Blanchett, and performers after the UNHCR's 2025 Nansen Refugee Award ceremony.

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## KEY MEDIA MOMENTS

Media coverage of the GRF Progress Review 2025 centred on UNHCR's communications, including the [9 December](#) Palais briefing by Nicolas Brass, Chief of the Global Compact on Refugees Section at UNHCR, the [12 December](#) 75th anniversary briefing with the global Nansen Laureate, and the [17 December](#) wrap-up release announcing over 30 new pledges. More than 20 journalists from major outlets such as Reuters, AP, Keystone ATS, RTS, AFP, France24, Al Jazeera, EFE and Kyodo registered, with dedicated coverage by [Anadolu](#) and [RTS](#). The [High Commissioner's opening remarks](#) were picked up by [Info Migrants](#) and [AP](#), focusing on the "unnecessary pain" caused by funding cuts. A key moment was Grandi's final press scrum on 17 December, widely attended and aired on UN TV. Media engagements included interviews with the Deputy High Commissioner (BBC World Service), Representatives for Syria and Sudan ([Anadolu](#)), and Regional Directors (RTS, [Anadolu](#)). Additional coverage came through the Nansen Refugee Award and interviews with global laureate Chief Martin Azia Sodea ([DW](#) and [TV5 Monde](#)).

## Charting the way forward to the GRF 2027

While the Progress Review reaffirmed global solidarity for refugees and demonstrated important results that have been achieved under the Global Compact on Refugees, including through the pledge mechanism itself, persistent gaps are still to be addressed. Throughout the three days of the event, delegations consistently highlighted the severe and compounding pressures facing refugee responses today. Global displacement continues to rise as conflicts multiply and peaceful solutions remain lacking. Political instability, climate-related shocks, and economic fragility are additional challenges putting pressure on refugee responses while funding has sharply declined. The world has seen the closure of essential programmes and reduced operational capacity by refugee response partners, driving greater gaps in refugee access to inclusive health, education, and protection services. Host countries stressed that national systems cannot absorb growing caseloads without greater and more predictable responsibility-sharing. Several delegations warned of the increasing strain asylum systems are under, with the challenge of growing backlogs and the adoption of more restrictive policies. This is further exacerbated by rising levels of xenophobia and the erosion of core protection principles, such as the right to seek asylum and non-refoulement. Return contexts, too, were described as fragile, and insufficient reintegration support prevents returns from being safe or sustainable.

At the same time, implementation of GRF pledges remains uneven, with meaningful policy reforms advanced as pledges by host countries hindered by a lack of matching financial, material, and technical support. Refugee-led organizations emphasized that meaningful participation remains limited by structural barriers, including underfunding, lack of decision-making power, and insufficient inclusion at national and regional levels. Other stakeholders underscored gaps in aligning humanitarian, development, and peace (HDP) nexus efforts. Taken together, these challenges point to the urgent need for renewed political commitment, sustained financing, and a more coherent and outcomes-driven pledge mechanism to ensure that the promise of the Global Compact on Refugees continues to translate into real improvements for refugees and host communities.

The GRF Progress Review confirmed that the pledge mechanism remains central to translating responsibility-sharing into concrete action but also underscored that credibility now depends on delivery rather than volume. Moving towards GRF 2027, the pledge framework must be recalibrated to function as a disciplined delivery instrument, driven by impact and results. This requires a clear shift towards quality over quantity, with pledges articulating a concrete change to be delivered, the pathway through which that change will be achieved, a defined timeframe, and measurable outcomes aligned with the GCR objectives and indicators. Further, the pledge stocktaking exercise confirmed



Participants to the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review held in Geneva.  
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that the multi-stakeholder pledge framework represents one of the most effective innovations of the GCR process and a critical driver of implementation, coordination, and transformative change. Evidence demonstrates that well designed multi-stakeholder pledges have delivered tangible results across protection, inclusion, self-reliance, and solutions, particularly where they are anchored in national systems, supported by clear governance arrangements, and oriented towards measurable outcomes.

Progress on inclusion, self-reliance, and solutions remains fragile, particularly as humanitarian and development financing declines and host countries face rising pressures. Sustaining delivery up to GRF 2027 will therefore depend on broadening and rebalancing the base of support with development actors and more strategically anchored private sector engagement. Development actors and international financial institutions play a decisive role in sustaining inclusion reforms, yet their engagement remains uneven. Where development finance has aligned with refugee policy commitments, progress has been more sustained. Therefore, engagement with development actors and international financial institutions should be deepened in contexts where inclusion reforms are underway or planned. This should include aligning refugee-related pledges with national development plans and sector strategies, and strengthening coordination between humanitarian, development, and financial actors at country level to reduce fragmentation and improve sequencing. Additionally, advancing self-reliance requires sustained investment in documentation, health, education, and community support systems. In turn, stronger levels of self-reliance contribute to improved outcomes in health, education and social cohesion. It will therefore be critical to embed refugee inclusion in national and local planning, supported by costed implementation plans that can attract predictable, multi-year financial and technical support.

The Progress Review also showed that private sector engagement delivers the greatest value where it supports nationally anchored responses and clear protection and inclusion outcomes, rather than operating through stand-alone initiatives. Based

on statements made throughout the Progress Review, private sector engagement should focus on economic inclusion through employer partnerships, digital protection and access to trusted information and services, sport as a platform for protection and social cohesion, and financing approaches that complement public and development investment. All private sector linked pledges should include explicit safeguards to ensure digital safety, protect privacy, prevent exploitation and abuse, and uphold international protection standards. Anchoring private sector engagement within national systems and public policy frameworks, and channeling participation primarily through multi-stakeholder pledges, will be essential to ensure coherence, accountability, and sustainability.

The GCR and the GRF pledging framework have demonstrated their value as effective platforms for forging new partnerships across the multilateral system, facilitating sustained engagement with a growing range of international actors. These emerging political and influential partners have expanded the base of responsibility-sharing and represent an important and growing source of political support, technical expertise, community engagement, and diversified resource mobilization. Dedicated efforts should be made to strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships which will be critical in broadening the base of support for the Global Compact on Refugees, mobilizing new resources, and ensuring sustainable implementation of inclusion policies within national and local systems.

Despite these challenges, through the GRF Progress Review, stakeholders demonstrated readiness and willingness to shape more effective approaches, recognizing that traditional funding levels may not be maintained. The discussions underlined the importance of innovative financing models and sustained dialogue at the country-level. In the context of UN80 and the humanitarian reset, the GCR was recognized as a key tool for moving away from separate, parallel humanitarian work to nationally anchored, inclusive, and ultimately more sustainable responses. The Progress Review reconfirmed both the relevance and practical value of the GRF and its pledging model. There was broad acknowledgment that approaches must evolve, and that progress will require concerted efforts from all actors. Discussions showed growing appreciation for the substantial returns generated by investing in refugee inclusion within national systems and expanding access to employment. A UN General Assembly–endorsed framework like the GCR has unique potential to bring diplomatic weight to protection-oriented narratives grounded in the principle of shared responsibility.

The discussions yielded important recommendations in terms of key priorities for the GCR process going forward to accelerate progress towards the four objectives and ensure the Compact continues delivering results for refugees and their hosts in an evolving context.

# Recommendations and follow-up actions on the road to the GRF 2027

**1**

Reinforce access to asylum and protection as foundational to responsibility-sharing

**2**

Bring renewed focus on refugee inclusion to help foster self-reliance and enable solutions

**3**

Optimize the GRF pledge framework as a high-impact delivery mechanism for protection, inclusion, and solutions

**4**

Invest in multi-stakeholder engagement, local leadership, and partnership brokerage

**5**

Use the GCR as a practical anchor for coherent global, regional, and national action in line with the UN80 and Humanitarian Reset

**6**

Enhance meaningful refugee participation toward greater policy influence across all stages of the GCR

**7**

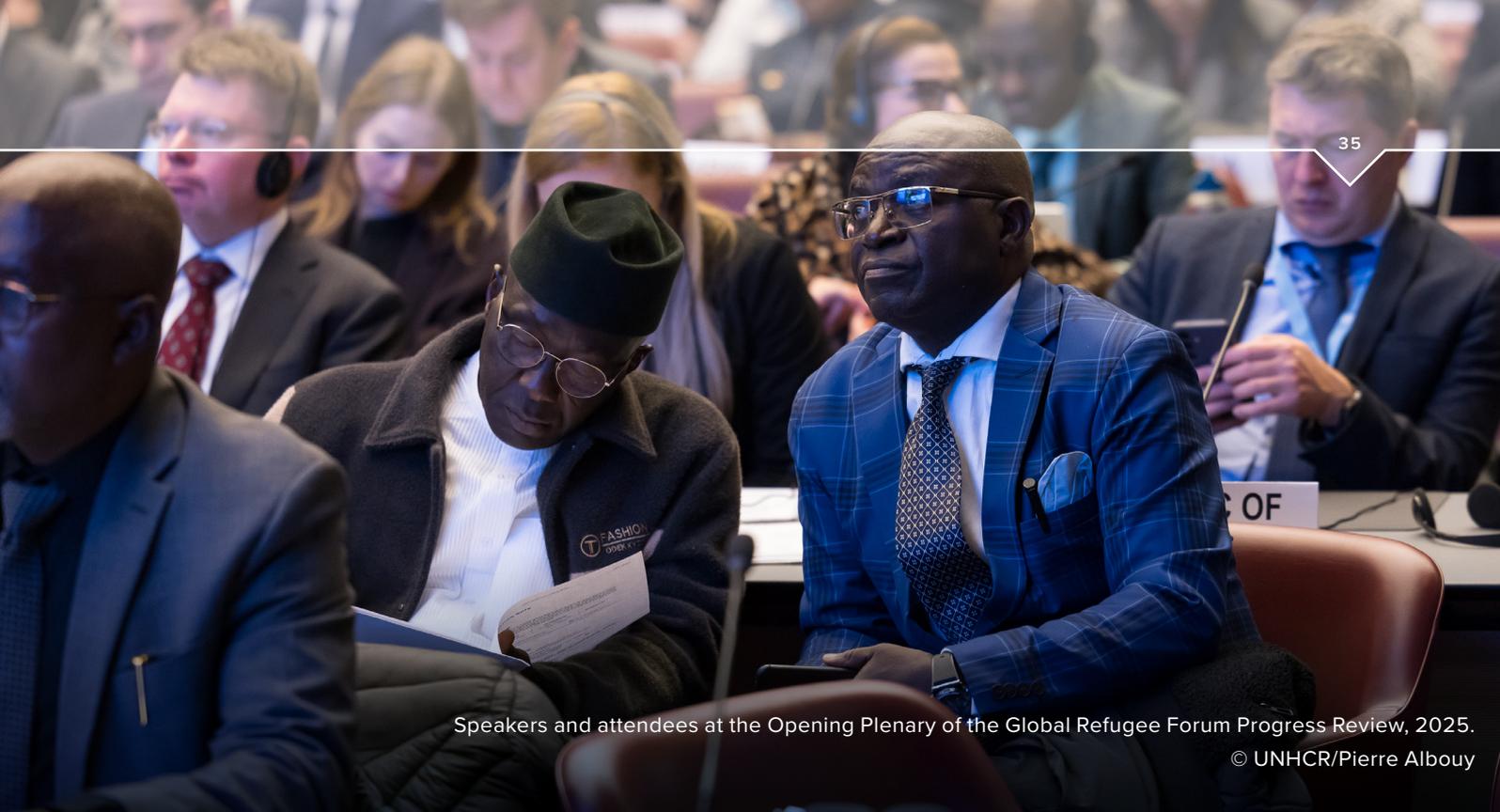
Strengthen data, evidence, and digital inclusion for a more impactful GCR implementation and refugee policy informed by the Indicator Report

**8**

Secure predictable, multi-year financing aligned with national leadership

## 1. Reinforce access to asylum and protection as foundational to responsibility-sharing

- ▶ Leverage the GCR to reinforce the principle of asylum by safeguarding access to territory, upholding non-refoulement, and supporting fair, efficient asylum procedures, recognizing that asylum space is under growing strain and must be preserved as a legal obligation and shared global value.
- ▶ Build consensus around a practical Agenda for Protection and Solutions that offers lawful, practical and cooperative responses to contemporary challenges and directly informs pledge development ahead of the GRF 2027.
- ▶ Encourage pledges to strengthen national asylum systems, including legal status and documentation to enable access to basic rights and services.
- ▶ Address shrinking protection space and contemporary protection challenges – including complex mixed movements, onward routes, AI-related protection risks, heightened politicization of asylum, and the impacts of natural disasters – by promoting lawful, predictable responses at borders, avoiding externalization practices, implementing cooperative route-based approaches, as well as promoting digital protection and safeguards in the use of digital tools to prevent harm, misinformation, and exploitation.
- ▶ Save lives and reduce harm along routes by ensuring rescue at sea and land, protection-sensitive entry systems, safe disembarkation and humanitarian assistance to address immediate needs leveraging complementary action and pledges under the GCR and Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.
- ▶ Ensure protection for stateless people through identification, determination, documentation, and prevention and reduction measures integrated within national systems.
- ▶ Scale-up efforts on gender equality and protection from gender-based violence through urgent implementation of current and new commitments under relevant multi-stakeholder pledges to ensure refugee women and girls are not left behind amidst rising levels of violence and closure of lifesaving services due to funding cuts; and prioritize supporting local women-led organizations (including those led by refugee women) through pledges to build on local expertise and ensure sustainability.
- ▶ Resource protection adequately by scaling predictable financing for asylum systems, legal aid, and reception, and broader protection services for groups at risks of violence (e.g. children at risk, people with disabilities, survivors of torture).



Speakers and attendees at the Opening Plenary of the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review, 2025.

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## 2. Bring renewed focus on refugee inclusion to help foster self-reliance and enable solutions

- ▶ Operationalize a new approach to refugee self-reliance to strengthen inclusion across sectors, reduce dependency on humanitarian aid and foster opportunities for solutions.
- ▶ Strengthen national leadership for sustainable reintegration in return contexts, linked to peacebuilding and stabilization, including access to basic services, livelihoods, and housing, land, and property rights, ensuring returns are voluntary, safe, and dignified.
- ▶ Build the policy, legal, and operational infrastructure required to scale up third country solutions and complementary pathways, including predictable, multi-year resettlement and community sponsorship, and expand access to complementary pathways through family reunification, growing sponsorship programmes, enabling skills-based pathways, and the issuance of machine-readable travel documents.
- ▶ Deepen engagement with multilateral development banks (including MDB Platform) to support labour-market integration, unlock flexible and blended financing, and generate evidence for inclusive policies.
- ▶ Expand collaboration with the private sector to catalyze investment, innovation, and job creation in refugee-hosting economies as well as labour mobility pathways to third countries.

## 3. Optimize the GRF pledge framework as a high-impact delivery mechanism for protection, inclusion, and solutions

- ▶ Reinforce pledge quality and results, guided by minimum delivery standards (innovativeness, complementarity, defined beneficiaries, time-bound milestones, and measurable outcomes).

- ▶ Simplify the pledge submission process to focus on essential elements, reducing lengthy narrative requirements.
- ▶ Consolidate follow-up and accountability through outcome-focused reporting, including space to capture changes achieved and constraints encountered.
- ▶ Archive dormant or inactive pledges to keep the database credible, realistic and focused on live commitments.
- ▶ Introduce positive incentives (visibility, political recognition, leadership acknowledgement) so pledge fulfilment is a marker of credibility.
- ▶ Review existing multi-stakeholder pledges against new and emerging needs and trends to assess relevance, momentum, and delivery capacity, developing new ones as needed and consolidating or concluding those that are duplicative, inactive, or fail to sufficiently integrate key elements of protection mainstreaming.
- ▶ Scale-up pledge matching and targeted support for host-country policy pledges aligned with national development plans.
- ▶ Mobilize donors, development banks, and the private sector to engage through multi-stakeholder pledges as the primary entry point to address insufficient matching for policy pledges.



Atmosphere during the day two of the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review, 2025.

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#### 4. Invest in multi-stakeholder engagement, local leadership, and partnership brokerage

- ▶ Deepen structured engagement with local NGOs, including refugee- and women-led organizations, private sector, academia, foundations, religious leaders, philanthropists, and cities and local governments to translate commitments into measurable results.
- ▶ Strengthen support to local authorities and area-based approaches, recognizing their central role in service delivery, social cohesion, and urban inclusion, including through cities' pledges and matched funding where relevant.
- ▶ Promote humanitarian-development-peace nexus and whole-of-government approaches that connect protection with national development plans and arrangements for refugees, reinforcing inclusion through national systems.

## 5. Use the GCR as a practical anchor for coherent global, regional, and national action in line with the UN80 and Humanitarian Reset

- ▶ Reground GCR delivery at country level, centring advocacy, pledge development, and implementation in national leadership and existing mechanisms.
- ▶ Elevate political advocacy to reinforce the primacy of refugee protection and inclusion and leverage GCR partnerships and pledges across UN development processes, political agendas such as the G7 and G20, climate negotiations, and peacebuilding forums.
- ▶ Expand the number of countries adopting the UN Common Pledge 2.0 while ensuring progress on existing commitments to enhance alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and national development plans while increasing efficiency across the UN system's engagement in forced displacement.
- ▶ Use the GCR as a practical framework that contributes to system wide coherence, efficiency, and reform agendas, including UN80 and the Humanitarian Reset.
- ▶ Sustain cooperation with regional organizations, regional development banks, economic commissions and other regional processes that shape policies on protection, mobility, and inclusion.
- ▶ Activate GCR mechanisms promptly in emerging crises to mobilize political engagement, development partners, and financing earlier and more predictably.
- ▶ Use regional support platforms and situation-related multi-stakeholder pledges, as delivery accelerators, linking them to inclusion and solutions priorities set by States.

## 6. Enhance meaningful refugee participation toward greater policy influence across all stages of the GCR

- ▶ Continue to increase and strengthen the participation of refugees and stateless people in GCR processes and events, ensuring meaningful engagement.
- ▶ Work with refugees and stateless people and the organizations they lead to sustain their active involvement throughout the GCR process, including in continuing identifying priorities and discussion topics, advocacy, pledge design and implementation (including multi-stakeholder pledges), policy dialogues, as well as national planning and UN development processes.
- ▶ Consolidate and expand refugee inclusion in State and stakeholder delegations to GCR milestone events, and support efforts to systematize such participation through refugee advisory mechanisms and other structured channels that enable sustained engagement in GCR processes.
- ▶ Ensure participation is resourced, safe, and impactful, contributing to policy coherence and accountability, and reflecting age, gender, and diversity considerations.
- ▶ Address systemic barriers to participation, such as language barriers, digital divides, visa restrictions, access to travel documents, and unequal access to funding.

## 7. Strengthen data, evidence, and digital inclusion for more impactful GCR implementation and refugee policy informed by the Indicator Report

- ▶ Ensure refugees, other displaced and stateless people are regularly included in national censuses, surveys, and administrative data, planned over multiple years.
- ▶ Promote the harmonization of methodologies, definitions, and regional frameworks with the GCR Indicator Framework, and strengthen the development of comparable and interoperable data across regional and national statistical systems.
- ▶ Conduct a review to strengthen the GCR Indicator Framework and reinforce the GCR objectives of responsibility-sharing, inclusion, self-reliance, and durable solutions, particularly demonstrating how countries include refugees in national systems and development plans, especially in low-income countries and fragile and protracted contexts.
- ▶ Fully leverage digital tools (e.g., UNHCR's Refugee Data Portal, Statistical Inclusion Navigator) for comparability, transparency, and joint action.
- ▶ Promote responsible and ethical use of AI in asylum and refugee-related data systems and build the capacity of States and actors to deploy AI tools that enhance protection outcomes, service delivery, and early warning, while safeguarding privacy and mitigating harm.
- ▶ Advance digital inclusion (connectivity, digital literacy, interoperable digital identity) to support protection, service access, and economic participation.

## 8. Secure predictable multi-year financing aligned with national leadership

- ▶ Increase predictable, multi-year, blended financing for host countries, aligned with national development plans and systems including for local organizations, and particularly those led by refugees (including refugee women-led organizations).
- ▶ Shift from fragmented, short-term humanitarian projects towards structural, system-compatible investments that benefit both host communities and refugees.
- ▶ Embed climate adaptation and resilience financing in refugee-hosting areas, recognizing compounding displacement and climate pressures, and including refugees in national adaptation plans.
- ▶ Improve aid effectiveness and coherence by reducing duplicative reporting and transaction costs for host governments and partners.



## Conclusion

The GRF Progress Review 2025 has shown that, even in a period defined by acute financial pressures, intensifying displacement, and geopolitical fragmentation, the Global Compact on Refugees continues to be a practical framework for collective action. Stakeholders across all regions reaffirmed that protecting refugees and supporting host communities is not only a humanitarian imperative but a shared global responsibility anchored in the principles of the 1951 Convention. The Progress Review highlighted meaningful progress since 2019: expansion of refugee inclusion in national systems, the development of the multi-stakeholder pledge framework, strengthened participation of people with lived experience, and a growing wealth of data and evidence to measure progress. Yet it also underscored that hard-won gains remain fragile. Declining funding, uneven responsibility-sharing, and limited progress on key policies and solutions pathways risk slowing down momentum at a time when demands on host countries are rising sharply.

The event also showed us that the full potential of the Compact has yet to be harnessed. To meet the scale of today's challenges, stakeholders must now focus on delivering measurable results through higher-quality, outcome-driven, multi-stakeholder pledges. These must expand predictable, multi-year financing, strengthen regional cooperation and national leadership, and implement the GCR objectives across policy action. Continued investment in meaningful participation – anchored in influence, not presence – will be essential moving forward. Reinforcing data systems, integrating refugee inclusion into broader political and development frameworks, and modernizing the pledge mechanism to ensure efficiency, coherence and accountability, will all be key enablers of progress. With early, inclusive preparation and renewed political will, the international community can ensure a path to 2027 that is defined not by constraints, but by collective resolve to translate commitments into lasting protection, inclusion, and durable solutions for refugees and host communities.

