

**ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH NGOS**  
**14 – 16 JUNE 2017**  
International Conference Center Geneva

***DISCUSSION PAPER***

**Session title:**        *Refugee voices in the global compact*

**Date:**                *Wednesday 14 June*

**Time/Room:**        *16h30 – 18h30 – Room 5/6*

**Background:**

The humanitarian sector is increasingly recognizing the meaningful participation of affected communities in decision-making concerning their protection and well-being as a central element to sound programming and accountability towards those communities. This commitment to ensuring the meaningful participation of affected communities was reaffirmed through the Grand Bargain's "participation revolution" work stream and is highlighted in the policies, guidelines and practices of a wide number of UN agencies and NGOs.

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (New York Declaration) is a milestone for global solidarity and refugee protection at a time of unprecedented displacement. It calls upon UNHCR to develop and initiate the application of the comprehensive refugee response framework (CRRF) in particular situations, in close coordination with relevant States, other UN agencies and stakeholders. Paragraph 69 of the New York Declaration and paragraph 2 of Annex 1 (the CRRF) make explicit reference to the participation of refugees in the process by calling for the development of "a multi-stakeholder approach that includes national and local authorities, international organizations, international financial institutions, civil society partners (including faith-based organizations, diaspora organizations and academia), the private sector, the media and refugees themselves. Within this "whole of society", refugees must be considered as a key stakeholder and their participation throughout the process leading to the development of the global compact on refugees (GCR) and its operationalization is critical to ensure that what is being envisioned for refugees is not planned and implemented without them.

Avenues and mechanisms must therefore be established to consult with refugees and allow their voices to feed into the development of the GCR and its subsequent application. The UNHCR/NGO Consultations provides the opportunity to bring together people from different organisations from around the world to share experiences and approaches, and make suggestions on how meaningful participation of refugees can be promoted.

**Objectives of the session:**

- Present and discuss preliminary findings from country-level consultations with refugees on their views/recommendations on the CRRF/GCR.
- Share experiences and approaches on refugee participation, including through self-representation, which could be used to ensure refugee voices are taken into account in the development and subsequent operationalization of the GCR.
- Connect organizations and individuals interested in collaborating on the issue of refugee participation in the development of the GCR and complementary Programme of Action to generate momentum and develop plans on how to take this issue forward.

**Desired outcome of the session:**

- Raise awareness on the critical importance of ensuring refugee participation throughout the development and application of the GCR.
- Encourage UNHCR and NGOs involved in the GCR development process to set-up systems/mechanisms to promote refugee participation.
- Identify concrete actions to ensure refugee voices are taken into account in the development and application of the GCR.

**Methodology:**

Panel discussion