

**WHO statement on occasion of
GCR Thematic Discussion
18 October 2017**

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The enjoyment of the highest attainable physical and mental health is a fundamental right of all human beings and prerequisite for sustainable development. Addressing refugee health needs and the public health implications of forced displacement must be an essential component of the GCR and in moving towards achieving the SDG vision including universal health coverage for all which is WHO's first priority.

In May 2017, at the Seventieth World Health Assembly, WHO Member States endorsed the resolution on promoting the health of refugees and migrants. Member States want to ensure that the health aspects of refugees and migrants are adequately addressed in the GCR and the GCM. We have been working closely with UNHCR, IOM and other partners to support the process including the development of the Framework of priorities and guiding principles to promote the health of refugees and migrants and in the application of the CRRF in the pilot countries.

In line with the Framework, to address the health aspects of refugees, the health related commitments in the GCR should include the following elements:

- National health policies, strategies and plans should be inclusive, taking into account all aspects of refugee health needs. Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches are essential.
- To move towards UHC, some countries may require modifying legal framework regulations that determine the access to health services of refugees as well as identifying health care financing models that are suitable to the local context.
- Health systems need to be prepared, resilient and refugee sensitive, taking into account cultural diversities and specific health needs of refugees in particular women and children. This implies health system capacity building and overcoming formal and informal barriers to health care. Short- term humanitarian assistance to save life and longer-term public health interventions must be available.
- Addressing the social determinants of health such as water, sanitation, housing, safe working conditions is essential to ensure good health, social inclusion and integration.

In this regards, WHO fully support the health programme of action listed in the concept paper which is based on the Framework of priorities and guiding principles. WHO stands ready to provide technical support needed in the development of the GCR, to ensure that the health aspects of refugees are adequately addressed. We will be working with UNHCR, IOM and partners in situation analysis, identifying best practices and develop the global action plan to promote the health of refugees and migrants.

I will conclude by saying that health is for all, and all means all including refugees.

Thank you.