

# Solutions, Inclusion & Gender Equality

11-13 JUNE 2024

UNHCR GLOBAL CONSULTATIONS WITH NGOS

CENTRE INTERNATIONAL DE CONFÉRENCE DE GENÈVE

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND



**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency



A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK  
FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE  
HUMANITARIAN ACTION

## Concept Note for UNHCR Global Consultations with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Geneva – Centre International de Conférence de Genève, 11-13 June 2024

### Solutions, Inclusion, and Gender Equality

#### 1. Background

For 30 years UNHCR and NGOs have convened annual global consultations on topics of strategic relevance to develop policy, advocacy, and operational recommendations.

Since 2019, regional consultations alternate every year with the global consultations to foster an exchange of ideas, define priorities, and inform strategies of UNHCR and NGOs at regional and global level.

Between June and September 2023, seven Regional Consultations with NGOs and civil society were held, resulting in [key recommendations](#) that were presented during the [74<sup>th</sup> Session of the ExCom of UNHCR](#). Building on this, UNHCR and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) will organize the 2024 Global NGO Consultations in person in Geneva on 11-13 June 2024.

#### 2. Themes

##### 2.1 Solutions, with a focus on inclusion

UNHCR works with States, development banks, other UN agencies, NGOs and civil society, and other stakeholders to identify and pursue solutions for refugees, displaced and stateless persons. NGO and other civil society actors play a key role in supporting inclusion in national systems and in achieving solutions through, for example: identification, case management, referrals and legal aid for resettlement; family reunification, and other sponsorship systems for complementary pathways; peace and reconciliation projects, housing land and property interventions, as well as financial and practical support for voluntary repatriation; and other socio-economic interventions such as education, livelihood and other services in support of local (re-)integration and inclusion in national systems.

Socio-economic inclusion is a fundamental enabler for any durable solution, be it voluntary return, local integration, resettlement or access to complementary pathways, and eradicating statelessness. The inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless people in national systems, programmes, and services is a key strategy to address their needs in a more predictable and long-term manner, promoting their self-reliance and resilience. Inclusion in social protection systems and programs can improve social cohesion, reduce inequalities between host communities and forcibly displaced people, and greatly contribute to improved protection outcomes, including to achieve gender equality.

Whilst new momentum and innovative approaches have emerged through processes such as the Global Compact on Refugees and the UN Secretary-General Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, solutions have not kept up pace with the number of people being displaced and becoming stateless. In line with the [UNHCR Strategic Directions](#) and building on the outcomes of the 2023 Global Refugee Forum, it is fundamental that the multiplier effects of partnerships with NGOs and civil society are built upon to strive for progress, diversification, and innovation in the search for solutions for displacement and statelessness.

The 2023 Regional NGO Consultations generated recommendations for UNHCR, governments, NGOs, and the private sector at the local, national, and international level, on how to collaborate to promote inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless people in national systems. The Global Consultations with NGOs will build on and strengthen those recommendations.

##### 2.2 Gender Equality



UNHCR's commitment to gender equality is articulated in the UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity (2018) through five obligatory core actions. The UNHCR Strategic Directions 2022 - 2026 identify accountability to women and children and gender-based violence (GBV) prevention, risk mitigation and response as priority areas for additional, accelerated, and targeted action.

Over the years, UNHCR, NGOs and civil society actors have worked together to prevent and respond to gender-related protection risks and needs. However, new and ongoing conflicts, the pushback on women's rights, the climate and environmental crisis, and the economic and social fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, have exacerbated gender inequalities.

The sessions on gender equality organized for the 2023 Regional NGO Consultations highlighted the importance of protection of vulnerable displaced and stateless persons, response to GBV, inclusion in decision-making, gender mainstreaming, and the empowerment of women-led organizations. The regional NGO consultations recognized that despite progress made, challenges persist across regions and that data gaps limit prospects for gender sensitive responses for the specific needs of people in all their diversity. Risks of labour exploitation and trafficking were highlighted as displacements becomes more protracted, particularly for women seeking employment who may face a variety of challenges, including language barriers, skills mismatch, and lack of childcare options. Regional recommendations were developed to address challenges to obtain gender equality for member states, UNHCR and NGOs. The Global NGO Consultations will be an opportunity to bring those recommendations to the global level and to agree on future collective action.

## 2.3 NGO Award

Since 2018 UNHCR has been celebrating innovative approaches in the way NGOs support displaced communities. The NGO Award recognizes their efforts and accomplishments in protection and delivery of services to refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), stateless persons and host communities. Since 2020, the NGO Award provided specifically organizations led by refugees and by women with a grant coupled with visibility and exposure to donors, international partners, and media, as well as the opportunity to exchange, learn, and connect with each other.

To reduce inequalities, facilitate greater inclusion, and expand partnerships, the 2024 NGO Award is dedicated to local organizations supporting persons with disabilities and organizations that are led by them.

## 3 Objectives and Outcomes

In the context of the above and grounded in [Principles of Partnership](#), the 2024 Global NGO Consultations will pursue the following objectives:

1. Exchange on the progress of the regional-specific recommendations and commitments from 2023, and review those that could be endorsed to become global recommendations.
2. Develop new recommendations to inform future collaboration between UNHCR and NGOs to promote inclusion as a pathway to solutions and to achieving gender equality.
3. Feed into global policy driven events such as the Global Refugee Forum and set in place preparations for the regional NGO consultations in 2025.
4. Provide an opportunity to build new connections, exchange information and good practices from different countries that may be replicated in other contexts.

The outcomes of the global NGO consultations will be presented at the annual meeting of the UNHCR's Executive Committee in October 2024 delivered by two NGO Rapporteurs.

## 4 Preparation Modalities

UNHCR and ICVA will coordinate the Global NGO Consultations, which will be in-person only (with possibility to broadcast the opening, closing, and main thematic sessions).

The main thematic sessions will be co-organized by a steering group made up of representatives of UNHCR Divisions, ICVA, and selected volunteer experts representing NGOs, including local NGOs and organizations led by forcibly displaced and stateless people. Their role is to identify the focus of the discussion, prepare the agenda, identify speakers and moderators, etc.

Side events will be organized before and after the main sessions. A call for expression of interest will be launched to NGOs and UNHCR. ICVA and UNHCR will approve side events, prioritizing those relevant to the

theme of the consultations and those co-organized by UNHCR and NGOs. The side events will also be assessed and selected based on the inclusion of interactive activities and focus on innovative approaches, increasing the space for active exchange.

## 5. Preliminary Agenda

DATE	Time	Agenda
11-Jun-24	12:30 – 14:00	Registration / Welcome coffee
	14:00 – 15:30	<b>Opening Session</b> and announcement of award winners
	16:00 – 17:30	<b>Main Session on Solutions and Inclusion</b>
	17:30 – 19:00	Reception
DATE	Time	
12-Jun-24	09:00 – 10:30	Side events
	11:00 – 12:30	<b>Main session on Gender Equality</b>
	12:30 – 14:00	Lunch
	14:00 – 15:30	<b>Interactive Session on Solutions, Inclusion and Gender equality</b>
	16:00 – 17:30	Side events
DATE	Time	
13-Jun-24	09:00 – 10:30	<b>Discussion on Solutions and Inclusion</b>
	11:00 – 12:30	<b>Discussion on Gender Equality</b>
	12:30 – 14:00	Lunch
	14:00 – 15:30	<b>Partnerships Session</b>
	16:00 – 17:30	<b>Closing Session</b>
DATE	Time	
14-Jun-24	09:00 – 12:30	Potential extra events to be confirmed

## 6. Participation

To ensure effective exchanges and concrete outcomes, the NGO consultations will adhere to the following parameters and criteria:

- **NGO and civil society:** 200 delegates, from NGOs and civil society actors. The maximum number of participants per organization is limited to 2 staff.
- **UNHCR staff:** A maximum of 50 staff members in addition to the above quota. Participation of UNHCR staff will be encouraged to ensure a two-way dialogue.
- NGOs who wish to participate must meet at least one of the following criteria:
  - Be a member of ICVA.
  - Have consultative status with ECOSOC with a demonstrated interest in solutions/inclusion and gender equality in the context of displacement and statelessness.
  - Be a funded partner of UNHCR in 2023/2024.
  - Be a non-funded operational partner of UNHCR (with recommendations from the UNHCR country office).
- Priority will be given to NGOs who have:
  - Engaged in the 2023 UNHCR Regional NGO Consultations.
  - Demonstrate expertise and experience in at least one of the two broad topics of discussion for this consultation (inclusion/solutions and/or gender equality).

To ensure the participation of local NGOs and organizations led by displaced and stateless persons, efforts will be made to facilitate and coordinate the funding of a few of these organizations by UNHCR.

## 7. Opportunities for Networking

- **Reception:** A networking event will be organized on the evening of the first day of the event.