

Summary of the Second Quarterly Informal Briefing on the Global Compact on Refugees

24 June 2024, 15:00-17:00 hrs. CEST

The Second Quarterly Informal Briefing on the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) was held on 24 June 2024 around the theme "Easing Pressures on Host Countries". UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection (AHC-P) Ms. Ruvendrini Menikdiwela opened the meeting, then passing the floor to H.E. Mr. Honsei Kozo, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, for opening remarks. AHC-P Menikdiwela also delivered opening remarks. The interim Head of UNHCR's Global Compact on Refugees Coordination Team, Mr. Ziad Ayad, presented updates on the Roadmap to the HLOM, before presentations from several multi-stakeholder pledges. There was then a discussion and floor interventions moderated by Amb. Kozo, before the closing of the meeting by AHC-P Menikdiwela.

Opening remarks by H.E. Mr. HONSEI Kozo, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

In his opening remarks, Amb. Honsei reinforced the need for solidarity as part of the GCR process and recalled that while the GRF is held every four years, host countries are engaged in refugee response daily and require matching in terms of financial, material, and technical support. He also expressed gratitude for host countries' continued generosity in hosting millions of refugees¹ and called for expanded application of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDP) through the multi-stakeholder pledge led by Japan and UNDP, which he invited stakeholders to join. As next steps, Japan is planning a session with host countries to explore policy commitments and needs.

Amb. Honsei also emphasized Japan's pledges under the "Women, Peace, and Security" approach, exemplified by projects in Bangladesh, Uganda and Zambia, and the new emergency training centre in Nairobi. He also updated on Japan's cooperation with African countries through the Ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). Japanese private companies and NGOs have also increased contributions, with several Japanese NGOs adopting HDP Nexus approaches. Finally, he applauded the success of the Consultations on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways 2024 and the Resettlement pledge.

Opening remarks by Ms. Ruvendrini Menikdiwela, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection (AHC-P), UNHCR

Ms. Menikdiwela opened by thanking Japan for its role as GRF co-convenor and leadership of the HDP Nexus pledge, and welcomed the active engagement of states, international organizations, civil society, private sector, refugees, and other actors in the GRF and GCR process. She recalled the priority to ensure host countries receive the necessary financial, material, and technical support to turn their policy commitments into reality.

The AHC-P encouraged harnessing the strengths and capacities of all relevant parties, building confidence in a whole-of-society approach. She highlighted the collective efforts needed towards advancing several essential common goals by 2027, including: providing access to labour markets and social protection in at least 15 countries; enhancing gender-based services in national protection systems in 20 countries; and enabling opportunities for millions of refugees for resettlement and complementary pathways.

The AHC-P also highlighted examples of progress made, for example by the United States of America in supporting MIRPS States on mental health, labour, and IDP solutions with projects starting in 2024;

¹ For example: such as Bangladesh, Chad, Colombia, Ethiopia, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Kenya, Pakistan, Türkiye, and Uganda

by Mexico for planning a mechanism for meaningful refugee inclusion in policy decisions; and towards the UN Common Pledge, which now counts 50 UN Country Teams and 20 UN agencies working towards refugee inclusion in development planning.

Update on Roadmap to the High-Level Officials Meeting 2025, Mr. Ziad Ayad, Senior Policy Officer and Head of the Global Compact on Refugees Coordination Team *a.i.*, UNHCR

Mr. Ayad recalled that follow up to the Global Refugee Forum 2023 will focus on support for low and middle-income country policy pledges by way of pledge matching. He informed that the biannual reporting process will continue through outreach from UNHCR and that progress updates can be submitted any time. In order to ensure the integrity of pledge data, Mr. Ayad indicated that an archiving exercise has been conducted for 384 pledges from 2019 which were not updated.

Many multi-stakeholder pledges are on track to reach their goals set for the High-Level Officials Meeting 2025 and GRF 2027, Mr. Ayad updated, highlighting several that garnered the most support such as Economic Inclusion & Social Protection, Education, Gender, Health & MHPSS, Statistical Inclusion, Sports, and Child Rights – an initial indication of priority themes for follow-up.

Mr. Ayad informed that UNHCR has analysed pledges for potential matching, identifying 306 policy pledges and 133 pledges with a financial component, and that tripartite meetings between pledging entities of financial/policy pledges will be organized in 2024, in collaboration with pledge leaders. He concluded by updating that the HLOM 2025 will be held at the CICG in Geneva on 16-17 December 2025, with an advance day on 15 December for parallel events.

Presentations by Multi-Stakeholder pledges on pledge follow up and progress

AHC-P Menikdiwela invited six multi-stakeholder pledges to provide updates on their implementation and relevance to the objective of easing pressures on host countries.

Chile and Colombia spoke about the Cartagena+40 multi-stakeholder pledge following consultations held in Colombia on 22 June with France, Germany, Japan and Switzerland. The negotiations of the Declaration and the Chile Plan of Action run from September-November 2024, with planned adoption of the Declaration on December 11-12, 2024, covering the period 2024-2034. The Declaration and Chile Action Plan focus on 1) protection for persons in human mobility and statelessness, 2) integral strategies for solutions, and 3) protection in the context of forced displacement due to disasters. Colombia also updated on pledges it leads on **Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention** and **Sports for Inclusion**.

Denmark's Public Private Alliance for Inclusive Refugee Response

Denmark updated on an alliance between its Government and three foundations – LEGO Foundation, Novo Nordisk Foundation, and Grundfos Foundation – to support development and durable solutions in host countries through pooled public and private funds. The Alliance's pledge is currently supporting an education programme in Ethiopia as well as Kenya's "Shirika Plan" to transform camps into integrated settlements, and will replicate this modality elsewhere. Denmark also updated on the **Quality Humanitarian Funding pledge**, led by Finland, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland together with Denmark with the aim to enhance unearmarked and flexible multi-year funding for refugee situations, and invited other donors to join.

Germany provided an update on behalf of the Climate Action pledge core group² and encouraged others to join. The group has a twofold target by GRF 2027: 1) Improved access to climate action, including capacity-building and financing for host developing countries and communities in climate-vulnerable settings; and 2) Refugees receive comparable support for climate action as nationals, through their inclusion in all relevant laws, policies, plans and programming.

² Denmark, Ethiopia, Germany, Somalia

To achieve these targets, the pledge will advocate inclusion in climate action laws, policies and plans; improve access to climate action and financing for host developing countries and developing countries of origin; inclusion of refugees in climate policy processes and decisions; inclusion of refugees and host communities in climate action programming; and enhanced collaboration and partnerships for sustainability. Pledges were made by 20 States, 12 international organizations, and a variety of civil society organizations, academia, and the private sector.³ Ethiopia, Somalia and Uganda pledged to include refugees in their climate adaptation plans; six states pledged to promote clean energy or reforestation; and ten states made financial pledges. The group is currently developing a roadmap, mapping policy processes and events (e.g., COP29), and plans senior level exchanges to ensure political engagement.

Global Legal Community Pledge presented by PILnet

PILnet presented The Global Legal Community Pledge which was first launched at the GRF 2019 to provide legal support to refugees. At the GRF 2023, the pledge was additionally joined by donors, international organizations, states, UN agencies and others. It provides support by way of 1) Legal assistance reaching 1 million refugees, 2) Legal empowerment of refugees to understand their rights and obligations. 3) Supporting policy processes in host countries. The pledge will meet quarterly, and a digital space has been launched for members to share information. Further, events will be convened to bring the legal community together, beginning with a pro bono pitching roundtable in Europe in October.

Ending Statelessness pledge presented by the United States of America

The United States presented an update on the Global Alliance to End Statelessness, which brings together stakeholders to end statelessness in follow up to the #IBelong campaign. Fifty entities have signed up, and the United States invited others to join, including by becoming a “solution seeker” as four states have already done. In October, a High-Level Segment on Statelessness will be convened at UNHCR’s Executive Committee meeting. Additionally, the United States updated on the ***Economic Inclusion and Social Protection Pledge***, by announcing that a donor group will be launched with institutional donors and foundations, and encouraged parties interested in joining to reach out to the US Mission or to the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative (RSRI).

Statistical Inclusion Pledge presented by Djibouti Institute of Statistics (INSTAD)

Djibouti, which co-leads the pledge alongside EGRISS and the World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Centre, announced that +100 pledges on statistical inclusion were advanced, half of which were made by states. Some 35% have reported their pledges to be in implementation, 5% fulfilled, and 3% in the planning stage.

Djibouti highlighted that its own pledge has been fulfilled and that the country’s President has taken a personal interest in the goal of capturing refugees in national surveys. Being included in datasets means improving access to social protection, jobs, health, and inclusion in national development plans. Strong support has further been seen from UNFPA and EU. Djibouti shared that the national pledge’s follow up arrangements build on existing platforms such as refugee coordination forums.

Interventions from the floor

Amb. Honsei moderated the discussion session of the briefing during which states and stakeholders participating in person or online could intervene. Many actors took the opportunity to update on multi-stakeholder pledges that they lead, and emphasised that a strong focus on matching between host country policy pledges and pledges by donors and other actors is pivotal for the successful implementation of pledges.

³ Notable pledges count for example UNDP, IFRC, the UN Country Teams in Namibia, Ethiopia, Brazil and Niger, and by five private sector companies.

Ethiopia reported on its close collaboration with Denmark on advancing pledges on education, noted that they have however not yet seen concrete matching. Ethiopia is currently implementing its pledges on inclusion in civil registration, the national strategy against violence against women and children, creating service and shelter centres, connectivity, and have benefitted with cooperation with IFIs in this regard. Ethiopia also indicated that recent trends show little easing of pressure or matching and shared concern on the future appetite of host countries to make inclusive pledges.

The United Kingdom updated on two pledges, encouraging others to join. First, a contribution made jointly with Sweden was announced to support the UN Fund supporting Women Led Organizations under the Gender Equality and Protection Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) pledge, in the amount of USD 3.6 million. The pledge has already been joined by more than 100 actors. Second, on the Education pledge, the UK stressed that half of refugee children are not in school and called for immediate action. The pledge has been supported by 54 states and 90 non-state actors. Recently, USD 15 million was announced for the “INSPIRE” Trust Fund by the World Bank with additional concessional financing for countries that open their schools to refugee children. Support has already been provided to Rwanda, South Sudan, and Burundi.

Norway underlined the importance of the **Quality Humanitarian Funding** Pledge, asking others to join, and confirmed they would continue to make at least 50% of their funding unearmarked.

Kenya highlighted the need for matching and third country solutions and that easing pressure should consider peacebuilding to ensure that refugees can return. Kenya also called for advancing the HDP-nexus; investment in countries of origin; increased financial support and resourcing for crisis; and unearmarked funding. GRF pledges advanced by Kenya are under implementation, including the Shirika plan, Economic Inclusion and Social Protection, and Statelessness. They thanked Denmark, the UK, the World Bank, and others that are providing matched funds. Kenya requested additional matching and investment in Kakuma and Dadaab across all sectors.

Germany, as a co-lead of the pledge on Gender Equality & Protection Against Gender-Based Violence, updated on their direct contributions to the UN Women and Peace Fund, announced in June 2024 in Berlin, with additional support for women and girls displaced from Ukraine.

Uganda expressed gratitude to those who have made financial pledges, while aligning itself with the messages of Kenya and Ethiopia on the acute need for matching. Uganda informed that their pledges are already in implementation, and it was suggested that additional unearmarked funding to support this was made available. Uganda welcomed UNHCR’s proposal to have tripartite meetings with donors and host countries to discuss specific matches.

Times Higher Education highlighted the new project announced with UNHCR on mapping of higher education scholarships as part of the implementation of the 15by30 pledge on tertiary education roadmap.

R-SEAT is engaging with states and partners on Meaningful Refugee Participation (MRP) and will release a report in the week of 1 July 2024 on best practices for MRP. The report shows good refugee participation in the GRF (+300), strengthened engagement of refugee leaders, refugees participating as equals including by States where 14 delegations brought refugees as part of their delegation. They stressed that more needs to be done, and the difficulty of refugees from the global south in accessing visas and called for an inquiry into this by UNHCR and Permanent Missions.

The European Union (EU) confirmed that all 15 of its pledges are under implementation, including support towards the Rohingya situation pledge and the Syrian displacement crisis pledge (in Jordan, Lebanon, and Türkiye). The EU reported launching several new projects in the past six months under the the EU Humanitarian Branch for Afghans, and is negotiating additional projects with member states and UN agencies.

El Salvador reaffirmed its commitment to the GCR through the MIRPS Support Platform and follow up on the Cartagena+40 Declaration. Their focus areas include: 1) employment services, work permits, naturalization and skills-certification, facilitated by Ministry of Labour; and 2) asylum system strengthening through launching a new centre and Status Determination Protocol. Donors were called upon for continued support.

New Women Connectors reaffirmed their commitment to the pledge on Meaningful Refugee Participation. To this end, they have been providing trainings on refugee inclusion to support a future where (women) refugees are heard.

Newcomers with Disabilities welcomed UNHCR's Global UNHCR NGO Consultations and requested that meaningful and flexible funding be provided to refugee-led organizations, and that refugees with disabilities be included as equals in relevant meetings.

Closing Remarks by AHC-P Menikdiwela, UNHCR

The AHC-P thanked all the speakers for their interventions and reiterated the ask for all relevant entities to join the Multi-Stakeholder pledges. She took note of the pledge matching needs expressed by Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and others who host high a number of refugees and continue to have generous inclusion policies. In closing, the AHC-P emphasized the importance of meaningful refugee participation and thanked Newcomers with Disabilities, New Women Connectors and R-SEAT in particular for their interventions.