

## **Statement by the Danish Refugee Council to the global thematic consultations, 15<sup>th</sup> Nov 2017, Whole-of-society approach**

### *Written submission*

The Danish Refugee Council welcomes the ambition to rethink how we respond to refugee situations. DRC has been a strong supporter of more comprehensive responses to displacement for many years; a response where multiple actors work together to meet protection and development needs of refugees and their host communities in all stages of displacement towards durable solutions.

In DRC, we have sought to break the humanitarian silo ourselves – in our own responses and by engaging in initiatives such as the Solutions Alliance. On this basis, the Danish Refugee Council warmly welcomes the ambition of a whole-of-society approach. An approach that is essentially about partnership and cooperation. An approach that is based on the premise that refugee responses require collective, concerted and long-term responses.

When developing the whole of society approach, however, we must be conscious that it does not lead to confusion. More actors with different interests can result in unclarity. If it is unclear who does what, we will risk that the lines of accountability dilute. Confusion will not help refugees and host communities. They need to know where and how decisions are taken, how they can access decision-making, and they need to know who to hold accountable for what. The rest of us, also need clarity: who leads? Where is coordination taking place? First and foremost we need to ensure that we all work towards the same objective to provide protection to refugees and promote development and durable solutions for both refugees and host communities.

Therefore, Danish Refugee Council proposes the following recommendation for the Programme of Action:

First, the Programme of Action should establish the basic parameters for a multi-stakeholder approach. Parameters that would ensure accountability and a joint direction. More specifically, we propose that

the Programme of Action clearly articulates the core priorities for response namely protection & solutions, and describes the core modalities for working together – how to set joint objectives, undertake coordination and monitor our delivery.

Second, and linked to the first, the Programme of Action should describe modalities for how refugees and host communities, as the core group of a whole-of-society, can be included and take a central role in designing and delivering a comprehensive refugee response.