"Towards a global compact on refugees"

Thematic discussion two:
Measures to be taken at the onset of a large movement of refugees
– and –
Thematic discussion three:
Meeting needs and supporting communities

Palais des Nations (rooms XVII and XXIV), Geneva, 17 – 18 October 2017

Summary conclusions

I.   Introduction

1.   The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2016,[1] called on the High Commissioner for Refugees, in consultation with States and other stakeholders, to develop a global compact on refugees for inclusion in his annual report to the General Assembly in 2018.

2.   In line with UNHCR's "roadmap" document,[2] on 17 and 18 October 2017 the Office convened the second and third in a series of thematic discussions to inform the global compact on refugees, specifically its "programme of action".[3] The discussions were co-chaired by His Excellency, Ambassador Carsten Staur of Denmark and the Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, Mr. Volker Türk. Thematic discussion two focused on "measures to be taken at the outset of large movements of refugees", while thematic discussion three examined strategies for "meeting needs and supporting communities".[4]

3.   Over 300 representatives from States, international and regional organizations and non-governmental organizations, together with experts and refugees, participated in a series of active and constructive conversations, focusing on good practices, lessons learned and suggestions for the programme of action. A number of written contributions were also received.[5]

4.   These summary conclusions do not necessarily represent the views of individual participants or UNHCR, but reflect broadly the themes and understandings emerging from the discussion. They should be read in conjunction with the summaries by the co-chairs for each of the panel discussions, available via: http://www.unhcr.org/thematicdiscussions.

II.   General conclusions

5.   An integral part of the global compact on refugees, the programme of action will underpin the comprehensive refugee response framework (CRRF) and facilitate its

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[1] New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 September 2016, A/RES/71/1 (New York Declaration), available from: www.unhcr.org/newyorkdeclaration.
[2] UNHCR, "Towards a global compact on refugees: a roadmap", 17 May 2017, available via: www.unhcr.org/refugeecompact.
[3] The global compact on refugees will consist of two parts: (i) the comprehensive refugee response framework (CRRF) contained in annex I to the New York Declaration; and (ii) a programme of action.
[4] Concept paper and other documentation from thematic discussions one, two and three are available via: http://www.unhcr.org/thematicdiscussions.
[5] The guidelines for submitting written contributions, together with written contributions received, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/writtencontributions.

implementation by building a platform of cooperation to enable more equitable and predictable burden- and responsibility-sharing.

6. The preliminary proposals for the programme of action contained in the concept paper for thematic discussions two and three[6] were broadly welcomed as providing a basis on which to proceed and, more generally, reflecting the types of measures, structures, support and commitments that the international community could seek to concretize in the programme of action. Valuable feedback on the detail of these proposals was provided, and a number of new suggestions were received, as detailed in the annex. The feedback and new suggestions will be taken into consideration in the process of developing the draft programme of action.

7. Many good practices were also highlighted at the country and regional levels. These practices will be captured, potentially in a "community of practice".

8. More generally, some broad lines of agreement at thematic discussions two and three included the following:

- A key purpose of the programme of action is to ensure more support to countries and communities hosting large numbers of refugees. The idea is not to impose additional burdens on these countries, but rather to support them in a manner that also enhances refugee protection. Shared responsibility and the creation of support structures for hosting countries will be at the forefront of the elements contained in the programme of action.

- We cannot wait for refugee crises to occur, but must better predict and prevent crises where we can. Greater investment in preparedness and long-term planning has been shown to pay dividends financially and in terms of speed of response: this will also be a key goal of the programme of action.

- There is an urgent need to mobilize more resources and ensure flexible and predictable financing that supports the protection of refugees and the well-being of hosting communities. Options in this regard include more unearmarked funding and creative options, such as loans in local currencies.

- The programme of action provides an opportunity for better partnerships between humanitarian organizations, development actors and international financial institutions to support longer-term development activities for the benefit of refugees and host communities alike.

- It is vital to support local actors, leaders, civil society, and municipal authorities as the front line of the response to large refugee movements, including by building their capacity and deploying resources and expertise to assist them. The goal is to strengthen existing systems rather than diffusing resources through parallel structures.

- Enhancing refugee self-reliance can be achieved while ensuring improved outcomes for host communities — including by reducing dependence on assistance, contributing to the economic well-being of the community as a whole, and helping to build the skills and financial resources that make return more viable and sustainable when conditions allow.

- The inclusion of refugees in national and local systems and services does not inhibit the achievement of durable solutions — including voluntary repatriation and third-country solutions — but rather complements efforts to achieve them. Significant support from the international community is needed to strengthen such systems and services in the emergency phase and over the medium-term.

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[6] Available from: http://www.unhcr.org/59dc8f317.

- Enhanced <u>data and evidence</u> capabilities will be crucial to improving the international community's response to large movements of refugees and protracted situations. The recently-announced World Bank-UNHCR joint data centre provides a basis on which to build.

- <u>Age, gender and diversity</u> approaches, as well as support for improved responses to refugees with a range of specific needs, will be important components of the programme of action.

III.   Follow-up

9.   These summary conclusions, together with the detailed written and oral contributions provided by stakeholders during thematic discussions two and three, will inform the remaining thematic discussions to be convened in November 2017, as well as the "stocktaking" at the High Commissioner's Dialogue in December 2017.

10.   UNHCR continues to welcome proposals for the programme of action. These can be submitted through the online facility for written contributions at unhcr.org/writtencontributions.

UNHCR
6 November 2017

ANNEX: FEEDBACK ON PROPOSALS FOR THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION, AND ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

Pillar one of the CRRF: measures to be taken at the onset of a large movement of refugees

Topic	Feedback on proposals in the concept paper, and additional suggestions
Preparedness and initiation of a comprehensive refugee response	**Global refugee response group** The proposed global refugee response group was generally welcomed. Duplication of existing structures was discouraged, and the inclusion of a broad range of stakeholders was recommended (including refugees); whether this would be a standing group or convened as needed on a regional level will be further considered. To activate the group, a "bell ringer" would be needed (potentially UNHCR), as would the leadership of hosting countries. The purpose of the group could include: early warning; mobilizing political commitments and resources; coordination, including between humanitarian and development actors; joint assessments and planning; support for reception; providing legal pathways for admission to third countries; and/or fostering technical support for hosting countries. In cooperation with relevant stakeholders, UNHCR will develop further the terms of reference, potential criteria for participation and other modalities. **Solidarity conferences** Generally welcomed as a tool to mobilize resources and political support. The need to ensure that the "systematization" of such conferences improves on the existing ad hoc approach was stressed, e.g. through identification of clear follow-up mechanisms. The differing capacities of States will be taken into account in identifying roles, responsibilities and contributions as part of this process. **Additional suggestions and considerations put forward** Innovative pre-crisis financing mechanisms, including contingency funds, insurance-based models and development funding to support government-led preparedness. A refugee response toolkit for local authorities. Mechanisms to ensure the participation of refugees, including women and girls, in planning from the onset of crisis. Early warning systems and risk analyses to predict the emergence of a refugee crisis.
Reception and security	**Support for reception arrangements** The proposals for additional support for reception arrangements were welcomed, and it was suggested that they could be linked to the activities of the global refugee response group (see above). Additional support was particularly encouraged: for local authorities and civil society organizations; to assist with identifying and addressing specific needs (see below); and to prevent abuse and exploitation, as well as providing assistance and remedies for victims. Support could be in the form of non-conditional and flexible funding (in line with "grand bargain" commitments), expert deployments through stand-by arrangements, technical assistance, and capacity building. **Support to ensure the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum** The proposal to ensure predictable support for the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum through the global refugee response group, including resources and technical or

	expert assistance, was generally welcomed. The modalities will be further elaborated with relevant stakeholders.
	Additional suggestions and considerations put forward
	Recognition of the existence of mutual rights and obligations between refugees and asylum-seekers and those working in reception centres.
Identifying international protection needs	**"Ecosystem" for collaboration on identity management**
	The "ecosystem" was seen as a good model to facilitate the sharing of good practices, tools and technology and ensuring accurate data collection; it could also facilitate data sharing and capacity building for local and national authorities to strengthen registration.
	Expanding the use of biometric technology, the involvement of the private sector and respect for confidentiality and data protection principles were encouraged.
	Asylum capacity support group
	There was broad support for this proposal. The group could, amongst other tasks: facilitate the provision of technical assistance and the establishment of twinning arrangements or other expert deployments; promote the sharing of case management tools; and support training and capacity-building for authorities, including to encourage consistency of decision-making across regions.
	It was recommended that the group provide assistance on the invitation of the host State; some participants suggested that it could be established on a standing basis. It could build on (not duplicate) the support already provided by UNHCR, and other models and good practices.
	Additional suggestions and considerations put forward
	Standard operating procedures for screening, referral and other mechanisms for the identification of persons in need of international protection, and fora for the sharing of good practices.
	Protocols for assisting persons with specific needs, and for ensuring data confidentiality.
	Gender guidelines for asylum decision-making.
	Consider including also statelessness determination procedures.
	Further guidance on new forms of "group-based" recognition of persons in need of international protection.
Specific needs	**Support for identifying and addressing specific needs**
	The proposal for additional support to identify and address specific needs was generally welcomed, including through the establishment of a network of "safe spaces" and tools to identify vulnerabilities and undertake risk analyses that build on existing frameworks (such as those to address trafficking).
	International support is best provided through and in order to strengthen relevant national and local systems. Participants advocated that it enable those with specific needs to participate in community life (not just meet their needs).
	Age determination procedures, sexual and gender-based violence referral mechanisms, and dedicated programmes for survivors of torture and trauma were highlighted; the use of the "Washington Group short set of questions on disability" was encouraged.
	Collection and analysis of disaggregated data was emphasized.
	Additional suggestions and considerations put forward
	A 48-hour "enhanced rapid response mechanism" to ensure that unaccompanied or separated children are identified on arrival, registered, screened for international protection needs, and given access to guardians, legal representation, safe accommodation, and health and mental health services.
	A collective "intersectional" analysis focusing on gender, age, disability and other factors in a crisis.

	Support work that identifies barriers faced by refugees with specific needs and explores ways to overcome them.

Pillars two and three of the CRRF: meeting needs and supporting communities

Topic	Feedback on proposals in the concept paper, and additional suggestions
Mobilizing more resources	**Additional humanitarian and development funding** The proposals contained in the concept paper were generally welcomed. On data, the recently-announced World Bank-UNHCR joint data centre could be a basis on which to build. The proposed mapping exercise of the burden of host countries was welcomed, and further exploration encouraged. The exercise could combine information from humanitarian actors, development actors and line ministries. On loan- and grant-based assistance, the "cascade approach" of the World Bank, which requires opportunities for private sector funding to be explored in the first instance, could be a model to ensure better prioritization of limited resources. Caution was expressed in relation to the loan model for refugee-hosting countries, and further exploration of the role for regional financial institutions was encouraged. The concept of "beyond aid" approaches was welcomed, and it was suggested that a process to foster further learning and exchange could be established. Further exploration of innovative financing mechanisms—including through guarantee mechanisms that support microcredit loans to refugees—was recommended. **Additional suggestions and considerations put forward** Strategic plans integrating humanitarian planning, development funding, third country solutions and durable solutions from the outset of a crisis. Commitments to core protection principles for new partners and funding streams. Increase the percentage of unearmarked and multiyear funding provided. Prioritize funding for local and refugee-led organizations, in line with the "grand bargain" commitments. An emergency response fund. Moratoria on debt repayments Direct budget relief. Loans in local currencies. Strategies to "de-risk" private investment in hosting communities.
Inclusion in national systems	**Feedback applicable to all proposals**. A scaling up of support to strengthen national systems was broadly welcomed, including through finance, technical advice and assistance, capacity building, and accurate data and information collation. It was recommended that local governments be systematically included in programme of action elements concerning inclusion of refugees in national systems. **Support for health systems** It was stressed that 'health' includes mental health. Social protection instruments, such as minimum health packages, would be an important consideration. Support for measures to address the needs of victims of torture, reproductive health and the prevention of and response to HIV/AIDS were emphasized. **Support for education systems** It was stressed that 'education' includes vocational and language training.

	Provision of grants and scholarships, both within the hosting community and also as a complementary pathway for admission to third countries, was encouraged.
	Support the promotion of social cohesion in curricula.
	Support for child protection systems
	The importance of measures for child protection, including the proposals contained in the concept paper, was reaffirmed.
	Additional suggestions and considerations put forward
	International support to address infrastructure challenges.
	Inclusion of refugees in social protection systems, including through cash-based interventions.
	A defined percentage of the funding allocated to support refugee inclusion could be reserved for host communities.
	On the rule of law:
	o Standby teams composed of rule of law officials to support access to justice and basic safety and security, including housing, land and property rights.
	o Expand legal aid.
	o Technical and financial resources for countries of origin and hosting countries to strengthen their rule of law and governance systems for refugee/returnee inclusion.
	o Support inclusion of refugees in rule of law and governance development programming, including in relation to housing, land and property rights and the right to legal identity and civil documentation.
	Ensure that the knowledge of humanitarian actors about the legislative and institutional obstacles faced by refugees is communicated to development actors who have knowledge of the national projects and planning processes that can help to clear those obstacles.
Livelihoods	**Support for the provision of livelihood opportunities**
	The proposals in the concept paper were generally welcomed.
	International support could be used to: assess labour market needs in the hosting country, including jobs that may be underfilled by nationals; develop strategies to formalize certain parts of the informal economy; provide structural assistance to ensure good conditions and wages for nationals as well as refugees; and provide vocational skills training programmes.
	Private sector engagement could be further explored, particularly to maximize sector-specific knowledge.
	Support to assist with the identification/collection of data on education and skills within refugee communities was encouraged (i.e. undertake "capacity assessments"); this could enable an evidence-based approach to labour market inclusion and access to third country opportunities.
	Additional suggestions and considerations put forward
	Support for livelihood opportunities specifically for women, including addressing gendered barriers to labour market inclusion.
	A "revolving fund" to provide refugee and host communities with access to start-up capital as needed.
	Temporary public work opportunities for refugees.
	Explore "development areas" and regional development centres in large hosting countries, as well as "job compacts".
	Increase access to online education and employment for refugees.
Humanitarian assistance	**New and innovative approaches**
	The proposals were generally welcomed.
	Measures to coordinate cash-based interventions were encouraged to avoid parallel and duplicative cash programmes administered by multiple agencies.
	Where appropriate, support was encouraged to ensure cash-based interventions are more widely used, multi-purpose and larger in scale, and delivered in closer cooperation with governments.

	Energy and environment
	Proposals were generally welcomed, and will be further developed.
	Additional suggestions and considerations put forward
	Establish a "collaborative space" for fostering innovation that involves humanitarian and development actors and the private sector.
	Ensure that transparency and accountability mechanisms keep pace with change.
	Explore ways in which blockchain technology could ensure accountability and transparency in some humanitarian assistance programmes.
	Establish an alliance for data and evidence, possibly building on the World Bank-UNHCR joint data centre (see above), to:
	o identify critical gaps in data and indicators;
	o develop frameworks for collecting and sharing data (including for ensuring the security and privacy of data);
	o collate and conduct regular reviews of evidence to support programme design; and
	o conduct cost analyses in displacement contexts.
	Emphasize the role for cash-based interventions at the interface between humanitarian and development responses.
	Explore the possible role for risk financing.
	Support refugee connectivity, including for online education.