



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM

**WEST AND
CENTRAL
AFRICA**

STOCK-TAKING EVENT

14-15 DECEMBER 2020



On Monday 14 and Tuesday 15 December 2020, on the eve of the first anniversary of the Global Refugee Forum, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) co-hosted a regional online event to take stock of progresses made and actions needed to operationalize the pledges made at the GRF and the High-Level Segment (HLS) on Statelessness.

The meeting was an opportunity to review results, progress and challenges, and review the impact of pledges and initiatives to inform the direction for the next refugee forum, and one year after the halfway point of the global campaign to end statelessness by 2024.

UNHCR, ECOWAS and CEMAC, together with representatives from Member States, civil societies, NGOs, humanitarian actors renewed their pledges and engagement to translate these pledges into concrete actions building solidarity with the world's refugees and the countries and communities that host them, and to end statelessness by 2024.

One year after the GRF, the context in which these pledges were made has changed dramatically, with the number of people forced to flee increasing further, both globally and in our region, while the COVID-19 pandemic severely tested international standards of refugee protection.

Among the 1,400 pledges made during the Global Refugee Forum, 55 pledges were for West and Central Africa by states and regional partners, with 34 of them in progress and 3 already completed. A further 77 pledges were made by entities from the region during last year's High-Level Segment on Statelessness, out of the 360 pledges on statelessness submitted globally.

Participants highlighted the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of their pledges. The pandemic not only aggravated issues that were already strained – access to education or livelihoods, resettlement targets, vulnerabilities of people forced to flee – but also prevented the implementation of planned activities or diverted financial resources.

With electoral processes taking place in several countries in the West and Central Africa this year, this affected implementation plans, especially for activities requiring the involvement of high-level officials and national institutions in those countries.

Despite the challenges, participants shared several remarkable progresses towards ending statelessness by 2024. They highlighted the adoption by Côte d'Ivoire of Africa's first Statelessness Determination Procedure, which will help protect thousands of people in the country who are without a nationality, the adoption in Chad of a new and progressive legislation on civil status registration, the publication in Mali of the results of a study on statelessness, while commendable progress was noted in the adoption a National Action Plans to End Statelessness by Cameroon and Central African Republic.

Participants also shared progresses towards pledges for the protection of population forced to flee, such as the efforts, led by ECOWAS, to promote the domestication and

implementation of the African Union Kampala Convention for the protection and assistance of IDPs, adopted in 2009. The collaboration between Niger and France for the implementation of the Asylum Support Group was also noted.

Discussion touched upon funding opportunities available in the region in support of the implementation and operationalization of both sets of pledges.

Participants are determined to continue accelerating the implementation of their pledges towards solidarity to work together, sharing responsibilities, and ensuring that people forced to flee are included in national responses, as well as ending statelessness by 2024.

The participants and pledging entities reinforced their willingness to uphold the commitments made to update each other on progress and working with all States and stakeholders to continue this global effort.

Illustrating the need for concrete actions to follow this meeting, ECOWAS will support its Member States through its advocacy, coordination as well as monitoring and evaluation of the GRF/HLS. It will also work with inter-sectoral ministers to enable states to deliver on their pledges. ECOWAS will require technical and financial support to perform these tasks.

Participants agreed on a multi-year roadmap to facilitate the operationalization of pledges, to be implemented under the leadership of ECOWAS, towards the next GRF and the end of the campaign to end statelessness.

Participants also committed to develop comprehensive GCR indicators that will support another high-level stocktaking event in December 2021, to monitor progress and identify future actions in preparation for the next refugee forum scheduled in 2023.

Summary of GRF Pledges in West and Central Africa

Pledges	Areas of focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48 pledges • 13 States • 1 Regional body • 1 media outlet • 1 NGO • 27 global pledges covering West and Central Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solutions • Protection capacity • Education • Jobs & livelihoods • Energy and infrastructure • Burden and responsibility sharing • Health

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