

**Progress since the first Global Refugee Forum**  
Virtual Quarterly Briefing  
Monday 14 December 2020, 15:00-17:00 hours (CET)

**Summary of Discussions**

**Introduction**

The informal briefing was the fourth opportunity in 2020 to provide an update to key stakeholders on the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees, one year after the first Global Refugee Forum was held in Geneva, with a specific focus on trends in implementation of pledges, progress in the key thematic areas of focus from the Forum, and plans for 2021. The event was chaired and moderated by the Deputy Director of UNHCR's Division of Resilience and Solutions, Mr. Mamadou Dian Balde, with opening remarks provided by UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, Ms. Gillian Triggs.

**Opening remarks**

*Ms. Gillian Triggs, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection*

- This briefing coincides with three significant milestones: the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of UNHCR, the second anniversary of the affirmation of the Global Compact on Refugees and the first anniversary of the Global Refugee Forum.
- At the time of the Forum last year, nobody could have imagined the ways in which the international community—including the international refugee protection regime—would be challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. Borders have been closed, resettlement has slowed considerably, and education and livelihoods opportunities have been restricted.
- The momentum for implementing pledges, however, has been sustained, and this is greatly encouraging. We have received implementation updates in relation to 40 per cent of pledges, more than 70 per cent of these are on track to be implemented as planned, and at least 70 have already been implemented. COVID-19 has slowed progress in some areas but accelerated it in others. For example:
  - In the one year since the Forum, from Costa Rica to Azerbaijan, governments have included refugees in their national health systems, partners have intensified advocacy, and several others have implemented programmes aimed at including refugees in national plans for education.
  - Although widespread travel restrictions have interrupted progress towards global resettlement targets this year, a number of countries have fulfilled their pledges towards the Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways with many also increasing their resettlement targets.
  - It is also inspiring to see momentum building behind the 10-year ambition of the Clean Energy Challenge, with membership having increased from 30 to 250 stakeholders, all joining forces to develop clean, modern energy solutions for displaced populations.
  - Regional Support Platforms have continued to work collaboratively to innovate regional responses to forced displacement, increasing and diversifying their membership to include both host and donor countries and other strategic partners.
  - Demonstrating the 'whole-of-society' effort encapsulated by the Forum, the city of São Paulo, Brazil, launched its first Municipal Plan of Public Policies for Refugees and Migrants in August – a pioneering initiative with refugee inclusion at its heart.

- Notable progress was made this year in the area of statelessness. At least 17 pledges have been implemented so far, including the accession to UN Statelessness Conventions by Malta and North Macedonia; the establishment of a statelessness determination procedure in Côte d'Ivoire and Kazakhstan; the signing of an amnesty law benefiting stateless persons in Tajikistan; and the adoption of National Action Plans to End Statelessness in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, and Rwanda.

We commend those that have flexibly adjusted their pledges to meet the challenges of the pandemic.

### **Update on planning for the High-level officials' meeting in 2021**

*Ms. Perveen Ali, Head of the Global Refugee Forum Coordination Team*

- The focus of 2021 will be the High-level Officials' meeting provided for in the Global Compact on Refugees. The focus of the meeting will be to take stock of progress in implementing the Global Compact on Refugees and to chart the way ahead.
- A year-long process is envisaged, culminating in this meeting, comprising:
  - An informal consultation on the roadmap to the High-level officials' meeting in late January. A draft roadmap for this process will be shared in the coming weeks, and we look forward to your comments on it.
  - A series of stocktaking opportunities (mostly at the regional level) to understand how far we have come in advancing the objectives of the GCR and implementing pledges, to discuss the constraints that have been faced and to identify ways to move forward. Similar opportunities will also be planned for specific themes and stakeholder groups. The results of these stocktaking opportunities will be consolidated into the background paper for the High-level Official's meeting.
  - In the fourth quarter of the year, a series of virtual spotlight sessions (similar to the format used for the 2020 High Commissioner's Dialogue) will highlight progress made, opportunities, and challenges.
  - The High-level Officials meeting itself will take place on 14 and 15 December 2021 at the Centre International de Conférences Genève at the senior officials level.
- The outcomes of the stocktaking opportunities and the meeting will be consolidated into an outcome document that will inform the strategic directions for the second Global Refugee Forum.
- In early 2022, UNHCR will share a roadmap to the second Global Refugee Forum, including strategic pledging guidance that addresses challenges and opportunities identified through the stocktaking.

### **Update on implementation of pledges**

*Mr. Ziad Ayad, Senior Policy Officer, Global Refugee Forum Coordination Team*

- The level of engagement in pledge implementation remains high, with updates having been received in relation to almost half of all pledges made (primarily from States and NGOs). In relation to those pledges for which updates have been received:
  - 72 per cent are in progress;
  - 14 per cent are in the planning stage; and
  - 14 per cent (at least 71 pledges) have been fulfilled. A few highlights are noted in [the accompanying PowerPoint presentation](#).

- Next year, the implementation tracking process will become somewhat more thorough and will focus more closely on the informing the reporting on the indicators for the Global Compact on Refugees. Further information will be forthcoming.

### Update on progress in the thematic areas of focus

(NB: details of the implementation of specific pledges can be found in [the accompanying PowerPoint presentation.](#))

#### Burden and responsibility sharing – focus on development actors

*Ms. Betsy Lippman, Senior Advisor, Innovative Partnerships, Division of Resilience and Solutions (DRS)*

- 70 pledges were made by development partners, 12 have been fulfilled, and 37 are in the planning stage. These pledges have enabled UNHCR to strengthen its relationship with a range of development partners (bilateral, multilateral, and UN) on programming, advocacy and the humanitarian-development nexus.

#### Education

*Ms. Jacqueline Strecker, Connected Education Officer, DRS*

- Of the 204 pledges made to education, more than 80 are in progress or have been fulfilled. The Education Co-sponsorship Alliance continues to be active in advancing the three outcome areas of the Global Framework for Refugee Education developed by the Alliance in 2019 (namely, Inclusion in National Systems, Qualification & Skills, and Emergency Response). The Alliance will produce a brief in early 2021 highlighting progress to date.

#### Energy and Infrastructure – focus on health and WASH

*Ms. Marian Schilperoord, Deputy Director, DRS*

- Health and WASH have been at the forefront of the response to COVID-19, which has shown again the importance of equitable access to vital services. An increased number of States have pledged for the inclusion of refugees in health systems and their universal access to WASH.

#### Jobs and livelihoods

*Mr. Cian O'Brian, Associate Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Officer, DRS*

- 140 pledges were made at the Global Refugee Forum relating to jobs and livelihoods, in particular in the areas of policy and inclusion, economic development, and private sector. 43 implementation updates have been received to date, demonstrating progress in a range of areas.

#### Protection capacity – focus on protection capacity pledges

*Ms. Bernadette Castel-Hollingsworth, Deputy Director, Division of International Protection*

- Good progress has been made at the national, regional, and global levels in implementing pledges relating to protection capacity, in particular in the areas of child protection, gender-based violence, gender and youth, community engagement and accountability to affected people, and disability inclusion. 100 of the 237 protection capacity pledges have so far been reported as in planning, in progress, or fulfilled.

#### Solutions – focus on local solutions, local integration, and voluntary repatriation

*Ms. Maja Pedersen, Associate Durable Solutions Officer, DRS*

- Although impacted by the pandemic, States and other stakeholders continue to make progress in implementing pledges relating to local integration, local solutions, and voluntary repatriation and reintegration. Efforts to mobilize support for the ambitious pledges made by host governments for local integration is ongoing, and a number of promising initiatives are progressing.

## Discussion

Following the presentations, the Chair invited interventions from the floor. A total of 26 interventions were made by States and other stakeholders, including Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, the European Union, the Africa Entrepreneur Collective, Amal Alliance, Education Above All, the European Network on Statelessness, the Global Refugee-Led Network, ICVA, International Olympic Committee, International Labor Organization (ILO), the ICRC, International Rescue Committee, “la Caixa” Foundation, Latter Day Saint Charities, Lutheran World Federation, PILNet, the Women’s Refugee Commission, UNFPA, and UNICEF.

Intervenors provided updates on progress made in implementing their own pledges and commended the efforts of all stakeholders in moving forward with the implementation of pledges in spite of the challenges posed by the pandemic. A number noted the heightened significance of the Global Compact on Refugees in times of pandemic, and of the pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum. Intervenors stressed the importance of maintaining momentum and looked forward to the provision of more information concerning the ‘roadmap’ to the High-level officials’ meeting in 2021.

In closing, the Assistant High Commissioner for Protection thanked the States and other stakeholders that had contributed to the discussion, particularly noting with appreciation the mentions of integration, inclusion, and welcoming communities.