

ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH NGOS
14 – 16 JUNE 2017
International Conference Center Geneva

DISCUSSION PAPER

Session title: ***Expanding resettlement and complementary pathways for better protection and solutions for refugees***

Date: ***Friday 16 June***

Time/Room: ***09h00 – 12h00 – Room 2***

Background and link to the theme:

In the *UNHCR non-paper* “Towards a global compact on refugees: a proposed roadmap”, the 2017 Annual Consultations with NGOs are listed among the thematic discussions contributing to the development of the Comprehensive refugee response framework and, ultimately, to a global compact on refugees, in line with the New York Declaration for refugees and migrants adopted by the General Assembly on 19 September 2016.

These discussions are intended to embrace all four aspects of the Comprehensive refugee response framework, including durable solutions. UNHCR expects that these thematic discussions will identify the actions that are essential to the type of refugee response envisaged in the New York Declaration and that will “inform the development of the Global compact on refugees. In the context of durable solutions, “increased used of resettlement” and “specific ways to increase and expand admission pathways” will be discussed by NGOs and UNHCR.

The Comprehensive refugee response framework enumerates three specific commitments for Member States related to resettlement and complementary pathways (NYD, Annex 1, paragraph 14):

- (a) Making available or expanding, including by encouraging private sector engagement and action as a supplementary measure, resettlement opportunities and complementary pathways for admission of refugees through such means as medical evacuation and humanitarian admissions programmes, family reunification and opportunities for skilled migration, labour mobility and education;
- (b) Sharing best practices, providing refugees with sufficient information to make informed decisions and safeguarding protection standards;

- (c) Broadening criteria for resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes in mass displacement and protracted situations, coupled with, as appropriate, temporary humanitarian evacuation programmes and other forms of admission.

Learning from the experiences of NGOs already engaged in these areas, this session seeks to explore ways that NGOs and UNHCR can work together to make progress towards these goals.

Objectives of the session:

- To foster a common understanding and distinction between resettlement and complementary pathways to protection and solutions;
- To identify actions and initiatives that NGOs and UNHCR can take to promote expanding resettlement and establishing complementary pathways for refugees.
- To already begin sharing and documenting good practices to be that can be used by States, international organizations, civil society and the private sector who are operationally engaged in supporting refugees' access to resettlement and complementary pathways.

Desired outcome of the session:

- Enumerate options and opportunities for expanding resettlement opportunities;
- Enumerate options for expanding humanitarian admissions programs, including through medical evacuation programs;
- Propose ways to establishing and advancing complementary pathways for admission of refugees to protection and solutions, including through family reunification and opportunities for skilled migration, labour mobility and education;
- Share best practices, including for providing refugees with sufficient information on third country solutions to make informed decisions and for safeguarding protection standards;
- Propose ways to broaden criteria for resettlement and humanitarian admission programs in situations of mass displacement and protracted situations.

Methodology:

The session is divided into three parts.

The first part, from 9:00-9:30, is a plenary introduction of the topics, namely resettlement and complementary pathways, including discussion of protection safeguards for refugees accessing complementary pathways.

The second part, from 9:30-11:15 (including a coffee break from 10:00-10:30), will feature breakout discussions (one on resettlement and one on complementary pathways). These will begin with more detailed overviews of the topics, followed by facilitated discussion, aimed for particular recommendations addressing the session's desired outcomes.

The third part, from 11:15-12:00, is back in plenary. It will include a recap of the breakout discussions, and in particular the recommendations from each, followed by time for questions and answers, and then a final conclusion.

Plenary:

9:00-9:05

Moderator welcomes everyone, provides an overview of the session, presents some framing remarks, and introduces the two panellists (one representing resettlement and one representing complementary pathways), who are also the facilitators of the breakout discussions.

9:05-9:25

Each panellist provides an overview of his/her topic, framed in part as a description of what to expect during the breakout discussion on that topic. (10 minutes each)

9:25-9:30

Moderator reiterates the most important points and provides instructions for breakouts.

Breakouts:

9:30-10:00

Facilitators provide a more detailed overview of the topic, noting in particular the relevant language from the New York Declaration, laying the groundwork for the facilitated discussion to follow after the coffee break. In the breakout discussions on resettlement and on complementary pathways respectively, facilitators include one representative each from an NGO.

10:00-10:30

Coffee break

10:30-11:15

Breakout discussions attempt to address each of the “desired outcomes” noted above. Facilitators are the same individuals who presented during the opening plenary.

Plenary:

11:15-11:30

Facilitators report back to the plenary with the results of the breakout discussions, focusing in particular on any recommendations.

11:30-11:55

Questions and answers, facilitated by the moderator.

11:55-12:00

Moderator closes the session by restating the most important conclusions and recommendations.