

**NGO statement on Agenda item 3:
thematic priorities for the pledging process and the sharing of good practices**

Dear Chair,

This intervention was developed in consultation with a wide range of NGOs.

NGOs view the Global Refugee Forum as vital in mobilizing international responsibility sharing for displaced people worldwide. Arriving a year after the Compact's adoption, it provides an important opportunity for States and relevant stakeholders to highlight our collective commitment to translate the Compact's vision into meaningful action.

On **pledging**, NGOs have already highlighted the need to match pledging with *specific* gaps, challenges and opportunities in *existing* refugee situations. We encourage States and UNHCR to initiate inclusive and context-informed approaches to ensure pledges lead to concrete changes in the lives of refugees and host communities, across the Compact's four objectives. This is the only way to address specific gaps; promote accountability – including for gross human rights violations; generate collective ownership at country level; and ensure inclusive and meaningful participation of affected communities, and local actors. Moreover, pledging at the Forum could draw on learning from the Leaders' Summit, where pledging had to meet certain eligibility criteria. Establishing thresholds, relative to an actor's capacity, is vital in ensuring pledges remain focused and bring additionality.

On **thematic priorities**, given the short time since the background note's release, detailed NGO comments will be provided later on. We, however, find that the proposed theme-based pledging has its pros and cons. Pledges on themes can be easier to mobilize, but could run counter to a context-based approach. Gaps, challenges and opportunities in a given context may not match pre-defined global themes. A global logic needs to be balanced with context-informed approaches in defining relevant pledges. The proposed themes do appear broad enough to secure that balance but some thematic areas (such as solutions) are more complex than others and may require more elaborate and multi-dimensional pledges.

On **showcasing**, we welcome tying pledges to good practice and suggest to thematically link good practices to the pledging format and initial commitments as well as to the indicators' framework. This will ensure those complement each other rather than remain self-contained. For instance, a pledge on improving reception and admission capacities could be paired with a good practice example in this area, and include a discussion on related indicators. This would provide an opportunity for immediate, practice-based feedback.

Moreover, guidance should be developed in advance to facilitate the selection of good practices and we encourage prioritizing practices that showcase partnerships among different actors,

including those not traditionally included. Guidance should also require case studies to include examples of refugee leadership and their meaningful participation.

However, let's acknowledge that good practice may not always exist. What if, for example, financial service providers in a given context have no risk appetite to cover refugees and host communities? We caution against an approach overly reliant on *laissez-faire* and recommend that States and UNHCR take leadership in driving progress on all GCR objectives even if 'good practice' is missing. Opportunities to learn from less positive elements of initiatives should also be factored in. Few initiatives will be entirely positive and reflections should be offered on areas for improvement.

To ensure **stocktaking and follow-up**, pledging should be closely connected to the Compact's outcome and indicator framework to promote accountability. If a theme-based approach to pledging is pursued, a methodology should be developed to ensure pledges are monitored under the Compact's outcome and indicator framework. A Global Refugee Forum detached from the Compact's objectives and indicators will not be able to drive its implementation.

In conclusion, we believe the Forum should represent a starting point for sustained collaboration. In the absence of a comprehensive framework to address multiple needs across the triple nexus, it is important that the Compact is not reduced to an exhibition, every four years, of vision, good practices and financing commitment. To avoid this, good practices should be linked to pledges and UNHCR should establish workstreams with all stakeholders to follow-up on expanding, improving and promoting cross-regional exchanges in between Forums.

NGOs look forward to continued exchanges on pledging and showcasing of good practices at the Forum, including at the 2019 UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations.

A detailed version of this statement is available on icvanetwork.org.

Thank you.