The Global Compact on Refugees in emergencies

10 December 2025

Key points

- In coordination with the country office, appoint a dedicated staff member (a Global Compact on Refugees [GCR] focal point) to oversee the implementation of the GCR within the emergency response in your office/team.

- Review existing pledges relevant to the country operation made by the host government, donors and other actors to assess whether these can be leveraged in support of the response.

- Support the host country government in establishing an interministerial working group to develop a comprehensive response plan (paragraph 21 of the GCR), in alignment with the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM),the Refugee Response Plan (RRP), and sustainable responses approach.

- You can see if your country is one of the more than 50 in which UN agencies have signed up to the UN Common Pledge 2.0 on its summary page. Where relevant, UNHCR and UN agencies in the country can mobilise the UN Common Pledge by contacting the in-country UN Common Pledge focal point (often within the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator), who can provide detailed guidance on how to leverage this pledge in emergency settings.

- Mobilize the thematic multi-stakeholder pledges and regional Support Platforms in support of the RRP.

- Leverage the existing or planned development funding of multilateral development banks (MDBs) and development actors to ensure socioeconomic inclusion and access to national services for refugees on par with that of nationals.

1. Overview

The objectives of the [Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)](), affirmed by the General Assembly in 2018, are to (i) ease pressures on host countries; (ii) enhance refugee self-reliance; (iii) expand access to third-country solutions; and (iv) support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity. The [extensive database of pledges]() announced since the first Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in 2019 provides an important entry point in emergencies – it should be used to identify existing political will and commitments of States; and the support that other stakeholders can provide to the host country or directly to refugees and host communities. Additionally, the thematic [multi-stakeholder pledges]() and [regional Support Platforms]() already have action plans for each country and can be used to request "whole-of-society" support.

In refugee contexts, UNHCR is mandated to lead the refugee response, including carrying out sectoral inter-agency coordination, contingency planning, response and resource mobilization, and finding durable solutions. In emergencies, this includes establishing a [Refugee Response Plan (RRP)]() – an inter-agency planning, coordination and fundraising tool – that aligns with national policies and priorities, and includes a diverse panel of relevant stakeholders. When establishing and leading a country RRP, UNHCR is encouraged to remind stakeholders of the pledges that they have made at previous GRFs that are directly relevant to the RRP, emphasizing the need for these pledges to be implemented, and highlighting that the RRP is also an avenue to pursue and fast-track the fulfillment of these crucial commitments in support of refugee responses and advancing support for host countries.

2. Relevance for emergency operations

Complementary to the [RRP](), the GCR provides a blueprint for advancing responsibility-sharing, coordination and the socioeconomic empowerment of refugees and host communities at the outset of an emergency. The GCR brings development actors on-board, jointly building data to inform the response, and serves as a guide for inclusion of refugees in national services, systems and development plans. It is brought to life by [thousands of pledges made by GCR stakeholders](), many of which can be adapted to suit emergency responses, alongside a collection of more than [500 good practices](), providing inspiration and practical advice for projects and initiatives.

3. Main guidance

The GCR emphasizes the importance of national and regional arrangements, and it is recommended to use the relevant existing [regional Support Platforms]() and mechanisms.

Similarly, several States have pledged implementation plans, which can prove important to the implementation of national RRPs. Pledges also provide a good complement to RRPs, which do not include the financial requests of national authorities or line ministries. If no such plans exist, the government may be supported in creating a "whole-of-government" approach in which a central authority (e.g. the Prime Minister's Office) coordinates a comprehensive plan where each ministry (education, health, labour, infrastructure, etc.) has its own responsibilities and targets that are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timebound), and at times, costed. This will allow non-state actors and donors alike to clearly identify areas of complementary

support (this process is also known as the multi-stakeholder approach).

Host country pledges

- [Host government policy pledges](#) can serve as a starting point to identify political will and potential systems and resources available that could be matched with financial, technical and material pledges made by others in alignment with the RRP.

- **Action points:**

- Appoint a dedicated staff member (a GCR focal point) to oversee the implementation of the GCR within the emergency response.

- Review [existing pledges relevant to the country operation](#) made by the host government, donors and non-state actors to assess whether these can be activated in support of the response.

- Establish an interministerial working group to develop a comprehensive response plan (paragraph 21 of the GCR) in alignment with the [RCM.](#)

Multi-stakeholder pledges

- [The multi-stakeholder pledges](#), which already list a range of actors and countries involved, can be used as a tool to request support under various themes, including creating a sustainable human settlement from the outset of an emergency; requesting asylum capacity support; promoting refugee inclusion in national services ([health](#), [education](#), [statistics](#) and [social protection](#)); ensuring the [protection of women and their inclusion at all levels of decision-making](#); encouraging [economic opportunities](#) and [food security](#); and [peaceful coexistence](#); or requesting [pro bono legal support](#).

- The respective multi-stakeholder pledge leaders can be contacted to express need for financial, technical and material support. Contact details are available on each of the [multi-stakeholder pledge pages on the GCR Digital Platform](#).

- **Action points:**

- See if your country of operation is one of the 50 in which the UN agencies have signed up to the UN Common Pledge 2.0 [here](#). In coordination with the focal point at Headquarters, UNHCR can further leverage the UN Common Pledge by contacting the in-country UN Common Pledge focal point (often within the Office of the United Nations Resident

Coordinator), who can provide detailed guidance.

- Mobilize the thematic multi-stakeholder pledges and regional Support Platforms in support of the RRP (contacts can be found under each [pledge page](#)).

The main opportunities for utilizing the multi-stakeholder pledges in emergencies are outlined below, although the list is not exhaustive. Many of the pledges have focus countries, but a request to include new countries can be communicated through UNHCR or directly to the pledge leadership.

A) Camp settings:

1. [Climate Resilient Sustainable Human Settlements for Refugees and their Hosting Communities](#): to promote and implement a sustainable and integrated approach to environmental and climate action mainstreaming, shelter and housing, access to basic services, governance and improved urban planning.

2. [Agriculture, Food Systems, and Food Security](#): to ensure that food assistance, food systems and agriculture are leveraged to sustainably meet the immediate needs of refugees, and stateless and other forcibly displaced persons.

3. [Refugee Environmental Protection Fund](#): to create an innovative and sustainable financing mechanism to invest in impactful reforestation and clean cooking programmes in climate-vulnerable displacement situations.

B) Inclusion:

1. [Statistical inclusion](#): for refugees to be included in national censuses and statistics to make them visible from the onset of an emergency.

2. [Economic Inclusion and Social Protection](#): to advance the economic inclusion and social protection of refugees, other forcibly displaced and stateless persons, and host communities.

3. Education ([primary, secondary](#) and [tertiary](#), and [ensuring technological access](#)): for all refugee children to have access to safe, quality and relevant education opportunities and to expand access to higher education and self-reliance for refugee and host community youth.

4. National Health System Inclusion: for [sustainable and equitable access to health care](#) and

related services at affordable costs, and emergency preparedness and response to support States and non-state actors in [preparing for mental health and psychosocial outcomes](#) due to displacement-related emergencies.

5. [Inclusion in gender-based violence (GBV) services](#) (Gender Equality and Protection from GBV pledge): including provisions for emergency preparedness and scaling up response capacity so that displaced and stateless women and girls have improved access to inclusive and quality GBV prevention and response services and to foster innovative partnerships with Women Refugee-led Organizations (WRLOs).

C) Mixed and Onward movement:

1. [Refugee Travel Documents](#): the 21st Century Nansen Passport – easy, ready access to renewable travel documents that protect against refoulement, provide access to complementary pathways and family reunification schemes, and can be accepted as ID, aiding self-reliance.

2. [Resettlement](#): implementing remote processing modalities for interviewing and selection, and establishing a mechanism to respond to sudden or unforeseen humanitarian needs by providing additional resettlement quotas.

3. [Anti-trafficking](#): enhanced protection for asylum-seekers, refugees, stateless persons and migrants at risk or affected by trafficking in persons.

4. [Protection at sea](#): new concrete steps to ensure the protection of asylum-seekers, refugees, stateless persons and migrants moving by sea.

5. [Alternatives to detention](#): rights-based alternatives to immigration detention for asylum-seekers, refugees, stateless persons and migrants.

D) Peaceful coexistence with host communities:

1. [Peacebuilding and conflict prevention](#): to address root causes of forced displacement and create conducive conditions for safe and dignified return and reintegration.

2. [Prevention of hate speech, misinformation and disinformation](#): to prevent the harmful impact on displaced and stateless populations, and on humanitarian action, of mis/disinformation and hate speech.

E) Support for protection :

1. [2023 Global Legal Community pledge](#): to increase refugees' access to legal services and information around the globe.

2. [Asylum Capacity Support Group](#): to strengthen the fairness, efficiency, adaptability and integrity of national asylum systems.

F) Coordination and non-transactional partnerships:

1. [UN Common Pledge](#) 2.0: need, risk and vulnerabilities are reduced over multiple years, through coherent, whole-of-UN support for hosting countries. The pledge is led by the Resident Coordinator and has been established in 50 countries as of 2024.

2. [Cities pledge](#): new support for climate action; support for policies that advance inclusion and durable solutions; support for policies and practices that increase opportunities for labour mobility and education; and identification of additional needs for humanitarian, development and peace cooperation.

[Localization](#) and [meaningful refugee participation](#): Localization in emergency response refers to recognizing, supporting, and integrating the leadership of local and national actors, including refugee-led organizations, in planning and delivering aid. These actors are often first responders and bring essential contextual knowledge. Emergency teams should actively consult local actors and displaced communities during assessments and planning and seek to include them in coordination structures to improve the sustainability and accountability of the response. Guidance and support can be requested from pledging entities under the GRF 2023 the Multi-stakeholder Pledges on Advancing Localization and on [Meaningful Refugee Participation](#). In emergency settings, the principle of Meaningful Participation also requires that refugees and other displaced people are engaged not only as informants but as decision-makers whose perspectives influence priorities, program design, and monitoring. This includes ensuring accessibility, safeguarding, and adequate time and resources for displaced communities to participate safely and effectively, even in rapid-onset crises.

G) [Support Platforms](#): The Support Platforms (CAR, MIRPS, IGAD, SSAR) and Situational pledges for Afghanistan (ReSolve), Rohingya, and the Chile Plan of Action are flexible modalities for the provision of situation-specific support from the international community.

Post emergency phase

- In the post-emergency phase, it is important to mobilize national and local governments, MDBs and development actors to leverage their existing or planned development funding to ensure socioeconomic inclusion and access to national services for refugees on par with

that of nationals.

- Advocate with the government and other stakeholders to [submit](#) a pledge under the GCR. Pledges can be submitted at any time and are announced or amplified during large events such as the Global Refugee Forums (2019; 2023; 2027) and Progress Reviews (2021; 2025; 2029) to call upon the international community. The events provide important opportunities to make an extra push for States to submit new pledges or implement existing ones, and to call for upscaled support for refugee resilience, easing pressure on the host country and unlocking solutions in third countries or in countries of origin by way of voluntary returns.

- Give visibility to existing policy pledges at future events (such as the GRF, the High-Level Officials Meeting, regional meetings, donor missions, etc.) to advocate for resource mobilization and implementation.

Checklist

- **a) Staffing:**

  Appoint a GCR focal point. Have a standing section on the GCR in reports and meetings, linking to key thematic areas. Ensure adequate staffing with development or solutions profiles.

- **b) Coordination with government:**

  Explore the possibility of establishing an interministerial working group to develop a comprehensive response plan (paragraph 21 of the GCR) in alignment with the RCM. Check if the UN Common Pledge 2.0 is already active in the country and draw upon the plan where applicable to advance GCR implementation.

- **c) Coordination (framework) with partners:**

  Use the pledges database as a basis for partnerships. Embed the GCR in the RCM, which is often activated by UNHCR at an early stage of the emergency. Make linkages between the pledges and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) work that the United Nations country team (UNCT) is undertaking together with the government and development actors for the transition from a traditional humanitarian response to one anchored in development approaches in line with the GCR. Mobilize development actors and MDBs to support investment in refugee-

hosting areas.

4. Policies, Guidelines and Useful Links

[UN, Global Compact on Refugees, 2018](#)

[UNHCR, Global Compact on Refugees Indicator Report, 2023](#)

[UNHCR, Roadmap to the High-Level Officials Meeting December 2025](#)

[UNHCR, Outcomes of the Global Refugee Forum 2023](#)

5. Links

[Pledges dashboard](#) [Good practices](#) [GCR newsletter](#)

6. Main contacts

Global Compact on Refugees Coordination Team:

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