

## **Collective Responses to Refugee situations: ensuring complementarity between humanitarian and development interventions: Lessons learned and recommendations from the roll out of the CRRF**

Panel discussion on the CRRF, co-chaired by the Estonian Presidency and UNHCR

By Daniel Endres, UNHCR | 10 November 2017

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Colleagues and friends,

First of all, I would like to thank the Estonian Presidency for working with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) on this timely and important discussion on the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework – as we call it, the CRRF. We are at a critical juncture for global responsibility sharing, as Estonia just indicated, and refugee protection. And so in the spirit of the New York Declaration, a range of actors have come together today to share our collective insights and suggestions on how to turn the CRRF into global reality.

Before looking forwards, let us just take a moment to see how we got here today. As you know, and as just mentioned, a bit over a year ago, 193 UN Member States, including Member States of the European Union (EU), unanimously recommitted themselves to the Refugee Convention, and to strengthen it through the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.

This ‘blueprint’ on how to respond to the refugee situation has four key objectives to ensure global responsibility, and to better protect refugees.

First, it aims to ease pressures on hosting countries. With 86 per cent of refugees living in low and medium income countries, more needs to be done. Second, it looks to enhance refugee self-reliance. That means seeing refugees as assets, with opportunities to contribute to host countries. Third, it works to expand access to third-country solutions. Many of you are familiar with resettlement, and family reunification, and humanitarian assistance can also help. And fourth, and possibly most important, it seeks to support conditions in countries of origin, to solve conflicts, and to enable return in safety and dignity.

All four objectives are, in fact, interdependent and indivisible, and there is a role for every actor in this room today to play in achieving them.

Actors are donors, civil society, the private sector, refugees themselves, and of course refugee hosting states and hosting communities.

Indeed, the most visible achievements to date relating to these key objectives have been done by large host countries themselves, through changes to national laws and through policies toward greater inclusion and self-reliance of refugees.

And already in one year, there have been concrete achievements on the ground.

In the past thirteen months, 12 countries have begun formally applying the CRRF, with Kenya and Belize the most recent to join.

Ethiopia for example has made significant progress in the enrolment of refugee children, from pre-school through to higher education. This means today within one year since the signing of the New York Declaration that an additional 20,000 children are in primary school today, giving them a brighter future. In addition to this, refugees now have access to social services, livelihoods, and legal employment.

This goes to the heart of the CRRF: refugees should be able to thrive and not just survive.

The inclusion of line ministries, such as education and health, enables the tailoring of sector-specific responses that also strengthen national and local structures. And this, importantly, accrued to the benefit of both refugees and host communities.

In addition to national applications, there are two coordinated regional responses: in a ground-breaking sign of political will, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) heads of States adopted the [Nairobi Declaration](#) in March this year. This was indeed a commitment to jointly pursue the development of a regional response for Somali refugees in the east and horn of Africa.

The critical role the EU played to make the Summit a success, as well as its continued support to implement the Nairobi Declaration, sends a strong signal of global responsibility sharing and solidarity.

And two weeks ago, in San Pedro Sula Honduras, five Central American countries and Mexico endorsed the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework, and presented their national action plans to enhance the protection of people forced to flee throughout the region.

The momentum and ownership generated by these regional responses is one of the first significant achievements of the comprehensive response.

Testament to this success of large hosting countries' work is the fact that, at the annual meeting of UNHCR's Executive Committee, more states expressed their interest becoming one of the roll-out countries.

However, large hosting countries also need to see sustainable and clear measures from donors, to share responsibility to protect refugees. Hosting refugees must be seen as a global public good – and refugee hosting states must see concrete action, expressed in financial additionality by donors.

A key example of the transformative potential of financial additionality is the World Bank's engagement with its new Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project, and the US\$ 2 billion IDA-18 financing for refugee and host community programmes. Along with financing in the form of grants and loans, the World Bank will be able to support CRRF countries like Ethiopia, Uganda, Djibouti and Kenya,

with technical expertise in sectors including education, energy, the environment and agriculture, and thus contribute to the inclusion of refugees while strengthening services and infrastructure for host communities.

We have also seen initial financial commitments from the European Commission and some EU Member States which are truly additional to standard budgets, and directly support receiving governments.

Specifically, coordination is needed in the area of humanitarian assistance and development cooperation. Also, here we have seen some commendable initiatives by the EU, best expressed by its *Lives in Dignity Communication* and subsequent Council Conclusions. These EU policies pursue a whole-of-institution approach, and recognize refugees as productive individuals, who hope to make a living and give their children a future.

Despite these key developments, our work has only started.

Since the New York Declaration was adopted, the number of people forced to flee their homes continues to grow dramatically, and has reached the highest level ever recorded - almost 66 million persons.

We must, as a global community, step up and systematize initial efforts to ensure comprehensive responses that are truly sustainable for refugees and the communities that host them.

In this spirit, we encourage the EU and its Member States to build on their significant efforts to date, and further support those countries hosting large numbers of refugees.

As we work towards the global compact on refugees and beyond, we call on the EU and its Member States to continue to set the standard as an exemplary international actor in pursuing a 'whole-of-institution' approach. The EU should seize the opportunity to sustain their engagement and translate forward looking policies into action on the ground, and ensure concrete, additional and predictable funding.

We have much to discuss today and these are mere opening thoughts to help fuel our discussion. As I turn to my colleagues on the first panel, I wish to extend a very warm welcome to all panelists, especially to those who have traveled from afar, and thank you for sharing your insights and recommendations on how the EU and its Member States can build on its work so far, to further support this global new way of working for refugees.

Thank you.