



## **Global Refugee Forum Pledging Guidance Inclusion of Older Refugees**

Older people have the right to promotion and protection of their rights in situations of risk and displacement. However, HelpAge International's on the ground experience and research tells us that, when older people are displaced, they face significant and specific risks in relation to discrimination, exclusion and safety and significant barriers accessing support and assistance that meet their needs that can be further exacerbated by gender and disability. Families are separated, roles change and community and support structures are disrupted. Meanwhile, host communities, governments and humanitarian agencies often exclude older people and fail to recognise the role and capacities of older people to support response and reconstruction.

The inclusion of older people in the Global Compact on Refugees is a key step to ensuring older people are considered in displacement. One year after the affirmation of the Global Compact, the first Global Refugee Forum (GRF) will be a unique opportunity for the international community to make concrete pledges and contributions to ensure that its implementation is inclusive of older refugees and ensures that their rights are upheld in displacement situations.

This note provides guidance on the development of pledges and contributions including example pledges for a range of actors. It supplements UNHCR's overall [Guidance Note on Pledges and Contributions and Good Practice](#).

## Overall guidance

In order to realize this opportunity, the development of pledges and contributions for the GRF should include:

- 1. Mainstreaming the rights of older persons across all pledges by:**
  - a. Considering how pledges will equally benefit older refugees and any additional support that may be needed to guarantee this
  - b. Considering how older refugees have participated in development of the pledge
  
- 2. Specific pledges to uphold the rights of older refugees which:**
  - a. Enhance the capacity of all actors to respond to the rights and needs of older refugees
  - b. Enhance the participation of older people in refugee response
  - c. Guarantee appropriate and accessible assistance
  - d. Provide access to national systems e.g. social protection and health systems
  - e. Improve the data environment with regard to older refugees
  - f. Meet older people's specific needs as durable solutions are sought

## Example pledges

### Enhanced capacity

#### To governments:

- Inclusion of older people in preparedness plans for refugee emergencies.
- Inclusion of older refugees in national ageing policies.

#### To donors:

- Enhanced and ringfenced financial contributions to host governments and humanitarian responders to support inclusion of older refugees in refugee response.
- Inclusion of older refugees in criteria for programme proposals and require reporting against this commitment.

#### To implementing partners in refugee response:

- Establish focal points for ageing within their organisational structure.
- Contributions of technical expertise to support refugee response that is inclusive of older people e.g. through training and capacity building, exchange programmes and secondments.

### Participation

#### To governments:

- Inclusion of older persons from refugee and host communities in delegations attending the Global Refugee Forum and in preparatory processes, including financial contributions to support this.
- Inclusion of older persons in national pledge development processes.

**To donors:**

- Contributions of financial resources and technical capacity to support Older People's Associations in host countries and build their capacity to engage in refugee response.
- Contributions of financial resources and technical capacity to develop Older People's Associations in refugee communities, where none exist.

**To implementing partners in refugee response:**

- Inclusion of older people within community governance structures set up as part of humanitarian responses.

**Appropriate and accessible assistance****To governments:**

- Pledges to include older people in refugee response plans and monitor implementation by all agencies.

**To donors:**

- Contributions of technical expertise and financial resources to improve access to assistive technology in refugee-hosting countries.
- Contributions of technical expertise and financial resources to improve older refugee's access to mental health and psychosocial support services.
- Contributions of technical expertise and financial resources to improve older refugee's access to appropriate health services and treatment for common conditions in older age.

**To implementing partners in refugee response:**

- Pledges to improve identification and appropriate referral of older persons at reception.
- Pledges to implement the Humanitarian Inclusion Standards for Older People and People with Disabilities. Financial and technical capacity contributions to support their roll out and application in refugee contexts.
- Pledges to remove age caps from jobs and livelihoods programmes and ensure training programmes are accessible for older people and people with disabilities.

**Access to national systems****To governments:**

- Include older refugees in national social protection systems including social pensions and cash transfer programmes.
- Guarantee access for older refugees to health systems and services to meet their specific needs.

**Improved data environment****To all actors:**

- Pledges by governments, donors and UN agencies to include older refugees in assessments to inform refugee response plans and funding allocations.
- Pledges by all actors in humanitarian response to disaggregate data across the life course by age in 5 year age cohorts where possible, or 10 year age cohorts as a minimum, alongside disaggregation by sex, disability and other characteristics.

- Contributions of technical expertise and financial resources to improve the collection and analysis of data disaggregated by age, sex and disability in the context of refugee response.

## **Long-term solutions**

### **To governments:**

- Extend family reunification to allow reunification of older parents with adult children in third countries.

### **To donors and organisations active in refugee response:**

- Contributions of technical expertise and financial resources to support application of durable solutions for older people, such as through the development of tools and resources on specific issues and key considerations for older refugees.
- Contributions of technical expertise and financial resources to countries of origin for ensuring age and disability- inclusive reconstruction efforts, including in the rebuilding of infrastructure and development of service systems.