

2021 REGIONAL NGO CONSULTATIONS IN THE WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION

Session on Operationalization of the Global Compact on Refugees

28 September 14:00 - 16:30 (Dakar time)

Background note

With more than 11 million forcibly displaced in the region – including 7 million IDPs and 1.4 million refugees – West and Central Africa is facing important challenges both in terms of emergencies and protracted situations. While some populations have been displaced for almost 4 decades, the situation in the region has become even more complex due to recurring conflicts, the effects of climate change and extreme poverty. For both protracted and recent situations, finding solutions remains paramount to support millions of people affected and alleviate the burden put on host countries and communities.

NGOs have always been part of the response in Western and Central Africa. UNHCR's support to people of concern and to states in the region would never have been possible without the strong engagement of NGOs who are playing a key role despite challenging circumstances. With the "whole-of-society" approach promoted in the CRRF, and in the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR), NGOs are offered new possibilities to support the forced displacement response and especially the solutions component of it by the implementation of local solutions with other actors.

During the last Global Forum on Refugees (GRF) organized in 2019, a few NGOs pledged to support the forced displacement response in West and Central Africa. In preparation of the High-Level Officials Meeting that will be held in December 2021 to take stock of the implementation of the pledges, this session of the Regional NGO Consultations will be a forum for NGOs to present their achievements and the challenges they faced with regards to the implementation of the GCR objectives and the GRF pledges. More specifically, many pledges made in the region foster inclusion and solutions. NGOs implementing activities in the region will have the opportunity to discuss additional and innovative ways to support the implementation of these pledges as well as potential new engagement for NGOs. The implementation of local solutions for refugees in Chad will be presented as a case study during the consultations.

The UNHCR Bureau for West and Central Africa is overseeing 21 operations supporting people affected by forced displacement and statelessness. The Bureau is currently handling forced displacement situations in the Sahel, in the Lake Chad Basin Region and in Central Africa Republic, in addition to the Ivorian situation and other activities including statelessness related ones.

ICVA is a global network of non-governmental organizations whose mission is to make humanitarian action more principled and effective by working collectively and independently to influence policy and practice. ICVA has been playing a key role in promoting the GCR objectives and approaches among NGOs.

By organizing this session, ICVA and UNHCR RBWCA would like to mobilize NGOs operating in the region around the GCR and the CRRF approach by:

- Recalling former discussions related to the GCR and the GRF pledges.
- Presenting the major situations in the region and solutions initiatives.
- Providing examples of what NGOs can do to support the implementation of solutions, especially local solutions.
- Discussing about what the GCR can bring in terms of solutions.

The meeting will mainly focus on solutions and namely how NGOs can support the inclusion process in at local level.

The session will also contribute to the preparations of the High-Level Officials Meeting on the Global Compact on Refugees on 14 and 15 December 2021, by identifying key sectors in which NGOs will engage in the WCA region as well as key messages to convey.