

Asylum Capacity Support Group (ACSG) Mechanism: Fact Sheet

1. What is the purpose of the ACSG Mechanism?

The ACSG Mechanism is a special initiative of the [Global Compact on Refugees](#) (GCR) that aims to ensure that asylum capacity support between States and other stakeholders is provided in a consistent and most impactful manner. The ACSG does this by matching State requests for support targeting positive improvements in the **fairness, efficiency, integrity, and adaptability** of national asylum systems, with corresponding offers made by States or other stakeholders. The ACSG will also share good practice examples through its **Online Portal** (under construction) and facilitate exchange of knowledge and expertise in relevant areas.



2. What is the benefit of the ACSG Mechanism?

Information on countries that are matched, and the support provided under the ACSG Mechanism will be reported on the ACSG Portal. **Having such information available will help to ensure consistency and coherence in capacity support, with focused support addressing critical gaps in a comprehensive manner. Importantly, the ACSG Mechanism also helps by preventing duplication of state efforts and resources for greatest impact** (e.g. where a State is already receiving capacity development support in a specific area) **as well as show where capacity support is needed** (where a State has unmet capacity needs). Thus, by coordinating initiatives through the ACSG Mechanism, including when stakeholders choose to engage bilaterally and independently from UNHCR, duplication will be minimized, and support can be directed to where it is most needed, especially in the context of matches involving different geographic regions.

In addition to the ACSG matching leading to better coordinated and targeted asylum capacity support, the ACSG Portal will help to bring **visibility to asylum capacity support projects**. This visibility enables cross-fertilization and creation of opportunities for further strengthening at national, regional and cross-regional level. The Portal will also provide an opportunity to showcase the capacity development work on a global stage and raise awareness and momentum on key asylum issues. As the ACSG Portal will also contain good practices and tools, this will help increase the effectiveness of capacity support projects of the future.

3. How does the ACSG Mechanism's matching process function?

The ACSG Mechanism's matching process begins once a request is received from one or more States for asylum capacity support. A State requesting asylum capacity support should make a commitment to improve one or more aspects of its asylum system and indicate where external support is required to meet this commitment. Many States pledged to strengthen their asylum systems in the context of the [Global Refugee Forum](#) (GRF), and will now be supported to concretise their pledges, as necessary. Other States are encouraged to make similar commitments (either through the ACSG or the GRF Platform, which will cross-reference each other).

In particular, UNHCR country offices are ready to support States in assessing their capacity, prioritizing areas for improvements and identifying support needs. [Annex 1 to the ACSG Guide to Working Modalities](#) (ACSG Guide) provides more details on the different areas of an asylum system which may be subject to a request for support.



States and other stakeholders are encouraged to make offers of asylum capacity support, especially in areas in which they hold particular expertise. Several offers in the form of pledges were already made at the GRF; additional ones are encouraged. In situations where there are insufficient offers of support or the offers of support do not address the identified needs, UNHCR may approach stakeholders with demonstrated expertise in the requested area of support to see if a matching offer could be made. UNHCR also encourages proactive offers of capacity support to States which might not have already pledged to strengthen their asylum

system, as such offers may act as a catalyst to initiate improvements, knowing that capacity support is available.

The ACSG Secretariat will match requests with offers in line with the prioritization criteria outlined in the ACSG Guide. Through country offices where feasible, UNHCR will inform the requesting/offering entity(-ies) of any potential matches and obtain their consent before providing detailed information about the request/offer to the other party. UNHCR country offices will facilitate the dialogue and development of the support scheme, while States receiving/offering the asylum capacity support will make the final determination on the scope of the support and its modalities.

The ACSG Secretariat will work with States or other stakeholder requesting and offering support to ensure that the request/offer is appropriately recorded as a GCR pledge/commitment.

4. What can and cannot be done under the ACSG Mechanism?

While the support channelled through the ACSG can include technical, material or financial assistance, the ACSG Mechanism is not primarily a funding mechanism. Therefore, it is anticipated that all support would include some degree of technical exchange. Since the ACSG speaks to asylum systems, requests related to other types of state systems will generally not be supported. However, if a state does not yet have an asylum system based on international standards but plans to establish one in order to make protection and access to solutions more effective, support could be sought for various aspects including but not limited to, drafting or the revision of legislation or support in establishing institutions.



5. How will ACSG achievements be tracked?

As per the process established on [tracking progress](#), all GRF pledging entities are periodically asked to provide pledge implementation updates. For tracking ACSG specific achievements, matched entities will be invited to share periodic updates that are geared towards detailing **good practices and assessing impact, to be shared on the ACSG Portal.**

DIP/RSD Section, October 2020

Contact: Questions relating to the ACSG Mechanism can be addressed via email to acsg@unhcr.org