

Global Refugee Forum 2023 Pledges

Framework document



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Family Reunification

This document has been prepared by the Global Family Reunification Network (FRUN) and contains ideas for pledge building around family reunification. The list is by no means exhaustive and is meant to inspire actors interested in making a pledge.



You can express your interest in making a pledge or being connected with other actors through [this form](#) or by scanning the QR code.

If you have any questions, please contact hqdiprcps@unhcr.org.

OVERARCHING GOAL

Everyone with a right to refugee family reunification can exercise that right and attain family unity within 5 years.

1 LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS TO SUPPORT ENTRY AND EXIT FOR THE PURPOSES OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION

- **Assessing and identifying** flexibilities within the legal infrastructure for reunifying refugee families within a national system;
- **Granting** beneficiaries of complementary forms of international protection equal access to family reunification as refugees;
- **Adjusting** eligibility criteria and application procedures, waving of application fees and/or income requirements, to be based on close ties rather than nuclear relationship types;
- **Adopting** additional measures to ensure the best interests of children is the primary consideration in the adjudication of family reunification applications and expanding framework to allow adult children reunification based on dependency principle;
- **Facilitating** access to family reunification through contracting of third parties to provide administrative support, providing livelihood opportunities for refugees in the family reunification process to meet income requirements;
- **Waiving or reducing** exit and/or overstay fees and expediting exit visa requests and expediting family reunification visas through waving of in-person interviews;
- **Developing** additional programmes to reunify extended family members, and facilitated procedures for populations with high rate of asylum recognition for expedited family reunification.

2 DOCUMENT ISSUANCE AND ACCEPTANCE

- **Issuing** machine-readable temporary/one way or Convention travel documents;
- **Accepting** documentation, including travel documentation issued by a country of asylum.
- **Issuing or facilitating** identity and civil status documents to individuals on the territory, including those relating to family composition;

3 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- **Considering** alternative forms of documentation to support identity, marital status and family relationship (such as copies of original documents, witness statements, religious or traditional certificates of marriage, photos, money transfer records, travel history and UNHCR registration records);
- **Accepting** replacement civil status documents issued by other countries of asylum.

4 CONSULAR ACCESS

- **Concluding** cooperation arrangements between countries to act as proxy embassies, in case of absence on the ground, for documentation submission, interview facilitation, biometric data collection, visa issuance and travel document collection;
- **Contracting** third parties, including visa processing centers or migration agencies, to assist with application processing and document issuance;
- **Expanding** submission modalities, by facilitating remote interviews, enabling online applications and/or applications directly by the family members in the receiving country, and allowing the submission of documentation online or via mail;
- **Waiving** certain procedural requirements where the facilities required are unavailable;
- **Training** consular officers to ensure sensitivity and understanding of refugee situations.

5 IMPROVE DATA AND DATA EVIDENCE

- **Participating** in infrastructure building for data collection on needs for family reunification, including developing tools/systems for the data collection on family ties in countries of asylum (including self-service), analysis and publication on global needs;

- **Building** capacity of States to systematically collect and report on applications (including data on application, decisions, arrivals and reasons for holds) in a standardized format to allow for comparative analysis;
- **Reporting** of family reunification data in a standardized format.

6 FUNDING

- **Financing** the costs of incidentals and airfare for reunifying families;
- **Exploring** community sponsorship models to fund the needs of reunifying families;
- **Engaging** the air industry to develop miles programmes to fund flights or fare waivers;
- **Funding** the support infrastructure from application to integration, including, RLOs diaspora groups and service providers;
- **Establishing** a system of donations to pool individual donations and holding individual donor campaigns;
- **Financing or loaning** law firms secondees to boost legal capacity and expertise.

7 INFRASTRUCTURE BUILDING AND MAINSTREAMING FAMILY REUNIFICATION

- **Establishing** an inter-ministerial body (working group / process / agency / subagency / division / department) dedicated to family reunification, which will ensure monitoring and reporting amongst other things;
- **Mainstreaming** family reunification activities within existing asylum structures;
- **Boosting** administrative and procedural support to families, particularly in countries of departure, including through engagement of local RLOs, and capacity building through trainings and/or seconded expertise;
- **Improving** legal support to refugee families, including by providing expertise and oversight to law firms offering pro bono hours to family reunification cases;
- **Participating** in the creation of a network/coalition to provide administrative, legal or procedural support to families to enhance coordination of activities.

8 INTEGRATION AND SUPPORT POST ARRIVAL

- **Including** beneficiaries of family reunification in existing integration support infrastructure for resettled refugees including cultural adaptation, language training, socioeconomic and legal counselling;
- **Ensuring** psychosocial support through existing structures;
- **Providing** cultural orientation.

9 COMMUNICATION

- **Developing** visibility products to highlight family reunification and raise awareness amongst refugee and diaspora communities;
- **Providing** accessible and digestible information on family reunification rights, eligibility and procedures, including online and through communicating with communities framework;
- **Supporting** the development of self-service points for refugees to update their information and access life information on application status and updates.

10 MONITORING OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION PROCEDURES AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF FAMILY UNITY IN EXISTING STRUCTURES IN THE ASYLUM SYSTEMS

- **Ensuring** regular monitoring of the implementation of refugee family reunification procedures, including legal frameworks, support infrastructures and statistics;
- Regularly **collecting** feedback from refugee and diaspora communities on the accessibility and efficiency of procedures and structures.