

Global Refugee Forum

Multi Stakeholder Pledge

Agriculture, Food Systems and Food Security

Guidance Note

Background

Forced displacement is both a driver and a consequence of acute food insecurity. According to the 2023 Global Report on Food Crises, in 2022 nearly 20 million refugees and asylum seekers (over 60% of the total global population) were hosted in 55 countries experiencing food crises.

Agriculture and food systems are interconnected and play crucial roles in supporting the long-term sustainability of refugees' food security and livelihoods. In many of the countries where refugees are living, agriculture accounts for a substantial percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) and serves as the primary livelihood strategy for both host and displaced populations, providing opportunities to generate income, increase availability, and improve food and nutrition security. In such contexts, expanding opportunities for sustainable agricultural livelihoods as part of food system transformation efforts, can enable refugees and their hosting communities to increase access to food, reducing needs for humanitarian assistance. Improving food security in refugee contexts is multidimensional and complex, requiring a comprehensive, systems approach that considers the unique challenges faced by displaced populations and seeks to address broader issues related to access to land, food production, distribution, and consumption, including the resources, technologies, institutions, and actors involved.

Yet changes in climate are affecting food systems, impacting agricultural value chains and compromising agricultural livelihoods, limiting their huge potential to deliver longer term self-reliance. This calls for accelerated action, which invests in climate-resilient food systems and agricultural livelihoods and supports sustainable management of and access to increasingly scarce and degraded natural resources- such as water, land and forests- the competition for which can threaten peaceful coexistence and compromise durable solutions.

This multi stakeholder pledge builds on the High Level Officials Meeting (HLM) 2021 key cross cutting recommendations: (4) Make better use of

Agriculture includes the cultivation of crops and animal husbandry as well as forestry, fisheries, and the development of land and water resources. In broader terms, agriculture also refers to agro-industries, manufacturing of agricultural inputs and machinery, such as seeds, fertilisers, tractors and irrigation systems, regional and river development, and rural development encompasses crop and livestock production, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry for food and non-food products.¹(*Making AgriFood Systems More Resilient to Shocks and Stressors, FAO 2022*)

A **food system** is the web of people, institutions, and activities linking the production, aggregation, transformation, transportation, and consumption of food (and its disposal) (*WFP Resilient Food Systems Framework, 2022*)¹

Food security is when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (*World Food Summit, 1996*).¹

combined humanitarian, development, peace capacities to achieve global GCR Objectives (5) Build attention to climate change into how we do business (6) Facilitate more systematic, inclusive and meaningful refugee participation; and (7) Enhance the data available to support effective action and investment in refugee situations; as well as key recommendations (12) Increase social inclusion for refugees; (13) increase economic inclusion and access to livelihoods, all of which fall under GCR Objective 2: Enhance refugee self-reliance.

Rationale

This multi stakeholder pledge serves as a platform to bring together partners and actors who wish to make individual and/ or collective commitments. These commitments acknowledge the critical role agriculture (including agricultural livelihoods), food systems strengthening, and food assistance play in addressing and preventing acute food insecurity, reducing needs for humanitarian assistance, and building the foundations for refugees and other forcibly displaced people to develop their self-reliance. They further aim to support refugees to thrive alongside their host communities and, when it is safe to do so, successfully reintegrate into their communities when they decide to return home.

Pledge Guidance Overview

What is a pledge?

Pledges encompass a wide range of commitments, and are not exclusively monetary, but can include a range of other commitments relating to food security, agriculture and food systems, such as:

- Individual or collective institutional commitments (e.g., improved targeting/inclusion of refugee populations);
- Technical assistance (e.g., to refugee hosting States);
- State or organizational policy generation or law reform;
- Commitments to address refugee related data and evidence gaps;
- Commitments to develop projects and programmes which contribute towards delivering durable solutions to refugees;
- Resource mobilization commitments to fund or otherwise support programmes, research, policy and law reforms.

The specific commitments under the multi-stakeholder pledge will be achieved through three complementary, reinforcing pillars underpinned by strengthened partnerships: (1) Law and Policy, (2) Programming; and (3) Data and Evidence. Pledging entities may make pledges which address multiple pillars, for example, a pledge can seek to support the generation of data and evidence to inform and shape programming and/or law and policy generation.

Pledging entities can include: States (including national, sub-national and local government institutions), regional/inter-governmental entities, international organizations, private sector, NGOs, civil society organisations, and technical or research institutions, as well as donors and international financial Institutions etc. Pledges may be made on behalf of individual entities or organizations or on behalf of an alliance of entities committed to advancing a particular objective or action related to the pledge.

- Pledges should be **SMART**: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timebound.
- The **objective** should be clearly specified and quantified in the pledge by including a quantifiable target (e.g., the number of targeted refugee and host population in a project; number of knowledge products developed; percentage of refugee population included in food security monitoring systems; etc.).
- The anticipated **month and year of completion** of pledge should be specified (within the 4-year implementation window of 2024 - 2027)
- Pledges should ensure an **age, gender, and diversity (AGD) approach**, for example:
 - ☺ Acknowledge and address the **different vulnerabilities, needs, and capacities** of girls, boys, women, and men, including people of all ages and gender identities, those with disabilities, and other diverse groups.
 - ☺ Advance gender equality and address **structural barriers that prevent the equal participation** of all, particularly of women and girls and LGBTIQ+ individuals of all ages and diverse backgrounds.
 - ☺ Promote the **full, equal, and meaningful participation** of refugees and host communities in decision-making – which is inclusive of all women and girls, young people and children, and individuals belonging to diverse groups – to ensure accountability to all affected people.

Pillar 1: Law & Policy

This pillar seeks to support and promote an enabling policy and legal environment for refugees to engage in food systems and agricultural livelihoods to achieve economic inclusion, strengthen food security and nutrition, resilience to shocks, self-reliance and improve social cohesion. This pillar is closely linked and complementary to the Data and Evidence and Programming pillars, which seek to support decision-makers, leaders and governments through the generation of timely, accurate and reliable data and evidence (e.g. food security and nutrition information), to better shape national policies and programmes aimed at promoting refugee inclusion and self-reliance, accessing decent livelihoods, tackling hunger, malnutrition and reducing poverty in displacement contexts.

Law reform pledges aim to expand the legal rights of refugees and other forcibly displaced people to support their social and economic inclusion, provide an enabling environment for their engagement in agriculture-based livelihoods, strengthen and prevent the deterioration of their food security and nutrition, and promote resilience to shocks, self-reliance and improve social cohesion. Pledges can range from national level law reform (such as commitments to develop legislation providing for land rights and natural resources, and access rights for refugee populations etc.) to local level law reform (such as local regulations providing rights to refugees to run informal businesses, and local level access to land etc.)

Policy pledges can assist States and local governments to design, refine or implement national legislative frameworks inclusive of refugees and may be closely linked to or complementary with law reform pledges. This may include, for example, national policy frameworks, such as national or sectoral development plans, which are inclusive of the rights, priorities, and needs of refugees, stateless, and forcibly displaced people. Policy pledges may also be made on behalf of individual entities or organizations or could be made on behalf of an alliance of entities committed to advancing a particular objective or action related to the thematic focus of the multi-stakeholder pledge.

Commitments under this pledge could include but are not limited to the following areas, noting pledges may address multiple, complementary outcomes:

- Food and nutrition security
- Agriculture and food systems development
- Inclusive agricultural value chains
- Climate change adaptation and climate resilience
- Land and natural resource management.

Additional notes:

- States pledging to adopt/enact/amend a law/decreed/act/regulation/policy should specify the name/code/year (if available) of the instrument in the pledge.
- States pledging to withdraw a reservation and/or declaration to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, or the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, should specify the full text and year of the reservation and/or declaration in the pledge.
- Pledging partners who are not states, commitments could either be: (i) a matching pledge to support the development of a state's law and/or policy adoption/amendment or (ii) a pledge to support a state's implementation of a law and/or policy. Support could be given through technical assistance and/or funding, among others.

For more details and sample pledges on Law & Policy please refer to Annex I.

Pillar 2: Programming

This pillar seeks to develop, implement, or fund programmes and initiatives across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus to meet the immediate needs of refugees, whilst laying the foundations for durable solutions. Programmes should, wherever possible, seek to link immediate assistance to the fostering of resilient, sustainable, climate adapted and inclusive food systems and agricultural livelihoods, which ensure the long-term food and economic security of refugees and deliver opportunities to contribute to local economies and markets, allowing them to thrive within their host communities. As much as possible, these actions should build on an understanding of the drivers of food systems failures, including how these failures affect forcibly displaced people. These actions should seek to facilitate local integration of refugees in their host communities, or the successful reintegration of returnees into their communities of origin.

Programmes and initiatives can also seek to support sustainable and equitable access to and management of natural resources and the promotion of peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities. At minimum, interventions should be conflict-sensitive and based on an analysis of risks.

This pillar is closely linked to the Data and Evidence Pillar, which will support host Governments, international organizations, NGOs and other entities to develop projects and programmes that respond to the specific needs and priorities of the refugees and other forcibly displaced populations.

Commitments under this pledge could include, but are not limited to the following areas, noting pledges may address multiple, complementary outcomes:

- Food and nutrition security

- Agricultural livelihoods, value chains, resilience and self-reliance
- Land and natural resource management
- Climate change adaptation and climate resilience
- Peaceful coexistence/ improved social cohesion.

For more details and sample pledges on Programming please refer to Annex I.

Pillar 3: Data & Evidence

This pillar seeks to address the data, evidence and analysis gaps that currently exist on the food security status, livelihoods, resilience, and self-reliance levels of refugees, other forcibly displaced people, and their host communities. It seeks to generate evidence on what works to sustainably improve their food security, healthy diets, livelihoods, resilience, and self-reliance.

Pledges are encouraged to increase the availability of reliable and regular, timely data collection and analysis on the food insecurity status (and related vulnerabilities) of refugees and other forcibly displaced populations and their host communities. The generation and sharing of timely, accurate and reliable data and evidence, commitments under this pillar will enable actors to effectively address refugee priorities through context-specific, evidence-based programmes and policies specific to their expressed needs. This pillar is closely linked to the Programming and Law and Policy pillars.

Entities and organizations seeking to make pledges which incorporate data and evidence generation, and analysis are strongly encouraged to employ integrated approaches which seek to listen to and better understand the perspectives, priorities and needs of refugees and other forcibly displaced people and ensure the voices of affected populations re shaping programming and policy.

Commitments under this pledge could include but are not limited to the following areas, noting pledges may address multiple, complementary outcomes:

- Data collection, analysis, harmonisation, and dissemination
- Evaluation and research
- Good practices and knowledge generation
- Knowledge partnerships

For more details and sample pledges on Data & Evidence please refer to Annex I.

ANNEX I: SAMPLE PLEDGES

Law & Policy

OBJECTIVE	SAMPLE PLEDGE
<p>Ensure area-based or national development plans leverage agriculture and agri-food systems to promote economic inclusion of refugee and forcibly displaced populations.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to adopt/amend development plan (name, code, year of the law if available) by (month, year) to include a framework for inclusion of displaced people in the agricultural sector and food systems (e.g., through a revision of registration processes for refugee-producer cooperatives).</i></p>
<p>Promote private sector investment in refugee-hosting areas to develop inclusive agricultural value chains that enable the socio-economic inclusion of refugees and other forcibly displaced people</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges (amount) to support (Government entity) with in the development / strengthening of (no. of) policy/ies by (month, year) that enable private sector investment in agriculture value chain development in refugee hosting areas.</i></p>
<p>Promote sustainable, secure, equitable access to land, water and other natural resources necessary for refugees and other forcibly displaced people to engage in agricultural livelihoods.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to adopt/amend law (name, code, year of the law if available) by (month, year) and the implementing decree/regulation (name of decree/regulation if available) by (month, year) to provide (no. of) refugees/stateless persons with the right to access agricultural land.</i></p>
<p>Support land tenure reform and increased accessibility of productive land for refugees and other forcibly displaced people for agricultural and pastoral purposes.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to support (Government entity) in the development or reform of land tenure laws and / or policies by (month, year) to provide (target population) refugees access to (number of hectares) land for productive purposes.</i></p>
<p>Develop climate change adaptation and natural resource management policies and plans that address the specific needs of and vulnerabilities of refugees, and other forcibly displaced people and their ability to engage in and benefit from sustainable agricultural livelihoods.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges (amount) to support (Government entity) in the development of climate change adaptation and natural resource management policy in (refugee hosting country / area) by (month, year) to improve access of (no. of) refugees to sustainable agricultural livelihoods and address depletion of natural resources.</i></p>

Programming

OBJECTIVE	SAMPLE PLEDGE
<p>Address and prevent food insecurity of refugees, other forcibly displaced and their host communities by ensuring access to timely, diverse, healthy foods.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges (amount) by (month, year) to ensure timely and effective humanitarian assistance to (no. of) vulnerable refugee populations and host communities in (refugee hosting country/area).</i></p>
<p>Promote the socioeconomic empowerment of refugees and other forcibly displaced people through the investment in inclusive, market oriented agricultural livelihoods programmes (e.g., inclusive value chain development, value addition, private sector engagement).</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to develop and implement Food Security and Agricultural Livelihood Programme focusing on developing or enhancing (no. of) agricultural value chains in in (refugee hosting country / area), targeting (no. of) of refugee and host beneficiaries by (month, year).</i></p>
<p>Promote the rehabilitation of agricultural infrastructure and early recovery/rebuilding of agricultural livelihoods for refugees and other forcibly displaced people to build early self-reliance, resilience to shocks and avoid dependency on humanitarian aid from the onset of the displacement.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to fund (Government and/or Organisation(s)) with (amount) to implement (no. of) of emergency agriculture livelihood support project(s) targeting (no. of) of refugees/other forcibly displaced persons by (month, year).</i></p>
<p>Promote the rehabilitation and development of land for sustainable agriculture.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to fund (Government and/or Organisation(s)) with (amount) OR (Institution) pledges technical support (amount) to rehabilitate and develop land for agriculture use targeting (no. of) of refugees/other forcibly displaced persons by (month, year).</i></p>
<p>Develop anticipatory action/early warning/disaster risk reduction systems to better manage and reduce disaster risk, mitigate impacts of disasters on refugees and their livelihoods and prevent or reduce displacement risk</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to develop an anticipatory action project in (refugee hosting country / area) to mitigate the impact of (name of) disasters) and prevent loss of refugee and host community livelihoods by (month, year).</i></p>
<p>Promote climate change adaptation and sustainable use and management of natural resources, such as land, water and firewood in food security and livelihoods programming in forced displacement settings</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to mainstream climate change adaptation techniques in their agricultural livelihood projects targeting (no. of) refugees in (refugee hosting country / area) by (month, year).</i></p>
<p>Contribute towards the local level peace and peaceful coexistence between refugees and their host communities by promoting joint intercommunity activities and dialogue platforms.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to mainstream intercommunity dialogue platforms in (no. of) forced displacement projects to improve intercommunity relationships in (refugee hosting country / area) by (month, year).</i></p>
<p>Support the development of innovative, flexible, and predictable funding models that allow investment in sustainable agricultural livelihoods across fragile forced displacement contexts.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to commit (amount) to create new funding models for emergency agricultural livelihoods support in displacement contexts in in (refugee hosting country / region) by (month, year).</i></p>

Data and Evidence

OBJECTIVE	SAMPLE PLEDGE
<p>Promote the systematic inclusion of refugees and other forcibly displaced people in regular data collection and analysis (e.g., food security monitoring) to create comparative data on the specific situation of refugees and other forcibly displaced people.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to systematically collect data on food security disaggregated by displacement status in (no. of) countries affected by displacement and food insecurity by (month, year) and make it publicly available.</i></p>
<p>Promote the systematic inclusion of food security and livelihoods considerations in existing data collection and analysis processes related to forced displacement.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to include food security and livelihoods data in (no. of) (name) existing data collection tools, dashboards, monitoring and/or reporting by (month, year).</i></p>
<p>Generate evidence to support the development of policies which allow the economic inclusion of refugees and other forcibly displaced populations in local agricultural economies and value chains.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges (amount) to support the generation of (no. of) data and evidence products to support the development/ strengthening of policies that enable private sector investment in agriculture value chain development in (X number of) refugee hosting areas by (month, year).</i></p>
<p>Generate knowledge products using participatory data collection approaches, and create best practices, to inform programming and advocacy priorities based on the priorities and needs expressed by refugees, other forcibly displaced and host communities.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges to incorporate qualitative data collection techniques into (no. of) data collection initiatives to create (no. of) knowledge products by (month, year) that reorient their responses based on refugee guidance.</i></p>
<p>New research partnerships developed with refugee-hosting governments and research institutions (with a focus on local ones) to increase understanding and expand the evidence base on the impact of inclusive agriculture, food security and food systems policies and programming for displaced populations.</p>	<p><i>(Pledging entity) pledges (amount) to support (no. of) grants that incorporate partnerships between researchers, policymakers and implementing agencies to understand the positive economic impact of refugee inclusion in their host communities in (refugee hosting country / area) by (month, year).</i></p>