

Advisory Board to the UNHCR Task Team on Engagement with Organizations led by Forcibly Displaced and Stateless Persons

UNHCR's inter-divisional Task Team on Engagement with Organizations led by Displaced and Stateless Persons was created in 2020, following the Global Refugee Forum 2019 (GRF). The Task Team aims to align internal UNHCR efforts and develop a framework on engagement of and partnership with organizations led by displaced and stateless persons, including those led by women, youth, LGBTIQ+ persons, persons with disabilities, and others.

The Advisory Board to the Task Team on Engagement with Organizations led by Displaced and Stateless Persons acts as a representative body for organizations led by displaced and stateless people and plays a critical role in providing advice to UNHCR's Task Team as well as other global UNHCR efforts, based on their experiences and expertise.

Member Organizations and Representatives Profiles of the Advisory Board



Apatride Network, European Union

[Apatride Network](#) is a network run by stateless people for stateless people, dedicated to giving voice to stateless views, stories, and dreams of equal human rights in the EU. Apatride connects stateless people to each other and to organizations that help, raises awareness on statelessness, and reveals problems that are at the core of the issue, such as racism and xenophobia.



[Aleksejs Ivashuk](#), representative of [Apatride Network](#), was born in Latvia but moved to the US with his family as a child. He has been involved in various organizations and projects related to statelessness, migration, and humanitarian work, including with IOM, the Canadian Red Cross, European Network on Statelessness, and the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion. After returning to Europe, facing discrimination due to his statelessness status, Aleksejs began working with international organizations to advocate for the rights of stateless people.



Asia Pacific Network of Refugees

Asia Pacific Network of Refugees (APNOR), Australia

[Asia Pacific Network of Refugees \(APNOR\)](#) is a network of RLOs established in 2018 that promotes genuine refugee inclusion in the Asia Pacific region. APNOR works to build a sustainable and inclusive network for RLOs, set the regional agenda for refugee policy based on the collective experiences of refugees and support the development of stronger national refugee-led structures that can influence policy reform. APNOR is led by refugees and aims to transform the aid sector by directly funding RLOs and providing capacity-strengthening support as requested. APNOR believes that refugee-led response initiatives are effective, innovative, and impactful because they are based on the needs and solutions identified within communities.



[Najeeba Wazefadost](#), representative of APNOR, is a former refugee from Afghanistan who has a degree in medical science and who is the founder of the Global Refugee Network. Najeeba has been involved in the development of regional and global refugee-led networks, which bring together refugee and migrant-led organizations and refugee change-makers to discuss their experiences and propose solutions for better refugee policy. She prioritizes and amplifies the voices of those most directly impacted by her work and is committed to promoting gender equality and empowering refugee and migrant women. Najeeba has served previously as a gender auditor for UNHCR and participated in key events.

Coalición por Venezuela, Regional (Americas)



[Coalición por Venezuela](#) is a union of Venezuelan civil society organizations (CSOs) across the Americas region, that was created to defend and promote human rights, freedom and democratic values, as well as to address the humanitarian situation inside and outside Venezuela and promote its development and progress. CPV was born within the framework of the 49th General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Medellín, Colombia, as an initiative of 31 Venezuelan CSOs on the American continent. This was in response to the need to combine efforts to provide an articulated, comprehensive and effective response to the complex humanitarian emergency that Venezuela is going through and to the migrant and refugee crisis that is affecting the region.



Ana María Diez, representative of the Coalición por Venezuela, is the current President of the Coalición and practiced law in Venezuela, including criminal law and the protection of children and adolescents. She has advised several commissions of the National Assembly of Venezuela (2015) and is a teacher in the areas of negotiation and conflict resolution. Ana María worked as a Humanitarian Protection Officer in Venezuela and later for Latin America and the Caribbean with HelpAge International. Since its foundation, she has worked at Coalición por Venezuela, fulfilling the functions of Country Coordinator in Venezuela, Coordinator of the Legislation Commission, Vice President, and now as President for 2022 to 2024.

Forcibly Displaced People Network, Australia



[Forcibly Displaced People Network](#) is the first registered LGBTIQ+ RLO in Australia. They operate with the belief that every service working with LGBTIQ+ displaced communities, whether it is health, housing, or case management, needs to be equipped to understand how race, migration status, trauma, gender, and sexuality shape one's experiences and interaction with systems. They engage in policy work, research, training of these communities and services supporting them, and other support for inclusion, belonging and safety for LGBTIQ+ forcibly displaced people.



Renee Dixon, representative of the Forcibly Displaced People Network, has been working as a human rights defender at international and national levels since 2004. As a result of their work, they were forced to leave Ukraine. Renee is an emerging academic and human rights advocate, who works toward a systematic change to support LGBTIQ+ displaced people, including through leading the Forcibly Displaced People Network.



Great Step Initiative, Nigeria

Great Step Initiative (GSI) is a refugee-led organization (RLO) that supports Cameroonian refugees living in Nigeria. GSI currently operates in Cross River and Taraba States. GSI's activities include mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), gender-based violence, child protection, and preventive health and sanitation. GSI is one of the seven winners of the 2020 UNHCR-NGO Innovation Award dedicated to RLOs in the COVID-19 response.



Cheng Laban Ndoh, representative of Great Step Initiative, holds a diploma in Human Resource Development, a certificate in security and safety, a certificate in Peace and Humanitarian Action, and a Bachelor of Science in Education and Theology. Cheng has also worked as a community health volunteer with Doctors Without Borders and is the founder and director of Great Step Initiative.



Migrantes y Exiliados Con la Paz (MEGoPa) / Red de Jóvenes Refugiados y Casa Refugiados, Colombia

The Colombian Migrants and Exiles for Peace Collective (Colectivo Migrantes y Exiliados Colombianos por la Paz, MEGoPa) is an organization formed by people with international protection needs of Colombian origin based in Argentina and Mexico, to promote their meaningful participation in all decisions that affect them in the region. MEGoPa collaborates with Casa Refugiados and is part of REVICPAZ-LAC, a youth and refugee led-network in Mexico, that promotes the social and political inclusion of refugees and migrants, for peaceful coexistence, equality and promotion of their rights.



Eliasib Amet Herrera, representative of MEGoPa, is currently studying International Relations at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). He has nine years of experience working for Programa Casa Refugiados A.C. (PCR), where he has held various roles including as Communications Coordinator, Peace Education Officer, and Community Outreach and Awareness Advisor. Eliasib is a laureate of the King of Sweden's award for Messengers of Peace and a founding member of the World Leadership Network of Refugees and the Collective of Colombians for Peace in Colombia from Mexico. He is also a member of the Network of Victims for Peace in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Red de Cultura de Paz de Kybernus, and the founder of the Young Refugee Network



MonyQadow, Kenya

[MonyQadow](#) is a RLO based in Kenya that implements programs to build capacity and facilitate the integration and sustainable living of refugees within their host communities. The organization focuses on refugee education, women and girl-child advocacy, and refugee entrepreneurship.



Adhieu Achuil Dhieu, representative of MonyQadow, is a South Sudanese refugee born in Kenya. With passion and drive to impact change for her refugee community, Adhieu's work focuses on refugee education, refugee entrepreneurship and most importantly, refugee women and girl's advocacy. Adhieu is also the East Africa Regional Leader for the Tertiary Refugee Students Network (TRSN), where she continues to advocate for access to higher education for refugee students. In her capacity as the TRSN East Africa Regional Leader, she was a representative at the inaugural Global Refugee Forum (GRF) 2019; Conference on Strengthening Transitions to Post-Secondary Education and Employment for Refugee and Displaced Youth in Kigali in 2022; and the 2022 UNHCR High Commissioner's Dialogue. Adhieu has also worked with [Glow Up Career's](#) where she facilitated Refugee Youth Leadership Training for over 70 refugee youth on leadership, advocacy and public speaking.



Moving Minds Alliance, United Kingdom

[Moving Minds Alliance](#) works to scale up the financing, policies and leadership needed to effectively support young children and families affected by crisis and displacement everywhere. Moving Minds Alliance is focused on rebuilding resilience by working to ensure that the needs of infants and toddlers and those who care for them – are not overlooked or under-funded.



Nour Jarrouj, representative of Moving Minds Alliance, is a Syrian refugee activist, non-profit founder, inclusion advisor, and a humanitarian worker who has dedicated her career to supporting marginalized communities. She is currently a Senior Engagement and Advocacy Manager with the Moving Minds Alliance. Nour holds a Bachelor of Science in Economics from Damascus University and a Master of Science in Violence, Conflict and Development from SOAS, the University of London with over nine years in the humanitarian and refugee sector.



Newcomers to Sweden with Disabilities, Sweden

[Newcomers with Disabilities in Sweden](#) is a refugee-persons with disabilities-led NGO that promotes the inclusion of refugees with disabilities in Sweden. The organization works to improve conditions for asylum-seekers and refugees with disabilities and collaborates with organizations such as MFD, the Swedish Agency for Participation, to produce materials for individuals with disabilities. The organization also holds online group activities and works on non-formal education to promote inclusion in Swedish society. The ultimate goal of the organization is to support individuals in becoming equal, contributing members of Swedish society, and to advocate for better conditions for people living with disability.



Ntobuah Julius Mvenyi, representative of Newcomers with Disability in Sweden, is a project manager with three years of experience working on projects in Sweden. He has extensive international experience in advocacy on disability, migration, and inclusion work. Julius is also as a member of the Special Patients' Council affiliated to the Agency Swedish Agency for Health and Care, responsible for field work, documentation, presentation of projects to both authorities and public, and support to refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities.



Refugee Emergency Fund (REF), Malaysia

[Refugee Emergency Fund \(REF\)](#) is a nonprofit organization established in 2017 that crowd funds to support refugees and undocumented migrants living in Malaysia. REF aims to provide support to refugees in Malaysia facing difficulties in procuring health services and rights to adequate standard of living. Cases supported by REF include funding for medical treatment, burials, and rental for housing. REF aspires to provide adequate funding assistance by means of crowdfunding; empower and build capacity of refugee communities by equipping them with knowledge on personal healthcare and available services, and advocate with agencies and decision-makers to ease access to healthcare and livelihood services for refugees.



Hasan Al-Akraa, representative of REF, is a 24-year-old educator, public speaker, social advocate, and Syrian refugee who recently resettled to the United States following 13 years of asylum in Malaysia. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Education from the University of Nottingham Malaysia. At the age of 17, he founded the Refugee Emergency Fund (REF) to extend financial aid to refugees and undocumented migrants in Malaysia, particularly in medical and housing emergencies. Hasan worked with numerous local and international entities, championing refugee rights to equitable services that facilitate a dignified life and meaningful participation of people with lived experiences throughout various initiatives.

REFUGEE CONGRESS

Refugee Congress, United States

[Refugee Congress](#) is a national nonpartisan organization built and led by former refugees, asylum-seekers, and vulnerable migrants to promote the well-being and dignity of all vulnerable migrants in the US. With members in all 50 states and the District of Columbia in the U.S., they use their voices and experiences to inform and influence decision-makers on critical issues that affect their communities.



Lourena Gboeah, representative of Refugee Congress, is a resettled refugee from Liberia and Chair of the Refugee Congress Board of Directors. She has worked with vulnerable populations for 19 years, including in immigration and refugee resettlement. She holds a Bachelor of Science in management and a Master of Social Work degree and has moderated panels on refugees. Lourena also serves on the Refugee Council USA Board of Directors and is a Regional Program Director for Upwardly Global.



Refugees Seeking Equal Access at the Table (R-SEAT), Global

[Refugees Seeking Equal Access at the Table \(R-SEAT\)](#) is an international initiative working to enhance the effectiveness of global refugee responses, by co-designing mechanisms to amplify refugee leadership ecosystems and increase the participation of refugees at state levels in a meaningful, sustainable, and transformative way.



Rez Gardi, representative of R-SEAT, is an international lawyer and human rights activist of Kurdish descent. She was born in a refugee camp in Pakistan before being resettled to New Zealand. She is the founder of 'Empower', an RLO that aims to increase the representation of refugee youth in higher education and co-founder for the Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies. Rez has represented New Zealand at the Global Refugee Youth Consultations, helped establish the Global Youth Advisory Council to the UNHCR, and is a member of the Refugee Advisory Group to the UNHCR Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement. She received the 2017 Young New Zealander of the Year award, the 2019 Outstanding Youth Delegate Award at the UN Youth Assembly and was selected as a Peace Ambassador by the European Commission and One Young World.



Shabwah Youth Organization (SYO), Yemen

[Shabwah Youth Organization \(SYO\)](#) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization in Yemen, established in 2020. The organization provides training, certification, and capacity building. SYO also provides services related to education and sustainable development; protection of women and children; protection of refugees, displaced persons, and migrants; health; climate change; and humanitarian and relief response.



Ahmed Al-Zabidi, representative of Shabwah Youth Organization, is a humanitarian worker with experience in various sectors, including protection, education, human rights, peace building and conflict resolution. In 2015, he was internally displaced by war in Yemen and when he saw the suffering due to the lack of services and forced displacement, he established a civil society organization to help those affected and provide humanitarian services. He currently works as a regional manager on the Middle East and North Africa team for the Youth and Children Group of the UN and volunteers in his community.



Transformation Innovation Hub, Zimbabwe

[Transformation Innovation Hub \(TIH\)](#) transforms and empowers refugees and local youth from the host community through innovative and social entrepreneurship in the Tongogara Refugee Camp in Zimbabwe. TIH seeks to provide job opportunities to refugees and local youth in the camp through supporting them to discover their abilities and purpose, and in developing their skills to enable them to create self-sustainable social enterprises.



Barthelemy Mwanza, representative of TIH, is a refugee leader and activist in the U.S. He works with the Global Refugee Youth Network (GRYN) on capacity-building and funding of refugee youth led-organizations. He is originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo and lived in Tongogara Refugee Camp in Zimbabwe for 11 years. As a refugee leader, Barthelemy has led community initiatives, was the Co-Chair of UNHCR's Global Youth Advisory Council (GYAC) and launched the Engaging Men in Responsible Practices to Prevent Gender-Based Violence against Women and Girls (EMAP) initiative. His impact as a refugee leader continues to resonate in the global quest for refugee welfare and empowerment.



Youth Social Advocacy Team (YSAT), Uganda

[Youth Social Advocacy Team \(YSAT\)](#) is a refugee, youth-led, community empowerment, peacebuilding and humanitarian organization. Since July 2017, YSAT works with refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and vulnerable host communities at the grassroots level in Uganda and South Sudan to enhance community-based conflict transformation, promote sustainable livelihoods, agriculture and skills development, provide alternative innovative learning opportunities, advance evidence-based research and advocacy for displaced communities.



John Jal Dak, representative of Youth Social Advocacy Team, is a former refugee welfare council Chairperson, Youth Leader, and Founding Director of the Youth Social Advocacy Team. He has participated in various consultations and events related to refugee issues, including the Global Refugee Youth Consultation in Uganda and the Solidarity Summit in 2017. He was also part of the online consultation on meaningful participation of refugees during World Refugee Day in 2021 and represented Local Actors by speaking at the launch of the Regional Refugee Response Plan for East and Horn of Africa in 2021. John has a strong interest in the role of local actors in decision-making and has worked closely with UNHCR and RLOs.