

Global Refugee Forum Consultation in Europe

Diaspora and Refugee Workshop

Copenhagen, 14 September 2019

1. Introduction

Ahead of the Global Refugee Forum DRC organized a preparatory workshop with 16 representatives of diaspora and refugee-led organisations from Denmark on 14 September 2019 in Copenhagen. This workshop is part of a series of four regional workshops funded by UNHCR to achieve **meaningful participation of refugee-led and diaspora organisations at the 2019 Global Refugee Forum (GRF)**. The GRF is the first global consultation since the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees, and aim to follow up and present pledges towards the Compact's objectives.

The purpose of the regional workshops is to:

1. Raise awareness among diaspora and refugee-led organisations about the existence of the Global Compact on Refugees and the functions and purpose of the GRF.
2. Facilitate that diaspora and refugee-led organisations across the regions reach a level of consensus in relation to the topics under the GRF, present good practices from their activities, and make relevant pledges towards the Compact's objectives.

Based on the Global Compact on Refugees six focus areas were used to structure the discussions and pledges towards the GRF:

- Arrangements for burden and responsibility-sharing,
- Protection capacity,
- Education,
- Work and livelihoods,
- Solutions,
- Infrastructure and energy.

The working groups at the Copenhagen preparatory workshop mainly focused on protection, integration, education, and work and livelihoods in Denmark as host country. As only a smaller number of the organizations were active in their former home countries, the international aspect was only touched lightly. Below are the outcomes from the different working groups.

2. Discussion on supporting refugees in Denmark, and outcomes.

Four working groups presented the results of their shared thinking on the most important challenges, existing activities, and ideas for improved response to the following GRF thematic areas:

- Protection
- Education
- Work & Livelihoods
- Solutions

1. WORK & LIVELIHOODS

Discussion of employment and entrepreneurship as key component of integration and inclusion.

Challenge/Gap/Need	Key allies/ responsible stakeholders/ co-sponsors	Examples of existing good practices	Recommendations / potential pledges ¹
Internship & trainings proposed to refugees, in particular women, are not linked to their experience and qualifications.	Job centres, private sector, diaspora organizations, CVOs	<i>Send flere krydderier:</i> cooking training together with internship/job opportunities <i>Aalborg Commune & Integration house</i> <i>Kringlebakken:</i> sponsored place in kindergarten and after school that enable women to access languages classes, jobs, etc.	Mapping skills and qualifications among refugees and private sector, and providing support for strengthening these skills through specific training programmes (in particular for women) that are linked to market opportunities A platform to recognize refugees' skills, qualifications, experience with Certificate Specific training programmes for refugees
Lack of training programme to build the capacity of refugees to access local market	Job centres, private sector, diaspora organizations, CVOs	<i>Løntilskud programme</i>	Encourage private sectors to recruit refugees (matchmaking) Changing the narrative to see refugees as an asset for the country (positive economic value)
Lack of opportunities and support for refugee entrepreneurs Some programmes exist in some communes, but information doesn't reach the refugees > Lack of knowledge. (ex: Gladsaxe commune has nothing for refugees)	Job centres, private sector, diaspora organizations, CVOs	<i>Vejle Commune financially support entrepreneurship</i> « <i>Mind your own business</i> ” and “ <i>Refugee Entrepreneurs Dk</i> ” : Initiatives supporting refugee entrepreneurs	Promote and support entrepreneurships > centralized platform (not depending on commune), information available for all refugees
Language centres not specialized for job market	Language schools, private sector, CVOs	Opportunities of specialized language classes (engineer, doctors...) in Germany	Language education based on interest (engineer, medical...)

¹ The participants are interested and willing to support these recommendations with their organizations in partnership with other stakeholders.

2. EDUCATION

Discussion of access to quality education

The education working groups discussed mainly tertiary education/skills training for adults that included elements that touch on other thematic areas, such as Work and Livelihood. Denmark was highlighted by the group as a generous country in term of education.

Challenge/Gap/Need	Key allies/ responsible stakeholders/ co-sponsors	Examples of existing good practices	Recommendation/ potential pledge based on learning experiences
Choice between work or study: Job centres require refugees to do different things than what they were wishing to do > studying for example (long education not authorized)	Job centres, universities, government	Education is free, and financial support (SU) Education is of high quality in Denmark Access to tertiary education for refugees: same as for all Danish students	Support refugees that want to study instead of doing work/internship that don't match their interest Advocate economic support, ease the law to access education
Lack of information about education opportunities Lack of mentoring before and during study	Universities, students, CSOs	<i>Match Danish Students with refugee students</i>	Mentoring system before and during the education to make it easier
Discrimination to access internship	Private sector, Universities, Government		Promote and support private sectors taking refugees for internship

3. PROTECTION

Facilitated discussion on accessing systems, legal status, safety, integration, countering discrimination and rights abuse

Challenge/Gap/Need	Key allies/ responsible stakeholders/ co-sponsors	Examples of existing good practices	Recommendation/ potential pledge based on learning experiences
Refugees don't feel safe in DK > fear of being returned any time (L140) Difficult to think long term with the sense of temporary	Government		Protection of refugee status
Lack of inclusion and discrimination	Government, CSOs, Private sector, Schools	Ex. Syrian Organization "Finjan" arranged a cultural café in partnership with trampoline house	Promoting inclusion and fighting discrimination

<p>Lack of awareness: to navigate all the rules and law: to know their rights</p> <p>Lack of information about the services, activities, opportunities they can access in their communes.</p>	<p>DRC (integration, asylum and volunteer dpt), Refugee Welcome, CISU, Red Cross, CSOs, Governmental agencies, diaspora orgs</p>	<p>Engaging in the public debate (media/facebook/Folkmøde): Ex. <i>The Syrian Network wrote an article about deportation of Syrians.</i></p> <p><i>Refugeewelcome platform</i></p> <p>Global refugee-led Network for advocacy and engaging more in the public debate</p>	<p>Different generations, different rules/situation > improved collaboration between different diaspora groups, networks > beneficial for new comers</p> <p>Creating a platform to share information on rights and protection for refugees to get together, share knowledge about their rights, when they need help</p> <p>In collaboration with authorities and NGOs sharing information about law and rights in native languages of refugees (women rights already in place, could be extended)</p>
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4. SOLUTIONS

Discussion about integration in Denmark including civil registration, asylum, family reunification and how to raise the voice of refugees.

Challenge/Gap/Need	Key allies/responsible stakeholders/co-sponsors	Examples of existing good practices	Recommendation/ potential pledge based on learning experiences
<p>Lack of refugee-led organisations and representation in different parts of Denmark</p> <p>Missing a parent/umbrella organisation to share info and create awareness</p>	<p>DRC, CISU, Red Cross, diaspora organisations</p>	<p><i>Global Refugee-led Network: nothing about us without us. Importance of a network</i></p> <p>Experience of a refugee-led organisation created in 2016 with 40 members and now more than 100 members</p> <p>Community schools offered for Syrian children (important to maintain mother tongue)</p>	<p>Having refugee network > voice in the municipalities</p> <p>Creating a diaspora umbrella platform > awareness, sharing the information for protection/rights, and to organize politically, trying to influence policies</p> <p>An idea could be to create a website where different organization/associations can post their activities there (to centralize the information about the different initiatives).</p> <p>To engage and do høringsvar when there is a law!</p>

3. Discussion on supporting refugees in Region of origin, and outcomes

Working group session defined main challenges, existing/possible good practices & commitments in the following areas:

- **Education:** Access to quality education and tertiary education
- **Work and livelihoods:** Supporting self-reliance and resilience
- **Solutions:** Supporting local integration in displacement or supporting countries of origin to absorb returnees.
- **Protection:** Accessing status, legal aid, access to justice, safety, inclusion and countering discrimination and rights abuse, protection of persons with specific needs (SGBV, Children)
- **Energy and Infrastructure:** How to support refugee populations in camps and urban settings and countries of origin to establish infrastructure to allow for return (WASH, Health, Shelter, Connectivity, energy, environment/sustainability)

Challenge/Gap/Need	Key allies/ responsible stakeholders/ co-sponsors	Examples of existing good practices	Recommendation/ potential pledge based on learning experiences
SOLUTION			
Lack of job opportunities	INGOs, private sector, CSOs, diaspora	Syrian networks and platforms to help and support with goods, material	To access funding, training, knowledge to get involved INGOs to consult with refugees
Lack of local partners	INGOs, private sector, CSOs, diaspora		Sharing information about local partners
EDUCATION (Syria)			
3,6 million children not accessing education in Syria Lack of schools, books, material, teachers	INGOs, local authorities, schools, government, CSOs, diaspora	“5 Skoler” Project: Aim is to start 5 schools on the Syrian Borders (Turkey and Lebanon) Project funded by donations and volunteer Erasmus Programme: There are currently 7 schools in the neighbouring countries – but it does not provide any certifications. UNICEF projects for schools in governmental area in Syria	Syrian network supporting education (financial) > sustainable strategy
Financial barrier for children in Lebanon, Jordan to access education <i>(Private schools in Lebanon > fees, so not accessible for everybody)</i>	INGOs, local authorities, schools, government, CSOs, diaspora	Project funded by donations and volunteer: creation of schools for Syrian children in Lebanon and Turkey (alternative education, certificate not recognized)	Financial support for Syrian children to access schools in Lebanon and Jordan
Difficult to access tertiary education for Syrians in Lebanon	INGOs, local authorities, schools, government, CSOs, diaspora	Example of Universities in Turkey, Jordan, Syria giving 70 scholarships for Syrian students Universities in UK sponsoring some Syrian students	Recognition of alternative certificate To influence Universities’ to make scholarship for refugees
Work and Livelihoods (for returnees)			
Returning is the fear to start again In host country it takes long time to get your qualifications recognized: losing skills	INGOs, local authorities, private sector, CSOs, diaspora	Financial support for voluntary returns	DRC to make agreement with Danish businesses in the country of return to support voluntary returnees
Losing their network back home > difficult to return and start their own business	INGOs, local authorities, private sector, CSOs, diaspora	Some Afghan diaspora organisations are supporting returnees (entrepreneurship)	Support entrepreneurship and networking back home

			Match people in Turkey that want to do their own business with entrepreneurs in Denmark
Difficult to adjust again in different environment	INGOs, local authorities, private sector, CSOs, diaspora		Create platform to support entrepreneurship in country of origin
PROTECTION (Iraq)			
Lack of gender equality	INGOs, CSOs, diaspora, Government	Share experiences across borders (Internet)	Supporting projects for women
Rights to education & work	INGOs, CSOs, diaspora, Government	Supporting local initiatives	Better access to education
Corruption	INGOs, CSOs, diaspora, Government		Fight Corruption
Rights of ethnic minorities	INGOs, CSOs, diaspora, Government		Fight sectaries
ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE (Afghanistan)			
Afghan refugees in Iran/Pakistan: no asylum counselling, no documents, ID cards with no legal rights	Government, INGOs, CSOs		Advocacy Iran/Pakistan States to give rights to access education and health
Lack energy, clean water, infrastructures	Government, INGOs, CSOs, diaspora		Improve Health Care for Women: self-hygiene product information for women in Afghanistan
Lack of safety, security, poverty, corruption	Government		
Knowledge sharing > challenge of literacy with women in Afghanistan	INGOs, CSOs, diaspora, Government		Initiatives to support illiterate women in enhancing their knowledge and capacities
ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE (Somalia)			
Poor infrastructures, no clean water, energy	Government, INGOs, CSOs, diaspora	Good telecommunication system Payment with mobile phones Ex. OFROSOM have implemented WASH projects funded by CISU and hospital projects funded by DRC	Advocacy towards the State to improve infrastructures
Private hospitals in big cities > only accessible to people that can afford them	Government, INGOs, CSOs, diaspora	Hospital facilities, infrastructures built with diaspora and donors	More sustainable solutions to be implemented in the health sector

Next steps

Having concentrated during the workshop on achieving some degree of consensus and awareness of some of the good activities different organizations are engaged in Denmark, but also in countries of origin, or countries where refugee populations live near to home, the final session of the workshop was dedicated to examining how the workshop would yield results for the Global Refugee forum in December.

DRC reminded the group of the timing and content of the GRF: 16th – 18th December, a ministerial meeting but with space for civil society voices, and for side events, as well as showcased best practices.

Commitments / pledges

The workshop produced one strong commitment / Pledge, namely the:

Establishment of a Danish refugee / diaspora led platform

The participants to the workshop committed to working towards the establishment of an umbrella for all interested Danish refugee and diaspora led organisations. The purpose of the platform would be to:

1. Improve community-based information to refugees and newcomers in Denmark through sharing of updated legal information, services and opportunities available to refugees / diaspora in Denmark
2. Function as a joint voice for refugees / diaspora groups in Denmark towards media and authorities.

This coalition of diaspora and refugee-led organizations will start working on it and prepare a common pledge.

Forwarding of other main recommendations

DRC will forward the recommendations formulated during the workshop with the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The most needed pledge for Denmark as host country is to improve the access to relevant job and entrepreneurship opportunities for refugees and newcomers. Education for refugees in Denmark was acknowledged as very good.

Global online workshop

Next step in the process will be to select agreed priority topics from the Danish consultations to a global online workshop. The online workshop will discuss and – if possible – consolidate any messages that have come out from across the regional consultations with a view to present these at the GRF.

Organisation

A steering committee of four persons: Sara Kobli, Abdullah Alsmael, Alice Al Maleh and Miriam Saidi, was selected from the group to lead the creation of a common diaspora-led platform, and to select agreed priority initiatives, for further discussion at a global online workshop.

Anybody from the Copenhagen workshop may connect to the global online workshop, when it happens in November 2019; present on that call will also be representatives from the Middle East, Africa and Berlin workshops.

Submissions of best practices or pledges, or ideas for side events, can be made by any organization bilaterally to [UNHCR](#) (online or on the template documents shared at the meeting) or as part of an agreed, multi-stakeholder effort (preferred, and part of the desired outcome of the workshop).

As part of the process of bringing diaspora and refugee voices together to make a joint statement or position more powerful, the workshop report may be used to develop a statement or policy document for the GRF.

Milestones towards the Global Refugee Forum

1. Submit a proposal for [Marketplace/Speaker/Spotlight Sessions at GRF](#) > deadline **30 September 2019**
2. Advocacy to influence or join [pledges](#) with other stakeholders > **up to December 2019**
3. Make and submit individual or joint [pledges](#) or [good practice](#) > **up to December 2019**
4. Global online Workshop with all the regional participants > **November 2019**



Workshop Participants

Name	Organisation
Rana Hadding	Rådet for Etniske Minoriteter
Awil Ali Kulane	SORADO
Kirstine Damgaard Henriksen	Rådet for Etniske Minoriteter
Sara Kobli	African Village
Sonia Faizi	Salsal
Miriam Saidi	SWEDA
Abdullah Alsmael	Den Nye Havn
Ebd alhamid Shekho	Syrian network in Denmark
Yassin Osoble	OFROSOM
Hozan Ibrahim	The Syrian Network in Denmark
Lela yusufi	Salsal
Nada Naanaah	The Syrian Network in Denmark, Dansk-syrisk Kulturforening
Fatima Sheekh	Waamo Relief organisation
Alice Al Maleh	Den Irakiske Kvindeliga
Rebecca Jawher	Irakisk kvindersliga i Danmark
Dina Hashem	The Iraqi Women's League

Regional Workshop in Europe for the Global Refugee Forum

14 September 2019, Copenhagen - Denmark

Workshop for representatives of diaspora and refugee-led organisations

Saturday 14 September		
09:00	Welcome	Beatrice Mauconduit, DRC
09:15	Introductory session and warm up	Anders Knudsen, DRC
09:30	Presentation of Global Compact for Refugees, and the purpose of the Global Refugee Forum The presentation will focus on responsibility-sharing; collective action, co-sponsorship groups, pledges, good practices; and the role of diaspora and refugee groups and individuals participating in the Forum and beyond. Questions and discussion	Bettina Normann Petersen, UNHCR, Beatrice Mauconduit, DRC
10:30	Supporting refugees in Denmark Working group session: based on experience participants select one topic to discuss in a group, and then formulate gaps/challenges, good practices and potential commitments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Access to quality education and tertiary education • Work and livelihoods Discussion of refugees' access to employment/entrepreneurship as key component of integration and inclusion. • Solutions Supporting integration in Denmark, (civil registration, asylum, supporting resettled refugees, supporting family reunification • Protection Support to access Danish systems, legal status, legal aid, access to justice, safety, inclusion and countering discrimination and rights abuse, protection of persons with specific needs (SGBV, Children) 	Anders Knudsen
11:30	Tea and coffee Break	
11:50	Groups reporting back in plenary on key findings, good practices, recommendations Questions and discussion	Anders Knudsen
13:00	LUNCH	

00	<p>Supporting refugees in the region of origin & countries of origin Working group session to define main challenges, existing/possible good practices & commitments in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Access to quality education and tertiary education • Work and livelihoods Supporting self-reliance and resilience • Solutions Supporting local integration in displacement or supporting countries of origin to absorb returnees. • Protection Accessing status, legal aid, access to justice, safety, inclusion and countering discrimination and rights abuse, protection of persons with specific needs (SGBV, Children) • Energy and Infrastructure How to support refugee populations in camps and urban settings and countries of origin to establish infrastructure to allow for return (WASH, Health, Shelter, Connectivity, energy, environment/sustainability) 	Anders Knudsen
15:00	Tea and coffee break	
15:20	Feedback to plenary on key findings, good practices, recommendations	Anders Knudsen
16:00	<p>Session on Next Steps: Taking the workshop outcomes to the global level Prioritizing which good practices and which pledges/commitments that should be made from this workshop.</p> <p>Presentation of what happens next – opportunities for coordination, partnership, replication</p> <p>Questions and discussion</p>	<p>Anders Knudsen</p> <p>Beatrice Mauconduit</p>
17:00	Summary and closure	Beatrice Mauconduit, DRC