

GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM 2023

Multistakeholder Pledge Guidance

INVESTING IN CLIMATE RESILIENT, SUSTAINABLE HUMAN SETTLEMENTS



Pledge Conveners as of 5th December 2023



Government of Ethiopia



With inputs from:

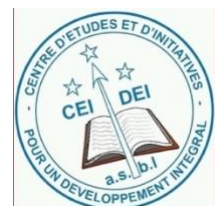
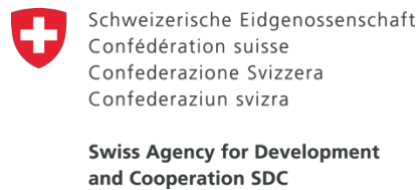


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Purpose

To invest in integrated **Climate Resilient, Sustainable Human Settlements** for refugees and hosting communities, to improve the quality of life for all

For the first time, the Global Refugee Forum welcomes a pledge on Human Settlements. The pledge aligns with recommendations 9-11 of the 2021 High level Officials Meeting and Objective 1 of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), to ease pressures on host countries. It also constitutes one of the 8 outcomes of the 2023 Global Refugee Forum taking place from 13-15 December.

The pledge aims to bring together national and local governments, individuals, private sector, NGOs, including refugee- and women-led organisations, and international organisations for coordinated humanitarian and development responses to invest in **Climate Resilient, Sustainable Human Settlements** to the benefit of refugees and host communities, while considering specific needs of women and girls, children, older persons and persons with disability as well as those of marginalized groups.

Defining Climate Resilient and Sustainable Human Settlements

Climate Resilient and Sustainable Human Settlements refer to urban and rural areas that are designed, developed, and managed in ways that integrate climate adaptation, environmental sustainability, social equity, and community participation in the planning and development of urban and rural areas. This approach aims to create liveable, safe, and environmentally friendly communities that can withstand the challenges of climate change while improving the quality of life for their residents.

The Pledge

This multistakeholder pledge draws from valuable insights and lessons gleaned from years of refugee response and assistance efforts. It marks a departure from the Energy and Infrastructure thematic area in the previous Global Refugee Forum, now focusing on the overarching domain of Human Settlements.

At its core, this pledge is founded upon the principles of inclusivity, accessibility, and transparency. By coordinating efforts to extend beyond traditional encampment approaches towards self-reliance and the inclusion of refugees and displaced populations in urban areas, the ultimate goal is to improve the quality of life for all.

By pledging, your organisation and institution can make commitments across two or more thematic priorities outlined in the [UNHCR-UN-Habitat Guidance for Responding to Displacement in Urban Areas](#), as follows:

- Urban Planning and Management
- Policy Legislation and Governance
- Housing and Shelter
- Basic Services
- Economy and Finance
- Environment and Climate Action



Urban Planning and Management

Urban planning and management are tools to bridge traditional humanitarian response with long-term sustainable development processes. Urban planning emphasises the spatial dimension, and participatory and age, gender diversity approach to ensure that refugees are not treated as a homogenous group. Urban planning can also encourage community interaction, crucial for the integration of refugees and hosting communities.

Goals under this thematic priority include:

- Ensure human settlements established or converted from existing refugee settlements use the integrated settlement approach including mainstreaming environment and climate action principles from the onset.

Examples of commitments could include:

- Ensuring that human settlements, whether newly established or transformed from existing refugee settlements, adhere to the integrated settlement approach
- Ensuring the implementation of an inclusive approach in the process to gather spatial data for urban planning
- Enacting legislation for the transformation of refugee camps
- Incorporating refugee populations into national and subnational development and disaster risk reduction plans



Policy Legislation and Governance

Effective and coherent institutional and governance frameworks that use an age, gender and diversity approach are essential to establish impactful and sustainable interventions in human settlements. **Urban Policy and Legislation** define the conditions for access to land, infrastructure, housing, and basic services and establishes rules for planning and decision-making. **Governance** provides the framework that defines the needs, interests, rights, and responsibilities of people, while also identifying the institutions responsible for the coordination and management of resources.

Goals under this thematic priority include:

- Ensure human settlements are grounded in adequate legal and policy frameworks to ensure their economic, social, and environmental sustainability and that result in legitimate and flexible access to financial, technical and institutional capacity and resources.
- Promote inclusive domestic legal frameworks which govern the existing rights of refugees, their access to an adequate standard of living including with sustainable housing and basic services.

Examples of commitments could include:

- Establishing robust policy frameworks to underpin the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of human settlements
- Advocating for inclusive domestic legal frameworks that safeguard the rights of refugees and their access to an adequate standard of living, encompassing sustainable housing and basic services
- Updating policy, legal and regulatory frameworks
- Equipping local authorities with the tools and means to generate public revenue from urban assets, thereby enabling them to address the needs of refugees and hosting communities



Housing and Shelter

Refugees and the forcibly displaced have the right to adequate **housing** and **shelter**, to be protected from the elements, to have a space in which they can live and store belongings, and to have adequate privacy, comfort, and security. Shelter and housing-related issues are strongly linked with other existing vulnerabilities of refugees. Housing that is poor in quality, for temporary use or overcrowded, increasing safety concerns, is often the only accessible option. Access to housing should also be analysed through an age, gender, and diversity lens to examine how intersectionality compounds an individual's risks and experiences of housing discrimination.

Goals under this thematic priority include:

- Ensure human settlements provide refugees and IDPs access to adequate, safe and

affordable shelter and housing solutions with security of tenure that provides privacy, affordability and protection.

Examples of commitments could include:

- Providing policy, financial, and technical support
- Applying universal design principles in human settlements
- Enhancing inclusive national and local housing policies in urban and rural areas
- Promoting an age, gender and diversity approach
- Ensuring equal and non-discriminatory access to adequate housing for everyone



Basic Services

The right to **basic services** like water, energy, sanitation, sewerage, and waste management, is strongly linked with social protection, human rights, and human development. Access to basic services ensures that all individuals attain a minimum standard of living. Public, social, and recreational spaces and infrastructures should also be considered a basic service. These shared resources can act as points of interaction and help to reduce conflicts and tensions by cultivating shared ownership and management.

Goals under this thematic priority:

- Ensure Human Settlements provide refugee and hosting communities access to basic services, including upholding their rights to health and nutrition, water, energy, sanitation, sewerage, waste management, and mobility.
- Ensure Human Settlements promote the access and availability of public spaces which support socio-cultural and economic activities for both refugee and hosting communities.

Examples of commitments could include:

- Promoting the availability of public spaces to support socio-cultural and economic activities for both refugees and host communities
- Bridging agendas between humanitarian and development actors to implement cost effective and strengthened delivery of basic services
- Providing financial and technical support to address gaps in basic services infrastructure provision in country strategies, plans and budgets



Economy and Finance

Refugees need safety and security, but they also need an opportunity to rebuild their lives. Human Settlements flourish by reaping the benefits of economies of scale and the exchange of knowledge and ideas among people in proximity. Promoting refugee livelihoods and creating greater self-reliance will require the presence of viable financial and local economic development structures, including human resources, and the approach will often be more cost-effective in the long run, with the return on investment likely higher than

traditional needs-based assistance.

Goals under this thematic priority include:

- Ensure Human Settlements provide refugee and hosting communities access and availability to fair employment and entrepreneurship opportunities and protect their socio-economic rights in Hosting countries.

Examples of commitments could include:

- Engaging with economic inclusion and social protection partners
- Offering banking and microfinance services
- Addressing municipal funding gaps.



Environment and Climate Action

The dynamics of poverty, food insecurity, climate change, conflict and displacement are increasingly interconnected and mutually reinforcing, driving more people to search for safety and security. To ensure environment and climate action activities are integrated in human settlements requires systematic engagement with a diverse range of people of concern. Special measures to ensure inclusiveness and accessibility for specific groups of concern, including women, girls and boys, older persons and persons with disabilities should inform and guide implementation.

Goals under this thematic priority include:

- Ensure Human Settlements mainstream environment and climate action in refugee programming, to prepare for and address the effects of climate and environmental related risks for refugee and hosting communities.

Examples of commitments could include:

- Institutionalising policies to protect ecologically sensitive zones
- Investing in the enhancement of settlements at risk
- Providing technical assistance in hazard analyses, mitigation measures and action plans.

The pledge represents a significant step toward including refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the pursuit of Sustainable Development Goals, particularly:



Why Pledge

The pledge is a response to the increasing frequency and scale of crises leading to unprecedented numbers of refugees and displaced people in need of protection and assistance. According to UNHCR data, of the approximately 103 million forcibly displaced in 2022, less than one per cent could safely return to their homes. Approximately 18% of displaced people find themselves residing in camps or camp-like environments, where the protracted nature of these situations presents massive challenges when it comes to addressing their fundamental needs.

In parallel, there has been an increase in the proportion of displaced people seeking to live and who currently reside in cities and urban areas, where over 60% of refugees and nearly three in every five IDP is now estimated to be living in cities and urban environments. In regions marked with inadequate urban planning and management, settlements face a heightened risk of experiencing issues such as poverty, urban sprawl, informality and competition for resources. These challenges can increase the vulnerability of communities to crime, inequality, exploitation, violence, and the breakdown of social and community networks. This is especially true as refugees often integrate into host communities, seeking to establish new lives.

The impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly evident in many refugee operational areas. Rising sea levels, prolonged droughts, severe floods and shifting climatic patterns are directly affecting housing, livelihoods and access to water and energy. It is important to note that approximately 70% of refugees and 80% of IDPs hail from countries at the forefront of climate crises. These climate "hotspots" often lack the necessary resources to adapt to or mitigate increasingly inhospitable environments, posing significant safety and security risks particularly for refugees and their hosting communities.

Investing in Climate Resilient, Sustainable Human Settlements is the crucial bridge between supporting both refugees and host communities and finding durable solutions. By promoting the development of sustainable settlements and delivering coherent humanitarian and development assistance, we can ensure that neither refugees nor host communities are left behind.

Pledge-Quality Check

Assess the quality and potential impact of your pledge before submitting.

Building on the lessons learned from the first GRF, these 6-point criteria help pledging entities ensure the high quality and future impact of their pledges. The highest quality pledges fulfil all six criteria.

01 Brings together 2 or more thematic priorities

02 Aligned with the key recommendations from the 2021 High-Level Officials Meeting

03 Additional, quantifiable, and needs-driven

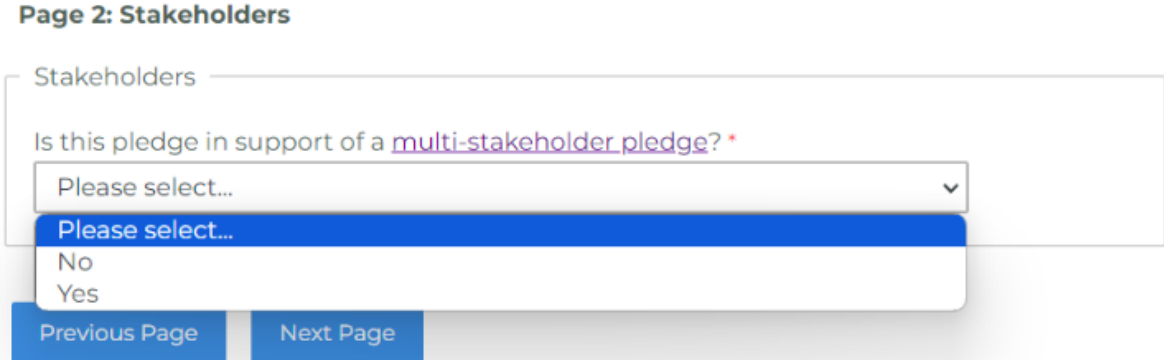
04 Jointly developed, in a whole-of-society spirit

05 Pre-matched to support inclusive policies

06 Developed in consultation with refugees and consider age, gender, and diversity

How to Pledge

Using the [Pledge Submission Form](#), you must indicate participation in the 'Multistakeholder Pledge on Sustainable Human Settlements for Refugees and their Hosting Communities' where prompted as follows:



The screenshot shows a form titled "Page 2: Stakeholders". Inside the form, there is a section labeled "Stakeholders" with a question: "Is this pledge in support of a [multi-stakeholder pledge?](#) *". Below the question is a dropdown menu with the text "Please select...". The dropdown menu is open, showing two options: "No" and "Yes". Below the dropdown menu are two buttons: "Previous Page" and "Next Page".

Subsequently, please proceed to formulate your pledge in accordance with this provided template:

[Name of Pledging Entity] commits to initiate/undertake/support **[X Activity/Project/Refugee Hosting State and/or Country of Origin]** and will require **[Y International Support]** towards facilitating implementation of **[One of 6 Key Areas of Focus]** - including by the way of **[Z Inputs]** (e.g., shaping the requisite policy, legal and regulatory frameworks, provision of material and/or in-kind support) by **[indicative deadline for fulfilment of pledge]**.

For more guidance on how to utilise the pledge submission form, please refer to the [step-by-step instructions](#) provided on the GCR website.

Background Notes

Progress has been made to prevent and resolve forced displacement, as attributed to the political will and commitment of Member States, inter-governmental platforms, regional frameworks, UN system partners, and multilateral financial institutions. Said actors have assisted in fostering conditions for safe and dignified returns, local integration and in addressing the root causes of displacement – complemented by grassroots-level, conflict-sensitive, HDP nexus programming.

There is yet much ground to be covered.

To this end, the **2021 High Level Officials Meeting** – mandated by the General Assembly per the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) – called for increased resources and enhanced planning and programme implementation in support of voluntary returns, and improved capacities and cooperation among key actors for addressing the root causes of forced displacement in countries of origin.

Building on the promising practices and opportunities for scaled-up engagement on safe voluntary returns, enhancing refugees self-reliance and addressing the root causes of forced displacement – with an outlook to GRF 2023 – a multi-stakeholder pledge contributing to GCR Objectives 2 and 4, has been formulated to leverage the current momentum around area-based initiatives with strong operative linkages to sustainable human settlements.

This pledge also underscores the importance of the GCR Objective 1 on '[Easing] pressures on host countries'. Accordingly, this pledge aims to harness new and emerging financial tools, funding mechanisms, and other platforms that facilitate fair burden and responsibility sharing. It further seeks to enhance development financing and provide more adaptable, dependable, and multi-year funding to support responses to refugee challenges.

Climate resilient, sustainable human settlements are essential to the attainment of durable solutions – cutting across the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding agendas.

This multistakeholder pledge fosters scaled-up global engagement among humanitarian and development entities to assist forcibly displaced persons, through State-led initiatives that prioritise inclusivity and long-term solutions.

We hereby welcome your partnership and support in advancing this global initiative.



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Annex: FAQs

What is the Global Compact on Refugees and what does the Global Refugee Forum aim to accomplish?

Please visit the following sites <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/about-digital-platform/global-compact-refugees> and <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/global-refugee-forum>

What is the Human Settlements approach?

The **Human Settlement** thematic area promotes an integrated approach to environmental and climate action mainstreaming in; shelter and housing, access to basic services (water, sanitation, and hygiene, renewable energy, connectivity) governance and improved urban planning and management for more resilient settlements for refugees and their hosting communities.

Why Human Settlements?

The shift from the **Energy and Infrastructure** thematic area in December 2019 to **Human Settlements** was made in response to past experiences and lessons learned over the years on how refugee response and assistance in both urban and rural areas could be improved to maximize synergies along the humanitarian-development-peace continuum and in response to global developmental shifts such as urbanization. It was also due to the lack of clarity on what 'infrastructure' implied and the confusion around the pledges received in 2019.

The last decade has witnessed escalating frequencies and scales of crises which has led to unprecedented levels of refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced and stateless people who require protection and assistance. Based on UNHCR figures, of the approximately 103 million forcibly displaced in 2022, less than one per cent could return home. Nearly three quarters of refugees, internally displaced and stateless people live in protracted situations for up to a decade. Some 22% of forcibly displaced and stateless persons currently reside in camps or camp-like situations worldwide but most refugees (78%) live in cities and urban locations.

Those in camps include over 60% of all UNHCR assisted refugees in Africa and over 35% of those assisted in Asia. The long rates of protraction, lack of sufficient resources and inadequate policies pose massive challenges in addressing their needs. Additionally, 70% of refugees and 80% of internally displaced people originate from countries on the front lines of the climate crises, and millions of refugees, displaced and stateless people live in climate "hotspots" lacking the resources to adapt to or mitigate increasingly inhospitable environments.

This poses unique and urgent challenges that need to be met with new, innovative, and sustainable responses beyond sector-technical and siloed solutions. The Global Refugee Forum (GRF) 2023 provides an opportunity to build on progress made by stakeholders on

pledges submitted since the first Forum in December 2019.

Is the Climate Resilient Sustainable Human Settlements pledge the same as the Climate Action Pledge?

No. UNHCR's primary engagement on climate action is through the Climate Action Pledge announced by the Special Advisor on Climate Action in June. It covers all aspects of climate action, including finance, policy, concrete projects, and technical and institutional support to implement them. However, given the far-reaching consequences of climate action, the UNHCR policies on Energy/Environment/Climate as well as Recommendation 5 on the HLOM, UNHCR will engage to mainstream climate action into other initiatives including Human Settlements, Self-Reliance and Social protection (Green jobs), Education, Health (Solar powered facilities), etc.

The primary focus of the Human Settlements pledge is a concept that draws attention to the need for sustainably addressing basic needs of communities (refugees, Host community, IDPs, etc.) through an approach that integrates various elements (shelter/housing, urban planning and management, economy and finance, etc.) through a climate resilience lens. It is not a Climate Action Pledge or initiative - it goes beyond that.

Further as the Group of Friends does not cover all the focus areas of a Human Settlement, the other elements would be covered through linked pledges which have some elements that advance the objectives of the whole or part of another pledge. The Refugee Environmental Protection (REP) Fund, Health, Education, Economic Inclusion and Social Protection are linked pledges for Human Settlements as they will all impact our objectives.

Why is Human Settlements a Group of Friends?

The Human Settlement Group of Friends is an effort to bring together and mobilize states, individuals, private sectors, NGOs, Banks, international and National organizations to raise visibility and ensure coordinated efforts to produce high quality, joint pledges and commitments that promote Climate Resilient Sustainable Human Settlements.

The Group will leverage the Global Refugee Forum in December 2023 as a key reflection and advocacy moment to advance the Human Settlement approach (integrating environmental and climate action, shelter and housing, access to basic services, renewable energy, governance and improved urban planning and management) for more resilient settlements for refugees and their hosting communities.

While organizations comprising the Group of Friends provide leadership and vision to help mobilize political, technical, financial and capacity building support for the pledges they are also encouraged but not required to also be part of the pledges as that would lead by example and encourage others to follow.

The group of Friends is Co-led by UNHCR and UNHABITAT and has the following members Germany/BMZ, Cities Alliance, Deltares, DSS Water, Global Platform for Action (GPA), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Switzerland/Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), UNICEF, Norwegian refugee Council (NRC), Netherlands,

Cities Alliance, OXFAM UK, Last Mile Climate, Globesight, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Africa Climate Mobility Initiative (ACMI), Global Center for Climate Mobility, Refugees.

What does the Group of Friends seek to achieve?

The group will seek to achieve the following:

Promote a common understanding of the Human Settlements concept, its focus areas and the transition to sustainability and climate resilience.

Focus and identify priority activities, countries/regions, and entities/states to optimize time and resources to address thematic sectors of Human Settlement (environmental and climate action mainstreaming, shelter and housing, access to basic services (water, sanitation, and hygiene), renewable energy, governance and improved urban planning and management.)

Coordinate and collaborate with other GRF Initiatives and Groups of Friends to share ideas, information, and priorities to magnify impact on refugee lives.

Develop pledging ideas and generate support through advocacy and visibility efforts, either directly or through identifying champion host and donor states.

Mobilise support for high-impact pledges that are transformative, supported by multiple stakeholders, and financeable.

Why should you partner with the Human Settlements Group of Friend?

Your organization or entity made a pledge in the last GRF that is incomplete (stalled or delayed), and you would like ideas or partnerships to move it forward.

- Your organization has worked in or is interested in Human Settlements and need an avenue to engage with technical experts to discuss and better understand the challenges related to Human Settlements. You would like the opportunity to influence the discussions around and be part of finding inclusive, innovative, impactful, and practical solutions to these challenges.
- Your organization has limited resources, but would like to be more impactful and optimize the support/assistance you are providing through engagement with other like-minded partners to collaborate on programmes/projects targeting specific locations or groups of refugees and amplify your impact.
- Your organization already has interest, expertise and operational experience and investments in the Human Settlements thematic area and would like to amplify/maximize their impact and influence through the platform of the GRF to improve the lives of refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced and stateless people, and their host communities.
- Your organization has resources (material, technical, financial) and is looking for the most effective and efficient way to support the Human Settlements thematic area

including financing pledges/commitments that align with your organization's strategy and priorities.

How can you support the Human Settlements thematic areas?

There are a few ways we encourage partners to provide support to the Human Settlement thematic area:

- Provide consistent representation, during activities and meetings (in person or remotely) as part of the Group of Friends or as an 'Interested Partner'.
- Support the development of pledges or formulation of commitments
- Provide material, financial, technical support, technical resources, institutional capacity support and/or links to relevant stakeholder networks to fulfil pledges/commitments.
- Provide staff time, resources, and leadership to support the Groups' objectives, including leading thematic subgroups and pledge development in the spirit of responsibility and burden sharing as espoused in the GCR.
- As part of the Group of Friends (by invitation only) driving the pledge development and advocacy process for Climate Resilient Sustainable Human Settlements
- Join the multistakeholder pledge on Climate Resilient Sustainable Human Settlements and identify what commitments you could support through technical, financial or capacity building support
- Be included in our mailing list and follow discussions and information on the pledge development process so you can be an advocate and help pass the message to your networks.

Human Settlements is a fairly broad concept as it has been defined, in order not to lose focus what are the primary focus areas of the Group of Friends?

The Group will lead the development of pledges and commitments in the technical sectors namely: Environmental and climate action mainstreaming, shelter and housing, access to basic services (water, sanitation, sewerage and solid waste management, hygiene), renewable energy, governance and improved urban planning and management.

How will the other focus areas within the Human Settlements concept be covered?

The 'non-technical' focus areas will be covered through mobilizing support through close coordination and collaboration with other linked initiatives, pledges and Groups of Friends on the adoption of enabling Policy and Legislation for enhanced human settlements with the Climate Action Pledge, Economy and Finance through the Economic Inclusion and Social Protection Pledge, Access to other basic services including health and Education, through the respective initiatives including connectivity (mobility) and safe movement within and between settlements.

What strategies do you intend to use to achieve the multistakeholder pledge on Climate Resilient Sustainable Human Settlements?

The Global Refugee Forum (GRF) 2023 provides an opportunity to build on progress made by stakeholders on pledges submitted since the first Forum in December 2019. However, to improve on the process and outcomes several strategies will be employed to ensure that the multistakeholder pledge is inclusive, high quality, efficiently realized and focuses on specific high-level outcomes/

These strategies include:

- Framework and policy and technical guidance notes for stakeholders on the expected structure, coverage, and type of high-quality commitments in each focus area.
- Facilitate multistakeholder strategic partnerships, common analysis, and planning for a collaborative approach using the comparative advantage of stakeholders involved.
- Leveraging proven private sector and market-based solutions to complex human settlement related challenges by facilitating multi-stakeholder partnerships, including with refugees, for systems change.
- Address the paradigm shift from traditional refugee and humanitarian response, tapping into local economic development, investment opportunities and new partnerships with non-traditional partners.
- Incentivize development actors to provide more policy, financial and technical support with responsibility sharing, as well as more predictable engagement in policy discussions that will result in an increase in the number of states demonstrating commitment to human settlements approaches.

How is the Group of Friends engaging with Refugees?

We have two avenues through which we engage with refugees and their needs directly and indirectly:

- The Human Settlements Group has established a refugee committee comprising refugees from various countries and regions that are working in or interested in one or more of the focus areas of Human Settlement and are available to engage with and provide their perspective on our products and deliberations
- Through the UNHCR and UN-Habitat regional structures who are in touch with and provide oversight for the country operations engaging with refugees

How can Host/Donor member states engage or learn more about the Multistakeholder Pledge?

Interested Host/Donor member states in countries can reach out to the UNHCR and UN-Habitat Regional or country offices to express their interest. In Geneva they can contact the GRF team through the website <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/human-settlements-group-friends>.