



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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138th IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 24 – 28.03.2018

IPU-UNHCR Workshop on *Refugee protection: Implementing the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework - What can parliaments do?*

*Saturday, 24 March 2018 (3.30 – 5.30 p.m.)
Salle Genève, CCV Annexe building, CICG*

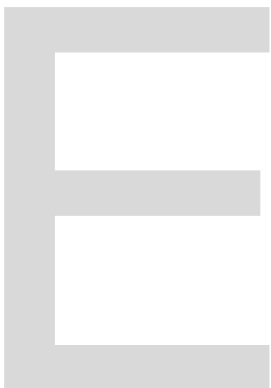
Concept note

The 2016 [New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants](#) by the UN General Assembly and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in its annex make clear that humanitarian, development, political and security actors all have roles in the achievement of refugee protection and solutions, and set the path for important policy shifts and new initiatives.

The CRRF specifies important changes in the historical approaches to refugee response: rather than responding with purely (and often underfunded) humanitarian methods and actors, the CRRF is designed to compose a more systematic and sustainable response which benefits both refugees and the communities who host them. It engages a much broader group of stakeholders—government at national and local levels, international and regional financial institutions, UN agencies and NGOs, refugees themselves, the private sector, and civil society actors. It seeks to ensure more sustainable responses by linking humanitarian and development efforts at an early stage in a crisis, and by investing in service delivery through national and local systems wherever possible. It specifically acknowledges that the protection of refugees and assistance to host States are a shared international responsibility, and that refugee-hosting countries can need additional and predictable humanitarian funding and development support. It commits to boosting refugees' self-reliance—to get them out of the limbo of aid without livelihoods—by including them in national development plans, thus investing in the future of refugees and local communities alike. It also calls for more planning and opportunities for durable solutions.

Governments of refugee-hosting countries and development donors increasingly recognize that refugees, internally displaced people, returnees and stateless persons are included in the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development, through its core principle of "leave no one behind". Many are finding ways to act accordingly. The World Bank's IDA18 features a US\$ 2 billion sub-window to benefit refugee-hosting communities; bilateral donors are starting to follow suit with grant aid, designing programmes to benefit refugees and host communities together, potentially with economies of scale.

UNHCR is working with Member States and its international, national and local partners to implement the comprehensive refugee response framework in a range of specific refugee situations. To date, a dozen countries have begun applying the CRRF in its entirety; most are cooperating under a regional approach. (For more information on the CRRF, please visit the CRRF global digital portal: <http://crrf.unhcr.org/en>.)



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Several of these countries have enacted significant policy shifts to make the CRRF a reality—for example, inclusion of refugees into national development plans and/or components thereof like education action plans; extension of civil documentation services; or access to labour markets and financial services. Some of these shifts entail legislation and implementation efforts, and this is where **Members of Parliaments** come in. MPs can give a crucial boost to their countries' efforts to apply the latest consensual methods for hosting refugees, boosting their self-reliance and potential contribution to society, and setting the stage for solutions. Similarly, from donor governments, some parliamentary action may be needed to update regulations and encourage practices in their development aid in line with the necessary flexibility and focus.

Workshop Purpose

This workshop will share information on the experience thus far in the countries implementing the CRRF, especially the policy shifts that most of the respective Governments have made, and how MPs have been and will be involved. It will also present some highlights of key research and evidence underpinning the CRRF approach, and the agenda to develop more evidence on results. Importantly, it will be an occasion for MPs to consider and convey what information they will need to play their decisive role when CRRF issues come to their parliament. Participating MPs can thereby shape the agenda for evidence-gathering.

Participants in the workshop will also be able to contribute to the ensuing General Debate at the IPU Assembly on *Strengthening the global regime for migrants and refugees: the need for evidence-based policy solutions*, in full appreciation of the rationale and evidence behind comprehensive refugee responses, and the role of Parliaments therein.

The workshop will be introduced by UNHCR and Members of Parliament, and then will feature questions and answers between participants and presenters, plus smaller group discussions if logistics allow.

Interpretation will be provided in Arabic, English, French and Spanish.