



Individual Self Reflection 2020 on World Humanitarian Summit Commitments and Initiatives - Academic Council on the UN System (ACUNS)



Stakeholder Information

Organisation Name

Academic Council on the UN System
(ACUNS)

Organisational Type

Academia

City and Country where Headquartered

Waterloo, Canada

Focal Point Name

Math Noortmann

Region

North America

Twitter ID

ACUNStweets



1B Act early

Individual Commitments

Commitment	Commitment Type	Core Responsibility
ACUNS will conduct and disseminate online or in print through its global network, special podcast interviews and short analytical articles addressing conflict prevention best practices and lessons learnt.	Operational	Political Leadership to Prevent and End Conflicts

Core Commitments

Commitment	Core Responsibility
Commit to make successful conflict prevention visible by capturing, consolidating and sharing good practices and lessons learnt.	Political Leadership to Prevent and End Conflicts

1. Highlight the concrete actions taken between 1 January – 31 December 2017 to implement the commitments which contribute to achieving this transformation. Be as specific as possible and include any relevant data/figures.

In 2017, Academic Council on the UN System (ACUNS) conducted 4 podcast interviews on (1) UN Peacekeeping: Challenging Assumptions, Improving Understanding, (2) UNFOLD ZERO, the threat of nuclear weapons & emerging solutions through the United Nations, (3) Local Perspectives in the Research and Practice of Peacebuilding, (4) Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association (<https://acuns.org/category/podcasts/>).

In its Newsletter, ACUNS published analytical pieces on (1) Women, Peace, and Security in the Arab Region, (2) Ending Impunity for Peacekeepers Involved in Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, (3) Domesticating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Africa. Archived copies are available here: <https://acuns.org/category/publications/newsletters/>

ACUNS has also continued to work with the UN studies associations of Japan, China and South Korea, including on the theme of regional contributions to UN peacekeeping operations, and on regional conflict resolution.

2. A. How are you measuring progress toward achieving your commitments? Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.

- Through existing, internal systems or frameworks for monitoring, reporting and/or evaluation.
- By reporting to, or using reports prepared for, UN principal organs, UN governing boards, or other international bodies
- Through multi-stakeholder processes or initiatives (e.g. IASC, Grand Bargain, Charter for Change, etc).

B. How are you assessing whether progress on your commitments is leading toward change in the direction of the transformation?

ACUNS does not have any measure for the 'end-user' effect of those reading its articles or listening to the podcasts. It can report increased engagement on social media including cross-posting by organizations with shared commitments. We are engaged in conversations with UN Executive Office of the Secretary-General staff and other UN representatives regularly.

3. A. Please select no more than 3 key challenges faced in implementing the commitments related to this transformation. Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.

- Adherence to standards and/or humanitarian principles
- Data and analysis
- Multi-stakeholder coordination

B. How are these challenges impacting achievement of this transformation?

Connecting with good potential podcast interviewees and article authors remains an ongoing challenge, but ACUNS is continuing to have reasonable success and continues to engage with Missions in NYC and Vienna and maintains good relations with the Director General at UN Office at Geneva.

4. Highlight actions planned for 2018 to advance implementation of your commitments in order to achieve this



transformation.

ACUNS will continue to engage with individuals and organizations and seek to produce high-quality articles and podcasts to raise the profile of this commitment. Our 2018 Annual Meeting in Rome "Human Rights, Migration, and Global Governance" includes participation by representatives of FAO, UNOPS, UNU, as well as government and NGO representatives.

5. What steps or actions are needed to make collective progress to achieve this transformation?

Coalitions of civil society organizations need to be coordinated and coherent in their engagement with Member States and UN bodies in advancing towards their commitments, while holding each other accountable for recognizing and acting according to appropriate standards. All actors (including the private sector) have to be encouraged to dedicate the necessary resources to continue to support progress.

6. List any good practice or examples of innovation undertaken individually or in cooperation with others to advance this transformation.

In January our Vienna Liaison Office organized, convened, and successfully completed a major meeting on "Implementing the 2030 Agenda", which engaged UN, civil society, and government representatives in an intensive exchange of ideas and best practices. Since then, the partnerships developed from this event have been maintained and focused on events to follow-up in 2018.



2C Speak out on violations

Core Commitments

Commitment	Core Responsibility
Commit to speak out and systematically condemn serious violations of international humanitarian law and serious violations and abuses of international human rights law and to take concrete steps to ensure accountability of perpetrators when these acts amount to crimes under international law.	Uphold the Norms that Safeguard Humanity

1. Highlight the concrete actions taken between 1 January – 31 December 2017 to implement the commitments which contribute to achieving this transformation. Be as specific as possible and include any relevant data/figures.

Academic Council on the UN System (ACUNS) hosted two conferences in 2017 that facilitated conversations about these issues and included participants from academia, government representatives, and NGOs. These conferences were: 2017 Annual Meeting – Revitalizing the United Nations for Human Rights, Peace and Development, June 15–17, Seoul, Republic of Korea, which had approximately 300 attendees; 2017 Vienna UN Conference – Implementing the 2030 Agenda, January 17–19, Vienna, which had approximately 150 attendees.

2. A. How are you measuring progress toward achieving your commitments? Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.

- Through existing, internal systems or frameworks for monitoring, reporting and/or evaluation.
- By reporting to, or using reports prepared for, UN principal organs, UN governing boards, or other international bodies
- Through multi-stakeholder processes or initiatives (e.g. IASC, Grand Bargain, Charter for Change, etc).

B. How are you assessing whether progress on your commitments is leading toward change in the direction of the transformation?

With ACUNS' mandate being primarily educational, our efforts focused on raising awareness of issues, and disseminating analyses of best practices as well as areas of difficulties still remaining. We work with government representatives and look for changes in policies or resource priorities that may reflect some of this effort.

3. A. Please select no more than 3 key challenges faced in implementing the commitments related to this transformation. Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.

- Adherence to standards and/or humanitarian principles
- Data and analysis
- Funding amounts

B. How are these challenges impacting achievement of this transformation?

It is critical to have relevant and good data to measure change, including changes in priorities and approaches. It is both politically sensitive and resource intensive to build this data, and this remains a challenge, especially for our members who are primarily scholars.

4. Highlight actions planned for 2018 to advance implementation of your commitments in order to achieve this transformation.

ACUNS will host additional conferences to promote dialogue around and awareness of these issues, including the 2018 Vienna UN Conference and 2018 Annual Meeting, which is being held in cooperation with the ISA Human Rights Joint Conference.

5. What steps or actions are needed to make collective progress to achieve this transformation?

It remains important for all organizations to coordinate and collaborate in order to avoid wasteful duplication or even competing or conflicting activities. At times, however, civil society organizations are guilty of competing with colleagues in the search for institutional funding and this reduces or even harms our overall effectiveness and credibility.

6. List any good practice or examples of innovation undertaken individually or in cooperation with others to advance this transformation.



ACUNS is aiding awareness and dialogue through conference sessions discussing human rights and humanitarian law.



2D Take concrete steps to improve compliance and accountability

Individual Commitments

Commitment	Commitment Type	Core Responsibility
ACUNS through its Vienna Liaison Office will promote efforts to identify, focus global attention on, and offer new ideas to prevent and/or stop, femicide (killing of women, as women) and the targeting of women in conflict situations.	Advocacy	Uphold the Norms that Safeguard Humanity
ACUNS will conduct and disseminate critical studies on core responsibility 2 (core commitments 1 and 5), using podcasts and written articles to highlight both issues, which are disseminated online and in print through its global network.	Policy	Uphold the Norms that Safeguard Humanity

Core Commitments

Commitment	Core Responsibility
Commit to promote and enhance respect for international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and refugee law, where applicable.	Uphold the Norms that Safeguard Humanity
Commit to speak out and systematically condemn serious violations of international humanitarian law and serious violations and abuses of international human rights law and to take concrete steps to ensure accountability of perpetrators when these acts amount to crimes under international law.	Uphold the Norms that Safeguard Humanity
Implement a coordinated global approach to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in crisis contexts, including through the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies.	Uphold the Norms that Safeguard Humanity

1. Highlight the concrete actions taken between 1 January – 31 December 2017 to implement the commitments which contribute to achieving this transformation. Be as specific as possible and include any relevant data/figures.

Gender-based violence prevention and response

Academic Council on the UN System (ASUNS), through its Vienna Liaison Office, has promoted efforts to identify, focus global attention on, and generate new ideas to prevent and/or stop, femicide (killing of women, as women) and the targeting of women in conflict situations.

2. A. How are you measuring progress toward achieving your commitments? Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.

- Through existing, internal systems or frameworks for monitoring, reporting and/or evaluation.
- By reporting to, or using reports prepared for, UN principal organs, UN governing boards, or other international bodies
- Through multi-stakeholder processes or initiatives (e.g. IASC, Grand Bargain, Charter for Change, etc).

B. How are you assessing whether progress on your commitments is leading toward change in the direction of the transformation?

The ACUNS Vienna Liaison Office works regularly with a number of interested and engaged Missions in addressing femicide through the General Assembly, and in national policy development. ACUNS encourages governments to pursue policies in support of the goals



in the report.

3. A. Please select no more than 3 key challenges faced in implementing the commitments related to this transformation. Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.

- Institutional/Internal constraints
- Strengthening national/local systems

B. How are these challenges impacting achievement of this transformation?

While many Member States and their governments are pursuing gender equality and inclusion policies, there remain a great number of political and cultural obstacles to achieving this end goal of full equality.

4. Highlight actions planned for 2018 to advance implementation of your commitments in order to achieve this transformation.

These issues will be discussed in detail at the 2018 Vienna UN Conference, which is focused on actions, potentials, and challenges linked to SDG 5: 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.'

5. What steps or actions are needed to make collective progress to achieve this transformation?

An important approach for all civil society organizations should be to identify common goals and to speak with a shared perspective on these goals and on the approaches and resources needed to achieve them. This is how civil society has successfully worked with governments in previous global initiatives.

Keywords

Gender



2E Uphold the rules: a global campaign to affirm the norms that safeguard humanity

Core Commitments

Commitment	Core Responsibility
Commit to promote and enhance respect for international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and refugee law, where applicable.	Uphold the Norms that Safeguard Humanity

1. Highlight the concrete actions taken between 1 January – 31 December 2017 to implement the commitments which contribute to achieving this transformation. Be as specific as possible and include any relevant data/figures.

Academic Council on the UN System (ACUNS) has produced podcasts and newsletter articles to disseminate information about these issues to its members and followers. ACUNS has also continued to engage with conversations on social media about this campaign, especially as these conversations relate to the #ShareHumanity topics of the WHS.

2. A. How are you measuring progress toward achieving your commitments? Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.

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- By reporting to, or using reports prepared for, UN principal organs, UN governing boards, or other international bodies
- Through multi-stakeholder processes or initiatives (e.g. IASC, Grand Bargain, Charter for Change, etc).

B. How are you assessing whether progress on your commitments is leading toward change in the direction of the transformation?

ACUNS members continue to provide careful and systematic scholarly research that includes studies of global norms related to human rights, peace and security, and sustainable development.

3. A. Please select no more than 3 key challenges faced in implementing the commitments related to this transformation. Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.

- Adherence to standards and/or humanitarian principles
- Data and analysis
- Multi-stakeholder coordination

B. How are these challenges impacting achievement of this transformation?

ACUNS produces critical analyses of current humanitarian problems and needs. The challenge is still to connect these analyses to policy and practitioners; however, 2017 has seen an increased awareness of ACUNS programming.

4. Highlight actions planned for 2018 to advance implementation of your commitments in order to achieve this transformation.

ACUNS will continue to produce substantive analyses through its various publications.



Additional Reports

Attachment
Femicide-Volume-VII-Establishing-a-Femicide-Watch-in-Every-Country.pdf
Femicide-Volume-VIII-Abuse-and-Femicide-of-the-Older-Woman.pdf