



MAKING OUR WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT COMMITMENTS COUNT

Norwegian Refugee Council self-report

February 2018




NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL

Author: Itay Epshtain, Senior Humanitarian Law and Policy Consultant

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Executive Summary

At the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), held in Istanbul in June 2016, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) made commitments towards **policy development, humanitarian advocacy, partnership, and training, operational capacity or financial reform.**

The NRC outlook on WHS commitments realisation is aligned with its core mission to protect the rights of displaced and vulnerable people during crisis, and to provide assistance to meet immediate humanitarian needs, prevent further displacement and contribute to durable solutions... Notably, the WHS commitments allow NRC a reflection on the interpretation and application of core humanitarian principles in its normative, analytical and operational frameworks.

By undertaking these commitments, NRC aspired to play a leadership role in some key areas, reflected in the NRC Global Strategy for the years 2018-2020, developed following the WHS.

The Platform for Action, Commitments and Transformation (PACT) was created to house the commitments and provide a hub for transparency and voluntary progress reporting. This review provides input to the PACT, including an overview of the progress made by NRC around four core responsibilities, and an analysis of emerging trends in progress and gaps that need be addressed.

Areas of focus and substantial progress include the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF); the Grand Bargain on humanitarian financing; Protection of Civilians; and risk management and the mitigation of counterterrorism measures on humanitarian action.

NRC's capacity to deliver aid in highly insecure environments underscored several commitments; highlighting the paradigm of presence, proximity and protection as analytically and operationally significant to NRC in the realisation of WHS commitments.

NRC's commitment to realising humanitarian principles is evident in the progress made over the last eighteen months, while noting that more could to be done to ensure consistent interpretation and application across the organisation.

1 | Introduction and Methodology

At the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), held in Istanbul in June 2016, NRC engaged in thematic roundtables derived from stakeholder consultations and anchored in the Agenda for Humanity¹. For each roundtable, a set of core commitments were developed, representing the key components NRC set out to achieve in the implementation of the Agenda for Humanity.

NRC's participation focused on four key objectives:

1. To ensure that people internally displaced by conflict, violence and disasters have access to humanitarian assistance and protection;
2. To redress humanitarian funding and coordination imbalances;
3. To place protection at the centre of humanitarian action;
4. To strengthen principled humanitarian action.

NRC made commitments in support of the Agenda for Humanity and its five Core Commitments towards policy development, humanitarian advocacy, partnership and training, operational capacity or financial reform.

This review is part of a two-phase approach to assess the progress made in achieving the commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit. The first phase consisted of an After Action Review carried out in the last quarter of 2016 (covering both pre-summit activities and participation in the WHS - from January 2015 till June 2016); this second phase evaluates progress made in achieving the NRC WHS commitments (January-November 2017).

It is intended to (a) provide baseline data on the status of NRC's WHS commitments; (b) highlight gaps and challenges in achieving NRC's WHS commitments; (c) provide recommendations to better implement and monitors NRC's WHS commitments.

Methodology

The review was undertaken by way of a questionnaire based on the PACT self-reporting requirements (see Annex B); identifying 17 key informants within NRC in each competence covered by the commitments, and conducting semi-structured interviews; complemented by an anonymous online survey completed by 22 individuals. Interviews held and the survey allowed some overlap, to solicit detailed input.

¹ See: <https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/>

2 | Platform for Action, Commitments and Transformation (PACT) Report

Through the Agenda for Humanity Platform for Action, Commitments and Transformation (PACT), NRC will report on progress annually, until commitments are realised. It provides an opportunity to communicate how NRC has taken commitments forward, confronting challenges and working to promote positive change.

The PACT report is organised around four core commitments; for each of the commitments a backdrop is provided, along illustrative achievements and an analysis of gaps in implementation, and the measures envisioned to bridge those.

The abridged character of the PACT report entails capturing a fraction of activities undertaken by NRC during the reporting period (January to November 2017); rather than an attempt to encompass the entirety of efforts to realise the WHS commitments, they serve as illustrations of collective efforts, and are not meant as an exhaustive account.

WHAT LED NRC TO MAKE THE COMMITMENTS?

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is an independent humanitarian organisation helping people forced to flee. In 2016, NRC assisted more than 6.8 million people across 31 countries with more than 12,500 people who worked with and for displaced people on behalf of NRC as international staff members, national staff members, employees and incentive daily workers.

NRC is responding in some of the most difficult places in the world, including Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan, and northern Nigeria. Our main areas of sectoral or thematic focus include Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene; Food Security; Shelter; Education; Camp Management; and Information, Counselling, and Legal Assistance.

NRC also encompasses NORCAP, the expert deployment roster, and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). Together these organisations provide NRC with significant additional technical and analytical capacity, including on issues such as climate change, resilience, and conflict prevention.

NRC engaged in the WHS with a sense of purpose in illustrating the innovative work NRC was already undertaking to improve services offered to displaced people, but equally to highlight reform needed in the humanitarian sector and its systems, building upon areas of demonstrated expertise.

The commitments undertaken represent a genuine attempt to promote increased efficiency in humanitarian relief, improving the quality of the assistance we provide and covering gaps in humanitarian aid. That said, NRC has been aspirational in the scope of its pledges, encountering internal and external challenges to their realisation in full.

By undertaking these commitments, NRC aspired to play a leadership role in some key areas, reflected in the **NRC Global Strategy for the years 2018-2020**, developed after the WHS. In addition to re-affirming our commitment to be the leading displacement organisation in hard-to-reach areas, NRC reaffirmed commitments undertaken at the WHS to be a champion for durable solutions to displacement crises and to become a leader in using data and technology to deliver better.

3 | Overview of progress

3.1 UPHOLD THE NORMS THAT SAFEGUARD HUMANITY

The core responsibility generated a wide range of advocacy, policy and operational commitments to **strengthen the protection of civilians by enhancing compliance with international law.**

Commitments broadly focused on **ensuring full access to people in need, and the protection of humanitarian personnel; affirming and promoting respect for international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and improving compliance and accountability.**

Achievements at a Glance

NRC committed to *defending the humanitarian principles through provision of humanitarian assistance and protection, and through courageous advocacy.*

NRC had maintained, through various fora, that states must investigate and prosecute serious violations, and demand that warring parties, including their own forces, respect international law and hold perpetrators to account. In NRC country operations seized by armed conflict (International Armed Conflict and Non-International Armed Conflict), specialised legal advice on the interpretation and application of International Humanitarian Law was sought and informed operational decision (such as in seeking legal expert opinions in relation to operations in Syria, Palestine, Kenya and Somalia). NRC will continue to develop the requisite expertise and collaborate with others to disseminate throughout the organisation.

NRC has invested in providing better **duty-of-care to all staff** on the frontlines, particularly national staff. During the reporting period, NRC rolled out overall standards for managing safety, security and health for staff in connection with NRC's duty of care. It is complemented by the development of an online training platform.

One such endeavour is the *Frontline Humanitarian Toolbox*² to address challenges in the Syria context. It is an innovative, interactive online training platform designed to impart crucial skills to **NRC and partner staff.**

NRC committed to *uncompromising defence of international legal instruments designed to protect displaced people and actively worked against movement to weaken the rights accorded by those instruments.*

As part of the follow up to the New York Declaration adopted in the immediate aftermath of the WHS, NRC has engaged in consultations on the Global Compact on Refugees and has played a key role in the rollout of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). NRC has been engaged with the piloting of comprehensive responses in different countries and regions where refugees are hosted, including Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Somalia and the Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA). NRC has led consultations with displaced populations in the Horn of Africa and the NTCA to promote the priorities of affected

² <https://vimeo.com/239970431>

populations in the Compact, and has worked with member states, to ensure that the Compact process results in a comprehensive regional protection and solutions framework to address forced displacement.

Additionally, NRC had addressed concrete steps to be taken by national governments to integrate the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement into relevant national and regional law and practice, and will continue to prompt implementation around the Guiding Principles 2018 anniversary.

Research undertaken in country operations including Jordan, Lebanon, Kenya and Colombia on the obstacles refugees face in accessing administrative procedures, through ICLA programmes, contributed to legal protection of refugees (through recognition of their status) and documentation of that protection – a tangible means to ensure that protection is effective and visible. One such keystone research is *Recognising Nairobi's Refugees: the challenges and significance of documentation proving identity and status*³, which provides a snapshot of the challenges that urban refugees have experienced obtaining documents that recognise their status as refugees and the consequences that flow from lack of documentation.

Committed to ***addressing violence and abuse against civilians in all our programmes, and to promote the recognition of protection as a primary need for people affected by crisis***; the 2017 iteration of the *NRC Programme Policy* provides the framework to ensure coherent, quality programming across all phases of displacement. A commitment to protection at large, and the protection of civilians, is at the core of NRC mission and underlies all activities, through integrated protection principles, objectives, and approaches across all programmes and core competencies, in all stages of interventions. In addition, where there are unmet protection needs and gaps, NRC may implement stand-alone protection programmes where there is a clear added value.

One such example of protection operationalisation is the NRC commissioned research on the operational challenges and dilemmas associated with the Protection of Civilians Site model. *Protection of Civilians Sites: Lessons from South Sudan for Future Operations*⁴ draws out lessons from South Sudan to better inform future responses. The report advises how aid workers and peacekeepers can co-exist in a shared space; how rules should be set up to manage criminality and security issues in camps; to prevent the flow of arms into sites; and how to ensure families are eventually able to leave and return home. The publication is a first step in enabling the humanitarian and peacekeeping communities to be better prepared for future POC sites operations.

More recently, NRC has developed and rolled out a *Humanitarian Mediation Course* to staff deployed to the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali; aimed to improve protection of civilians and provide humanitarian personnel working in conflict contexts with practical knowledge, tools and skills to design, plan and conduct mediation and dialogue facilitation processes preventing or mitigating episodes of violence; preventing forced displacement and facilitating returns; improving acceptance and humanitarian access; and enhancing respect for affected populations' basic rights.

NRC committed to ***maintaining strong risk management systems to minimise the risk of diversion of humanitarian assistance***, through its 2016 compliance project encompassing reporting at country, region and global level.

Operating in risk-disposed environments, NRC had invested in initiatives assuring staff security, avoiding partisan political agendas that exclude or harm vulnerable people to limiting diversion of aid to armed actors in multiple regional and country operations.

³ <https://goo.gl/dLJa6o>

⁴ <https://goo.gl/CZkZKB>

NRC is a leading NGO on risk management in settings of conflict and fragility, and has conducted extensive research in this area. NRC and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) conducted a study on *The Impact of Counterterrorism Measures on Principled Humanitarian Action*. Building on the findings of this study, NRC published the *Risk Management Toolkit in Relation to Counterterrorism Measures*, aimed at helping organisations identify, manage, and mitigate the key risks pertaining to aid delivery. Following its publication, NRC field-tested the Toolkit in Afghanistan, Kenya, Turkey, and Yemen. This was well received by donors and the humanitarian community.

In addition, NRC played a key role in numerous fora addressing normative, regulatory and technical frameworks of counterterrorism measures, promoting unimpeded principled humanitarian action. NRC has led risk management policy discussions with states, including the United States, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Norway, and Sweden, as well as UN agencies, NGOs and academia. For example, NRC collaborated with Harvard Law School Programme on International Law in Armed Conflict (PILAC) on the study on *Suppressing Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Supporting Principled Humanitarian Action*, and with the Duke Law School on their report “*Tightening the Purse Strings: What Countering Terrorism Financing Costs Gender Equality and Security*”.

Furthermore, NRC was invited to participate in the global conversation as the NGO representative to the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF) in influencing standards and implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures of the international financial system directly related to humanitarian operations. NRC has developed expertise in the intersection of counterterrorism measures and principled humanitarian action, and will continue to improve tools through work with NRC country and regional offices, as well as partners, in relation to the *Risk Management Toolkit*⁵. A revision to the Toolkit is slated for 2018.

NRC committed to *providing impartial assistance and protection based on needs alone, rather than countering violent extremism and other political agendas*. Recently, NRC published a Position Paper on the intersection of *Countering Violent Extremism and Principled Humanitarian Action*⁶.

NRC committed to *build upon **strategic partnerships with humanitarian actors** to ensure protection leadership, coordination, and outcomes are achieved across the whole humanitarian system*. During the reporting period, NRC had strengthened relationships with partner organisations, the ICRC, UN agencies and donors in operationalising humanitarian principles. Likewise, NRC has engaged in numerous consultations in Geneva, New York and elsewhere, aimed to ensure the centrality of protection in humanitarian operations and develop robust conceptual and operational outputs to protection of civilians in armed conflict.

NRC has increased its investment in the New Way of Working multi-stakeholders’ consultations, advocating for an approach integrative of presence, proximity and protection in protracted conflicts. The 2017 Programme Policy reflects a commitment to choice and self-reliance of displaced people and promotes durable solutions to displacement through return, local integration or resettlement in a third location, without discrimination on account of their displacement.

NRC published a study *Presence and Proximity - To Stay and Deliver, Five Years On*⁷ in collaboration with UNOCHA. It showed that the humanitarian community continues to grapple with the problem of its ability to stay and deliver effectively and responsibly in highly insecure environments. Progress has been made in a number of areas. Yet despite these improvements, this study also broadly finds that not enough has changed, particularly at the field level, since the

⁵ <https://goo.gl/aAPyck>

⁶ <https://goo.gl/uGCWnX>

⁷ <https://goo.gl/fDrnpp>

publication of *To Stay and Deliver* in 2011. In partnering with humanitarian actors, NRC had stressed through this stream of work a focus on conflict-related displacement, and the bridging of apparent gaps in respecting and ensuring respect for International Humanitarian Law.

Central to this effort is a series of ongoing and new initiatives to improve International Humanitarian Law compliance, which will bear fruit over time, including the development of a policy compendium, and the "Protection Reboot" initiative to improve protection at field level.

The above-mentioned policy compendium currently under development will collate existing and revamped resources addressing key policy areas, including: global responsibility sharing for forcibly displaced people; voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable returns; impact of stabilisation policies on principled humanitarian action; protection of civilians in the context of peacekeeping missions and civil-military coordination; and efficiency in humanitarian financing.

Challenges Faced in Implementation

In the armed conflict-affected contexts in which NRC operates, civilians are often denied the protection they are entitled to. In the period leading to the Summit and following, we had witnessed with growing concern prevalent disregard for International Humanitarian Law and the humanitarian principles that underpin the WHS commitments.

Deliberate and indiscriminate attacks on civilians and relief personnel have intensified, as well as incidents of capricious and arbitrary denial and obstruction of humanitarian assistance. Of added concern is the erosion of the protection framework for asylum seekers and refugees, induced by a political course negating credible demands for asylum.

The key problem to be addressed regarding improving respect for International Humanitarian Law is one of political will, especially by states, who are the signatories to the Geneva Conventions, but also by non-State actors.

Likewise, we had witnessed that building a coalition of organisations to champion a critical reflection on counterterrorism measures adopted by states remains a challenge of engaging in a highly politicised conversation, while seen as a significant component of furthering the Grand Bargain and recusing donor conditionality.

Next Steps to Advance Implementation

In upholding the commitments, NRC would continue to invest in the interpretation and application of international law to its operations, countering policies and practices that undermine humanitarian principles and the rule of law.

NRC will employ a range of normative, analytical and operational modalities to enable it to deliver in hard-to-reach areas and access the most vulnerable in line with humanitarian principles and the applicable international law.

3.2 LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND – ADDRESS FORCED DISPLACEMENT

Commitments under the core responsibility include those related to **forced displacement**; recognised as a humanitarian challenge and also as a political, development and human rights one, and that a new approach is needed to address and work to reduce displacement. This new approach should aim at meeting the humanitarian needs of the displaced, while also **reducing vulnerability and increasing the self-reliance and resilience of refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and host communities.**

The need for **more equitable and predictable responsibility sharing** was highlighted in NRC commitments, as well as the importance of **upholding and strengthening the implementation of protection frameworks for refugees and IDPs**.

Achievements at a Glance

NRC committed to *actively contributing to all efforts to defend and strengthen the 1951 Refugee Convention and its Optional Protocol, and to supporting all other legal frameworks and policies that ensure the protection of people on the move.*

NRC had intensively engaged in multiple consultations around the Global Compact on Refugees and the interlinked Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, focusing its efforts on the implementation of the Convention in relation to rapid large movements of refugees; better identifying persons in need of international protection; enhancing economic inclusion and promoting livelihood opportunities for refugees in a way that benefits host countries and communities; and bringing innovation to humanitarian assistance to achieve greater efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability.

NRC also committed to *continuing to engage in constructive dialogues with national governments to ensure that Internally Displaced People (IDPs) are not forgotten or side-lined in policy and operational approaches to prevent, respond and find sustainable solutions to displacement.*

Through NRC's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), we managed to continuously highlight the plight of people caught in protracted and chronic displacement situations, and to improve measurements of displacement severity and risk in order to target resources to where they are most needed.

IDMC presented the latest data and trends of internal displacement by conflict and disasters worldwide, addressing connections between internal and cross-border displacement, the factors that force IDPs across borders, and the issue of refugees being returned home, only to become internally displaced again. The *Global Displacement Risk Model*⁸ completes the reporting framework through the lens of disaster risk reduction and climate resilience as part of overall sustainable development planning.

Complementing the above, NRC committed to *actively supporting the right of persons to seek asylum, and work with states to ensure that their obligation to provide safe, fair and efficient asylum access is fulfilled.*

The refugee crisis in Europe and its manifestation in Greece posed such a challenge to NRC Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA) programme in responding to the influx of forced migrants into Europe, and the effects for their rights globally. NRC had over the reporting period increased its investment in understanding the domestic implementation of Refugee Status Determination (RSD) procedures, and across a number of country operations had promoted access to alternate legal or administrative processes in the absence of RSD or other refugee specific measures to ensure persons seeking international protection are considered under international, regional or national law.

Furthermore, NRC committed to *supporting efforts to improve global responsibility sharing for the protection of forcibly displaced persons, and to speaking out wherever states take steps to outsource their protection responsibilities.*

⁸ <https://goo.gl/bbBPvV>

Through experience with a range of regional refugee protection and responsibility sharing mechanisms being tested in many of the operational contexts where NRC is working, NRC was able to draw key lessons from responsibility sharing mechanisms; These lessons, pertinent to WHS follow up and consultations regards the Global Compact on Refugees are found in the *Lessons from Responsibility Sharing Mechanisms*⁹ Position Paper authored by NRC to reflect on lessons learned from Europe, Central America, Jordan, Lebanon, Kenya and elsewhere in the Horn of Africa. The paper focuses on the range of mechanisms under consideration to improve responsibility sharing in refugee response, incorporating findings from in-country realities and guidance on refugee protection objectives in any responsibility sharing mechanism, including in financing arrangements; externalisation and preventing onward movement incompatibility with responsibility sharing; and the essential political commitment required to ensure action.

One such instance is addressed in a joint report with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Oxfam, titled *The reality of the EU-Turkey statement*¹⁰ in which NRC showcased how vulnerable people are forced to live in degrading conditions, and it outlines the many ways in which asylum seekers are barred from exercising their right to a fair asylum process. The report highlights major gaps in critically needed legal counselling and assistance to navigate the confusing, constantly changing asylum procedures. Beyond the deeply concerning situation in Greece, the EU is looking to replicate the EU-Turkey Statement model elsewhere, and in so doing, risks setting a dangerous precedent for the rest of the world.

NRC continued to promote efforts to ensure safe and regular routes to Europe for people in need of international protection through resettlement, humanitarian visas, private sponsorships and family unity, and realising commitments made to solidarity and responsibility sharing mechanisms within Europe, such as the relocation scheme.

NRC committed to ***eliminating gaps in education for children and youth by ensuring our programmes are relevant, responsive, and safe and meet global education standards.***

Education Cannot Wait (ECW), launched during the Summit, offered NRC the opportunity to engage in an agile, inclusive platform and join forces, at both global and local levels, to support education in emergencies with humanitarian speed and development depth. The ECW is in line with NRC's collaborative approach intended to ensure that every crisis-affected child and young person where NRC operates is in school and learning; based on the recognition that continuous access to quality learning is a priority for children and families affected by conflicts, natural disasters and displacement. NRC also contributed to the revision of the ECA management structure by providing suggestions for improvement in terms of efficiency.

It is complimentary to NRC longstanding commitment to the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards for Education. NRC had also maintained engagement with the Global Education Cluster; Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) and the Watch list for Children in Armed Conflict; Global Working Group to End School-Related Gender Based Violence and the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) in Norway and throughout our country operations.

NRC has been following on the **Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action**, launched at the WHS; aligning NRC strategies, approaches and programmatic responses with the principles outlined in the Agenda for Humanity, in view of reaching all young people and empowering them to be agents of positive transformation; and co-leading with UNICEF the development of *Inter-agency Guidelines on Programming with and for Young People in Humanitarian Settings*¹¹ (including an inception report and tools developed for field consultation).

⁹ <https://goo.gl/7oT9T6>

¹⁰ <https://goo.gl/kDh78s>

¹¹ <https://goo.gl/yieUsW>

In complementing efforts, in 2015 NRC embarked on an ambitious initiative to close the gap for millions of children and youth who have been denied their right to education. By 2018 we aim to reach one million youth annually with our educational programmes.

Challenges Faced in Implementation

NRC often works in protracted crises characterised by long-term or cyclical displacement. In these contexts, conflict coincides with other factors such as recurrent natural disasters and State fragility, compounding displacement. These contexts require an integrative approach.

NRC recognises that in protracted crises, displacement is primarily a political challenge, which requires continued responses to persistent humanitarian needs in displacement affected communities. It requires an alignment across humanitarian, development and political endeavours to achieve collective outcomes that address protracted displacement and prevent new displacement from becoming protracted.

The WHS commitments represent such an attempt, but a shift in focus from short-term emergency relief to the displaced, to supporting displaced people in accessing rights and durable solutions has yet to materialise in full.

Next Steps to Advance Implementation

To promote durable solutions for displaced people through resettlement, safe return or local integration, NRC will continue its efforts to promote greater collaboration and coordination between humanitarian and development actions in addressing root causes of displacement, reducing needs, risk and vulnerability for recurrent displacement.

If successful, the Global Compact on Refugees will be the first instrument to provide a globalised framework for responsibility sharing for refugee protection. While it will be important to learn from past examples, there is a fundamental shift in approach that will be required to create global ownership for refugee protection. In order to achieve this, negotiations across states must be driven by the goal of increased protection and solutions for refugees.

For protection and solutions to be available for refugees on a global scale, legal and policy frameworks that guide states in receiving, protecting, and hosting refugees must lead to a standardised minimum level of entitlements (as enshrined in the Refugee Convention) adopted and implemented across all countries, and manifested in the New Way of Working initiative(s) to ensure displacement is properly addressed, while ensuring the preservation of humanitarian space whenever necessary. To successfully fulfil the obligations incumbent upon them, states must ensure access to basic services, education and livelihoods for hosted refugees.

3.3 CHANGING PEOPLE'S LIVES – FROM DELIVERING AID TO ENDING NEED

The Summit generated support for a New Way of Working that meets people's immediate needs, while at the same time reducing humanitarian needs, risk and vulnerability. Commitments undertaken by NRC focused on investing in and building on the capacities of local actors, including people and communities directly affected by displacement and host communities, more joined-up approaches between humanitarian and development action, among a range of issues. NRC also highlighted its intentions to invest more in data and risk analysis.

Achievements at a Glance

NRC committed to *working in partnership with other stakeholders to find **durable and sustainable solutions** for populations with humanitarian needs.*

In numerous consultations convened in Geneva, NRC advocated for explicitly limiting measures which incentivise return (including setting targets and quotas for return, restricting legal stay for refugees, or limiting access to humanitarian assistance, basic services, and livelihoods); further clarifying standards of safety and dignity, which must be met in return processes with operationally relevant benchmarks for achieving these standards, to address all widespread threat to life and physical integrity of a person, including threats that stem from generalised violence and disasters.

To safeguard the sustainability of returns, NRC promoted defining international responsibilities for return sustainability in concrete and actionable terms, including greater clarity on the role for the international community in supporting and monitoring the sustainability of returns.

Through NRC's Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), we committed to *providing global data, evidence and tools to develop and **implement policies and measures that can help prevent and respond to internal displacement worldwide**, developing approaches that link prevention, humanitarian action, sustainable development, and climate change policy frameworks.*

In addition, we committed to *contributing to **disaster risk reduction and management** efforts related to disaster and climate displacement through supporting capacity development to national authorities, regional and international institutions.*

NRC is active in the Platform on Disaster Displacement. NRC's work on the intersection of climate change and conflict has the potential for a strong empirical basis building off our extensive experience field experience, exemplified in NRC's role in the resilience consortium to support community capacity to organise and react to the intertwined shocks of drought and violent conflict in the Horn region.

NRC has been developing the *Words into Action Guide for Implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*; addressing the reduction of risk of disaster displacement and strengthening the resilience of disaster-displaced people, expected to roll out to national practitioners and policy makers in 2018.

IDMC had during the reporting period completed an analysis on the structural drivers of internal and cross-border displacement linked with conflict and disasters and disaster-related displacement risk. IDMC is applying innovative methods through the use of machine learning and big data analysis for an automated learning approach to identify the structural drivers of displacement. IDMC has already completed an initial analysis focused on disaster displacement; preliminary findings on our conflict displacement correlation analysis will be completed in the coming months. IDMC will publish findings in the 2018 Global Report on Internal Displacement. The work will help us identify how and when to intervene to avert crises at an early stage.

NRC committed to *bridging the gap between prevention, response and recovery by **providing timely expert capacity** to national and international stakeholders.*

Through NORCAP we operate several rosters with standby personnel consisting of experienced professionals in areas of expertise that range from education, protection, health and nutrition to cluster coordination, camp management, legal affairs and peacebuilding. The Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Protection Standby Capacity Project (ProCap) was created to build the capacity of relevant actors to strengthen the humanitarian protection response. ProCap is a UN inter-agency project, with a steering committee and support unit in OCHA. The Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS) was established in 2009 to strengthen coordinated humanitarian needs assessments before, during, and after crises. ACAPS is led by a consortium of the Norwegian Refugee Council, Action Contre la Faim and Save the Children International.

Challenges Faced in Implementation

Disaster risk management activities will have to be further reviewed to ensure they meet the specific needs of vulnerable populations, including those who are displaced or face a high risk of displacement. In particular, activities relevant to reducing disaster displacement risk and strengthening the resilience of disaster-displaced people should be considered, based on the realisation that resilience-building activities for the public at large will also benefit people with a high risk of displacement.

Compiling global figures on internal displacement, refugee statistics or international migration remains a challenge in addressing spatial and temporal data gaps and differing definitions of the same phenomena, given the many factors that underpin want and related displacement.

Next Steps to Advance Implementation

In addition to introducing new technological solutions in tracking displacement, there are several concrete steps that can be taken to improve the quality and interoperability of data and ensure it is used more responsibly by policymakers, the media and others, including common standards, terms and definitions and, most importantly, technical and methodological guidance to ensure that data is collected in accordance with these standards.

Likewise, ensuring that the multitude of drivers of risk are addressed through our analytical and operational framework would see the development of capabilities to access the most risk-prone communities and individuals; aligning NRC strong technical expertise and field presence with those of development actors; and an overall increase in partnerships with donors, host governments, UN agencies, INGOs, local actors and the private sector.

3.4. HUMANITARIAN FINANCING – INVESTING IN HUMANITY

The commitments undertaken by NRC underscored the investments to be made in local capacities, in reducing and acting on risk, and in increasing the scale and efficiency of financial resources at our disposal. Significant commitments were made to engage donors in developing multi-year financing solutions, and scale-up the use of cash-based programming.

The humanitarian-development nexus drew strong support, with the recognition that players traditionally focused on development situations should play a stronger role earlier in the continuum by financing increased infrastructure needs and related services, stimulating entrepreneurship and strengthening education systems. In the related special session on Islamic social financing, Maybank Islamic and NRC announced a global humanitarian *waqf* (endowment fund) aimed to provide stronger support to displaced people, as well as protracted, underfunded and forgotten emergencies.

Achievements at a Glance

NRC committed to *drawing upon its extensive experience with a diversity of donors to simplify donor conditions and review current reporting practices, and advocate for harmonised narrative and reporting templates.*

In addition, we committed to *encouraging donors to develop flexible funding mechanisms to bridge the gap between humanitarian and development action. We commit to advocating that funding for durable solutions to displacement is available during a humanitarian response.*

The signature of the Grand Bargain created a momentum offering a genuine opportunity to raise challenges and opportunities to change humanitarian financing. Different work streams have since advanced. NRC engagement in the Grand Bargain focused on four specific work streams around donors conditions: multiyear financing; harmonisation of reporting, reduced duplication of management costs and less earmarking. This builds on the Donor Conditionalities Project (DCP) in cooperation with Boston Consulting Group (BCG).

Harmonisation and simplification of reporting: NRC played a key role in promoting the testing of a standard template (called 8+3) on narrative reporting. The pilot is currently ongoing in three country operations – Myanmar, Iraq and Somalia (encompassing more than 12 donors and 8 UN agencies joining the initiative). NRC is participating with 42 projects. Several other donors are now expressing an interest in discussing harmonisation of financial templates and harmonisation of cost classification system building on suggested solution put forward by NRC and Boston Consulting Group in the *Money where it counts* project in line with workstream four.

Multi-year humanitarian financing: Endorsed in the Grand Bargain by donors, UN agencies and NGOs, multi-year humanitarian financing (MYHF) is assumed by NRC and related work stream co-conveners to bring a variety of benefits. NRC is currently acting as NGO co-champion in support to co-conveners of the multi-year funding work stream. The study commissioned by NRC, FAO and OCHA *Living up to the Promise of Multi-Year Humanitarian Financing*¹² explores when and where MYHF can have the greatest impact, and identifies the investments and enabling conditions required at the organisational and systemic levels for it to live up to its potential. The research also points towards the challenges that humanitarian actors now face in building a more predictable and responsive humanitarian system and identifies a set of new and emerging challenges related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Building on the discussion stimulated by the report NRC is now conducting an analysis of obstacles and solutions to transfer MYHF to partners.

Reduce earmarking: In line with the Grand Bargain commitment to reduce earmarking, several donors are investing in pooled funds. To better understand the potential and challenges of these tools, NRC conducted a study to map pooled funds and provide recommendations for efficiency. *Understanding Humanitarian Funds: Going beyond Country-Based Pooled Funds*¹³ maps the various pooled funds, available for humanitarian response and resilience programming, identifies good practice and lessons, and provides recommendations for the existing pooled funds, which may also be useful for new and future pooled funds. Findings from the report were shared with OCHA as the Country-Based Pooled Funds manager, and with EU Trust fund managers. Further thinking on complementarities between flexibility and predictability of funding is underway.

NRC committed to **scaling up cash programmes**, both through contextualised partnerships and systems and by developing ‘grab and go’ platforms that can be used in any crisis.

Moreover, we committed to **building capacity within cash transfer programming and coordination by working with INGOs, UN agencies, national and regional institutions, and through our expert deployment rosters.**

Cash based programming has been further integrated into project design and country teams training during the reporting period (through the Global Cash Delivery Consortium; consortia in Iraq and other country operations; and the Remote Cash Project). NRC actively promotes multi-purpose cash (MPCA) whenever appropriate and engages multilaterally to address delivery challenges through initiatives including the Global Cash Delivery Consortium, and *Remote Cash Project*¹⁴, developing a unique expertise in delivering cash assistance in high-risk areas.

¹² <https://goo.gl/5sc62b>

¹³ <https://goo.gl/f3Rya6>

¹⁴ <https://goo.gl/MmR87W>

In addition to developing the capacity to deliver multi-purpose cash assistance at scale, NRC continued to use cash as a modality within sectorial and integrated programmes, primarily in the emergency phase when sector specific needs have not yet been identified. Recognising that cash-based interventions are not always the most appropriate response (as markets might not be functioning or required services not available to purchase, we are not modality led, but prioritise appropriate quality interventions on the basis of broad needs assessments. Moreover, the soft components of a quality cash based intervention – necessary to ensure that the cash transfers actually have the intended humanitarian benefit – will remain with humanitarian actors both in conflict and more stable contexts. A particular focus moving forward in the realisation of WHS commitments is on NRC’s ability to support the transition from MPCA to a durable solution.

The Cash and Markets Capacity Development Roster (CashCap) was established to increase the use and effectiveness of cash and markets programming in humanitarian aid.

Challenges Faced in Implementation

The different work streams of the Grand Bargain are making progress at a different pace. The Quid Pro Quo principle underpinning the Grand Bargain is applied unevenly. While there is a good level of engagement from various actors on harmonisation of narrative reporting, there are reluctances in approaching issues that entail changes in the way we deal with risk. The commitments in the Grand Bargain represent a potential to significantly change how donors and aid providers work together towards increased efficiency, reduced duplication and management costs, increased predictable multi-year funding and harmonised and simplified reporting mechanisms. However, the commitments attached to the Grand Bargain pose both internal challenges as change to ways of working is envisioned and tested throughout the organisation, as well as external challenges to reconciling divergent views of actors.

One of the main challenges with cash programming remains a lack of coordination and collaboration. Because coordination of cash-based interventions does not fit the regular coordination structures and of lack expertise in planning and coordinating across multiple sectors. In addition, there is also a lack of analysis on protection issues related to cash programming.

Next Steps to Advance Implementation

Increased coordination and synergies across all the work streams of the Grand Bargain is paramount to ensure the achievement of the overall goal. A reinvigorated effort in operationalising the suggestions emerged from the Grand Bargain is needed.

While progress was achieved in terms of efficiency through the Grand Bargain, limited investments have been made on the other recommendations from the High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing, including to diversify source of funding. NRC partnership with the May Bank to establish an Islamic Fund represents a step forward to mobilise around innovative source of funding.

Further thinking from our leadership around key initiatives to move forward HLP recommendation is to take place in the next months.

3 | Conclusion and Recommendations

The World Humanitarian Summit was a milestone in the effort to **address and reduce displacement**, as well as serving as a platform for states and other organisations to make commitments ahead of the New York Summit on Refugees and Migrants in September 2016.

However, to see through solutions for displaced people and host communities, states should implement the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and work towards the adoption of a Global Compact on Refugees in 2018, while increasing efforts to address root causes and prevent future displacement; adopting new financing and programming approaches that reduce needs and vulnerabilities, while meeting their immediate assistance and protection needs.

Those initiatives should be intertwined with an effort to **enhance the protection of civilians in conflict**, as violations of International Humanitarian Law continue unabated in many armed conflicts NRC responds to. Obligations to protect civilians and facilitate humanitarian access are undercut by a failure by a culture of impunity around violations. That can only be addressed by an upsurge in concerted political will and tangible steps to ensure compliance with International Humanitarian Law. NRC on its part can make better use of engagement opportunities with the United Nations Security Council, and other accountability mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council and its Special Procedures.

Internally displaced people featured prominently in the discussions at the WHS, and the Agenda for Humanity called for a comprehensive global plan to reduce internal displacement. Since the Summit, however, political attention on internal displacement has been inconsistent. Meanwhile internal displacement continues to rise, with limited durable solutions in view. With internally displaced people accounting for two thirds of all forcibly displaced people, the political, humanitarian and development agenda of NRC should prioritise this issue.

The investment NRC made in achieving **humanitarian financing** commitments through the Grand Bargain is bringing results. Further engagement is now needed to operationalise the discussions held in the past year. Synergies with existing fora and platform is key for the success of the initiative.

Annex A: List of Interviewees (by Alphabetical Order)

Clemence	Boutant-Willm	Humanitarian Principles Advisor
Nina	Birkeland	Senior Advisor Disasters and Climate Change
Joel	Charny	Director NRC USA
Roger	Dean	Global Adviser, Cash-Based Interventions
Eric	Demers	Head of Programme Development and Support Section
Bina	Desai	Head of Policy and Research IDMC
Jan	Egeland	Secretary General
Brooke	Lauten	Humanitarian Policy and Protection Advisor
Kate	McGrane	Senior Humanitarian Policy Advisor
James	Munn	Director NRC Geneva
Gregory	Norton	Head of Internal Audit
Annelies	Ollieuz	Education Team Leader
Rilito	Povea	Head of Policy and Advocacy
Fernando de Medina	Rosales	ICLA Team Leader
Cecilia	Roselli	Head of Policy and Partnerships Unit
Monica	Sanchez Bermudez	ICLA Adviser
Kristel	Tonstad	Legal Advocacy and Policy Adviser
Magnhild	Vasset	Director of Field Operations

Annex B: Semi Structured Interview

Affiliation: HO/ Geneva / Other

1. Work with NRC relates to the following **WHS Core Commitments**:

Uphold the Norms that Safeguard Humanity	
Leaving No One Behind - A Commitment to Address Forced Displacement	
Changing People's Lives - From Delivering Aid to Ending Need	
Humanitarian Financing - Investing in Humanity	

2. What led NRC to make the WHS Commitment(s)? (e.g. expected change in practice or policy in your area of work/competence)

3. Reflecting on your area of work/competence; **what actions were taken** since the WHS to realise commitments and how did they result?

4. What **challenges** has NRC faced in realising the WHS commitment(s)?

5. Reflecting on your area of work/competence; what measures would you suggest NRC adopt to advance WHS commitment(s) implementation (**e.g. gaps**)?

6. How would you suggest NRC better **link** WHS Commitments to its broader agenda? (e.g. SDGs, Global Compacts)

7. What is most needed on the part of the **humanitarian community** to advance the Agenda for Humanity and WHS Commitments? (e.g. gaps between the actions of INGOs and those that are further needed)

8. If you had to point at **one NRC achievement or best practice** to advance the WHS Commitments, what would that be?

Annex C: NRC's Commitments for the World Humanitarian Summit

Uphold norms that safeguard humanity

We commit to sharing risk with local partners. Working in strong and mutually beneficial partnerships is critical to providing humanitarian assistance and protection.

We commit to maintaining strong risk management systems to minimise the risk of diversion of humanitarian assistance.

We commit to providing impartial assistance and protection based on needs alone, rather than countering violent extremism and other political agendas.

We commit to defending the humanitarian principles through provision of humanitarian assistance and protection, and through courageous advocacy.

We commit to uncompromising defence of international legal instruments designed to protect displaced people and will actively work against any movement to weaken the rights accorded by those instruments.

We commit to being a courageous advocate on issues vital to the protection of the rights of displaced and other crisis-affected populations.

We commit to addressing violence and abuse against civilians in all our programmes, and to promote the recognition of protection as a primary need for people affected by crisis. We will lead by example by ensuring that protection is central to our work.

We commit to build upon strategic partnerships with humanitarian actors to ensure protection leadership, coordination, and outcomes are achieved across the whole humanitarian system.

We commit to advocating for the adoption and implementation of the 2015 Safe Schools Declaration. We also commit to promote implementation of the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict among non-state armed groups.

We commit to challenging states on counter-terrorism measures that impede principled humanitarian action, and will continue to request exemptions to such counter-terrorism measures for humanitarian actors.

Leaving no one behind: a commitment to address forced displacement

We commit to always asking: Are we reaching those most in need of help and protection?

We commit to actively contributing to all efforts to defend and strengthen the 1951 Refugee Convention and its Optional Protocol, and to supporting all other legal frameworks and policies that ensure the protection of people on the move.

We also commit to continuing to engage in constructive dialogues with national governments to ensure that Internally Displaced People (IDPs) are not forgotten or side-lined in policy and operational approaches to prevent, respond and find sustainable solutions to displacement. We commit to addressing the protection gap faced by IDPs worldwide by holding IDP-hosting states accountable for better data collection and data sharing on internal displacement.

We commit to supporting the ratification, wider domestication and effective implementation of regional protection mechanisms such as the Kampala Convention and the Cartagena Declaration, seising on opportunities for the regional bodies to improve the protection, assistance and dignity of displaced and crisis-affected people.

Through NRC's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), we commit to continuously highlighting the plight of people caught in protracted and chronic displacement situations, and to improving measurements of displacement severity and risk in order to target resources to where they are most needed.

We commit to actively supporting the right of persons to seek asylum, and will work with states to ensure that their obligation to provide safe, fair and efficient asylum access is fulfilled.

We commit to supporting efforts to improve global responsibility-sharing for the protection of forcibly displaced persons, and to speaking out wherever states take steps to outsource their protection responsibilities.

We commit to actively identifying obstacles to durable solutions, and to working towards their resolution with duty bearers and other stakeholders at local, national, and international level.

We commit to eliminating gaps in education for children and youth by ensuring our programmes are relevant, responsive, safe and meet global education standards.

We commit to working with states and other stakeholders to prevent and address disaster and climate displacement, including through support to the implementation of the Nansen Initiative's "Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change".

Changing people's lives – from delivering aid to ending need

We commit to working in partnership with other stakeholders to find durable and sustainable solutions for populations with humanitarian needs.

Through NRC's Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, we commit to providing global data, evidence and tools to develop and implement policies and measures that can help prevent and respond to internal displacement worldwide. We commit to working with partners to improve global monitoring of internal displacement, and to develop approaches that link prevention, humanitarian action, sustainable development, and climate change policy frameworks.

Through NRC's deployment instruments, we commit to supporting the national, regional and international efforts to strengthen community resilience, by integrating displacement and climate services within disaster risk reduction and management, climate change and development plans. We commit to building the capacity for dissemination of climate information to affected populations, tailored to their needs and changing climates.

We commit to contributing to disaster risk reduction and management efforts related to disaster and climate displacement through supporting capacity development to national authorities, regional and international institutions.

We commit to improving the capacity of the international humanitarian system and national stakeholders to communicate effectively with communities affected by crisis, in order to

increase the efficiency and accountability of the humanitarian response.

We commit to bridging the gap between prevention, response and recovery by providing timely expert capacity to national and international stakeholders.

Investing in Humanity: Humanitarian Financing

NRC commits to drawing upon its extensive experience with a diversity of donors to review current reporting practices, and advocate for harmonised narrative and reporting templates.

We commit to providing humanitarian assistance and protection that empowers people to meet their most urgent needs.

We commit to always asking '*why not cash? And if not now when?*' We, therefore, also commit to providing 'multi-purpose' cash payments wherever possible.

We commit to scaling up cash programmes, both through contextualised partnerships and systems and by developing 'grab and go' platforms that can be used in any crisis.

We commit to advocating for humanitarian and refugee response plans that promote the use of multi-purpose cash assistance, wherever possible. We commit to participating in multilateral efforts to address the challenges in delivering cash safely and effectively.

We commit to building capacity within cash transfer programming and coordination by working with INGOs, UN agencies, national and regional institutions, and through our expert deployment rosters.

We commit to encouraging donors to develop flexible funding mechanisms to bridge the gap between humanitarian and development action. We commit to advocating that funding for durable solutions to displacement is available during a humanitarian response, not after.