

ReSolve Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Forum

Afghan women and girls in displacement

28 November 2024

Background

Developed by the SSAR Support Platform, the ‘ReSolve’ Multistakeholder Pledge for Resilience and Solutions for the Afghanistan Situation was introduced in the context of the second Global Refugee Forum in 2023.¹ It advances the Global Compact on Refugees’ (GCR) principle of burden and responsibility-sharing through country-specific pledges for Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan and intends to unite key stakeholders in a coordinated pledge effort to support Afghans affected by displacement.

In order to provide a platform for continued dialogue, stocktaking, and collaboration among stakeholders in the region working towards the objective of the ReSolve pledge, the SSAR Support Platform, in collaboration with the Asia Displacement Solutions Platform (ADSP), plan to convene a first ReSolve Multistakeholder Engagement Forum, bringing together governments and civil society committed to the pledge. The Forum will provide stakeholders with an opportunity to showcase their approaches in complex operational environments, discuss challenges, and identify synergies across organizations for further strategic dialogue and partnership.

First session of the Engagement Forum: Afghan women and girls in displacement

The first session of the Forum will focus on Afghan women and girls in displacement who are subject to deeply rooted gender-based discrimination, social exclusion, and limited access to services. They face systematic barriers to accessing education, health, and reproductive services, and are at a high risk of gender-based violence, with limited access to safe spaces, legal support, and psychological care. Limited employment options and cultural expectations often prevent women from gaining economic independence in displacement, and participating in decision making, limiting their ability to advocate for their own needs. Addressing their needs requires a multifaceted response engaging a broad range of international, national, and local community-based stakeholders.

In Afghanistan, Afghan women and girls face intensified restrictions on fundamental rights, with severe limitations on education, employment, and public life. Girls are currently barred from secondary and higher education, drastically reducing their future opportunities. Due to their particularly precarious protection situation, women and girls are at increased risk of Gender-based violence (GBV), which remains pervasive, with limited legal recourse. Amid these constraints, humanitarian and community-based organizations continue to offer limited services, often through concealed or community-based initiatives, to support women’s health, education, and resilience.

In Iran and Pakistan, in many cases, girls’ education is limited by a lack of resources, school closures, and early marriage expectations, while healthcare—especially reproductive services—remains difficult to access, with limited facilities and cultural constraints discouraging women from seeking care. Economic opportunities for Afghan women are minimal, as work restrictions and limited vocational training options

1 [Multistakeholder Pledge: ReSolve for Resilience and Solutions in the Afghanistan Situation.](#)

Photo: Shukria, a midwife trainee, returns to her village, in the Qazan valley, Bamyan province to visit neighbours and family. She says meeting a family who recently lost a baby has made her more determined to study and work hard so that she can return, qualified, to the community and support mothers and children and prevent unnecessary deaths. © UNHCR/Oxygen Empire Media Production

often leave them dependent on male family members for financial support. Additionally, the risk of GBV remains high, with inadequate protections or recourse in host countries. Despite these challenges, NGOs and local organizations work to provide support through educational programs, vocational training, and safe spaces, striving to meet the unique needs of Afghan refugee women and girls within host communities.

Objectives

The inaugural session of the Engagement Forum, scheduled for 28 November 2024, will provide an opportunity for national organizations from Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan who have either made GRF pledges or intend to formalize a pledge under ReSolve to provide insights into their work, which will include multi-sectoral programming to prevent and respond to GBV and support survivors. They include: Kabul Orthopedic Organisation from Afghanistan ([KOO](#)), the Association for Protection of Refugee Women and Children ([HAMI](#)) from Iran, and [INSPIRE](#) from Pakistan.

The specific objectives of the session include:

- Review the challenges and obstacles faced by Afghan women and girls in displacement, including gender-based discrimination, social exclusion, and limited access to services.
- Gain a comprehensive understanding of the protection needs of Afghan women and girls, amongst the refugee and returnee populations in Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan.
- Showcase the programming of national NGOs supporting Afghan women and girls in Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan.
- Explore opportunities to promote comprehensive responses to the protection needs of Afghan women and girls in displacement.

Participation

The session of the Forum is open to all SSAR Global Core Group members, stakeholders that have made GRF Pledges in support of resilience and solutions for Afghan refugees, as well as operational partners that support resilience and solutions for Afghan refugees more broadly. With the Multi-Stakeholder Pledge remaining open for new Pledges, all partners are encouraged to consider making a Pledge in line with their current and planned operational priorities ahead of the convening of the forum, to facilitate their regular participation.²

The Forum will be convened by the Netherlands as Chair of the SSAR Support Platform. In the spirit of highlighting the role of civil society in the Afghanistan Situation, the Asia Displacement Solutions Platform (ADSP) will act as co-convenor in line with its longstanding engagement and Pledge under 'ReSolve'. The SSAR Secretariat is supporting the planning and facilitation of the sessions of the forum.

The Engagement Forum is planned for November 28, 2024. For enquiries on the 'Resolve' Pledge and the Engagement Forum, you may reach out to the SSAR Secretariat at ssar-secretariat@unhcr.org.

² Pledges can be submitted through this website: [Pledge concrete actions for refugees and host communities | The Global Compact on Refugees | UNHCR \(globalcompactrefugees.org\)](#).