



Statement by the Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts
The Global Compact on Refugees and the role of cities and municipalities

This is a statement on behalf of the Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts. The Initiative is a multi-stakeholder partnership bringing together 30 civil society, UN, trade union and philanthropic organisations around a shared agenda - to ensure that children's rights are at the heart of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration, and to create a continuum of care, protection and support for refugee and migrant children.

The Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts commends States for adopting yesterday the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). We welcome that the text of the GCR is guided by international human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The GCR promotes concrete steps that, if effectively implemented, will strengthen the protection of refugee children and increase their access to quality education and healthcare and other vital public services that children need. Increasingly, more and more refugees, including children, settle in urban areas, so cities are often on the frontline, playing a key role in protecting the rights of refugee children. Many cities have stepped up to the challenge, adjusting and extending their services to make sure that no-one is left behind, working hand in hand with public service workers, civil society, the private sector and children and young people themselves.

Yet, cities face many challenges too. Many are in fragile countries where public services remain weak. And even in non-fragile contexts, there can be significant pressure on resources.

The need of cities to respond to refugee situations from a child rights approach should be reflected in every step of the GCR implementation. The implementation of the GCR provides an opportunity to

bring positive changes to the lives of all children. Let's work together under the leadership of national and local authorities to make it happen.

The Initiative stands ready to support cities and other authorities in reaching out to vulnerable children including in urban settings, in assessing their situation and implementing solutions that uphold the child's best interests. The Initiative would like to invite local and national authorities and other key actors to:

- Develop action plans and pledges that prioritize investments and access to services for children on an equal footing with national children;
- Involve children and young people in policy making, urban planning and development;
- Work together through multi-stakeholder platforms for collaboration, exchange, learning, technical support and practice with a view to achieving step changes on 3 key issues -
 1. Access to protection and care for refugee children, including alternatives to child detention
 2. Access to services, such as education and healthcare
 3. Strengthening mechanisms of collaboration on child protection across borders in pursuit of durable solutions in children's best interests.

Thank you!