

Joint Pledge on Sport for Inclusion and Protection, Global Refugee Forum 2023: Guidance note

“ I used the power of sports in Afghanistan to stand for my rights and the rights of other women. Now, as a refugee, I am using the same power to support and empower refugee and minority women in Europe. People everywhere play sport. It is often seen as a leisure activity, but for refugees, sport can be a safe space. It can help with physical and mental health and well-being. It can give social support, personal development and skills that can be useful for studies or employment. Sport can also make communication between communities and generations easier, and it can contribute to gender equality. This is especially true for displaced children, youth, women, girls, and persons at risk of exclusion or marginalization, such as persons with disability. ”

– Khalida Popal

1. Introduction

This guidance note aims to support individuals, organizations, and entities in formulating commitments under the 2023 [Global Refugee Forum \(GRF\)](#) Joint Pledge on Sport, as a contribution towards improving the lives of displaced people.

It will answer the following questions:

- What is the Joint Pledge on Sport?
- How does the Joint Pledge on Sport contribute to the Global Compact on Refugees?
- How can you get involved in the Joint Pledge on Sport?
- What are the benefits of being part of the Joint Pledge on Sport?

Please see page 3 for more information about the GRF and the [Global Compact on Refugees](#).

2. What is the Joint Sport Pledge?

The Joint Pledge on Sport for Inclusion and Protection, facilitated by the Sport for Refugees Coalition (SfRC) presents a refreshed look at the role that sport can play in refugee responses ahead of the Global Refugee Forum in December 2023.

The pledge, developed by a reference group of actors from many sectors engaging with sport and refugees in different ways, is born out of the belief that sport can, and does, make a valuable contribution in displacement contexts.

Everyone within the sport ecosystem has a role to play in improving the lives of refugees and host communities – and together we can achieve far more. For this reason, everyone – from grassroots sports organizations through to national and international organizations – are invited to join the Joint Pledge on Sport.

Figure 1: Pledge overview and 5 commitment areas

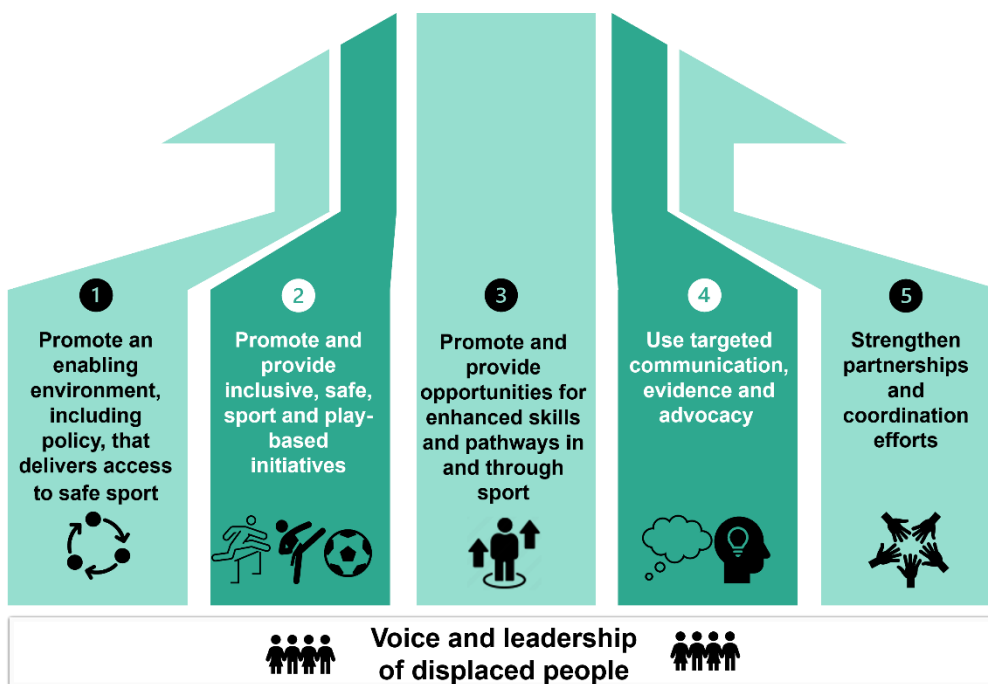


Figure 2: Details of the pledge and commitment areas that form the Joint Pledge on Sport 2023

Together, we pledge to mobilize resources, expertise and networks to promote access to, and opportunities through sport for, and with, displaced people and host communities, contributing to more inclusive, tolerant and cohesive societies.

We will:

- 1. Promote an enabling environment, including policy, that delivers inclusive access to sport and ensures** equitable opportunity to participate and excel by eliminating barriers, addressing inequalities and lack of resources.
- 2. Promote and provide inclusive, safe, sport and play-based initiatives** (including events and competitions) engaging displaced people and host community members of all ages, sexes, genders and abilities, where sport contributes to personal growth, protection, inclusion and cohesion.
- 3. Promote and provide opportunities for enhanced skills and pathways in and through sport,** including training, scholarship and employment opportunities.
- 4. Using the platform of sport, communicate and advocate** for refugee issues and use targeted communications, evidence and research to highlight the positive role sport can play for displaced people at the individual, community and whole of society level.
- 5. Strengthen partnerships and coordination efforts** within and beyond the sport sector to maximize the benefits of sport within and outside of displacement situations.

We are committed to advancing this work with displaced people and communities at all stages of the pledge implementation process.

3. How does the Joint Pledge on Sport contribute to helping refugees?

The refreshed Joint Pledge on Sport in 2023 builds on the success of the 2019 Pledge, and contributes to the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees (particularly GCR Objective 2: Enhance Refugee Self-Reliance). It is also aligned with [recommendations](#) made at the Global Refugee Forum, High Level Officials Meeting in 2021 (marking the mid-point of the first Global Refugee Forum cycle 2019-2023).

[The Global Compact on Refugees \(GCR\)](#) is the main international framework for strengthened international cooperation and solidarity with refugees and affected host communities. It specifically recognizes the contribution of sport and sporting entities in ensuring the protection and well-being of refugees. Following the affirmation of the Global Compact on Refugees by the world's governments in 2018, the [Global Refugee Forum \(GRF\)](#) was established. The GRF provides states and many other actors with the opportunity to come together every four years to share progress, good practices and contribute financial support, technical expertise and policy changes, to help reach the goals of the Global Compact on Refugees.

4. How can you get involved in the Joint Pledge on Sport?

Step 1: Develop a commitment towards the Joint Pledge under one or more of the 5 pledge commitment areas outlined above, with the support of this Guidance note.

Step 2: Register your commitment on the Global Compact on Refugees online portal ([here](#)) and via the Joint Pledge on Sport commitment form ([here](#))

Step 3: Contribute to a collective voice about the role of sport in the context of forced displacement by providing simple annual updates about the progress of your pledge.

5. What is a commitment towards the Joint Pledge on Sport?

Everyone can make a commitment. A commitment is unique to each organization or committing entity. A commitment details the actions you will take and the changes they will make, as a contribution to the overall Joint Pledge on Sport 2023.

Figure 3: Pledge vs. commitment overview



6. Commitments: Best practice

To make the commitment process easier or provide some inspiration, here are some best practice guidelines and example commitments from across the sector.

Organizations should:

- Ensure the meaningful engagement of refugees during the commitment-making process. Guidance is available [here](#).
- Develop commitments through a consultative process and/or multi-functional team.
- Aim to mobilize your network and encourage others to make their own commitment.

7. What will happen to the data once collected?

Commitments, and annual progress updates, will be collected by the Sport for Refugees Coalition co-conveners. This data will be collated and showcased on the International Platform for Sport and Development (sportanddev.org) and the [Global Compact on Refugees Website](#) to demonstrate the collective global effort and contribution of sport to improving the lives of refugees and achieving the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees. This information will also be used to strengthen the evidence base to inform future advocacy efforts in promoting the role of sport in displacement contexts.

8. What are the benefits of being part of the Joint Sport Pledge?

Committing towards The Joint Pledge on Sport means making a direct contribution towards improving the lives of displaced people, the implementation of the GCR and the Agenda [2030 principle of Leaving No One Behind](#).

By contributing to a multistakeholder response to displacement, you are also part of a global effort to better protect, include and assist displaced people and hosting communities. A commitment registered for the GRF will be visible on the GRF website, can be noticed by other stakeholders interested in collaboration. Successes related to multi-stakeholder pledges and specific commitments will be highlighted at the next GRF in 2027.

You can also choose to become a member of the Sport for Refugees Coalition (SfRC). The SfRC is an inclusive space for interested organizations working or looking to work in the field of sport and displacement (Learn more about the SfRC [here](#))

As a member of the SfRC, you benefit from:

- Organizational exchanges between members of the Coalition.
- Opportunities to share and gain insights into how sport can contribute in displacement contexts and responses.
- Opportunities to develop new partnerships.
- Collective advocacy for the role sport can play in the context of displacement.
- Visibility for your organisation through the Coalition's homepage on [Sportanddev](#).
- Being part of a collective voice on the power of sport in displacement contexts.

To receive more information on how to join the SfRC please reach out to:

contact@sportcoalition.org

9. Additional resources

[What is the Global Compact on Refugees?](#)

[What are Pledges?](#)

[What do we mean by an Age, Gender, and Diversity \(AGD\) approach to all aspects of our work?](#)

[What do we mean by Meaningful Refugee participation?](#)

[Where can I find more information about the Agenda 30 principle of Leave No One Behind?](#)

10. Annex: Commitment examples

The following table provides examples about how each stakeholder group could contribute to a commitment area. A commitment may include one or more areas of commitment. Please note that these examples are for illustrative purposes and do not constitute an exhaustive list.

Stakeholders	Commitment Areas				
	Enabling environment	Safe sport and play initiatives	Enhanced skills and pathways	Evidence, Comms and advocacy	Partnerships and coordination
Member States	<p>Enable policy/ process that promotes sport as part of the process of refugee inclusion within their host country.</p> <p>Enable policy/ process that systematically embeds sport in existing refugee services (education, health etc).</p> <p>Support creation or refurbishment of inclusive sport spaces in refugee hosting communities.</p>	<p>Include refugees in existing community sport-based initiatives/ support the creation of new community sport-based initiatives.</p>	<p>Support refugee athletes to pursue opportunities like jobs or education, alongside their sports careers.</p>	<p>Robust evaluation of sport-based initiatives.</p>	<p>Partnership with other relevant stakeholders in the sport ecosystem to strengthen the sport offer in displacement contexts.</p>
Local Governments or Cities	<p>Guarantee access for refugees to join sports clubs, programs, and initiatives by removing barriers.</p>	<p>Include refugees in existing community sport-based initiatives/ support the creation of new community sport-based initiatives.</p>	<p>Support employment, training and volunteer opportunities for refugee athletes/sport participants.</p>	<p>Storytelling projecting positive narrative around refugees and/ or the role of sports.</p>	<p>Partnership with other relevant stakeholders in the sport ecosystem to strengthen the sport offer in displacement contexts.</p>
International/ National Federations	<p>Support NFs/clubs to extend access to refugees.</p>	<p>Holistic support to refugee team (incl. training, travel, education, psychosocial support etc).</p> <p>Identification and training for refugee coaches to deliver sport at community level.</p>	<p>Scholarships for refugee athletes.</p> <p>Identification and training for refugee coaches, technical officials, administrators.</p>	<p>Storytelling projecting positive narrative around refugees and/ or the role of sports.</p>	<p>Partnership with other relevant stakeholders in the sport ecosystem to strengthen the sport offer in displacement contexts.</p>

National Olympic Committees	Support NFs/clubs to extend access to refugees. Work with authorities to remove barriers that prevent refugee participation.	Support sport-based initiatives at home and in other refugee hosting countries.	Talent identification and referral to national teams/ Olympic Solidarity scholarships. Hosting refugee athletes.	Storytelling projecting positive narrative around refugees and/ or the role of sports.	Partnership with other relevant stakeholders in the sport ecosystem to strengthen the sport offer in displacement contexts.
Sports Clubs	Support to create an inclusive sports environment that welcomes refugees.	Identification, training and mentoring of refugee coaches to deliver sport at community level.	Support employment, training and volunteer opportunities for refugee athletes/sport participants.	Storytelling projecting positive narrative around refugees and/ or the role of sports.	Partnership with other relevant stakeholders in the sport ecosystem to strengthen the sport offer in displacement contexts.
NGOs/SfP Organizations	Facilitate access to sports facilities, equipment, and training for refugees.	Implement sport-based initiatives supporting displaced people and host communities and contributing to wider humanitarian and development outcomes.	Support employment, training and volunteer opportunities for sport participants.	Storytelling projecting positive narrative around refugees and/ or the role of sports. Sharing of data/evidence for purpose of joint advocacy on the role and contribution of sport.	Partnership with other relevant stakeholders in the sport ecosystem to strengthen the sport offer in displacement contexts.
Private Sector	Leverage resources, expertise, and influence to extend access to sport for displaced people.	Support sport-based initiatives in line with 'for purpose' goals.	Support employment, training and volunteer opportunities for refugee athletes/sport participants.	Storytelling projecting positive narrative around refugees and/ or the role of sports.	Partnership with other relevant stakeholders in the sport ecosystem to strengthen the sport offer in displacement contexts.
Academia	Leverage research findings to advocate for policies grounded in empirical evidence and best practices.	Enhance the skills and knowledge of individuals engaged in sports initiatives for refugees.	Support that enables complementary pathways in education.	Robust research and evaluation of sport-based activities.	Partnership with other relevant stakeholders in the sport ecosystem to strengthen the sport offer in displacement contexts.
UN/ International Organizations	Inclusion of sport in (Regional) Response Frameworks.	Systematically integrate sport in other workstreams.	Support employment, training and volunteer opportunities for refugee athletes/sport participants.	Robust research and evaluation of sport-based activities.	Coordinate sport partners in displacement contexts.