

Title of Event: Exploring the PGRN 2027 and the Safe Pathways Update

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Toplines:

- Global resettlement needs remain high despite regional declines in some areas, with conflict, insecurity, human rights abuses, and restricted livelihoods continuing to drive displacement across multiple regions.
- Resettlement remains a critical protection and responsibility-sharing mechanism, particularly for refugees facing acute vulnerabilities, limited legal status, or barriers to local integration and safe return.
- Complementary pathways are expanding in some contexts, including labour mobility, education, and family reunification programs, although overall access remains limited relative to need.
- Family reunification continues to be the most widely used complementary pathway globally, while education and labour pathways are concentrated among specific nationalities and regions.
- The gap between projected resettlement needs and available resettlement places continues to widen due to shrinking quotas, funding constraints, and growing displacement pressures.

Presenter(s):

- Sagalee Adam – Co-moderator
- Faiza Shakori – Co-moderator
- Kerstin Lindblad
- Haruno Nakashiba
- Cecile Thoreau
- Julia Zajkowski
- Amelia Bulloch
- Jonathan Hoskins
- Shirin Alhaj
- Ndeye Fatou Ndiaye

Circulated Materials:

[Brief: OECD-UNHCR: Safe Pathways for Refugees 2026 update](#)

[UNHCR launches new platform to analyse complex journeys across key routes | UNHCR](#)

Key Points:

- **Global Trends and Projected Resettlement Needs**
 - Overview of projected resettlement needs and major displacement trends over the past six years.
 - Conflict remains the primary driver of displacement across most regions. Some regions have seen declining projected needs due to returns, integration efforts, and changing refugee populations.
- **Safe Pathways to OECD Countries and Brazil**
 - Focus remains largely on eight refugee-producing countries: Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Somalia, Sudan, and Venezuela.
 - Overall use of complementary pathways increased in 2024.
 - Family reunification permits account for at least half of all permits issued across participating countries.
 - Notable declines in permit issuance observed in Germany and Canada.
 - Iranian nationals are the largest group accessing complementary pathways.
- **Pathway trends by nationality**
 - Family reunification dominates for Eritrean and Somali refugees, and remains significant for Afghans and Syrians.
 - Iranian nationals account for most study permits.
 - Venezuelans primarily access labour mobility pathways.
 - Iraqis and Sudanese use a more balanced mix of pathway types.
- **Regional Update: Americas**
 - Movement toward North America has decreased, while multidirectional migration within Central America has increased.
 - Migration drivers remain unchanged and include violence, insecurity, and crime.
 - Human rights concerns and political repression are major drivers of displacement from Nicaragua.
 - Projected resettlement needs remain stable at approximately 169,700 individuals.
 - Haitians and Venezuelans represent the largest populations requiring resettlement in the Caribbean.
 - Resettlement continues to be an essential protection solution despite increasing migration barriers.
- **Regional Update: Asia-Pacific**
 - Refugee and asylum-seeker populations have increased significantly over the past decade.
 - Refugee and internal displacement numbers declined slightly over the past year, largely due to returns to Afghanistan, while stateless populations remained broadly

stable. As a result, overall resettlement needs decreased, reflecting smaller refugee populations in major host countries.

- These trends are influenced by returns, deteriorating camp conditions, and improved integration and labour inclusion opportunities in some contexts such as Malaysia.
- Resettlement remains the primary tool for addressing acute protection needs, and it serves as an important responsibility-sharing mechanism in Iran and Pakistan. Earlier access to protection and durable solutions can reduce onward movement.
- Recent positive developments, particularly in Australia, Japan, and South Korea, alongside growing regional solidarity, present opportunities to expand complementary pathways and existing programs.

- **Regional Update: East and Southern Africa (ESA)**

- The region hosts approximately 23.8 million forcibly displaced people.
- Resettlement is often the only viable protection pathway for many refugees.
- Ethiopia has the largest projected resettlement needs but also faces internal conflict that contributes to secondary displacement.
- Uganda maintains the world's most progressive refugee policies but faces significant capacity pressures.
- Kenya hosts the third-largest refugee population in the region.
- Drivers of displacement are contextual and include conflict in Sudan, South Sudan, and eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- Restrictions on livelihoods, access to services, and travel documents in host countries continue to push refugees toward dangerous migration routes while limiting their ability to access existing pathways.
- Resettlement should be viewed as one component of a broader solutions framework but remains a critical responsibility-sharing mechanism.

- **Regional Update: Türkiye and Europe**

- Approximately 600,000 Syrians have returned following recent political developments in Syria.
- Türkiye currently hosts more than 2.27 million refugees, though numbers have declined due to voluntary returns.
- Irregular movement towards Europe continues, including among individuals already registered as refugees or asylum seekers in Türkiye.
- Limited access to basic services and necessities, combined with heightened protection risks for women, girls, children, LGBTQI+ individuals, and religious minorities, continues to drive humanitarian needs.
- The gap between resettlement needs and available places continues to grow.
- Complementary pathways are playing an increasingly important role in Türkiye's refugee response, although arrivals through these pathways remain modest relative to overall needs.

- **Regional Update: Middle East and North Africa (MENA)**

- High-risk groups, including minorities and LGBTQI+ individuals, continue to require resettlement and protection.
- Lebanon remains the world's largest refugee-hosting country per capita and has also experienced large-scale internal displacement affecting approximately one million people, including refugees.
- Iraqis and Yemeni refugees often face more limited access to protection pathways than Syrians.
- Syria's changing political and security environment has prompted significant returns, but protection risks have shifted for certain minority groups, and many returns remain premature and dependent on evolving security and economic conditions.
- Overall projected resettlement needs have declined by roughly 25%, largely driven by a 60% decrease in projected Syrian needs.
- In contrast, projected needs among Sudanese refugees have increased by more than 25%, particularly in Egypt and Libya.
- The Sudanese conflict has driven large-scale cross-border displacement, with approximately 1.5 million Sudanese seeking refuge in Egypt.
- Governments across North Africa continue to emphasize the importance of resettlement.

- **Regional Update: West and Central Africa**

- The region hosts approximately 20 million displaced and stateless persons, including 3.9 million refugees and asylum seekers, of whom approximately 64% are children.
- Chad hosts approximately 40% of the region's refugee population.
- Systematic recognition of refugee status has declined in several contexts.
- Gender-based violence remains one of the most reported protection risks, while LGBTQI+ refugees face increasing protection concerns.
- Global resettlement quotas for the region have decreased by 74% since 2024.
- Countries of first asylum continue to pursue refugee inclusion efforts, but dangerous onward migration remains common.
- Complementary pathways remain limited but show potential for expansion, particularly through emerging higher education opportunities for francophone refugees.