



## **Complementary pathways: speaking points**

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### **OECD-Cedefop experts forum**

#### **Upskilling, reskilling and employing adult refugees**

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- New York Declaration: 19 September, international community commitment to increase individual and collective capacity to share responsibility for contributing to the achievement of protection and comprehensive solutions.
- The prospect of reaching a durable solution through voluntary repatriation, local integration into the first country of asylum and resettlement are increasingly distant for increasing numbers of refugees.
- Solutions can be said to have been found when refugees enjoy their rights, including access to national services and systems, on a durable, legal basis, equivalent to that of nationals, without discrimination.
- Complementary pathways serve to increase the range of regulated means by which refugees may reach sustainable solutions to their international protection needs.
- Complementary pathways may offer:
  - permanent solutions immediately, such as through family reunion, or they may be found through
  - Comprise a series or suite of residency permits or visas that can be made available to refugees – with the removal of administrative and other barriers - so they can progressively reach a solution that is durable.
- A defining feature of complementary pathways is that refugees use them autonomously
- The viability of complementary pathways is dependent on States having mechanisms in place to:
  - assure international protection particularly from refoulement;
  - support refugees in their search for safe pathways and avoiding the risks associated with irregular movements protection, such as exploitation and trafficking.
- Complementary pathways may be found through the use of study and traineeship programmes, temporary labour mobility opportunities, skilled migration and family reunion

- Examples of initiatives being developed include the Japanese Government providing 100 scholarships for Syrian master's students over five years; [NGO]Talent Beyond Boundaries developing a talent register of refugees in Lebanon and Jordan, with a view to linking them to employers in third countries
- Complementary pathways may be found within individual (third) countries or through regional means eg one country provides or funds training, so that refugees may take up employment elsewhere in the region: EU mobility provisions might allow for this
- UNHCR is developing a range of tools for States, civil society actors, UNHCR staff and refugees themselves to inform the identification, development and expansion of complementary pathways to protection and solutions
- UNHCR will contribute to the development of specific initiatives – driven by States and civil society actors – that in turn will be monitored and evaluated for the purpose of replicating them elsewhere
- UNHCR will liaise with and support States and other partners about lifting barriers to opportunities that could offer complementary pathways to protection and solutions. Barriers include:
  - Costs of obtaining visa applications, skills/qualifications recognition, airfares,
  - Reliable information about options, available from trustworthy sources and linked to practical advice about how to negotiate often complicated application processes
  - Difficulty obtaining Convention or other travel documents – to facilitate regulated movement, will require creativity and commitment to international collaboration, as envisaged by the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.
- Complementary pathways are one part of a broader range of regulated means by which refugees may progressively reach comprehensive, durable solutions to their protection needs. It is a concrete manifestation of the more inclusive approach to refugee protection that is evident in the 2016 [New York] Declaration, and in numerous other fora.

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