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1st Anniversary of Historic Refugee Summits Must Ensure Action on Commitments

The Global Campaign for Education – US (GCE-US), a broad-based coalition of over 80 members dedicated to ensuring universal quality education for all children, calls for greater funding, transparency and accountability regarding commitments made to expand access to refugee education.

According to a new report by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, 3.5 million refugee children are currently out of school and refugee children are five times more likely to be out of school than their non-refugee peers. Education gives refugee children a place of safety amid the tumult of displacement and is an investment in the future.

In September 2016, the UN Summit for Refugees & Migrants and Leaders’ Summit on Refugees helped place a spotlight on the global displacement crisis. The latter featured a goal of providing access to education for one million additional refugees and 17 refugee-hosting countries pledged to help reach this goal in a variety of ways.

While we have seen greater attention and awareness on the importance of investing in education for the globally displaced, we must not lose this opportunity to hold governments and donors accountable to commitments that were made at least year’s historic refugee summits. We must ensure that these commitments are tracked and that students see the benefits of commitments that were made on their behalf.

During this week’s opening of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly, and related meetings and events, we encourage donors and decision makers to prioritize follow-up from last year’s Leaders’ Summit, including:

- Identify a lead government or entity to coordinate formal follow-up from the Summit.
- Ensure sufficient monitoring and evaluation of commitments made at the Summit.
- Provide mid-year and annual reports on commitments made at the Summit.
- Host follow-up ministerial meetings to track ongoing commitments and generate new support are held, as appropriate.
- Ensure that civil society is consulted and fully engaged, as our constituencies can be leveraged to assist in this effort.

Efforts to mobilize the support of refugee-hosting governments and the donor community are critical in finding solutions to these unprecedented challenges. We look forward to working with our partners to ensure that progress made is sustained and that this important momentum is carried forward.

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