

GP2.0 Event
Advancing Durable Solutions in light of the
Report of UN SG's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement

Wednesday, 3 November 2021

09:00 – 10:30 EST | 14:00 – 15:30 CET

SUMMARY

The High-Level Panel's final [report](#), entitled "Shining a Light on Internal Displacement: A Vision for the Future," calls for stepped-up action on solutions for IDPs. Building on this vision, the report includes recommendations aimed at preventing and reducing displacement, ensuring better assistance and protection for IDPs and providing lasting solutions to internal displacement. The report provides an opportunity to mobilize collective action and political will towards solutions for the internally displaced and to give visibility to their plight.

This virtual event was organized by GP2.0 co-chairs (IOM, OCHA, UNDP, UNHCR) in partnership with the High-Level Panel's Secretariat. It was co-hosted by the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN in New York. More than 230 participants dialed in from different constituencies (Member States, UN entities, NGOs, civil society, IDP representatives and academia). The event gathered reactions to the Panel report and provided a space to initiate discussions on what needs to be done – in the short-medium- and long-term – to ensure effective follow-up to the report's recommendations.

KEY MESSAGES

It is of vital importance to step up global attention and action given the ever-growing numbers of persons living in internal displacement. As highlighted by the High-Level Panel, the world faces a crisis related to internal displacement, whether resulting from conflict and violence or the impact of climate change and disasters – or a combination of these causes which often overlap and intersect.

National ownership and responsibility are crucial. As part of their sovereign duty, affected States bear the primary responsibility to assist and protect their displaced citizens and residents and support them to achieve an end to their displacement. Government leadership is crucial for resolving displacement sustainably and at scale, but this generally requires international support (technical capacity, programming, financing). Affected Governments can show political will and take immediate action to implement the Panel's recommendations.

A paradigm shift is a fundamental necessity when addressing the challenges faced by IDPs and host communities. Internal displacement is not just a humanitarian problem. Addressing internal displacement is linked to broader challenges of governance, development, human rights and peace. It is closely tied to the interconnected realities of climate change, urbanization and fragility. In this context, development, peace and disaster risk reduction actors must be engaged earlier, systematically and comprehensively, and much better use must also be made of the capacities of the private sector and civil society. These efforts must draw on strong data and evidence. All of this requires adequate financing.

IDPs and host communities of all ages, genders and diversities should be at the center of prevention, assistance, protection and solutions efforts. They have a crucial role to play in the implementation of the Panel report. Nobody is better placed to speak about internal displacement than IDPs and host communities themselves. IDPs need to be taken seriously as citizens and residents, as people with individual agency and rights who should play an essential role in shaping their future.

The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement remain the internationally recognized global framework on which action on internal displacement must be based. Efforts to advance durable solutions for IDPs must be based on the Guiding Principles and on the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs.

A roadmap providing a clear vision and concrete targets should be developed, building on the High-Level Panel's recommendations. This roadmap could include a dedicated follow up mechanism at global level and make use of existing frameworks like the GP2.0 and the Group of Friends of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement.

INTRODUCTION & PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT

OPENING REMARKS - Ambassador Pascale Baeriswyl, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the UN in New York

Given the ever-growing numbers of persons living in internal displacement, global attention and action are crucial. An initiative such as GP2.0 with its bottom-up approach and its systematic multi-stakeholder involvement is essential. Switzerland has supported the establishment of the High-level Panel and welcomes the report. It urges all member states, the UN system, and other relevant stakeholders to make use of the momentum and ensure a swift implementation of the recommendations.

Switzerland welcomes particularly the paradigm shift of looking at the global IDP crisis from a humanitarian, development, and peace perspective. Solely a whole-of-UN response cannot adequately address this crisis. To achieve this objective, it is of the utmost importance to ensure that cross pillar collaboration is effectively facilitated, implemented, and monitored. Engagement of states and other stakeholders can foster the exchange of good practices at the regional and global level. Only a multi-stakeholder approach can ensure the implementation of the recommendations. For this reason, a support mechanism within the UN system, such as a dedicated Secretary to the SG or DSG, would be necessary.

Switzerland is committed to taking forward the Panel's recommendations. For many years, it has been active in supporting and promoting durable solution initiatives (in Somalia, Ethiopia and most recently, Iraq) for example, by supporting the offices of resident coordinators (a key pillar for the implementation of the nexus in specific contexts) as well as by supporting peer exchanges among Member States on best practices regarding durable solutions.

PRESENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL PANEL - Mr. George Okoth-Obbo

The Panel recognizes that today the world faces a global internal displacement crisis, whether resulting from conflict and violence or climate change and natural disaster. According to a projection by the World Bank, in less than 30 years, the world could be facing up to 216 million internal migrants due to climate change. All this has influenced the Panel's conclusions and recommendations. Notwithstanding the effects of COVID-19, the Panel had a range of consultations through several partners in order to receive input and feedback from IDPs and host communities. As a result of these and many other consultations with a range of stakeholders, a significant amount of information has become available; more than 100 submissions received by the Panel are still available on the website and accessible to the public.

The Panel affirms the humanitarian dimension of the internal displacement crisis and recognizes that humanitarian response itself can set the stage for solutions. However, there is a need to see internal displacement as more than just a humanitarian problem. IDPs are citizens and the Panel has called for full rights and citizenship to be respected. The Panel has also highlighted the urban dimension of internal displacement. Internal displacement and solutions should be deemed as a development imperative and set at the center of development priorities of each of the countries impacted by it and globally – this is the nexus. Key instruments to support all the different shifts are financing and data in addition to national ownership and responsibility as well as international solidarity and accountability.

In terms of ongoing activities, the UNSG is preparing and calling a meeting of the leadership of the UN to come up with a plan of action on how the UN will respond to the Panel's recommendations and set up a standing mechanism. Furthermore, the work of the High-Level Panel was strongly facilitated by States through the mechanism "Group of Friends". The Panel has recommended that this should move forward, albeit with a different iteration. The recommendation of a Special Representative of the Secretary General on internal displacement is also strongly encouraged by the Panel.

In response to a question from the floor on why the panel did not specifically recommend reparation, restitution and compensation as the only solution or the ultimate goal for resolving the IDP crisis, Mr. Okoth-Obbo reminded participants of the role provided expressly for restitution and reparation in durable solutions for IDPs. Broadly speaking, the issue of transitional justice was an important part of the work of the Panel, having included a member from Colombia to draw on their experiences. In its recommendation, the panel says: "*States should address displacement in peace processes, include IDPs of all ages, genders and diversities in associated dialogues and should promote compensation, restitution, transitional justice and social cohesion initiatives as part of the recovery process.*"

Furthermore, Mr. Okoth-Obbo stressed that assistance should be even more effective. A systematic and predictable approach is when all this is embedded and mainstreamed as part of the national approach. It will shift only if there is predictability. Finally, regarding the question on how to strengthen the responsible use of data and the process to generate nationally owned evidence, Mr. Okoth-Obbo stressed that the Panel was very much focused on its ultimate importance for proper understanding of the reality, dimensions and details of internal displacement and use of that data in decision-making and accountability. Of course, in contexts where there is even no recognition of the issue or availability of data to begin with, the Panel also highlights the importance of standing up national systems for collection and disaggregation of the data. Finally, there are several recommendations on how to move forward, so this is also a question that is critical in the context of follow-up.

COMMENTS ON THE REPORT & ON THE WAY FORWARD

Mr. Anare Leweniqila, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Fiji to the UN and other international organizations in Geneva

Among several opportunities emerging from the report, there is the call for a paradigm shift in transitioning from the humanitarian to development dimension, which is fundamental in addressing the challenges faced by IDPs. The humanitarian approach tends to be reactive to situations, whereas the development approach is proactive focusing on solutions. For instance, in the humanitarian language, community relocation is seen as a measure of last resort; whereas in the context of climate change, this must be part of development planning to make sure that IDPs are protected.

The High-level Panel report talks about political will. States need to take action to help those in need. Notwithstanding the support from the UN, if the state does not take any action, most of the Panel's recommendations cannot move forward. Consequently, in order to assess the issues and identify

durable solutions for IDPs, it is crucial to work along with States and at the regional level. Additionally, it is important to understand whether the existing UN mandates and modalities are adequate in providing a voice for IDPs. It would be possible to set up a mechanism at the international level to ensure to keep raising priorities for IDPs, also at the United Nations level.

In response to one of the questions from the floor on how to strengthen the responsible use of data and the process to generate nationally owned evidence, Mr. Leweniqila explained that while data collection is currently done primarily by humanitarians, it would be important to build, in collaboration with the UN, national data systems.

Prof. Walter Kaelin, Professor emeritus for international and constitutional law, University of Bern/Switzerland, former Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (2004 to 2010)

Many of the Panel's recommendations had been already raised in different contexts and thus are not new. However, the Panel was able to come up with a comprehensive approach to solutions and to put these different recommendations together to bring a real change. In doing so, the Panel went back to the basics taking the Guiding Principles seriously and stressing the primary responsibility of governments – which are frontline responders – in terms of action, planning and budget. For this to happen, the international community should support governments through predictable technical and financial support.

IDPs must be seriously considered as citizens and as people with agency and rights. It is thus necessary to move beyond consultations and intention surveys to community-based planning, providing the means to achieve solutions for both IDPs and host communities. This requires a fundamental shift to a primarily development-oriented approach to solutions. For example, the private sector must be seen as a stakeholder and not just as a potential donor.

In the follow-up of the Panel's recommendations, there are three main concerns: i) to date, the discussion remains in the hands of humanitarians (UN, donors, NGOs). On the contrary, there is the need to reach out to development actors making them the main drivers in the process of change. ii) The follow-up is inward looking (mainly UN reform). Many recommendations concern the world outside the UN (the affected countries, the affected communities, the private sector, civil society, the donors, the international financial institutions). iii) necessary to understand who will drive that process. There is the need for visibility, authority, someone who can reach out and build bridges. Therefore, it would be good to have a SRSG.

In response to a question from the floor on whether the panel recommends abolishing IDP registration and documentation as a prerequisite to access services and rights, Prof. Kaelin reminded participants that the panel did not look at this complex issue as such. From his own perspective, he finds necessary to distinguish between registration in the sense of who as a displaced person would have access to specific assistance on the one and granting a legal status on the other hand. The problems are linked to the legal status. Had the panel looked at registration to grant a legal status, it would most likely not have recommended it as being an IDP is being in a specific factual situation creating specific needs. A legal status reinforces the risk that IDPs are marginalized rather than being seen as citizens with rights and agency. Finally, prof. Kaelin reminded participants that the private sector is important in the report. As a donor, but even more so as a partner, e.g., to implement housing solutions at scale.

Ms. Jade Elena Garza Ndiaye, Senior Operations Officer for Forced Displacement in the Fragility, Conflict and Violence Group, The World Bank

The World Bank (WB) is a development institution and as such, the paradigm shift recommendation resonates with how the WB has been supporting IDPs. The World Bank also agrees with many of the recommendations of the Panel on government ownership, strengthening data and analytics and addressing the drivers of displacement while reducing displacement risk. In the WB context, IDP interventions are rooted in: i) broader development efforts to reduce poverty and boost prosperity through government approaches that promotes national ownership and also sustainability; ii) the development approach is part of a broader effort that does not only include IDPs but also encompasses the needs of the conflict affected populations in general, including host communities, with a view to mitigate the risk of future conflict; iii) the timeline of the development approach is focused on the medium-term socio-economic dimension of the crisis.

How does the World Bank take some of the Panel's recommendations forward? Working with IDPs in WB is not new: over 25 years, there have been over 85 projects with IDPs as beneficiaries. Three areas that need to be improved: i) producing more data and evidence that can help better understand the issues and inform project designs. Centrality of the Joint World Bank/UNHCR data center which includes, as part of its mandate, building capacity on IDP data collection analysis and management; ii) understanding the broader context of the country of focus. IDP interventions in one country may look very different in the way they look in another country, depending on each context; iii) in order to improve mainstreaming of IDPs in project designs, there is the need to automatically consider them as part of an overall assessment of potential project beneficiaries in a more systematic and regular way.

In response to a question from the floor related to funding, Ms. Ndiaye said that the Bank's financing Window for Host Communities and Refugees does not include dedicated financing for IDPs because IDPs are citizens of the countries in which they reside, and therefore, are covered through the financing modalities already made available at the country-level. The World Bank does have an envelope for countries facing risks of fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV), which significantly increases the allocations for low-income countries most affected by violent conflict—and some of the largest producers (and hosts) of internally displaced people. She stressed that private sector could play an important role in responding to forced displacement situations by serving as a key source of growth, jobs, and resilience.

On the question raised from the floor on how to strengthen the responsible use of data and the process to generate nationally owned evidence, Ms. Ndiaye referred to the WB-UNHCR Joint Data Center, of which one of the objectives is to not have parallel systems to collect data. Just producing data is not enough, it needs to be analyzed and influence the country-level work and priorities. On a question raised from the floor related to engaging with local governments, Ms. Ndiaye reminded participants that the World Bank provides funding to municipalities. There are projects with various approaches. Often, local administrations bear the brunt of people displacement. The WB's response is enabling those local administrations to respond effectively.

Ms. Jane Backhurst, Chair of Board, International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)

To show that the Panel's report continues to be about, for and with IDPs, participation of IDPs throughout the implementation phase needs to remain central. A collective and coherent approach to solutions, protection and prevention across States, NGOs and UN agencies is required. Better communication and coherence in how international actors engage, develop programming, and build solutions is also essential. In addition, there is the need to change funding modalities. Follow-up across development, humanitarian and peacebuilding programmes is crucial. From the perspective of UN agencies, States and the UNGA, it is of paramount importance to have concrete and clear roadmaps with milestones along the way and an end goal for the next two years; necessary to organize a high-level event as soon as possible.

It was also highlighted that there is the need for an SRSG or a high-level position in the UN system. However, if this will not be possible, it will be important to understand how to take forward the aims of this position, perhaps looking at a high-level meeting of States. UN agencies, States, and NGOs are critical in giving feedback to community representatives and especially IDPs who provided input and attended country meetings in the development of this report to make the recommendations real. In taking forward the Panel's recommendations, it is important to support impacted States in accountability towards each other and IDPs.

In response to a question raised from the floor related to the role of reparation, restitutions, and compensation, Ms. Backhurst stressed that as we move forward with the recommendations, we shouldn't lose sight of the Guiding Principles. Section 5, articles 28-29 of the Guiding Principles refer to the need for authorities to provide compensation and/or reparations as appropriate. It is important that this is taken forward, both from perspective of national laws, but also implementation at local authority level.

Mr. Abdifatah Kassim Muhumed, IDP representative in Somalia, Member of the Community Action Group formed by Jubaland State Ministry of Interior and IOM's MIDNIMO 1 project

Nobody is better placed to speak about IDPs issues than IDPs themselves. There is the need to emphasize that IDPs are citizens and have rights. The main challenges IDPs face in their everyday life are marginalization, discrimination, and lack of humanitarian assistance. It is crucial to find long-term solutions for IDPs.

In relation to community-based planning mentioned earlier, he reminded participants that community-based planning should be government-led and community-driven, should have inclusive approaches towards IDPs, refugees and host communities. He also stressed the importance of giving feedback to different sectors of the community and ensure a consistent feedback mechanism that will ensure continued support.

INTERVENTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

H.E. Kaha Imnadze, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations in New York

Georgia is one of the most affected countries in terms of displacement: 400,000 IDPs and refugees. The situation in the occupied territories remains grave: refugees and IDPs have limited access to basic healthcare services. As such, Georgia attaches particular importance to the work of the High-Level Panel, to the report and the recommendations. The realization of the right of voluntary return to one's home in safety and dignity is key solution for internal displacement. For this to happen, there is the need for more resolute actions by the international community to address not only durable solutions for IDPs but also to address the conflict settlement as it is the core of the issue.

Unni Rambøll, Norway

Internal displacement is more than a humanitarian issue. It is time for a fundamental shift. Looking at the recommendations, not many are of humanitarian nature. Important that the leadership will not have a humanitarian flag to get a good follow-up. Norway is currently working on the nexus, but there is some way to go. The recommendation on data is going to be important. It is important to understand who will drive the process in this regards. Impacted states would be best suited. Most work will be done at the country level. Norway has embassies in all the most impacted states and as a result, Norway can play an important role in the implementation phase.

Muhammed Dakane (UNRCO Somalia)

Introducing municipalities as entry point for durable solution programming would be highly welcomed. The only one grey area the Panel needs to be clear on is the engagement with the private sector. Important possibilities come from the private sector, e.g. housing, land, and property issues in Somalia.

Olivier Beer (UNHCR Cameroon)

IDPs are citizens – that is a fact – and as such, there is the need to include them in national development plans. There are however two main challenges. First, IDPs often lack identity documents and are therefore invisible. Some do not even have a nationality, thereby exacerbating the risk of statelessness. It is thus fundamental to advocate for IDPs to have ID cards as the first step towards solutions. Second, there is a huge amount of data available, collected through tools and surveys by humanitarian actors. However, these data are mostly used for emergency purposes and not for solutions other than not being collected by governments. This leads mostly to humanitarian assistance. For this reason, it is crucial to support a more comprehensive collection of data.

Natalia Baal (Head of EGRIS Secretariat)

EGRIS welcomes the explicit mention on linking the work of the Expert Group to affected countries but also to international partners to make use of the Panel’s recommendations on IDP data. A potential role of EGRIS is to be a suitable place to explore enhanced coordination for capacity building activities on data. It also welcomes the Panel’s recommendations on mid- to long-term financial and political support. EGRIS draws attention to ongoing activities, e.g. common approach to developing solutions for IDPs, trying to bring a more harmonized approach across countries.

Ganna Dudinska (Advocacy Manager, NRC Ukraine)

It is critical to ensure that IDPs and host communities have a central role in shaping the response to their needs and durable solutions to end displacement. The experience of the Luhansk region (eastern Ukraine) and Luhansk IDP Council as one example of a consultative body that systematically engages IDPs and local communities in the development of laws and policies on internal displacement, which was included in the report, could be useful and replicable in other contexts. Merging localized data collection with IDP representation provides tangible agendas for local authorities and improves the quality of domestic durable solutions’ response.

Sally James (FAO)

FAO welcomes the report and fully supports its recommendations. We acknowledge the strong focus on the increased urbanized nature of internal displacement; however, the report does not substantially acknowledge the important rural dimension of internal displacement. Nor has it placed emphasis on the need for solutions approaches to adopt a comprehensive rural-urban lens, particularly in relation to the key role of the agricultural sector as an engine of recovery in development and peace responses, and in relation to intersecting food crisis and internal displacement prevention efforts. Any comprehensive approach must not forget rural areas given the drivers and impacts of internal displacement on rural populations and rural areas remain significant.

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