

**High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges 2018:  
“Protection and solutions in urban settings: engaging with cities”**

18 & 19 December 2018

**Roundtable on Internal Displacement**

**Summary**

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This roundtable explored the challenges displaced persons (IDPs) face in urban settings and examined some of the successful practices that governments at national and municipal level, as well as other stakeholders have implemented to address displacement issues in urban areas.

The following issues in particular were highlighted:

**1. Understanding the root causes of forced displacement and collecting data are essential to achieving durable solutions**

In addition to violent conflicts, participants highlighted other factors that contribute to displacement, including development projects, sexual and gender-based violence, corruption, high rates of impunity, climate change and disasters and limited access to basic services. In view of this, a comprehensive understanding and analysis of displacement situations are key to developing and realizing durable solutions for displaced populations.

For example, organized crime and high rates of gender-based violence against women, coupled with persistent impunity for perpetrators, are important factors that contribute to displacement in Honduras. Having recognized the importance of an evidence-based analysis of the root causes and trends of displacement to inform solutions, the Honduran government, with support from UNHCR and the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS), undertook a profiling exercise in 20 municipalities from 2014 to 2015. The data collected from this exercise has significantly contributed to the development of a national legal framework to address internal displacement in the country and also helped inform durable solutions at the national and local level. The Government is currently working with the municipalities that were involved in the exercise on a pilot project to provide support to displaced persons in urban areas.

Similarly, JIPS supported a multi-sectoral profiling exercise in North Darfur, Sudan with a view to collect information about the displacement situation in the country and inform planning for durable solutions at different levels of government. The exercise employed a participatory approach, engaging a wide array of stakeholders, including different levels of government, affected populations and the international community. Ensuring the involvement of the affected communities – both displaced and host communities – and the government from early on in the process, was identified as key to promoting local ownership of the exercise.

In tandem with the final stages of this exercise, the North Darfur government launched a stabilisation plan in November 2018 to facilitate local integration of displaced people living in camps around the City of El Fasher. The government renamed displacement camps around the city in a move to transform them into city districts. Additionally, the government is leading the process of providing land for former camp residents who wish to settle in the area. The hope is that the findings of the profiling exercise, which will be shared with the communities involved, as well as the line ministries and the Governor of Darfur, will help better inform the government’s ongoing plans and measures towards durable solutions.

**2. Internally displaced people face serious challenges in urban settings and municipal authorities play a key role in ensuring that their needs are addressed and their rights are upheld**

Displaced persons are increasingly moving to urban areas, where they often face challenges in accessing adequate housing, education, livelihood opportunities and social services. Additionally, displaced women and girls are at a heightened risk of sexual and gender-based violence in urban areas. As Mayors



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and municipal authorities are responsible for providing protection and services to all residents, they play an instrumental role in mitigating such challenges. In Mogadishu, forced evictions disproportionately affect IDPs and constitute an important obstacle to achieving durable solutions. With thousands of displaced persons forcibly evicted every month and thousands more at risk, the Municipality of Mogadishu has taken a series of measures to prevent and respond to forced evictions. These measures include providing relocation support to forcibly evicted persons, producing eviction guidelines, setting up a team to monitor forced evictions and developing an inclusive city extension plan that incorporates displacement issues.

### **3. In the midst of addressing the needs of displaced populations lies opportunities that could improve social, cultural, technological and economic benefits for all city residents**

While the influx of displaced persons can put considerable pressure on a city's resources, services and infrastructure, participants highlighted examples of cities where the situation has been used as an opportunity to reinvigorate the city and enhance services and safety for all of its inhabitants. It is important to recognize that displaced persons very often bring with them skills and productive assets that, if given the opportunity, they could put to use in their new city. When the city of Mariupol received over 100,000 displaced persons in 2014, which constitutes about a fifth of the city's pre-conflict population, the Mayor and other municipal authorities embraced this drastic change as an opportunity. The Municipality developed a plan to address the displacement situation with input from displaced persons, focusing on local integration, housing and livelihood opportunities as priority areas. As a result, many projects were created and have been or are still being implemented as part of this plan. For example, the city established the first social hostel for displaced persons in Ukraine, launched a pilot project for social housing, and created a centre that offers an array of support services to displaced persons including, housing, livelihood assistance, legal aid, and childcare support. The city has created enabling conditions for local integration of displaced persons. Many have already obtained employment and 63 families have received apartments as part of the pilot project, allowing them to resettle in the city.