

**UNHCR ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH NGOs
27 – 29 JUNE 2018**

International Conference Center Geneva

DISCUSSION PAPER

Session title: *Operational review and IDP policy update*

Date: Friday 29 June

Time/Room: 12h30 – 14h00 – Room 3

Background:

UNHCR has worked in situations of internal displacement for more than 45 years, ever since the Office extended protection and assistance to refugees returning to southern Sudan and “persons displaced within the country”. During nearly five decades, UNHCR has responded to the needs of millions of internally displaced persons worldwide and is currently engaged with 33 countries coping with internal displacement.

Within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee framework, UNHCR leads the global protection cluster. It also co-leads the global shelter cluster with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the global camp coordination camp management cluster with the International Organization for Migration (IOM). UNHCR’s country-level leadership mirrors that of the global level. UNHCR leads 25 out of the 35 national protection clusters, as well as 12 out of the 26 national shelter clusters, and 10 out of the 16 national camp coordination and camp management clusters. Most national clusters are co-led with partners.

UNHCR complements its cluster leadership with operational delivery that contributes to the results agreed upon with partners. UNHCR’s overall response is diverse, ranging from delivering assistance and meeting basic needs, such as shelter, to preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence, providing legal aid and documentation, ensuring child protection, and working to preserve housing, land and property rights. UNHCR is also active in the other global clusters, including health, nutrition, food security, WASH, emergency telecommunications, and logistics.

Addressing the annual plenary session of the Executive Committee in October 2016, the High Commissioner committed UNHCR to working more systematically across the entire

spectrum of displacement, including through more decisive and predictable engagement with internally displaced persons. This commitment is now anchored in UNHCR's strategic directions (2017—2021).

The High Commissioner launched an internal review aimed at identifying the systemic and organization-wide transformations required to make its response to internal displacement more effective. The review's final report provides a "roadmap" for actions needed to strengthen the Office's response in situations of internal displacement, from preparedness through to solutions. These are grouped under three themes that guide UNHCR's work on internal displacement: ensuring the centrality of protection; working across the full spectrum of displacement; and strengthening automaticity in UNHCR's engagement.

The review's wide-ranging recommendations also touch on the key enablers of UNHCR's work: programming and budgeting; data and information management; workforce management; resource mobilization; and inter-agency engagement. Although the review focuses mainly on organizational and internal questions, the fundamental objective is to make UNHCR a better support to governments and a stronger inter-agency partner.

To achieve greater alignment with its strategic directions and establish a stronger foundation to institutionalize the outcomes of the review, UNHCR is now updating its policy on engagement in situations of internal displacement. The current policy framework dates back more than a decade to the years following the United Nations Humanitarian Reform. Although complemented by more recent guidance, the existing policy does not reflect important changes in the humanitarian landscape and partnership environment or account for the significant investments that UNHCR has made in global cluster leadership, coordination, information management and operational delivery.

UNHCR's updated policy will set a clear direction for UNHCR's role within the inter-agency system in preparing for and responding to internal displacement, as well as acting as a catalyst in the pursuit of durable solutions for internally displaced people. Through the policy, UNHCR will set out the principles, modalities and accountabilities for engagement in internal displacement, with a particular focus on:

- Preparing and engaging early in new or evolving internal displacement situations;
- Stepping forward as the "first port of call" in emergency response;
- Ensuring the centrality of protection and achieving protection outcomes through assistance;
- Clarifying and meeting interagency coordination and leadership commitments;
- Ensuring effective data and information management within the interagency response;
- Facilitating integrated programming and area and community-based approaches; and
- Catalysing solutions with national actors and humanitarian and development partners.

The policy will be a platform for internal change and will also provide greater clarity to governments, partners and internally displaced people regarding UNHCR's commitments and role. The updated policy should be issued by the end of 2018.

Objectives of the session:

This session will update NGO partners on UNHCR's work in implementing the recommendations of the Operational Review on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement and development of the updated UNHCR policy on internal displacement. The Special Adviser on Internal Displacement and the Chief of the IDP Section in the Division of International Protection will focus on UNHCR's role in internal displacement today and will outline the important internal transformations underway to ensure a more decisive and predictable engagement and strengthen its role in protecting, assisting and achieving solutions for internally displaced people within the interagency response.

Desired outcome of the session:

- Update partners on UNHCR's progress in taking forward the recommendations laid out in the Operational Review and development of the updated policy on internal displacement;
- Provide a forum to discuss the priorities, key enablers and impediments to making UNHCR a more predictable and decisive partner in situations of internal displacement; and
- Receive partner advice and recommendations that will inform development of the updated UNHCR policy on internal displacement.