

# UNHCR Institutional Plan on Solutions to Internal Displacement

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March 2023

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**Cover photo:** UNHCR together with UNDP implements a joint project on provision of grants to small and medium enterprises (SME), providing communities with livelihood opportunities in Guzara district, Afghanistan. Three skilled workers living in displacement started a small aluminum factory in 2021. Today, the SME has expanded and employed 25 workers from displaced communities, boosting the local market and building financial independence. © UNHCR

Internally displaced man works on handicrafts in a community center set up by UNHCR, which focuses on supporting the population in becoming financially independent. Kigonze camp in Bunia, Democratic Republic of the Congo.



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## I. INTRODUCTION

Building on the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the report of the High-Level Panel, the UN Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement has three overarching goals that the UN, States and other actors must work together to achieve:

1. Help IDPs find a durable solution to their displacement.
2. Better prevent new displacement crises from emerging.
3. Ensure those facing displacement receive effective protection and assistance.

The UN has committed to the development of Institutional Plans at organizational levels, allowing agencies to outline their operational strategies and concrete actions toward prevention, response and solutions on internal displacement.

This Institutional Plan is in furtherance to UNHCR's commitment at the Secretary General's Executive Committee in December 2021 and in close coordination with the Office of the Special Advisor on Internal Displacement. Through this Plan UNHCR endeavors to demonstrate institutional efforts towards its longstanding commitment and engagement in situations of internal displacement.

UNHCR has implemented several recent institutional changes to strengthen our engagement in situations of internal displacement. These have determined our course of actions globally since 2019.

As an overarching framework, UNHCR released its revised [Policy on Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement](#) in 2019. The Policy covers all aspects of UNHCR's IDP engagement, including in preparing for and delivering protection and solutions as a part of collective response in support of States, IDPs and affected populations. An accompanying [Guidance Package](#), with practical guidance to staff and partners on policy implementation, was also shared. The Guidance Package is currently being revised to make it even more fit for purpose with progress on our institutional actions. UNHCR's 2023 [Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response](#) anchors '**durable solutions from the start**' as one of the key principles, meaning that the pursuit of durable solutions must be embedded in all emergency preparedness and response activities from the onset. To facilitate the capacity building of managers working in IDP Operations, an E-Learning Module on Managing UNHCR's IDP Engagement was developed internally and released in mid-2021.

In terms of institutional design, UNHCR completed a [regionalization and decentralization initiative](#), to ensure that UNHCR is strengthened where it matters most – closest to the populations we serve – and that colleagues are effectively positioned to make operational decisions. The authority of Bureaux Directors and Country Office Representatives to [reallocate resources towards internal displacement](#) was simplified and expedited through revisions to the UNHCR resource allocation framework, obviating the need for most headquarters clearance. The position of **UNHCR Principal Advisor on Internal Displacement** was created in 2019, to promote coherence, catalyse and coordinate internally all aspects of an expanded UNHCR IDP Step-Up. An **IDP Boost** fund was also established under the [UNHCR Initiative on Internal Displacement](#), providing 60 million USD over three years between 2020-2022 for innovative UNHCR IDP protection, solutions and coordination programming. In a key advance, strategic oversight of IDP operational implementation and cluster engagement is **directly provided at the highest level**, jointly by the [Assistant High Commissioner for Operations and the Assistant High Commissioner for Protection](#), an elevation in approach since 2020 intended to ensure requisite level consideration of internal displacement matters within organizational processes.

On reporting, UNHCR has revised its approach following the SGs Action Agenda release to improve the external presentation of our efforts. UNHCR High Commissioner highlighted the organizational commitment towards IDP solutions in his statements to the [Third Committee of the General Assembly](#) in November 2022 and well as in his [October 2022 EXCOM Statement](#). The so-called "**Omnibus**" **Resolution** released by the General Assembly encouraged the Office of the High Commissioner to contribute to collective efforts to advance solutions, consistent with the **UNHCR mandate**. UNHCR reports quarterly on its internal displacement engagement to its member state through the [Standing Committee](#). This includes updates made in March and October from the regional perspective, and a **dedicated presentation on internal displacement** made annually around June. Seven [external updates](#) on UNHCR IDP engagement have been released, as well as an overarching report on [UNHCR Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement 2019 - 2021](#).

UNHCR has continued to draw the attention of IASC Principals noting that **protection must be central to preparedness efforts, as part of immediate and life-saving activities and throughout the duration of humanitarian response and beyond**. We have consistently reviewed and revised our Policies to ensure accountability to affected people. It is in this light that an **independent evaluation** of UNHCR IDP engagement, an initiative under the auspices of the UNHCR evaluation service, will soon be forthcoming in time for the conclusion of a five year implementation period of UNHCR's IDP Policy.

In terms of programmatic design, with the launch of a new [results-based management approach](#) in 2021, UNHCR has embarked on a transformative initiative to enhance its capacity to deliver and report on internal displacement results. At its core is the move to **multi-year planning** that facilitates long-term strategic thinking and strengthens the engagement of country operations with national and United Nations inter-agency development processes, which are normally of a multi-year nature. Strengthened engagement with partners and stakeholders is a key feature of the new approach. As part of the new RBM, UNHCR adapted its results structure **to focus on results** rather than programming based on budgetary pillars. A revision of the results framework has also been completed. Critically, financial tracking of **expenditures on internal displacement** are also an embedded feature of the revised system, launched in 2022.

Member States comprising the [Executive Committee of UNHCR](#) have **long noted** "that the many and varied underlying causes of involuntary internal displacement and of refugee movements are often similar, and that the problems of both refugees and the internally displaced often call for similar measures with respect to prevention, protection, humanitarian assistance, and solutions". As per our commitment to work across the full spectrum of forced displacement and to promote socioeconomic inclusion of refugees, IDPs and stateless

persons, UNHCR has undertaken to maximize opportunities for **integrated programming and respond through area-based approaches** that are inclusive of all relevant population groups in a given operational context. This includes situations where these populations (e.g., IDPs, refugees and asylum seekers, returning refugees and IDPs), and/or with host communities live together in a specific geographical area, usually corresponding to administrative boundaries, where there is a high level of needs requiring a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder response.

In terms of Partnerships, UNHCR contributes to a multi-stakeholder, whole-of-society approach to internal displacement through wide ranging and inclusive partnerships with local and national authorities; local civil society, community-based organizations, local women's organizations, and faith-based groups; UN entities including political and peacekeeping missions; regional and international organizations; development actors and financial institutions; the private sector; and internally displaced people and wider displacement-affected communities.

As recent examples of **cooperation with UN partners**, through a Global Memorandum of Understanding, UNHCR and [UN-Habitat](#) are exploring deeper collaboration for monitoring and improving land tenure among forcibly displaced populations. A comprehensive module on 'Access to Land and Property' has been created under the UNHCR Forced Displacement Survey.

The [UNDP-UNHCR Global Collaboration Framework](#) for Inclusion and Solutions 2023-2025 builds on collaboration with focus on key areas where UNDP has a strong comparative advantage to bring development financing, technical assistance and advocacy to situations of forced displacement. It aligns the work of our respective agencies to deliver on the humanitarian development-peace nexus, providing solutions for the displaced and stateless and support for the host communities and governments that generously host them.

In June 2022, the High Commissioner and DG IOM established the [IOM/UNHCR Framework of Engagement](#), towards strengthened collaboration in contexts of mixed movement with migrants and refugees, durable solutions for IDPs, and data. It builds on the ever increasing and valued positive experiences of collaboration between the two entities globally.

In February 2023, [UNHCR and UNICEF](#) signed a Strategic Collaboration Framework, which sets out our joint ambition to promote the inclusion of displaced children and their families in national plans, budgets, datasets and service delivery systems. Whilst the key focus of the collaboration under this Framework is on refugee and returnee children, their families and the communities that host them, both organizations have operations in contexts with mixed movements. Given this, and both organizations' commitment to the Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, the Framework may therefore also apply to internally displaced people upon mutual agreement at country level.

In furtherance of national ownership, UNHCR hosts the Secretariat of the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS). Through their International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons (IRIS) they offer critical guidance to the 52 member states participating in the process of standard and norm setting. More specifically, on how to improve the quality and availability of official statistics on IDPs.

In October 2019, the [World Bank and UNHCR inaugurated the Joint Data Center](#) on Forced Displacement (JDC) based in Copenhagen. The JDC aims to enhance the ability of stakeholders – including governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations – to make timely and evidence-informed decisions that can improve the lives of persons impacted by forced displacement, including refugees and internally displaced persons.

With a focus on socioeconomic data, the JDC works with partners to enhance the collection, analysis and sharing of quality data on forced displacement in line with international standards. Notably, the JDC also supports EGRISS, both financially and through technical expertise.

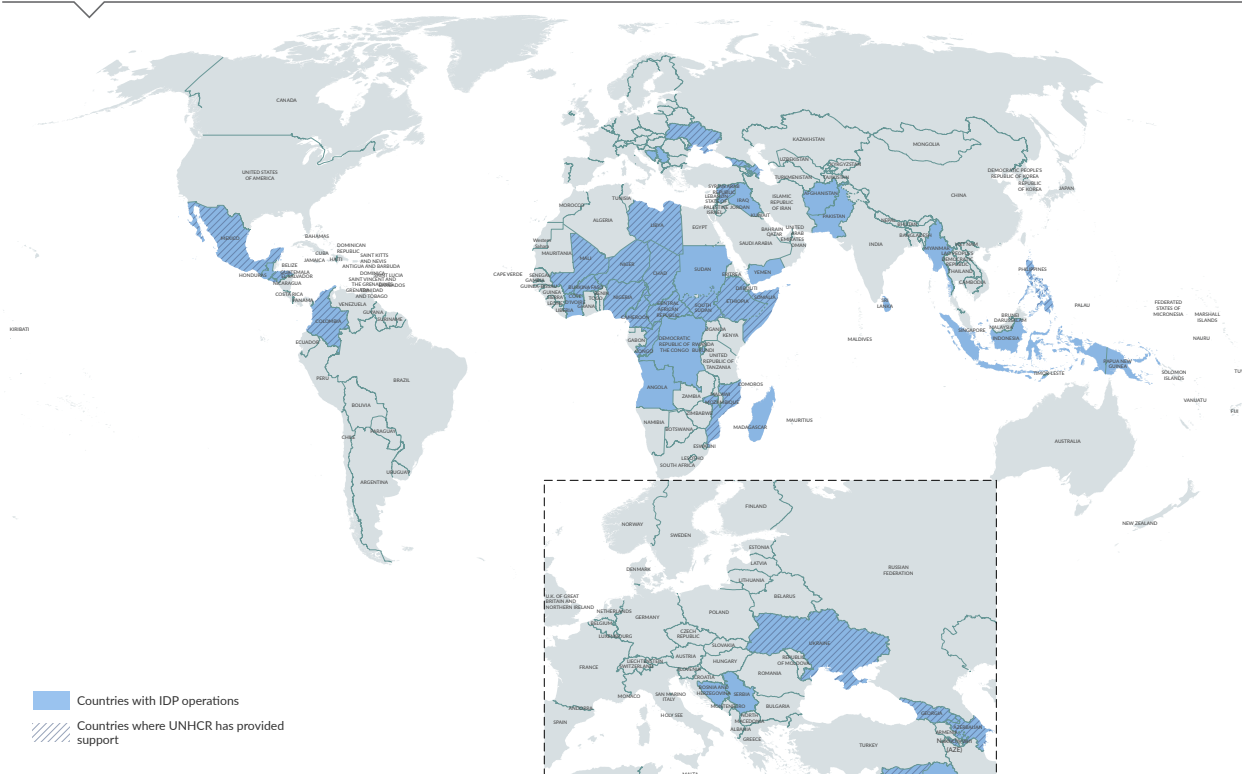
Moving forward, this document provides a further update on the revised approach by UNHCR in situations of internal displacement, offering additional updates on our engagement from a variety of functional perspectives.

## II. BACKGROUND TO THE ON-GOING UNHCR STEP-UP ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

UNHCR has worked in situations of internal displacement for more than 50 years, ever since the Office extended protection and assistance to refugees returning to southern Sudan and “persons displaced within the country”<sup>1</sup> We have expanded our operational role and commitments to coordination leadership as internal displacement has increased in scope, scale and complexity in recent years.



WORLD MAP  
UNHCR support to national IDP legal and policy frameworks  
as of 01 Aug 2022



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.  
Printing date: 01 Aug 2022 Sources: UNCS, UNHCR, UNHCR-GPC database on Law and Policy on Internal Displacement Author: UNHCR - HQ Copenhagen Feedback: mapping@unhcr.org Filename: A4L\_geoservices

Internal displacement expenditures by UNHCR for 2021 were USD 784 million, representing 16% of the overall expenditure of the organization. Not included within this figure are costs, such as for staffing (including Senior Management) and infrastructure and other costs, which are sometimes captured within refugee expenditures.

The 2022 ExCom approved Operating Plan for Pillar 4 (IDPs) was USD 1,357 million, a record figure. The Operating Plan has further increased by 53%, because of Supplementary Budgets linked to Ukraine and Afghanistan Situations, and currently stands at \$2,082M.

<sup>1</sup> See the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 1705 (LIII) of 27 July 1972. See also ECOSOC Resolution 1655 (LII) of 1 June 1972

At the 2016 Executive Committee session with Member States, the High Commissioner committed UNHCR to working more systematically across the entire spectrum of internal displacement, and to ensure a more decisive and predictable engagement in partnership with others. This orientation has been anchored in UNHCR's Strategic Directions since 2017. This call for change resulted from an assessment that UNHCR was – in some cases – too hesitant or inconsistent in responding to internal displacement. The goal was for UNHCR to develop the same “reflex” to protect, respond and catalyse solutions for internally displaced people that we have for refugees. As a result, several internal reforms have been enacted in the last six years to facilitate an IDP Step-Up.

A self-critical internal review conducted in 2017 enabled UNHCR to identify the systemic and organization-wide transformations required to make its response to internal displacement more effective. The review provided a “roadmap” for actions needed to strengthen response in situations of internal displacement, from preparedness through to solutions. These were 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 touched 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 focused mainly on organizational and internal questions, the fundamental objective was to make UNHCR a better support to governments and a stronger inter-agency partner.

## UNHCR's Stepped-up IDP Engagement



In 2019, a revised Policy on UNHCR's engagement with internally displaced persons was released. The policy commits UNHCR to leveraging fully the synergies between our engagement with refugees, internally displaced people, returnees, stateless people, and others affected by humanitarian crises, while considering our different responsibilities vis-à-vis different categories of forcibly displaced people, and relevant inter-agency arrangements. The IDP Policy also commits UNHCR to progressively adjusting internal systems and processes to enable the organization to work seamlessly and effectively across the full spectrum of forced displacement.

The Policy empowers and requires UNHCR Representatives to be proactive in preparing for and stepping into emergencies that result in significant internal displacement, as part of a humanitarian response under the UN country leadership and based on a sound protection and context analysis.

These IDP focused approaches at UNHCR also benefited from overall system changes underway in 2019 and 2020, with the decentralisation of operational functions to seven global regions, bringing our senior management and their teams closer to the country representations enabling a more comprehensive people-centred approach.

### UNHCR Regional Bureau Leadership in IDP Solutions

In January 2019, the High Commissioner announced that UNHCR would move its Regional Bureaux to the field, setting in motion the most far-reaching and consequential transformation in its nearly 70-year history. The impetus for UNHCR's internal change process was driven, in part, by new developments in a rapidly evolving international context. At the global level, there has been an appetite for new approaches which go beyond traditional humanitarian action, and a realization that forced displacement is not just a humanitarian but also a political and a development challenge.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by world leaders at the UN General Assembly in September 2015, and its commitment to 'leave no-one behind' provide a powerful basis for the inclusion of refugees, the internally displaced and stateless people in economic development planning, as well as in all other measures taken by States to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Likewise, The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), adopted in December 2018, is widely regarded as a 'game changer' that will promote a stronger, more predictable and more equitable international response to large-scale refugee movements.

The seven regional UNHCR Bureaux are integral to the implementation of IDP solutions at country and regional levels, notably also the linkages between Solutions for IDPs and Refugees fleeing similar causes. UNHCR's Seven Regional Bureaux cover the full spectrum of setting regional strategies and priorities, managing performance and compliance, identification and monitoring of emerging issues and risks, and the provision of technical support and guidance to country operations.

For implementing and operational partners, the Regional Bureaux are critical hubs for collaboration and strategic engagement, as well as for addressing any cross-cutting operational challenges that they emerge within a given region. Regional Directors have primary accountability for strategic decisionmaking, regional prioritization, and quality assurance—and enhanced delegated authorities to effectively manage their respective regions. From within UNHCR, thematic specialists have held consultations with each of the Regional Bureau on the Action Agenda and Solutions to internal displacement, with 2023 priority setting undertaken accordingly.

Plain Savo IDP site, Democratic Republic of the Congo





### III. CENTRALITY OF PROTECTION IN HUMANITARIAN, DEVELOPMENT AND SOLUTIONS ACTION

UNHCR is, at its core, a protection organization whose effectiveness is measured by its success in achieving its primary goal of ensuring that refugees, internally displaced populations and affected persons are protected and obtain full respect for their rights. Tackling the challenge of internal displacement means advocating for and reinforcing the primary responsibility of States, including non-State parties to a conflict where relevant, to assist and protect people in accordance with international humanitarian law and human rights law.

It also means that protection is not a separate activity but is in fact the principle underlying UNHCR's activities on the ground, in relation to displacement affected States, communities and in our partnerships. In complex humanitarian emergencies, UNHCR works with stakeholders to ensure that protection informs humanitarian and development decision-making and remains central to humanitarian action. This approach is equally applicable to our work on solutions for refugees as it is for IDPs. Towards this end, UNHCR will continue to:

- Support Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators and UN/Humanitarian Country Teams to develop an overarching protection and solutions strategy, based on evidence-based protection analysis. UN and humanitarian partners will be able to rely on UNHCR for expertise and advice on protection priorities and Representatives will participate actively in UN/Humanitarian Country Teams, to help ensure that protection is placed at the centre of the humanitarian response and solution efforts.
- In our cluster coordination responsibility, support and steer the development and implementation of comprehensive cluster strategies, while mobilizing internal and external resources and engage a range of stakeholders to fill response gaps.
- Promote protection mainstreaming, working with all clusters to design and deliver an interagency response that is shaped by protection considerations. Appropriate opportunities will be identified to reinforce local and national actors, including those responsible for development, to engage in and eventually lead the response to internal displacement.
- Ensure a community-based protection approach and prioritize interventions to prevent, respond and mitigate the most urgent and immediate protection risks and needs, including protection against sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual and gender-based violence and child protection.
- Apply and integrate systematically to its work with IDPs its longstanding expertise in shelter, and camp and site management, including experience gained in the refugee context in transitioning from camps into nationally/ locally led inclusive settlements.
- Support local and city authorities in responding to needs of urban internally displaced and host communities. Working also with UN and NGO partners for effective responses to the most vulnerable.
- Prioritize actions that contribute to the conditions conducive for safe, dignified and comprehensive solutions, including (where relevant) for refugees returning from countries of asylum. Special areas of focus will include community engagement, law and policy, ID and other documentation (to ensure the prevention and reduction of statelessness), shelter, secure land tenure, livelihoods, peaceful co-existence and conflict resolution.
- Galvanize and contribute to government-led efforts to address the needs of IDPs – including those who are integrating locally, returning to places of origin or settling in other parts of the country, as well as the wider displacement-affected community. Also supported will be durable shelter, housing, land and property rights, socio-economic inclusion and livelihoods, peaceful co-existence and conflict resolution.

- Leverage cash as a response modality where appropriate, as a vehicle for social protection, empowerment, livelihoods, financial inclusion, social cohesion and reintegration.
- Continue engaging and contributing to the IASC processes to advocate for protection and solutions including through the five IASC OPAG Task Forces on Centrality of Protection, Localization, Accountability of Affected Populations, and Humanitarian Development and Peace Nexus.
- Leverage available opportunities and resources to advance protection and solutions to forced displacement for all in a way that supports local protection systems. Supporting and enhancing existing protection, community and social service systems and encouraging more sustainable solutions that will not only contribute to mitigating protection risks but will also contribute to building resilience to sustain future shocks, in an inclusive way.



## IV. PATHWAYS TO SOLUTIONS

A durable solution is achieved when IDPs no longer have specific assistance and protection needs related to their displacement and can exercise their rights without discrimination based upon their displacement. Support for durable solutions to internal displacement must begin at the onset of a displacement crises. UNHCR commits that we will continue to:

- Galvanize and contribute to government-led efforts to address the needs of IDPs – including those who are integrating locally, returning to places of origin or settling in other parts of the country, as well as the wider displacement-affected community.
- Support with protection and conflict analysis to ensure a “do no harm” approach to IDP solutions.
- Initiate and participate in multi-stakeholder assessments, profiling and analysis, engaging relevant national bodies and other actors to develop a comprehensive understanding of the longer-term protection and assistance needs, vulnerabilities, socio-economic conditions, capacities and aspirations of IDPs, returning refugees and wider displacement-affected communities.



Elderly internally displaced woman receiving seed funding through UNHCR’s community resilience building programme. Local Integration site in Kachin State, Myanmar.

- Support capacity building of government actors in protection and solutions. Collaborate across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus, facilitating an integrated approach between all relevant actors in advocacy and project development.
- Support UN Resident Coordinators in promoting government-led and owned protection-oriented solutions strategies and related coordination mechanisms (at national and sub-national level). UNHCR has provided guidance to its field Representatives for their support to RCs on IDP Solutions.
- Leverage existing established relationships with government actors, inter-governmental organizations, promote and advocate for the internally displaced to be included in national systems-including social protection programmes and services- and development strategies, to avoid parallel systems, including existing coordination mechanisms
- Leverage UNHCR’s existing relationships with the OECD, IMF, World Bank, other Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), IFIs and bilateral development actors, to engage in joint efforts to secure (catalytic) financing for solutions and contribute to the broader policy discourse in the context of forced displacement.
- Support, strengthen regional and situation-specific solution platforms and mechanisms that have developed comprehensive solution frameworks and strategies, plans, and mobilized donor support especially in the context of refugee solutions and tailored to the specific context & need, support Resident Coordinators in IDP solutions coordination
- Leverage UNHCR’s broader field presence, proximity to IDPs, and experience in engaging communities and advocate for IDP voices to be at the centre of decision-making in solution planning, processes, and implementation.

## V. SOLUTIONS-ORIENTED EMERGENCY RESPONSE

UNHCR defines a “humanitarian crisis emergency” as any humanitarian emergency crisis or disaster which has caused or threatens to cause displacement, loss of life and/or suffering, affecting the rights or well-being of refugees, IDPs and others, unless immediate and appropriate action is taken; and which demands exceptional measures. The priority in any humanitarian response is to save lives and reduce suffering through meeting humanitarian needs. UNHCR commits to continue to:

- In countries prone to conflict, violence or disaster-induced displacement, UNHCR will participate in interagency emergency preparedness measures, contribute to UN system-wide, and government-led or supported prevention and early warning mechanisms, and strengthen local and national capacity to prevent and mitigate displacement risks, including promoting the search for solutions from the outset of a displacement situation through solution-oriented contingency, planning and capacity building.
- In all aspects of preparedness, UNHCR will contribute protection expertise and seek to embed protection across preparedness efforts in all sectors or clusters, including those led by UNHCR and to also analyse potential displacement patterns and use our shelter and site coordination and management expertise in scenario planning.
- UNHCR will seek to ensure that protection monitoring, and community engagement mechanisms are established, as a means of identifying, preventing and mitigating conflict and violence, and their consequences, including forced displacement. Protection monitoring also serves to identify problems in the response and obtain much needed community-feedback.
- UNHCR will also seek opportunities for partners to exchange information, mobilize resources and coordinate preparedness activities for protection, camp/site coordination and management and shelter.
- Guidance and technical advice will continue to be provided to enable States to develop and implement national laws and policies on internal displacement as well as protection-sensitive response capacity.
- As part of these efforts, each UNHCR IDP operation will ensure that a sound risk analysis, carried out together with partners, drives its own organizational preparedness and, as the context dictates, UNHCR emergency declarations, in accordance with UNHCR’s Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response.



UNHCR with its partners works on building community resilience and self-reliance through access to livelihoods. Kabul, Afghanistan.



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## UNHCR approach to “Solutions from the Start” in IDP settings

UNHCR’s 2023 Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response anchors ‘durable solutions from the start’ as one of the key principles, meaning that the pursuit of durable solutions must be embedded in all emergency preparedness and response activities from the onset. Internal displacement emergencies are often very fluid, with new displacements occurring at the same time as IDPs are deciding to return or pursue other solutions. An approach that pursues durable solutions from the onset includes:

- 1. Programmatic interventions that (a) enable durable solutions decision-making by communities, and (b) catalyse and facilitate durable solutions of IDPs already as part of an emergency response; as well as**
- 2. Leverage UNHCR’s Three-Cluster coordination and leadership roles (c) to instil the durable solutions lens across other sectors and the HCT early-on for a system-wide approach, and (d) to link up to developmental and peace actors from the onset to identify early entry points and opportunities for joint action.**

For UNHCR, durable solutions from the start means to invest in people and their own agency to reduce dependency risks.

Examples of programmatic activities to consider as part of emergency preparedness and response include the capacity for intention surveys and return area mappings, counselling activities, cash or in-kind support to enable durable solution decisions, economic empowerment, alongside community-based support also considering relations with non-displaced communities (social cohesion, peaceful co-existence).

## VI. COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY TOWARDS IDP SOLUTIONS

Communications play a strategic role in fulfilling UNHCR's mandate for refugees, IDPs and stateless people. Advocacy in turn helps to bring policies, practices, and laws into compliance with international standards.

UNHCR's communications and focused advocacy provide visibility to situations of internal displacement and highlight our engagement in coordinating, assisting and finding solutions for affected populations. Internal displacement remains a key communication priority in line with UNHCR's Strategic Directions. The focus is to engage media, government and public audiences with timely updates, data, advocacy messaging and IDP stories that show the agency of internally displaced people and promote empathy, support and peaceful co-existence. UNHCR will continue to:

- Develop and implement country-level communications strategies and messaging, guided by UNHCR's Global Communications Strategy, which reflect country-level priorities for IDPs, and displacement affected communities.
- Ensure that UNHCR's advocacy includes IDP voices and highlights their humanitarian needs, the effectiveness of the operational and cluster-based response and the impact of underfunding on affected populations.
- Input into interagency communications and advocacy messaging and strategies for the benefit of IDPs, drawing from both UNHCR's operational engagement and its cluster leadership.
- Ensure that IDP engagement is an integral part of country reports, donor reporting, sitreps, updates and other internal and external communication products.
- Ensure work with development partners to have their voices amplify UNHCR's advocacy goals for protection and inclusion.

UNHCR documenting an IDP story in  
Kyaukme IDP camp, Shan State, Myanmar.

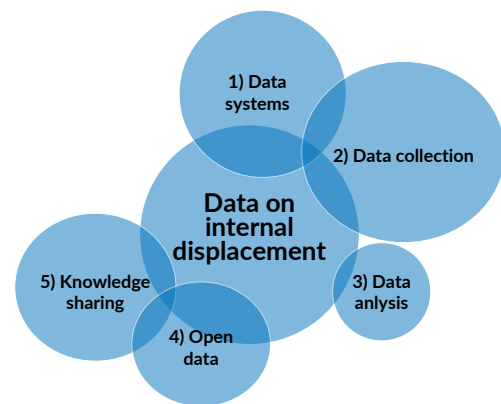


# VII. DATA AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT TO ADVANCE IDP SOLUTIONS

Finding durable solutions to displacement within countries is also critical, as UNHCR's collaboration with the World Bank demonstrated with the initiation of the Joint Data Centre in 2019, and its expansive ambit of refugee and IDP related data methodologies. As underlined in the UN Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, to enable solutions for IDPs requires further improvements to the available socio-economic data on solutions to better assess IDPs' progress in overcoming their displacement related vulnerabilities.

UNHCR notably contributes to IDP-related data collection and analysis efforts, through its collaboration with the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS) and IOM. UNHCR in furtherance of national ownership, co-leads the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS). EGRISS is developing IDP statistical standards and supports national statistical office capacity-building. The UNHCR-World Bank led JDC supports the EGRISS financially and with technical expertise.

UNHCR's efforts to improve data and information analysis on internal displacement are broad, spanning setting standards, conducting profiling and IDP enrolment, improving data quality and collaborative efforts to improve data on solutions. This approach is embedded in partnership and collaborative methodologies with states and with other critical stakeholders. UNHCR will continue to:



- Ensure that a sound protection analysis is conducted together with partners, including in preparedness and other stages of internal displacement. This requires accurate, up-to-date, comprehensive and quality data and information that can support evidence-informed advocacy, programming, monitoring, assistance and service delivery by UNHCR and the rest of the humanitarian community and contribute to solid protection and solutions outcomes.
- Invest in and maximize use of standard information products – including protection and other monitoring reports, needs analyses, technical assessments, service and presence mapping and other products – in support of our operational engagement and our cluster responsibilities. Information products will be shared in accordance with responsible data approaches, including through UNHCR and inter-agency web-based platforms and portals.
- Prioritize one or more of the following approaches to population data management, depending on the operational context and the role and capacity of other actors, keeping in mind that comprehensive individual registration by UNHCR is not desirable in situations of internal displacement:
  - I) estimation;
  - II) enrolment; and
  - III) profiling and surveys, in collaboration, as appropriate with partners.



FAO and UNHCR meet with community elders to discuss the joint implementation of a livelihoods initiative in Badakhshan Province, Afghanistan.

© Oxygen Studio

## VIII. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR IDP SOLUTIONS

For UNHCR, partnerships are a means of working together inclusively with all relevant stakeholders towards a shared goal of upholding international protection principles and driving durable solutions.

*“The importance of partnerships in internal displacement settings is a prominent feature of the 2019 UNHCR IDP Policy, which requires “country, regional and global operations to mobilize and deploy resources and capacity in support of UNHCR’s longstanding pledge to work in partnership with others”.*



In 2022, UNHCR's partnership strategy rested on four tenets, all relevant to IDP situations. The goals, as approved by UNHCR's governance board include: placing affected populations at the centre of the response; upholding protection principles; championing localization; and assisting governments to coordinate the international response to displacement and statelessness. In addition to UNHCR's operational role, in terms of coordination of the humanitarian response, UNHCR led 29 out of 32 protection clusters; 19 out of 22 camp management clusters; and 20 out of 32 shelter clusters in country operations, at the national level.

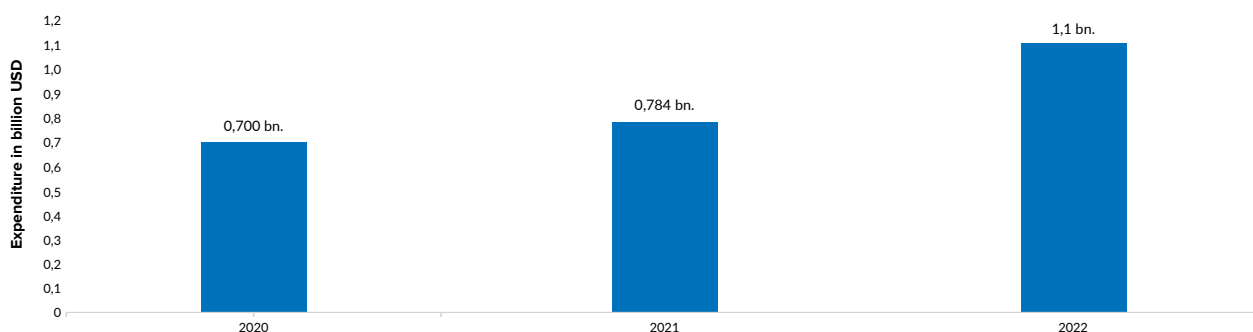
Working towards the achievement of the United Nations sustainable development goals, UNHCR has proactively contributed to the development of interagency policies, guidance and tools developed in 2022 to further IDP solutions. Internally, investment includes a new results-based management tool which requires alignment of UNHCR country strategies with the collective priorities outlined in the United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks. Over 70 UNHCR operations have prepared multi-year plans to be aligned with the sustainable development cooperation programme cycle by 2024. With a 100 per cent participation rate in the United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks, UNHCR is uniquely placed to help bridge the humanitarian/development and peace divide as the protection mandate of UNHCR transcends these pillars.

Partnerships in IDP settings are also a critical feature of UNHCR's Strategic Directions 2022-2026, which calls upon the organization to strengthen and diversify its partnerships and drive change through its interagency engagement in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the furtherance of Grand Bargain commitments. UNHCR commits to continuing to:

- Assist governments in reviewing the existing legal and national framework to ensure alignment of national policies with the international or the regional pre-existing IDP frameworks.
- Spearhead the linkages with development actors such as multilateral banks to better assess, respond to, and influence the protection policy environment for all displaced populations, including those internally displaced.
- Gradually roll out a multiyear planning process and increase multiyear partnerships in an effort to better link its humanitarian operations to development approaches.
- Support Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators and UN/Humanitarian Country Teams to develop an overarching protection and solutions strategy for the UNCT, based on evidence-based protection analysis.
- Using its protection and solutions lens to deliver protection updates to the UN and other international actors.
- Place IDPs in the centre of its operational delivery and to drive localization of the UNCTs efforts through enacting new policies and procedures that focuses on capacitating national and local actors.
- Ensure that the clusters UNHCR leads within the humanitarian sphere include attention to durable solutions from the outset of an emergency.
- Established an Advisory Board consisting of organisations led by displaced and stateless people to ensure strong two-way communication with the IDPs themselves and ensure they are meaningfully represented and can influence UNHCR's approaches to IDP situations. The Board provides advice on how to strengthen UNHCR partnerships with organizations led by forcibly displaced persons and is an integral part of their localization efforts.

# IX. REVISED PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES TOWARDS IDP SOLUTIONS

UNHCR has embarked on a transformative initiative to enhance its capacity to deliver and report on results and launched its new results-based management approach. At its core is the move to multi-year planning that facilitates long-term strategic thinking and strengthens the engagement of country operations with national and United Nations interagency development processes, which are normally of a multi-year nature. Strengthened engagement with partners and stakeholders is also a key feature of the new approach.



Under the new approach UNHCR country operations, including those involved in IDP response, now develop three to five-year multiyear strategies encompassing the full spectrum of the organization’s operational engagement, including humanitarian response, advocacy and capacity development, inclusion and transition toward solutions. Each operation determines the duration and timing of their strategies in consultation with key stakeholders, including host governments, and taking into consideration the cycles of national and system-wide planning processes, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), and the Humanitarian Response Plan.

*UNHCR has undertaken to introduce the new multi-year planning process in a phased manner over a three-year period, starting in 2022. All operations including those in IDPs context will have transitioned to multi-year cycles by 2024. This staggered approach will allow the scaling up of support and quality assurance capacities and will facilitate the alignment of operations’ programming cycles with national and system-wide planning processes.*

As part of the new results-based management approach, UNHCR adapted its results structure to focus on results rather than programming based on budgetary pillars. That structure required operations working with several population groups (refugees, IDPs, stateless persons and returnees) to “artificially” develop parallel programmes for each group, making it difficult for operations to focus on long-term results and solutions, including for host communities. This is a significant shift from the previous programming pillar structure which could not facilitate UNHCR’s protection and solutions orientation to engage adequately across humanitarian and development systems, whose programmes are usually articulated around results areas.

UNHCR has introduced a new Global Result Framework and restructured its programming around impact and outcome results areas. The impact areas translate UNHCR’s mandate in programmatic terms and capture the main changes in the lives of refugees, IDPs, stateless and returnees to which UNHCR contributes. They are: I) attaining favourable protection environments; II) realizing basic rights in safe environments; III) empowering communities and achieving gender equality; and IV) securing solutions. This approach facilitates area-based interventions and to work across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus.

Within this new approach to planning and programming and as indicated in the High Commissioner’s 2022 – 2026 Strategic Directions, UNHCR is working on developing an internal Strategic Action Plan on the focus area defined as “Grow UNHCR’s engagement on responses and solutions for internally displaced people”. This plan will define priority locations, strategies and actions for achieving measurable changes for IDPs, setting-out a roadmap and monitor achievements through key milestones. It will also identify barriers and opportunities, key actions needed, requirements and, where appropriate, target operations.

## X. WORKFORCE CAPACITY

UNHCR has prioritized the development of a versatile workforce to ensure a holistic and integrated response to all populations we serve, while also building a cadre of specialized staff to deliver protection and assistance in complex humanitarian emergencies. To this end, UNHCR has designed a blended interagency coordination learning programme for staff to develop the skills and competencies needed to coordinate emergency responses in refugee, internal displacement, and mixed situations. A more advanced training programme for cluster coordinators has also been launched to complement this learning programme. UNHCR has as well revised job descriptions to incorporate the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to work effectively in all operational contexts, including internal displacement situations. Moving forward:

- UNHCR will support its staff, and where possible the personnel of our partners, to acquire the diverse skills and competencies necessary to work across the full spectrum of forced displacement, including in situations of internal displacement.
- We will also reinforce ongoing efforts to identify, train and maintain a cadre of staff with specialized skills and competencies, including those related to coordination and information management in both cluster and non-cluster situations, for deployment as needed, especially in emergencies
- In October 2021, UNHCR released its Practical Guidance for UNHCR Staff on IDP Protection in the Context of Disasters and the Adverse Effects of Climate Change. This guidance was developed to help field staff at UNHCR operations become familiar with, prepare for and deliver protection responses in the context of internal displacement linked to disasters and the adverse effects of climate change. While similar to conflict-induced settings, the characteristics of internal displacement in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change, may in some instances require specific approaches regarding protection risks and solutions responses, and involve additional considerations for preparedness and response by UNHCR operations.

Youth in Honduras show their solidarity with displaced persons. **“DO NOT TURN YOUR BACK ON THE DISPLACED.”**



# ENDNOTES

I See UNHCR Strategic Directions 2022-2026, January 2022, available at: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/91745>

II Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement, 18 September 2019, UNHCR/HCP/2019/1, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5d83364a4.html>

III See also Unlocking Solutions for the Internally Displaced, an additional submission provided by UNHCR to the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, September 2020, available at: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/document/1036>

## Additional reading

UNHCR, report on [UNHCR Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement 2019 - 2021](#), September 2022

UNHCR, [Private Sector Engagement for Internally Displaced Persons](#), 2021

UNHCR, [A Review of Innovative Financing Mechanisms for Internally Displaced Persons](#), 2021

UNHCR, [UNHCR Initiative on Internal Displacement 2020 – 2021](#), March 2020

UNHCR, [Unlocking Solutions for the Internally Displaced](#), 2020

UNHCR, [Submission by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement](#), 2020

UNHCR, [Guidance Package for UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement](#), 2019

UNHCR, [Age, Gender and Diversity Policy](#), 2018

UNHCR, [Operational Review of UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement](#), 2017

UNHCR, [Internal Note for UNHCR Representatives: Protection Leadership in Complex Humanitarian Emergencies](#), 2016

UNHCR INSTITUTIONAL PLAN ON SOLUTIONS TO INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

2023

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