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Cross-Regional Forum on Implementing Laws and Policies on Internal Displacement

FINAL REPORT



Table of contents

Summary of Takeaways	2
Introduction	3
Opening Remarks	4
Institutional Remarks	5
Adequate Legal, Policy and Institutional Frameworks on Internal Displacement	6
Multi-Level Governance for the Response to Internal Displacement (Part 1)	9
Multi-Level Governance for the Response to Internal Displacement (Part 2)	12
The Critical Role of Nationally Owned Data on Internal Displacement	15
Engaging Internally Displaced Persons in Prevention, Protection, and Solutions	18
Preventing Arbitrary Displacement and Mitigating its Causes	20
Advancing Protection and Solutions to Internal Displacement (Part 1)	22
Advancing Protection and Solutions to Internal Displacement (Part 2)	25
Conclusion and Next Steps	28
Final Evaluation	29

Summary of takeaways

- **National ownership and localization** are central to effective protection of IDPs and durable solutions, including land allocation to IDPs, integration into urban planning and governance, establishing strong legal and policy frameworks with clear responsibilities, adequate budgets, and reliable data systems.
- **Legal and policy development on internal displacement varies:** some countries have long-standing national laws, while others rely on emerging state or subnational frameworks in the absence of national legislation. Some laws and policies centre only on disaster-induced displacement, yet have been used to address displacement caused by conflict and violence.
- **Effective governance traits** for successful responses to internal displacement include clear roles across government levels, adequate resourcing, and continuous dialogue between national, regional, and local authorities, regardless of whether systems are federal, unitary, or hybrid.
- **Empowered local authorities are critical**, as they can often respond faster and more efficiently than central authorities due to contextual knowledge, while regional levels can play an important coordination and brokerage role. Lack of national political will or legislation shifts responsibility downward, though responsibility should be shared.
- **Political will, institutional stability and partnerships** are essential for protection and durable solutions; weak national commitment, frequent institutional changes, or the absence of national legislation undermine continuity and accountability. Partnerships are essential to build political will and ensure practical implementation.
- **Data must serve people, not institutions:** ethically collected, transparent, and actionable data should inform policy, guide protection and targeted responses and enable accountability with national and local ownership of data ensuring accountability and sustainability.
- **Meaningful participation is both a right and a practical necessity**, enabling policies that reflect real needs. Persistent gatekeeping, safety concerns and uneven inclusion – particularly of displaced women – remain major protection challenges.
- **Preventing arbitrary displacement requires proactive approaches**, addressing root causes through evidence-based policies, community dialogue, and inclusive local leadership, supported by political will and coordinated institutions.
- **Durable solutions depend on integrated approaches**, that link humanitarian and development planning, benefiting host communities alongside IDPs, with predictable financing, inclusive governance, and joint planning.
- **Treating IDPs as active contributors rather than passive recipients**, supports dignity, social cohesion and long-term integration. Mental health and psychosocial support, socially mixed housing, neighborhood transformation, and territorialized service delivery can be key to advancing resilience, social cohesion and preventing renewed displacement.

Introduction

The 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement affirm that the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and assistance for internally displaced persons (IDPs) rests with national authorities. Since their adoption, dozens of governments have developed laws and policies to prevent, respond to, and support durable solutions for internal displacement. To date, at least 134 IDP-specific instruments across 49 countries have been adopted¹, with additional measures under development, including at the subnational level².

Establishing legal, policy, and institutional frameworks in line with international and regional standards is an essential step toward addressing internal displacement effectively. Yet, while notable progress has been made in adopting laws and policies, implementation remains a key challenge, particularly for local and municipal authorities. As internal displacement increasingly occurs in urban settings, cities and towns find themselves on the front lines of both the challenges and opportunities presented by the influx of IDPs into their communities.

To help address this challenge, UNHCR, the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs, Ms. Paula Gaviria, and the IDP Protection Expert Group (IPEG) convened the 3rd Annual Cross-Regional Forum on Implementing Law and Policy on Internal Displacement, with a special focus on local (particularly municipal) responses. Hosted at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (IIHL) in Sanremo, Italy, the Forum explored how national laws and policies on internal displacement connect with local implementation and vice versa. Discussions examined how differing levels of political, administrative and fiscal decentralization affect the development of effective local responses.

The Forum's overarching objective was to strengthen alignment between central and local authorities, providing a space where government representatives could exchange practices and models, and reflect on opportunities to contextualize, develop and implement legal and policy frameworks that respond effectively to internal displacement while contributing to inclusive urban development. The goal was to ensure that internally displaced persons enjoy their rights as citizens and residents, while receiving protection and assistance tailored to their displacement-specific needs.

This year's event built on the success of two previous Cross-Regional Fora—held in Sanremo (June 2023) and Dakar (September 2024)—which brought together government officials from Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America to share experiences and strengthen peer learning. In 2025, the Forum convened 24 participants representing Colombia, Ethiopia, Honduras, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Somalia, and Ukraine. These were mostly government representatives from the local or subnational level. Participants also included two IDP leaders, UNHCR staff, and a representative of the Government of Switzerland, a country with a long-standing tradition of supporting global efforts to address internal displacement, including through policy dialogue, financial contributions, and engagement in multilateral initiatives.

[1] UNHCR, [IDP Law and Policy Dashboard](#).

[2] UNHCR-GPC, [Global Report on Law and Policy on Internal Displacement](#) (2025).

Participants were informed that the forum would follow the Chatham House Rule, allowing open discussion of ideas and experiences.

The Forum was facilitated by a selected group of experts, comprising:

- **Ms. Paula Gaviria Betancur**, UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, Co-Lead of IDP Protection Expert Group
- **Mr. Peter de Clercq**, former Deputy Special Representative of the SG and Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator, Member of the IDP Protection Expert Group.
- **Prof. Jennifer Welsh**, Former Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary General, Member of the IDP Protection Expert Group.
- **Dr. Melissa Wehmayer**, Visiting Fellow at LSE, Specialist on Displacement and Migration Research.

Facilitators led eight substantive sessions that covered legal, policy and institutional frameworks on internal displacement, multi-level governance for the response to internal displacement, data on internal displacement, IDP engagement in prevention, protection and durable solutions, preventing arbitrary displacement and advancing protection and durable solutions to internal displacement.

Each session began with key context, principles and international standards. Following this introduction, country participants gave presentations with examples from their work, followed by an open facilitated discussion with all forum participants to allow for an exchange of experiences.

Facilitators were supported by an organising team including: Nadine Walicki (UNHCR, Senior Adviser to the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs); Martina Caterina (UNHCR Global lead on law and policy on internal displacement) and Martina Ranieli (IIHL, Head of Institutional Engagement). UNDP's Senior Global Advisor on Forced Displacement, Catherine Osborn, also joined the event.

Opening remarks

Ms. Martina Ranieli, acting as moderator, introduced the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (Sanremo Institute), expressing gratitude to its partners and supporters — notably UNHCR, the Office of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, the IDP Protection Expert Group, and the Government of Switzerland — for their collaboration and continued commitment. Participants were warmly welcomed and encouraged to engage actively. Ms. Martina Caterina emphasized the importance of creating a shared space for dialogue.



Institutional remarks

Ms. Paula Gaviria, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), welcomed participants, recognizing their commitment to protecting and assisting displaced populations. She highlighted the scale of the challenge: more than 83 million people are displaced within their own countries—double the number from six years ago—and the majority live in urban areas, putting immense pressure on local governments. She urged states to move beyond managing displacement toward preventing it, addressing the root causes of conflict, inequality, and weak governance. Drawing on her experience leading Colombia's Victims Unit, she stressed the importance of partnerships and local ownership, calling on participants to turn displacement into a story of resilience.

Ms. Elizabeth Tan, Director of the Division on International Protection at UNHCR, thanked the Forum's organizers and the nine participating governments for advancing internal displacement policy. She noted that UNHCR's Global Report on Law and Policy on Internal Displacement and its IDP Law and Policy Dashboard track more than 140 laws and policies across 51 countries, reflecting major progress. Yet, she cautioned, the real challenge lies in implementation, not just adoption. Ms. Tan reaffirmed that meaningful participation of IDPs is a right central to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and essential for durable, inclusive outcomes.

Concluding the institutional remarks, Mr. Christian Frutiger, Assistant Director General of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), reaffirmed Switzerland's commitment to durable solutions through its support for the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, the UN Action Agenda, and the Internal Displacement Solutions Fund. Drawing on Switzerland's global experience, he identified three priorities for turning policy into practice:

1. **Urban inclusion** — cities must plan for housing, services, and jobs that include IDPs, as shown through initiatives like the Mayors Migration Council and Cities Alliance;
2. **Whole-of-government approaches** — aligning laws, budgets, and development plans across national and local levels; and
3. **Meaningful participation** — ensuring displaced persons help design and monitor policies that affect them.

Mr. Frutiger concluded that these three pillars—inclusive urban governance, coordinated government action, and genuine IDP engagement—are the foundation for transforming paper commitments into tangible improvements in people's lives.

Adequate Legal, Policy and Institutional Frameworks on Internal Displacement

This session began with an overview of the international environment shaping displacement responses. Mr. de Clercq noted that the humanitarian system is facing unprecedented strain: budget cuts, shrinking staff, donor fatigue, and declining global attention to crises. He identified several structural challenges:

- The rise of populism and “country-first” politics undermining cooperation.
- Increasing politicization of displacement, where migrants and IDPs are framed as threats.
- Erosion of multilateralism, with states bypassing UN mechanisms.
- Disregard for international humanitarian law, often without accountability.

Yet, within crisis lies opportunity. He urged participants to view internal displacement through the lens of national ownership, where sovereignty entails both authority and responsibility.

Solutions should be understood as human-development challenges, not just humanitarian tasks. Durable solutions to internal displacement must therefore be integrated into national development and governance plans. Localization and national ownership, he said, should be entry strategies, not exit strategies.

Mr. de Clercq also addressed localization, criticizing superficial approaches that merely “tick boxes.” True localization requires transferring decision-making and funding to national and subnational actors who understand the realities on the ground.

Country in Focus

The Somalia representative presented the example of government leadership on local integration of IDPs in Baidoa, followed by discussion with participants.

Somalia, South-West State

Approximately 700,000 IDPs live in Baidoa, many affected by conflict and climate change. Here, the government has allocated land to IDPs, enabling the creation of settlements that now host around 50,000 people with access to security, health, and education services. This initiative reflects a strong commitment to localization, with authorities working closely with municipalities, traditional leaders, and communities to integrate IDPs into urban planning and ensure their inclusion in local governance structures. The approach emphasizes bottom-up engagement, direct interaction with IDPs, and growing national ownership supported by newly developed legal and policy frameworks.



Contributions through Q&A session:

Nigeria

The representative described how Benue States hosts more than half a million displaced persons, and this poses coordination challenges between federal and subnational levels. The speaker reflected on the Somalia practice with a particular focus on the importance of data, especially quality and acceptance. Benue state recently adopted its own IDP policy to complement national frameworks. The speaker emphasized social cohesion, the need for actionable domestic legislation aligned with the Kampala Convention, and greater inclusion of civil society and the private sector.

Ethiopia

The speaker reflected on similarities between Somalia's experience and those in his own context. In the Somali Region, efforts are underway to achieve humanitarian self-sufficiency and reduce reliance on external aid through national capacity building.

Mexico

Participants described the difficulty of providing protection in contexts of organized crime, where violence creates similar level of victimisation and challenges as in some contexts of armed conflicts. National and local actors often face threats, and humanitarian work is dangerous, noting that when displaced people arrive in urban areas with scarce resources, discrimination often emerges. Additionally, they showed interest to learn how IDPs were involved in drafting Somalia's law and whether learning from other countries had helped. Lastly, Mexico still lacks a national IDP law and has only recently begun recognizing internal displacement at the federal level. Inclusion in the National Human Rights Plan did not translate into effective action due to insufficient resources, unclear institutional responsibilities, and reliance on guidelines without federal operational involvement. As a result, states were left with responsibility but no adequate funding or capacity. Five states have their own IDP laws, with coordination mechanisms existing at the local level, but the absence of a national framework remains a structural challenge.

Honduras

Representatives expressed interest in the methodology Somalia used to collect IDP data, and whether such information is accessible on any government platform. Honduras is beginning the implementation of its legislation on internal displacement, but lacks physical, reliable data on displaced people. Many individuals do not even identify themselves as displaced, and authorities only discover cases through reports of violence or trauma. Additional questions were asked with reference to how Somalia protects sensitive information about displaced persons when collecting and managing such data.

Contributions through Q&A session:

Colombia

Delegates emphasized prevention as essential to breaking cycles of repeated displacement, particularly for children vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups. The country's system for registering IDPs through the Registro Único de Víctimas was also mentioned as a practice through which individuals voluntarily declare their victimizing events (forced displacement, threats, sexual violence, or torture and more) and the Victims Unit evaluates whether they qualify for inclusion. If rejected, individuals may appeal. Colombians can declare displacement up to ten years after the event. With reference to Somalia's practice, interest was shown with reference to what criteria is used to recognize someone as an IDP and whether climate-related displacement is also included, noting that Colombia's law only covers conflict-related displacement.

Somalia and Ethiopia

Again were cited as examples of progress in **national ownership**, having adopted strategies and policy frameworks rooted in the **Kampala Convention**.

CONCLUSION

Successful models of localization and national ownership in the IDP response include allocating land to IDPs, integrating IDPs into urban planning and local governance, establishing robust legal and policy frameworks with adequate budget allocations and institutional clarity of responsibilities, fostering community engagement and ensuring the availability of reliable and accessible data. Countries vary in the development of laws and policies on internal displacement: some have long-standing national legislation, while others more recently began to adopt frameworks at the state or subnational level in the absence of national legislation.



Multi-Level Governance for the Response to Internal Displacement (Part 1)

Dr. Weihmayer introduced the concept of multi-level governance, emphasizing that displacement responses require coordination between national, regional, and local authorities – as well as with civil society and international partners. She explained that multi-level governance involves both vertical interactions (across government tiers) and horizontal interactions (across institutions and sectors and with civil society). The aim is to ensure clarity of responsibilities, build trust, and promote shared ownership.

Country in Focus

Ukraine

Following the 2014 occupation of Crimea, Ukraine adopted its first Law on Internal Displacement, which was drafted in close collaboration with NGOs. The Ministry of Reintegration was created thereafter to coordinate national displacement issues. After 2022, when the full-scale invasion displaced more than 12 million people, responsibilities were further decentralized and distributed across several ministries, with coordination occurring at national, regional, and local levels. Implementation increasingly rests with municipalities, organized through hromadas, the main type of municipality and the third level of local self-government in Ukraine, which manage integration programs and provide social protection. Ukraine has four national strategies on IDP integration, each supported by a dedicated working group (such as social protection or economic inclusion). At the hromada level, local taxes are meant to fund services for vulnerable groups, but the level of support varies significantly by location: IDPs enjoy different levels of social protection as national budget allocations depend partly on proximity to the armed conflict frontline, and rent prices tend to be higher in areas where social protection benefits are stronger. According to the Ukraine representatives, these allocations are often made without local consultation and are not based on local data. Moreover, national funds arrive with strict spending restrictions that do not always reflect local realities. Some obligations are now set in law, for example, food for school children must be financed from local budgets.

Nigeria

At the national and state levels, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs coordinates with all relevant ministries, departments, and agencies, and then cascades decisions down to local governments for implementation. A standardized programming template is sent to each local authority, which uses it to capture the specific needs and priorities of affected communities. This template becomes the basis for determining budget items and ultimately populates the local action plan, ensuring that interventions align with national frameworks while reflecting local realities. The process is bottom-up: communities are consulted directly, their priorities shape the content of the template, and local authorities retain ownership of planning and implementation. The resulting action plans often focus on community infrastructure, economic recovery, and peacebuilding. International partners, including IOM, UNDP, and UNHCR, support this system with funding, technical assistance, monitoring, and impact measurement, helping to reinforce national leadership while ensuring accountability and evidence-based programming.

Country in Focus

Mexico

Although Mexico still lacks a national law on internal displacement, several states, including Michoacán and Oaxaca, have begun developing their own legal and institutional frameworks. Oaxaca's IDP law, adopted in September 2025, was the most recent internal displacement law in the world at the time of this event. In Michoacán, authorities faced the challenge of designing a response without federal legislation, which required them to review all relevant national guidelines and harmonize them with local realities. This effort was formalized through publication in the official state journal and the adoption of a decree establishing a state committee composed of 16 government departments, led by the Secretariat for Migrants, with UNHCR, UNICEF, and IOM designated as permanent invitees. The committee created bridges between municipalities and enabled the development of coordinated strategies across locations. Additionally, with support from UNHCR and UNICEF, Michoacán introduced training programs and municipal toolkits to guide officials in identifying, assisting, and protecting IDPs, with special attention to regions affected by organized crime, where IDPs are often reluctant to identify themselves as displaced due to fear and the sensitivities surrounding violence and territorial control.

Colombia

The **System of Co-Responsibility**, created in 2004 following a Constitutional Court ruling, distributes duties across all levels of government. The national Victims Unit manages data and programs, while municipalities deliver emergency aid such as housing, food, and clothing. When local capacity is insufficient, departmental or national institutions step in. Additional mechanisms include early-warning reports from the **Ombudsman's Office** and a **territorial certification model** that evaluates municipal compliance with the Victims Law.³

“As an internally displaced leader, I can use what I learned to compare different countries' models with ours.”

^[3] M. Weihmayer, "Multilevel Governance 'from Above': Analysing Colombia's System of Co-Responsibility for Responding to Internal Displacement », Journal of Refugee Studies, Volume 37, Issue 2, June 2024, pages 392-415.

Contributions during the Q&A discussion

Michoacán (Mexico)

While transversal coordination mechanisms exist across three levels of government, a major challenge to the subnational response to internal displacement is the lack of institutional accountability and budgetary limitations. Responsibility for the IDP response often shifts between levels of government; absence of national will hampers state/local action. In the context of organized crime, municipal governments rely on local actors such as the church and CSOs to fill law and policy gaps. The aim is to replicate the development of municipal tools for assistance and needs assessment across 130 municipalities.

Colombia

The experience in Perechyn and Vosnesensk is that local governments invest in IDPs and use tax revenues to support vulnerable populations, and local authorities are faster and more practical than central government in decision-making. The central government struggles to understand local-level responses; local actors deal directly with affected communities. The regional level can act as a knowledge broker and help develop concrete tools.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion: While governance systems differ – federal, unitary, or hybrid – and unitary systems have different levels of decentralization, successful responses share three traits: clear mandates, adequate resourcing, and continuous dialogue between levels of government. The absence of political will at the national level or a national law on internal displacement can cause responsibility to be tossed to other levels. Local governments can be faster and more efficient at decision-making and response than the central level given its familiarity with the issues and context, and the regional level can play a broker role.

“The comparative experiences will guide us as we update our frameworks on internal displacement.”

Multi-Level Governance for the Response to Internal Displacement (Part 2)

This session explored how national, regional, and local actors share responsibility for addressing internal displacement. The discussion focused on localization, highlighting the importance of supporting municipalities and communities in designing and delivering context-specific solutions given their deep understanding of the local context, dynamics, culture and expertise. At the same time, local actors should not bear the full responsibility for the response. Risk should be shared among different actors with action defined by joint decision-making, genuine partnerships and an understanding of local norms.

For this session, participants were divided into three groups where they compared and contrasted the local response in their three countries. Country contributions are detailed below and group discussions reaffirmed that local governments must be recognized not only as implementers but as decision-makers and policy actors central to prevention, protection and solutions. The importance of engaging politicians at the local level with evidence and concrete examples was stressed to ensure local political will and legitimacy. Social cohesion is a major focus of local actors and participants reported a shift to area-based programming to ensure that IDPs and other communities benefit from investments that strengthen existing programmes and services.

Country contributions in Group Discussions

Ethiopia

The country employed a bottom-up approach to developing its multi-level governance model for durable solutions, beginning in the Somali Region, which pioneered its own strategy before informing and motivating the federal government to adopt a national framework. Regional authorities initially led efforts to coordinate humanitarian and development interventions and unlock access to national development financing, demonstrating that local practice could shape national policy. The Ethiopian delegation noted that decades of hosting Somali refugees had created parallel service systems that complicated responses to internal displacement; current efforts therefore prioritize integrating services for host communities, refugees, and IDPs to reduce duplication and strengthen resilience. While relocation had previously been favored, the government now promotes local integration as a more sustainable pathway, particularly when escaping conflict- or drought-affected areas to safer places where displaced households prefer to remain. Major challenges persist, including land tenure obstacles, limited development financing, and the difficulty of balancing return and reintegration in areas impacted by conflict, drought, and floods. Sustained political engagement and incentives have been essential to keeping regional and federal actors aligned and committed to advancing reforms.

Nigeria

The country representative stressed the importance of coordinated, multi-level governance rooted in local ownership. In Nigeria, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs coordinates all relevant ministries and cascades decisions to local governments, which conduct consultations and develop localized action plans reflecting needs in areas such as infrastructure, livelihoods, economic recovery, and peacebuilding. Nigerian authorities and UNHCR have also shifted toward an area-based approach, investing in public infrastructure and services that benefit both IDPs and host communities, helping to foster acceptance and reduce tension by recognizing IDPs as contributors to the local economy.

Country in Focus

The Phillipines

In the absence of a national IDP law, local governments have taken the lead in developing rights-based protection frameworks, particularly in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). BARMM adopted its own regional IDP law, Asia's first such sub-national law, establishing internal displacement councils at municipal and regional levels to address prevention, protection and durable solutions. However, these structures operate largely within the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) system, which is designed for disaster-induced displacement, leaving gaps for conflict-related displacement caused by armed conflict, clan feuds and extremism. Local IDP councils, therefore, carry a broader mandate than national bodies, and face challenges such as misaligned funding and limited consultation. The Municipality of Kapatagan (Lanao del Sur), illustrates local leadership through Ordinance No. 93 (2024), a comprehensive rights-based IDP protection framework grounded in humanitarian and human rights standards. The ordinance obliges prevention, safe evacuation, essential services and durable solutions, while ensuring accountability and humanitarian access. Kapatagan has implemented relief programs, medical assistance and constructed permanent housing, showing how local frameworks and action can fill national policy gaps and deliver meaningful protection.

Pakistan

The representative explained that the country manages internal displacement through a disaster-management system led by the National and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities, as Pakistan does not have a national IDP law. Governance is highly devolved: provinces and districts carry most operational responsibilities, resulting in uneven practices across regions—some provinces maintain robust registration and assistance systems, while others depend more on humanitarian support. Participants highlighted the need for clearer role definitions and consistent standards between federal, provincial, and district authorities. Political transitions, security limitations, and wide disparities in local capacity further shape the effectiveness of responses. Despite these challenges, Pakistan's experience underscores the importance of strong local engagement, as district officials in conflict-affected areas often have the best understanding of community dynamics and needs.



Country in Focus

Mexico

Representatives noted that inter-state coordination is particularly difficult without national standards, making it challenging to harmonize approaches or share data. Michoacán, for example, has established an inter-institutional committee led by the Secretariat for Migration to facilitate access to services for displaced persons, while Oaxaca has developed a different coordination schema rooted in its own administrative traditions. These divergent models illustrate the complexity of achieving coherence in a federal system without national legislation. Participants stressed that uneven criteria and budget allocations between states undermine continuity of assistance and limit the potential for coordinated, multi-level action.

Honduras

The representative underscored that, although the country has recently adopted a national IDP law, essential regulatory and operational instruments, such as detailed protocols and budgetary provisions, are still under development. One of the principal challenges is completing the regulatory process so that the National Congress can assign the resources required for implementation. At the municipal level, authorities are responsible for identification, local assistance and cohesion-building, but capacities vary widely and are heavily influenced by political turnover. Participants highlighted that political polarization between the national government and certain municipalities, including San Pedro Sula, which, while generating significant local tax revenue, is led by a party different from the ruling national administration, has affected access to resources from the national level. This dynamic can weaken coordinated responses and delay the operationalization of the new law at the local level.

Colombia

Participants emphasized that Colombia has one of the most extensive legal and institutional frameworks on internal displacement in the region, yet implementation remains uneven across the country. Large urban centers such as Bogotá possess the technical capacity, institutional structures, and resources to manage and assist significant IDP populations, whereas smaller municipalities face acute limitations. This disparity sometimes results in displaced persons being referred, or self-relocating, to Bogotá or other major cities, increasing pressure on the capital. The Americas Group discussion drew parallels with Ukraine, noting that in both contexts, some cities offer stronger services and social protection than others due to differences in resources and national allocations. This can contribute to secondary displacement, concentration of IDPs in better-resourced areas, and higher rental prices in certain urban centers. With approximately 70% of IDPs in Colombia residing in cities, participants stressed the urgent need for strengthened coordination, inclusive urban planning, and sustained support for local integration.

CONCLUSION

Effective displacement governance requires coherent national frameworks that genuinely empower local authorities. Political sensitivities, concerns over external perception, and frequent institutional changes often disrupt continuity and coordination. Durable solutions therefore depend as much on stable political commitment as on strong legal and institutional design. Partnerships are critical to increasing political will and addressing the practical realities of program and service implementation.

The Critical Role of Nationally Owned Data on Internal Displacement

This session focused on data on internal displacement and related issues in terms of ethics and methodology. Participants examined how to collect accurate, respectful, and actionable information about displaced populations. In analyzing a sample IDP questionnaire, participants quickly identified limitations: repetitive and unclear questions, lack of context, and failure to capture the complexity of displacement. While every questionnaire is imperfect, they should aim to capture as many realities as possible. Participants stressed that data collection should have a **clear purpose** and be designed to reflect lived experiences rather than extract incomplete information. Dr. Weihmayer emphasized ethical concerns — protecting privacy, preventing harm, and avoiding over-surveying vulnerable people. Datasets should be anonymized and securely stored. Data should be collected only when it will **directly benefit the affected population**.

Country in focus

Honduras

Representatives from Honduras shared that internal displacement in the country is largely invisible, as there are no camps, mass movements, or concentrated IDP communities. To reveal the scale and impacts of displacement, the government conducted two national characterization (profiling) studies. The first study included household surveys carried out collaboratively by national and local stakeholders, with support from partners including the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS).⁴ The second study played a decisive role in shaping Honduras' internal displacement law, because it examined not only the number and location of displaced people but also their needs, intentions to return, levels of violence, housing and property loss, and access to services. One key finding was that displaced people in Honduras tend to seek refuge and protection within same city in which they were displaced; this intra-urban displacement differs from many other contexts. The participation of the National Institute of Statistics gave the study credibility and ensured its recognition as the official national displacement statistic, identifying an estimated 247,090 internally displaced people (2.7% of the population of Honduras) between 2004 and 2018. A municipal representative added that the study has been essential for helping local governments identify where IDPs are located and design prevention and durable solutions programs. While the study requires updating to capture current displacement trends, it remains a vital tool for community-level planning.

“The Forum in Sanremo created a truly inclusive space for dialogue between municipalities, civil society and international organisations. The methodology with small working groups and practical case exchanges allowed us not only to listen but also to actively contribute. Another strong point was the opportunity to build real partnerships – the networking sessions were meaningful and well facilitated, leading to concrete follow-up cooperation ideas”

[4] [Joint IDP Profiling Service](#)

[5] <https://www.jips.org/jips-country/honduras/>.

Country in Focus

Somalia

The country's strong policy framework on internal displacement is underpinned by several data collection initiatives, particularly in cities such as Mogadishu and Baidoa. Somalia's recent laws and durable solutions policies draw on government-generated information (Somalia included displacement into its National Strategy for the Development of Statistics 2024-2029) as well as data collected through the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster. These combined sources provide the evidence base needed to tailor policies to local conditions. While the representative noted that CCCM actors lead much of the data collection, the broader discussion highlighted how Somalia's approach demonstrates the value of coordinated national and subnational data systems for developing targeted and context-specific solutions.

Ukraine

Ukraine's social passport system is a local-level data collection and planning tool. The social passport is a document containing information about a community's resources and social characteristics, allowing its potential to be assessed. Although the preparation of social passports is required by Ukrainian legislation, until 2018 communities treated it mostly as a formality. They lacked guidance, training, or methodology, and therefore produced them in inconsistent ways. Also, because official IDP registration only captures individuals seeking social support, many displaced people remained invisible.

To address this gap, the Stabilization Support Service (SSS), a Ukrainian Charity, developed standard recommendations for local governments, which later informed the Procedure for Determining the Needs of the Population in Social Services (Order of the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine of 19 April 2023, No. 130-N). Since 2018, SSS and UNHCR have supported over 500 municipalities in preparing or updating their social passports.

The social passport combines three major information sets:

- Demographic data on all people living in the hromada (from multiple local sources, not only IDP registration).
- Social service information, including schools, hospitals, pharmacies, administrative services, and social protection institutions.
- Information on displaced entities, such as businesses, institutions, and community centers that have relocated to the area.

Representatives emphasized that the social passport is not a single document but part of a three-part planning framework:

- the social passport itself,
- a needs assessment, and
- a development plan for the local social protection system.

When all three components are used together, municipalities can design effective recovery strategies, prioritize institutions for support, and allocate budgets appropriately. The social passport is particularly important for identifying vulnerable people (such as survivors of domestic violence or the homeless) whose needs might otherwise be excluded from local planning. IDPs use the social passport as a service navigator, and UNHCR confirmed that the social passport is central to its recovery programming, as it enables clear identification of gaps and needs, as well as plans for improvement in social services.

Contributions during the Q&A discussion

Colombia

Delegates explained the country has developed one of the most comprehensive national data systems on internal displacement, centered around the Registro Único de Víctimas (RUV). Delegates described the RUV as a Single Victims Registry that now includes over 8 million internally displaced persons, and collects detailed individual and household information, such as when people fled, where they arrived, their household composition, and specific needs using an age–gender–diversity approach. This depth of information enables authorities at both national and local levels to design targeted and evidence-based public policies. Colombia monitors IDPs' access to rights through the Indicators of Effective Enjoyment of Rights (IGED), a set of measures defined by the Constitutional Court to oversee the implementation of its ruling T-025 of 2004. The indicators track whether displaced people can access safety, education, health, housing, livelihoods, and other essential rights. For example, IGED data reveals that Afro-Colombian adolescents face specific barriers in accessing education, which directly informs more targeted interventions. Similarly, national data shows that approximately 71% of IDPs prefer to remain where they currently live, guiding the government's focus on urban and local integration within the emerging national durable solutions policy. In addition, implementation of the Victims' Law is monitored through territorial certification processes, which assess whether municipalities and departments are meeting legal obligations. Civil-society networks, supported by UNHCR, help monitor rights enjoyment and propose improvements, ensuring that data reflects both institutional reporting and the lived experience of displaced communities. Together, these mechanisms create a robust and multi-layered national data system that guides protection, prevention, and durable solutions efforts.

CONCLUSION

Data must serve people, not institutions. Data is valuable only when it is collected ethically through transparent methodologies, and used to improve protection, guide policy, and support durable solutions. Nationally representative datasets can support local and city level programming and can help identify places within the city with high density of displacement that require a response. National and local ownership of data ensures accountability, sustainability, and respect for affected populations. Guidance exists for how to better collect data on internal displacement, for example through the EGRIS recommendations.⁶

“I liked that there was always space for reflection, not only based on theoretical examples but on real situations, and that we were able to learn from the perspectives of other countries.”

[6] Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS), March 2020. International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics, available at: <https://egrissstats.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/The-International-Recommendations-on-IDP-Statistics.pdf>

Engaging Internally Displaced Persons in Prevention, Protection, and Solutions

This session explored meaningful participation as both a fundamental right and a cornerstone of effective governance. Anchored in Art. 25(a) of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (Principles 18, 22, 23, 28 and 29), genuine participation ensures dignity, ownership, and alignment with local realities. Professor Welsh underscored that IDPs should not simply be consulted but must be able to shape decisions affecting their protection and recovery.

Speakers noted that although many governments acknowledge participation in policy, practice often remains superficial. They stressed that real inclusion requires continuity, representative engagement, and safe conditions for displaced leaders—including women and youth—who often face heightened risks. As Professor Welsh highlighted, participation is never a neutral act; it carries political and personal consequences for those who step forward to claim their rights.

Country Presentations

Colombia

Colombia presented one of the most established and legally grounded participation systems in the world. Under Law 1448 (2011), the country created the Victims' Participation Tables, formal mechanisms operating at municipal, departmental, and national levels that represent the interests of more than 10 million registered victims, including 8.9 million internally displaced persons. These tables ensure representation and participation by type of victimization and identity group, with women holding at least 50% of seats, and have played a decisive role in shaping major national reforms, such as the 2024 extension of the Victims' Law, the adoption of child and ethnic participation protocols, and the alignment of participatory cycles with local political terms. Despite limited resources, security risks for leaders, and inconsistent engagement from local authorities, Colombia's model remains a global benchmark for institutionalized and democratic participation in post-conflict recovery. It demonstrates how legally mandated participation can shape budgets, oversee local implementation, and hold institutions accountable.

Mexico

The state of Oaxaca became the first in Mexico to adopt a comprehensive [law on internal displacement](#),⁶ approved in September 2025 following an extensive participatory process. Over six months, the government conducted more than fifty dialogue sessions across displaced Indigenous and Afro-Mexican communities, ensuring free, prior, and informed consent. Authorities ensured free, prior, and informed consent, provided interpretation in sixteen Indigenous languages, and created child-friendly spaces supported by educators and psychologists. The resulting legislation recognizes diverse drivers of displacement, including violence, land conflicts, organized crime, and climate change, and establishes state responsibilities for protection and reparations. Oaxaca's experience shows how inclusive consultation can overcome mistrust, bridge institutional and community priorities, and produce rights-based legislation in a federal context lacking a national IDP framework.

Country Presentations

Ukraine

Country representatives shared a model of participation shaped by ongoing conflict and decentralization reforms. As internal displacement shifted from a temporary to a protracted reality, displaced people and local governments jointly established IDP Councils, particularly in Luhansk, Donetsk, and Zaporizhzhia. These councils function as formal platforms where IDPs, NGOs, and municipalities jointly address priorities such as access to housing, social services, and integration measures. Many council members are women who balance unpaid advocacy with family responsibilities, yet remain at the forefront of community organizing. Local officials in some municipalities, such as Perechyn, promote dignity and belonging by referring to IDPs as “new citizens,” reinforcing social cohesion in host communities. Despite resource constraints and the pressures of wartime governance, Ukraine’s localized councils demonstrate how sustained engagement of displaced persons can meaningfully shape policy and maintain dialogue even under crisis conditions.

CONCLUSION

Meaningful participation is both a right and a practical necessity, enabling policies that reflect the real needs and priorities of displaced communities. Participants also highlighted the persistent role of gatekeepers, particularly in some displacement-affected areas, as a major obstacle that must be addressed for participation to be genuine and safe. Internally displaced women’s participation varies – strong in some countries, limited in others.



“The knowledge will help structure and improve our national and local responses to internal displacement.”

Preventing Arbitrary Displacement and Mitigating its Causes

This session explored how countries are addressing the root causes of displacement through prevention, social cohesion and dialogue. Mr. de Clercq emphasized that prevention is a political responsibility—requiring trust, inclusion, and early action to resolve conflicts before they escalate. Participants examined experiences from Nigeria and Honduras, illustrating how governance, community engagement, and data-driven planning can avert crises and foster resilience.

Country Presentations

Nigeria

The representative explained that Benue State's Peace and Reconciliation Commission was created to address decades of communal conflict driven by land disputes, resource pressures, and long-standing grievances that had repeatedly triggered violence and displacement. With communities no longer knowing who their "enemies" were, reconciliation was impossible, and responses remained largely reactive. To shift toward prevention, the Commission—supported by UNHCR—undertook the first comprehensive mapping of conflict dynamics, revealing complex economic networks behind the clashes, including hired laborers, absentee cattle owners, and arms procurement. Benue now hosts seventeen IDP camps, reflecting the scale of the crisis. The Commission rebuilt trust by engaging herders and farmers separately before facilitating joint dialogue, where both groups expressed interest in transitioning to ranching but lacked resources and technical support. Women's networks became key early-warning allies and helped shape prevention strategies, which were incorporated into the state's Women, Peace and Security Action Plan. Structural reforms are underway, including the establishment of a Livestock Management Agency to regulate ranching and prevent land conflicts, alongside peace education in schools to foster long-term social cohesion.

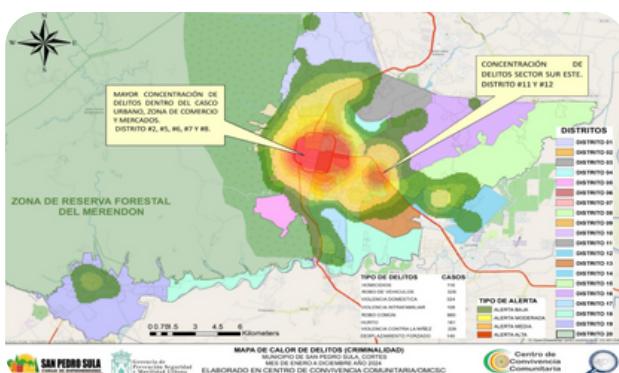


Country Contributions

Honduras

The representative explained that although the country recently adopted a national IDP law, implementation remains incomplete, especially regarding protection systems and reliable data collection. A core challenge is that many people do not self-identify as displaced; displacement is often detected indirectly through reports of violence or when individuals seek medical care for trauma-related symptoms. The government maintains sensitive IDP data but does not publish it due to confidentiality concerns, as records include names, identification numbers, and other personal details. Municipalities as San Pedro Sula, one of the areas most affected by violence-related displacement, have developed local tools to compensate for limited national guidance. San Pedro Sula uses a municipal heat map that visualizes patterns of homicide, domestic violence, and, since 2024, forced displacement. Previously, the heat map also included data on sexual violence, but the police no longer share this information, reducing visibility of important protection risks. Local authorities also described psychosocial initiatives grounded in art and cultural expression, which help affected individuals, especially youth, articulate their experiences and trauma in safe community spaces. Attention has also been given to displaced teachers, providing them with skills to identify students affected by violence or displacement and to offer appropriate referrals or support.

Honduras has begun integrating internal displacement into broader national transition and development plans, which is intended to strengthen prevention and reduce invisibility in communities. However, municipalities noted significant structural barriers: local governments are rarely consulted by central authorities, are not included in key budget or regulatory processes, and lack sustained funding despite collecting local taxes. Political polarization, weak institutional trust, and frequent changes in government focal points also undermine continuity. Combined with recurring climate shocks such as floods, these gaps make it difficult for local actors to prevent displacement or protect affected populations effectively.



Advancing Protection and Solutions to Internal Displacement (Part 1)

Professor Jennifer Welsh guided a discussion on how protection frameworks evolve into durable solutions that restore dignity and stability. Participants examined how laws and policies can be operationalized through multi-sectoral collaboration and long-term planning. Ms. Welsh emphasized that durable solutions must link protection, livelihoods, and governance from the outset. Protection should not only prevent harm but also create opportunities for social and economic participation. Participants reflected on how humanitarian responses can evolve into development strategies that empower both IDPs and host communities.

Country Presentations

Colombia

Located on the Pacific coast near the border with Ecuador, Tumaco is a multi-ethnic and multicultural district with a long history of conflict, organized crime, and environmental vulnerability. 42% of Tumaco's displaced population was uprooted by armed conflict, with an additional proportion displaced by climate-related factors, while only 18% of displaced households have adequate housing. High multidimensional poverty (41% vs. 12% national average) and the settlement of many displaced families in mangroves and tidal lowlands place communities at risk of flooding and limit access to basic services. Persistent armed group presence further restricts mobility, especially for youth, and contributes to chronic insecurity and fragmented institutional responses.

In this context, Tumaco is implementing a Pilot on Durable Solutions, jointly coordinated with the national government and international actors, using a community-based planning methodology that centers the displaced and host populations in the design of interventions. The process includes community mapping, participatory diagnosis, and joint construction of a shared territorial vision. The resulting Integrated Territorial Intervention Plan identifies 22 priority initiatives in housing, habitat improvement, livelihoods, education, health, and social cohesion.

A core component of Tumaco's approach is urban legalization of informal settlements, considered an essential enabling condition for durable solutions. Legalization involves topographic surveys, property title analysis, characterization of households, and a master plan that regulates land use, conservation areas, and infrastructure upgrading. This process contributes to prevention by reducing environmental risk, protection by stabilizing communities in safe zones, and solutions by enabling access to secure housing, services, and livelihoods.

The representative highlighted significant results and advances, including upgraded schools and sports facilities that serve as social cohesion hubs, strengthened community leadership, improved public services, access to microcredit and green-business training, reduced school absenteeism, and enhanced coordination between local and national institutions. Governance improvements, including community dialogue tables, verification mechanisms, and territorial data systems, have helped build trust and inform evidence-based decision-making. These efforts are now informing Colombia's national CONPES on Durable Solutions, reinforcing Tumaco's role as a learning site for integrated, participatory, and environmentally grounded solutions to displacement.

Country Presentations

Ukraine

Two complementary municipal practices, from Perechyn in Zakarpattia and Voznesensk in Mykolaiv Oblast, show how local authorities are advancing protection and durable solutions despite the pressures of war. Both illustrate a model of locally driven, partnership-based recovery rooted in decentralization reforms and strong engagement with internally displaced persons (IDPs). In Perechyn, the arrival of nearly 5,000 IDPs in the first months of the invasion placed enormous pressure on a small municipality with limited resources and no public buildings suitable for housing. Rather than wait for national programmes, the city developed its own partnership model with private investors and relocated machine-building enterprises, whose workers, many of them IDPs, needed stable accommodation. The City Council provided land, while businesses financed construction, resulting in the Good Neighbors residential complex and the Lake Wood energy-efficient housing initiative, both offering dignified housing and community facilities. Perechyn also enabled the relocation and reopening of the Kramatorsk Lyceum by providing unused school premises, which were renovated through a partnership between the two cities, the state, and an investor, demonstrating how education infrastructure can support integration and community cohesion.

Voznesensk, located 140 km from the front line, hosts more than 3,600 IDPs (over 10% of its population) while managing significant war damage to housing and public services. In 2023, the municipality established an IDP Council, chaired by a twice-displaced woman, to ensure that IDP perspectives shape local planning, including the city's sustainable development strategy. To strengthen access to livelihoods, the city's Adult Education Center and Community Development Center provide training in sewing, barista skills, digital printing, embroidery, baking, photography, among other skills. Supported by multiple grant schemes, IDPs have opened businesses such as confectioneries, sewing workshops, physiotherapy practices, and coffee shops, many employing other IDPs. The municipality also promotes self-reliance through its Harvest Path programme, which supports agricultural micro-projects and distributes seeds to thousands of households.



Contributions during the Q&A discussion

Pakistan

The country representative described Pakistan's federal approach to managing internal displacement, drawing lessons from recurring crises. The country's disaster management system, anchored in national and provincial authorities, has progressively integrated risk reduction, early warning, and recovery. Coordination with tribal councils and community elders helps anticipate and prevent displacement along the Afghan border. Pakistan's experience highlighted how trust and collaboration between local actors and institutions transform emergency response into preventive governance.

Ethiopia

Attendees from Ethiopia reflected on how the examples from Colombia and Ukraine can inform, but not directly map onto, Ethiopia's diverse displacement landscape. The delegate noted that disparities between regions, urban versus pastoralist populations, conflict-affected versus stable areas, shape what types of solutions are feasible. Housing-focused urban integration or formal employment pathways, for example, cannot simply be replicated for pastoralist communities. Ethiopia emphasized three key considerations for solutions: a) **regional disparities** in service access and standards of living; b) **pastoralist mobility and socio-cultural norms**, which require distinct approaches; c) the challenge of determining when a solution is truly achieved in contexts with active conflict and varied development levels.

Somalia

Highlighted how decentralized systems and locally owned data can strengthen coordination and accountability. In all contexts, aligning national frameworks with local implementation ensures that policies reflect real needs and capacities. Like other countries, Somalia faces urban displacement pressures, heavy demands on municipal services, and the need for coherent multi-level coordination. It stressed that durable solutions frameworks must be adapted to Somalia's clan-based governance structures and decentralized political realities, but the principles showcased, local ownership, partnerships, and coordinated protection, remain universally applicable.

CONCLUSION

Durable solutions require national ownership, empowered local authorities, and sustained political commitment. Host communities must benefit alongside displaced people, and protection and solutions are inseparable, grounded in participation, strengthened through prevention, and shaped by local realities. Predictable financing, inclusive governance, and joint planning are essential. Several participants also encouraged a shift in perspective: to view IDPs not only as recipients of aid but as contributors whose skills and resilience can drive recovery and local development.

Advancing Protection and Solutions to Internal Displacement (Part 2)

This session explored how protection frameworks evolve from emergency response to long-term, rights-based solutions grounded in dignity, inclusion, and opportunity. IDPs are citizens and residents, not outsiders, and protection must be a state responsibility embedded in law, policy, and governance. Modern responses should move beyond parallel refugee-based models toward inclusion of IDPs in nationally owned systems integrating social protection, access to justice, and participation. Participants reflected on key principles—dignity, safety, rights, and participation—and discussed how governments can turn commitments into tangible results by coordinating across sectors, empowering local actors, and involving IDPs in decision-making.

Country Presentations

Pakistan

Pakistan is exposed to multiple hazards (floods, earthquakes, landslides, drought, extreme heat, and glacial lake outburst floods) as well as human-made disasters and conflict-induced displacement. The country's protection and solutions framework is grounded in a disaster-risk management model rather than a dedicated IDP law. Governance is led by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMA), such as the PDMA of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the Relief, Rehabilitation and Settlement Department. These bodies are responsible for preparedness, early warning, emergency response, camp management, and rehabilitation. Although PDMA are legally mandated to support the settlement and rehabilitation of IDPs, their systems are primarily oriented toward disaster-induced displacement.

Recent institutional reforms include: integration of conflict displacement in disaster management acts; empowered provincial structures with budgets and technical capacity; mandatory disaster-risk management integration into development plans; strengthened gender and child protection mechanisms; and expanded flood early-warning systems. These mechanisms were applied in recent crises: the 2025 Bajaur combing operation, mass floods, sectarian conflict in Kurram, and large-scale displacement from military operations. Authorities evacuated tens of thousands of families, established camps and relief operations, and facilitated organized returns with compensation and reconstruction programs. Persistent challenges include financial constraints, donor fatigue, fragile security in border regions, the absence of climate-resilient infrastructure, institutional fragmentation between disaster-focused national bodies and protection needs arising from conflict displacement.

“The Forum in Sanremo created a truly inclusive space for dialogue... very well facilitated, leading to concrete follow-up cooperation ideas.”

Country Presentations

Colombia

Bogotá is home to 380,000 victims of Colombia's armed conflict, 84% of whom are internally displaced. Despite three decades of humanitarian assistance, nearly 70% of displaced people in the capital continue to face significant vulnerability, largely due to persistent barriers in livelihoods and housing. This reality prompted the city to move beyond an aid-based paradigm toward a territorial, rights-driven model of local integration articulated through its *Política Pública de Integración Local*, which frames integration as a long-term process beginning at the moment of displacement and extending to full socioeconomic participation. This shift builds on years of humanitarian programming delivered through an extensive network of assistance centers providing food, shelter, legal aid, psychosocial support, and socioeconomic stabilization.

Bogotá's local integration policy combines individualized protection measures, access to health care, education, food security, income generation, adequate housing, and family reunification with community-level investments that upgrade neighbourhood infrastructure, public spaces, and coexistence strategies so that host communities benefit alongside IDPs. The policy was developed through a structured participatory process with the District Victims Participation Tables, using sequential consultations, pedagogical tools, and digital platforms. Victims contributed directly to the Action Plan and received clear feedback on how their inputs shaped decisions, helping strengthen trust in city institutions.

Through this process, tensions emerged including disputes over resource allocation between IDPs and host communities, the challenge of adapting citywide programs to prioritize victims, concerns about preserving ethnic identities, and the difficulty of managing support in a context marked by high mobility. The city representative mentioned a key political challenge: many IDPs in Bogotá strongly resist area-based approaches. After decades of struggle for individual recognition and rights, displaced communities fear that territorial strategies could dilute the entitlements attached to their victim status. For many, the IDP label has become a core political identity, and losing it is perceived as losing visibility and rights, captured in the sentiment expressed by participants: "If I am not an IDP, I do not exist." Any durable solutions strategy must therefore balance individual rights with collective, area-based interventions.

Bogotá city has also reflected on lessons from earlier housing policies for IDPs. Large-scale housing built for IDPs in isolated complexes became stigmatized, poorly integrated, and increasingly unsafe, turning into violent ghettos rather than engines of integration. The city now prioritizes socially mixed, territorially integrated housing paired with services that foster coexistence and reduce segregation. From this experience, Bogotá identifies several emerging good practices: strong information systems to guide decision-making, territorialized service delivery through local centers and mobile units, a robust humanitarian response system that provides immediate protection, and targeted mechanisms that prioritize victims' access to essential services. Pilot initiatives now focus on transforming neighbourhoods, improving social cohesion, and expanding access to livelihoods and adequate housing, laying the groundwork for durable, locally owned solutions for IDPs.

"The peer-to-peer exchange was the most effective way to learn."

Contributions during the Q&A discussion

Ethiopia

Ethiopia's delegation described efforts to strengthen protection through risk reduction, early warning, and inclusive dialogue. The government's Durable Solutions Initiative integrates humanitarian and development planning across federal, regional, and local levels. Data-driven mapping and IDP participation inform recovery in conflict-affected regions such as Somali and Afar, while peace committees and community dialogues aim to prevent renewed displacement. The Ethiopian approach underscores that protection and resilience depend on good governance and sustained coordination.

Mexico

Participants from Mexico emphasized the importance of early solutions that restore rights and rebuild trust. In Oaxaca, the first state-level law on internal displacement was developed through inclusive consultation with Indigenous and Afro-Mexican communities, ensuring cultural respect and institutional accountability—a model for subnational governance.

Honduras

The representative from Honduras highlighted community participation and social monitoring as central to prevention. In San Pedro Sula, the municipality has pioneered community mapping, participatory art, and local coexistence programs that foster trust and inclusion. These locally led prevention initiatives show how municipal authorities can create protective environments with limited resources.

Ukraine

Representatives from Ukraine reflected on the protracted nature of displacement and the need for psychological and social inclusion. Municipalities such as Voznesensk and Perechyn are leading locally owned housing, employment, and integration programs, viewing IDPs as “new citizens” rather than beneficiaries. This framing promotes belonging, dignity, and partnership in rebuilding communities.

Somalia

The Somali delegation emphasized the challenge of recurrent displacement and the need to link humanitarian assistance with long-term governance and recovery. Authorities are integrating durable solutions into development plans and strengthening coordination between national and local actors. Somalia's approach highlights the importance of treating displacement as a long-term social reality, not a temporary crisis.

CONCLUSION

Effective governance, strong coordination, and the integration of humanitarian and development planning are essential to building resilience and preventing renewed displacement. Locally driven approaches—legal frameworks, inclusive consultations, community-based initiatives and social inclusion—help restore rights and foster trust. Treating IDPs as active citizens promotes dignity and supports long-term integration, yet balancing individual rights with area-based strategies remains a challenge, as IDPs can fear losing recognition tied to their displaced status. Advancing durable solutions requires socially mixed, integrated housing and neighborhood transformation, underpinned by robust information systems and territorialized service delivery.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Participants reflected on lessons from three days of exchange and to envision a future where protection and solutions are grounded in dignity. Using a live Mentimeter exercise, participants generated a word cloud where the term dignity appeared at the center, surrounded by safety, rights, and participation—capturing the moral and practical essence of the Forum. Ms. Gaviria emphasized that dignity is not an abstract concept but a guiding principle for law, policy, and practice. Protection, she noted, must go beyond preventing harm to ensuring that displaced persons rebuild lives with security, inclusion, and agency. She encouraged participants to link the insights from all sessions—on law, policy, governance, data, and participation—to create coherent national and local strategies for durable solutions.

Reflections highlighted five enduring lessons:

1. Localization is essential—responses must reflect local realities rather than imported frameworks.
2. Peer learning and cross-country exchange builds solidarity and both highlights and supports innovation.
3. IDP participation ensures accountability and legitimacy.
4. National leadership and political will enable durable solutions.
5. Mental health and psychosocial support are integral to recovery.

Participants closed with heartfelt testimonies. A delegate from Ethiopia reaffirmed that IDPs should be seen as agents of development, not burdens. Colombian representatives spoke candidly about the political fatigue surrounding displacement yet underscored their commitment to maintaining public trust. Ukrainian participants reflected on the enduring uncertainty of long-term displacement, asking, “When does it truly end?”—a question symbolizing both the practical and emotional dimensions of the challenge. Participants from Somalia and Nigeria concluded that solutions must emerge from within, rooted in national ownership and community engagement. In her final remarks, Ms. Gaviria called for continued collaboration among governments, civil society, and international partners with IDPs, and reminded participants of the need for self-care and resilience among practitioners. “The goal,” she said, “is not to have all the answers, but to ask better questions — and to keep dignity at the center of every solution.”



Final Evaluation

The evaluation of the 3rd Cross-Regional Forum on Implementing Law and Policy on Internal Displacement, held in Sanremo from 1–3 October 2025, reflects a high level of participant satisfaction, engagement, and learning. Attendees completed an anonymous survey, representing government officials and practitioners from across nine countries. Their feedback confirms that the Forum effectively met its objectives of fostering peer-to-peer exchange, strengthening implementation capacity, and deepening understanding of how legal and policy frameworks can translate into practice.

Overall, the response was overwhelmingly positive. All respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the event, with an average rating of 9.7 out of 10, reflecting both the quality of the content and the professionalism of the facilitation. Every participant (100% of respondents) indicated that they would recommend the Forum to colleagues, underscoring the perceived value of the learning experience. The feedback emphasized that expectations were not only met but, in many cases, exceeded, particularly regarding the balance between technical substance, interactivity, and cross-country dialogue.

Participants identified several key strengths of the Forum. They particularly appreciated the interactive structure, which combined conceptual presentations with practical case studies, as well as the diversity of national perspectives shared throughout the sessions. The focus on durable solutions, multi-level governance, and the participation of internally displaced persons was highlighted as central to the Forum's success. Many described the event as a rare opportunity to engage directly with peers facing similar challenges, allowing them to draw parallels between different contexts while identifying locally adaptable solutions.

Constructive suggestions for improvement for future editions were also provided by the participants. Some requested more time for in-depth discussion and case analysis, noting that several exchanges could have benefited from extended debate. Others proposed a stronger focus on prevention and preparedness frameworks, as well as slightly longer or more flexible sessions to allow for more reflective exchanges.

When reflecting on what they had learned, participants emphasized the Forum's role in reinforcing the principle that people must be at the center of displacement responses. Many reported gaining a clearer understanding of how to align humanitarian, development, and governance efforts, and how to design programs that uphold dignity, rights, and inclusion. Examples such as Colombia's Victims Registry, Pakistan's disaster management coordination, Ukraine's social passport system and Bogotá's local integration model were repeatedly cited as valuable references for application in other contexts.

I am engaged in humanitarian coordination for response to natural disasters. The contents of the program will assist me in ensuring participation of displaced persons in immediate response as well as early recovery response.

Participants described the event as both technically enriching and personally inspiring, offering a renewed sense of commitment to advancing protection and solutions at home. In describing how they intended to apply the knowledge gained, participants mentioned concrete steps such as developing local action plans, integrating social protection and cohesion initiatives, and enhancing data systems and coordination mechanisms within their respective institutions. Several also noted that the Forum had inspired them to promote community participation and evidence-based policymaking, bridging the gap between central and local levels of governance.

100%

of participants would recommend the Forum to colleagues

9.7

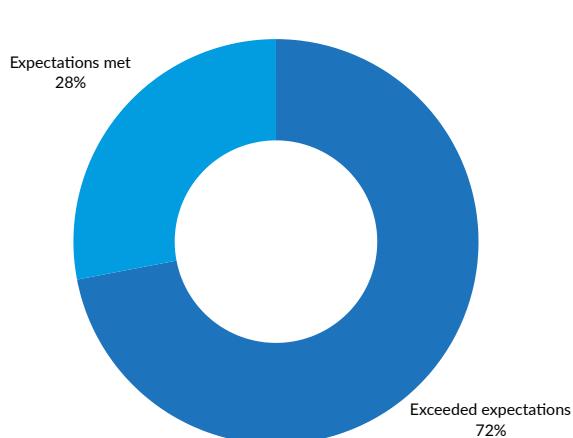
out of 10 participants expressed a high level of satisfaction with the event

72%

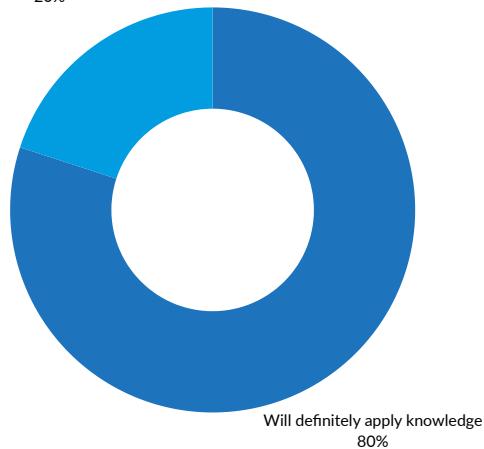
participants noted that the Forum exceeded their expectations while others' expectations are met

80%

participants will definitely apply knowledge gained while others will apply knowledge to good extent



Will apply knowledge to good extent
20%





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