

REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE ON PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Lomé, 25 October 2022

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

The High Commissioner's Protection Dialogue is a unique annual event to discuss critical issues related to protection, inclusion and solutions for refugees, internally displaced persons, stateless persons and returnees. This year, it will be held on 7-8 December in Geneva, and will focus on strengthening cooperation with development actors to deliver protection and solutions. In preparation for this high-level dialogue, UNHCR Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa organized a regional roundtable, held in a hybrid on 25 October 2022 in Lomé, Togo. This roundtable was a precious opportunity to discuss between protection and development actors around initiatives that can unlock solutions for the displaced through enhanced development cooperation. Such needs and opportunities were explored on the basis of lessons learnt and lived experiences in the Central Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin and Central Africa.



Highlights from the Main Participants

Session 1 | [Local development needs in forced displacement contexts](#)

➤ **How does forced displacement affect local educational needs? A testimony from a primary school in northern Burkina Faso**

In the Centre-Nord region of Burkina Faso, primary schools like the one Mr. Sebgo runs in the commune of Kaya are facing increasing challenges due to the influx of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Mr. Sebgo's institution was even created in response to this influx, and it has about 80% of IDPs. Success rates are excellent, but resources are limited. Buildings made of hard materials are lacking, as are furniture and school supplies. Mr. Sebgo calls on **development actors to support the scaling of the educational offer in areas hosting forcibly displaced persons through sustainable infrastructure and equipment.**

➤ **How can local civil society organisations concretely play a role in the search for solutions? From IDP housing assistance to access to basic services in Adamawa State, Nigeria**

In September 2014, Madagali and Michika Local Government Areas of Adamawa State, Nigeria were overrun by the insurgents. Thousands of displaced persons escaped seeking for shelter and food. They approached the Church St. Theresa's Cathedral Yola that offered assistance without discrimination of origin or religion. IDPs were then resettled "to lift the weight on the shoulders of the Diocese and to reduce dependency syndrome". Following inclusive consultations and negotiations on access to land, housing opportunities and basic services for displaced households, a **voluntary, safe, and dignified resettlement** into new homes was organized in Sangere-Marghin. For Rev. Fr Kwairanga, initiatives from civil society organizations need to complement the government action, through universal and indiscriminate support to achieve durable solutions. Development actors should accompany those endeavors **involving state authorities and local organizations by helping to recover the dignity through adequate housing and to restore access to economic activities and market opportunities for the IDPs.**

➤ **The search for solutions and the need to increase local development-oriented support. A case for Ivorian returnees**

After fleeing violence in northern Cote d'Ivoire in 2010, Mr. Bahi repatriated from Liberia in 2014. He then built a motorized pirogue to facilitate the repatriation of Ivorian refugees to Liberia and encouraged his communities to return. Mr. Koffi, as prefect, has worked to accompany the repatriation of Ivorian refugees and their reintegration into their respective host communities. The returnees have jobs and skills that only need to be supported. But **access to reintegration opportunities also requires access to land.** And when returns occur, , land tensions are addressed through the existing and effective mechanisms that are in place. The socio-professional integration of returnees must therefore not only result from **improved social and legal protection**, particularly for the most vulnerable among them - and individual civil documentation is a key component - but must also involve measures to prevent or resolve local disputes and conflicts. **Development actors should therefore prioritize investments in individual documentation production, social cohesion and access to socio-economic opportunities in return areas.**

Session 2 | [Government-led initiatives for long-term solutions](#)

➤ **How is the government of Niger working with development actors to address the need for socio-economic inclusion of the forcibly displaced people?**

The governmental approach that guide the main responses in the most displacement-affected regions of Niger (Tillaberi and Diffa) is based on national legal and policy instruments, including the domestication of the Kampala Convention, the national policy of disaster management, or the national plan of economic and social development. Most particularly, the search for durable solutions is advanced through two main initiatives that promote a coordinated nexus approach to provide integrated responses to displacement and guide development actors in this area: (i) [the national strategy on sustainable recovery, which includes socio-economic inclusion opportunities](#), and (ii) the upcoming [national strategy for the return of displaced persons](#), which is being developed to "meet the needs of the displaced persons' attachment to their lands of origin".

➤ **How is the government of Nigeria leveraging development solutions to enable the socio-economic inclusion of the forcibly displaced? Case of Adamawa State.**

The Boko-Haram induced displacement crisis has heavily affected the State of Adamawa. The governmental response has not only included an important security investment programme, but also indiscriminate provision of socio-economic services in areas hosting IDPs, [such as livelihoods and education opportunities](#). Local inclusion of the forcibly displaced has been fostered through a strong political will at country level, which led to the adoption in September 2021 of the [national IDP policy](#). The international community should support long-term development goals building on inclusion drivers such as local political initiatives to [increase access to land opportunities](#), or the acceptance of [refugee identify cards to open bank accounts](#).

➤ **How can multiple countries affected by one displacement crisis and similar protection risks work together towards the search for solutions? Cameroun and the CAR Solutions Support Platform**

Refugees from the Central African Republic face numerous long-term protection challenges in the neighboring countries. Their situation lacks visibility as well as a consistent regional response in the long-term. Those challenges have called for the creation of a coordinated solutions-oriented response mechanism, that is led by the concerned governments who signed the [Yaounde Declaration](#). In line with the objectives of the [Global Compact on Refugees](#), the [CAR-Solutions Support Platform](#) is being then developed to help implement its Recommendations, with the support of UNHCR. Development actors have a key role to play in the Platform, via its Core Group, to [by contributing to country and cross-border solutions, i.e. socio-economic inclusion or favorable and sustainable conditions of return](#).

Session 3 | [International Development Cooperation Opportunities to support solutions](#)

➤ **How can development Banks advance sustainable solutions (returns and local inclusion) for the forcibly displaced? The World Bank (WB) in the region**

The WB's [Fragility, Conflict and Violence Strategy](#) addresses the need to mitigate the effects of fragility and conflict, promoting synergy between humanitarian assistance and long term development, empowering governments in their response to displacement, and [focusing on socio-economic inclusion](#). This strategy is accompanied by different financing mechanisms, such as [the IDA18 Regional Sub-Window for Refugees and Host Communities](#) or the Prevention and Resilience Allocation. If security is paramount for the return of the displaced to their areas of origin, local inclusion is crucial to prevent the spread of local conflicts. To facilitate this, it is necessary to have access to quality local public services such as civil status, local justice, education, health, water points, and economic opportunities. As the first point of contact between the citizen and the state, [local public actors such as local authorities, deconcentrated technical services and administrative districts therefore have a great responsibility towards IDPs and host populations](#). The World Bank's support in this area (i) places the [needs of citizens, including IDPs, at the center of its interventions](#) which strengthen the capacities of local public actors, and (ii) aims to respond to the urgency of the crisis while [building sustainable and resilient national and local systems](#).

➤ **How can development cooperation funding instruments be adapted to address forced displacement and contribute to long-term solutions? The INTPA cooperation approach in the region**

In West and Central Africa, the EU has embarked in a strategic shift, addressing root causes of forced displacement, focusing on [self-reliance](#) and engaging in direct cooperation with host countries, supporting refugees and host communities, in line with the GCR. Investments are guided by [nexus and human-right based approach](#) and on the demands of the partner governments that hold the primary responsibility of long term solutions. The EU is also catalyzing its support in a new fashion through [support to inter-governmental mechanisms such as the CAR Solutions Support Platform](#). INTPA's localization strategy entails to work with cities and local authorities, so that the [localized aspect of displacement is acknowledged](#). Investments in data, research, infrastructures and education remain key.

➤ **Complementary intervention: UNDP's inclusive stabilization approach**

UNDP considers a [multistakeholder approach](#) is a prerequisite to improve the security conditions, the livelihoods opportunities, the socio-economic infrastructures and the social cohesion of forcibly displaced people. Through the UNDP-led stabilization facility, the organization works very closely with local authorities, national governments, security forces, humanitarian and development partners and local communities to develop [adaptative local solutions](#) and ensure that [any assistance reach those in need](#) in the concerned areas.

➤ **Complementary intervention: AfDB's fragility and resilience strategy**

Adopted in March 2022, AfDB's third strategy to address fragility and resilience in Africa aims to **strengthen institutional capacities, build resilient societies and catalyse private investment**. This strategy, guided by six principles - prevention, core selectivity, do-no-harm approach, long-term support, partnerships, and ownership - addresses the underlined complexities and dynamics of forced displacement. AfDB's **country strategic papers** that guide the organization's country interventions, as well as the launch of MDBs platform are entry points and opportunities for closer collaboration to **mainstream the inclusion** of refugees, IDPs, returnees and host communities across a wide range of sectors and **policy instruments**.

➤ **Complementary intervention from EU's Foreign Policy Instrument**

To promote local stability, it is necessary to work in collaboration with development actors and local authorities, focusing on social cohesion, and more specifically **the capacity of host communities to cohabit with forcibly displaced people**. To this end, FPI has mobilized substantial funds (12 million euros) from 2020 for the Centre-Nord region of Burkina Faso and vocational training activities have been carried out so that displaced persons can strengthen their autonomy and at the same time contribute to living together and to local development.

➤ **Complementary intervention: GIZ support to inclusive planning at local level**

GIZ's « *Projet d'appui aux Déplacés Internes et de renforcement de la résilience des Communes d'Accueil (PDICA)* » is a programme that in Burkina Faso links access to basic social services and social cohesion in IDP hosting areas. The provision of services can prevent conflict escalation and lead to increased interactions between social groups, and ultimately, to social peace. **Capacity building to local authorities and communities on inclusive planning** and implementation helps to **better protect in the long term both IDPs and host communities**. This process should be carried out in a consultative manner, in collaboration with international organizations and civil society organizations.

➤ **Complementary intervention: NIALS' view on the link between development and human rights**

Pursuing a **human right-based approach** to development should be a priority in Africa, not only because the continent's strategy in terms of protection of forcibly displaced people is already bounded by three legal instruments - the Kampala Convention, the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement – but because it is a responsibility matter. It indeed contributes to better identify the responsibilities over respect to the five guiding principles which strengthen resilience of local communities, and reduce risks and poverty in targeted areas: **responsibility of rights holders and duty holders, access to information, right of displaced people to participate in governance, non-discrimination principle, do-no-harm, and accountability**.

Key Conclusions

At local and country levels | Policy and legal instruments are key

- **National and sub national policy and legal instruments** are key for inclusion of the forcibly displaced in development initiatives, such as Nigeria's IDP policy, or Niger's strategy of sustainable recovery.
- Such strong political will can lead to effective inclusion enabling factors, starting with facilitated access to local services through **refugee identity cards**.

At regional level | Inter-governmental frameworks have a role to play

- **Inter-governmental mechanisms for dialogue and cooperation** – such as the CAR Solutions Support Platform - are important ways to **effectively operationalize the Global Compact on Refugees**, involving state authorities, civil society organizations, private sector and international partners. They can help development actors to provide tailored and sustainable cross-border support to countries affected by the same displacement crisis.
- **Regional economic organizations** such as ECOWAS, ECCAS, IGHAD, also play a key role in coordinated cross border responses around the nexus, and solutions-oriented initiatives should be built with them.

At all levels | Solutions-oriented interventions must be collaborative, right-based, sustainable

- Ensuring voluntary returns and relocation and finding sustainable local integration solutions is a **collective obligation** for all actors working in areas of displacement. Humanitarian and development actors must work closely with national and local authorities in a coordinated manner.
- All stakeholders should adopt a **right-based approach** and target the populations based on their level of vulnerability to ensure that refugees, IDPs, returnees and the host communities are **at the center of the search for durable solutions**.
- From the onset of a displacement crisis, international responses should be **based on quantifiable evidence** and **help strengthen the national and local systems**. Integration of the challenges faced by the forcibly displaced into the existing mechanisms can help achieve durable solutions.

Relevant documentation

Video | [GCR implementation in Nigeria](#)

- [Click here](#) to watch or download UNHCR's latest video on the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees in Nigeria.

Video | [Short video summary of the roundtable](#)

- [Click here](#) to access UNHCR RBWCA's tweet including a video summarizing the event.

Video | [Full recording of the event](#)

- [Click here](#) to download the full video recording of the roundtable by UNHCR's local partner (mp4 file, 9 GB).

Photos | [Coverage of the event](#)

- [Click here](#) to download pictures of the event (compressed folder, 87 MB).

Written documents | [Briefing kit](#)

- [Click here](#) to download a briefing kit including the concept note, agenda, background notes and maps that are linked to the discussions.

Biographies of the Speakers

Chairs

➤ **UNHCR | Yvette Muhimpundu**

Senior Protection Coordinator - Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa - muhimpun@unhcr.org



Ms. Muhimpundu holds a Master's degree in International Law. She has over 23 years of experience in humanitarian work and in particular with UNHCR in a wide range of refugee, mixed migration, statelessness and internal displacement operations. This includes emergency operations in the Great Lakes, the Horn and West Africa, especially the Central Sahel. Previously, she worked at UNHCR headquarters in Geneva as Chief of the Inter-Agency and Coordination Section. She also served as Assistant Protection Representative in Niger.

➤ **EU / INTPA | Isabelle de Ruyt**

International Aid / Cooperation Officer - Migration and Forced Displacement - Isabelle.RE-RUYT@ec.europa.eu



Ms de Ruyt is the program manager for multi-country and regional programming on forced displacement in Sub-Saharan Africa for the International Partnerships Directorate-General of the European Commission. She joined EU in 2016 as the Manager for the Trust Fund on Migration in the Delegation to Djibouti and IGAD. She worked for around 10 years for the United Nations first as a political affairs officer in the UN Mission in Afghanistan and then in the Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat in New York. Before, she worked for the OSCE, as a diplomat in the Belgian representation to the OSCE, as the spokesperson of the OSCE Mission to Skopje and as an advisor in the Office of the OSCE Secretary-

General in Vienna.

Session 1 | Local development needs in forced displacement contexts

➤ **Burkina Faso | Mahamoudou Segbo**

Primary School Director – [+226 70 99 37 12](tel:+22670993712)



M. Segbo has been a primary school principal since 2003, with 34 years of teaching experience, including 31 years as a principal in five different schools in Burkina Faso. With the major humanitarian crisis in Burkina Faso, he has developed several major local initiatives to integrate internally displaced students into the school system. His efforts have notably resulted in the enrollment of 300 of them, who have effectively resumed classes at the Kouim Kouli B elementary school of which he is the director, in the middle of a major IDP hosting area.

➤ **Nigeria | Rev. Fr. Maurice Kwairanga**

Director, Catholic Diocese Of Yola - kwairangafrmaurice@gmail.com



Rev. Fr. Kwairanga is the Executive Director of the Justice Development and Peace Commission in Yola, Nigeria. He is also a Member of the Durable Solutions Steering Committee, Adamawa State, Nigeria. He has 19 years of experience in humanitarian and development work, and a great local expertise with displaced persons in North East Nigeria. He has been the Manager of the Internally Displaced Persons' Camp in St. Theresa's Cathedral Camp Yola, now permanently relocated to Salama Housing, Sangere-Marghi, Girei LGA, Adamawa State, Nigeria.

➤ **Cote d'Ivoire | Gervais Bahi**

Chief of Zilebli village



M. Bahi is Chief of Zilebli Village, in the department of Bolequin, Cote d'Ivoire. He was a nurse's aide, secretary and advisor to the Zilebli village chief until 2010, when he was forced to flee the post-election violence. In exile, he was a community agent, serving the displaced, until 2013 when he was repatriated. Since 2016 he has therefore been appointed village chief of Zilebli and has invested in conflict resolution, preservation of social cohesion and peace in the village. He built a motorized dugout canoe to facilitate the repatriation of Ivorian refugees in Liberia and encouraged his communities to return.

➤ **Cote d'Ivoire | Etienne Bini Koffi**

Prefect of Toulepleu - [+225 08 70 29 59](tel:+22508702959)



M. Koffi is a civil servant, graduate of the National School of Administration. He is Prefect of the Department of Toulepleu, Cavally Region, since 2019. Thanks to his proximity to elected officials, executives, youth and women's leaders as well as representatives of national and foreign communities in his district, he was able to preserve a climate of peace, social cohesion and security before, during and after the 2020 presidential and 2021 legislative elections in this sensitive border area of Côte d'Ivoire with a tumultuous past. This peaceful environment has facilitated the various repatriation operations of Ivorian refugees and their integration in their respective host localities.

Session 2 | Government-led initiatives for long-term solutions

➤ **Niger | Mamane Oumarou**

Director of Studies and Programs - Ministry of Humanitarian Action - ommhg76@gmail.com



M. Oumarou is certified in monitoring and evaluation from Laval University in Canada. He was for several years responsible for monitoring and evaluation at the Niger Ministry of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management. For the past 4 years, he has been Director of Studies and Programming for the same Ministry.

➤ **Nigeria | Prof. Maxwell Michael Gidado**

Chief of Staff to the Governor of Adamawa State - ommhg76@gmail.com



Prof. Gidado hails from Ganye Local Government in Adamawa State of Nigeria. He greatly contributed to the advancement of legal education and the legal profession in Nigeria, notably by establishing four Faculties of Law in Nigeria, teaching and mentoring 1000 law students in several faculties of law in Nigeria, and so many other initiatives. Prof. Gidado is an author of six books and has over 100 articles published in reputable journals at both National and International levels. He holds the National Honors of the Officer of the Order of Republic of Equatorial Guinea (ORG) and was conferred with the prestigious rank of the Senior Advocate of Nigeria in 2015 in the academic category. Recently, M. President conferred the national honors of the officer of the Order of the Niger (OON). He is currently the Chief of Staff to the Governor of Adamawa State, His Excellency, Honorable Fintiri.

➤ **Cameroon | Norbert Tirlamo**

Deputy Director, Political and Legal Affairs - Ministry of External Relations – tnobs2008@gmail.com



M. Tirlamo is a Cameroonian Diplomat who Heads the Service in charge of relations with the UNHCR at the Cameroonian Ministry of External Relations. He is also the Deputy Coordinator at the Technical Secretariat of the Managing Organs of Refugee Status in Cameroon. Besides, he was recently appointed interim Deputy Director in charge of Political and Legal Affairs at the Commonwealth Department of the Ministry. He brings over ten years of experience in international development, including durable solutions for the over one million asylum seekers, refugees, IDPs and returnees Cameroon is hosting. He has equally been active in the management of emergency responses pertaining to various humanitarian situations across the country. He is the GCR Government focal point, and played an important role in organizing the Regional Ministerial Conference on solutions for CAR Refugees, that led to the Signature of the Yaounde Declaration.

Session 3 | International Development Cooperation Opportunities to support solutions

➤ **World Bank | Annabelle Vinois**

Fragility, Conflict and Violence Country Coordinator for Niger and Chad - avinois@worldbank.org



Ms. Vinois has been working with the World Bank since 5 years, having covered notably West and Central Africa. Before that she produced documentary films about community-led initiatives across Africa and Latin America to inspire global environmental action. Annabelle started her career as an attorney in Brussels, Belgium, practicing immigration, family, and criminal law.

➤ **World Bank | Ousmane Kolie**

Senior Public Sector Specialist - mkolie@worldbank.org



M. Kolie is a senior specialist in public sector and local governance and coordinator for the Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Chad). His areas of intervention include local governance, public financial management, and the modernisation of public administration

➤ **GIZ | Idrissa Ouedraogo**

Conseiller Technique Principal - Projet d'appui aux Déplacés Internes et de renforcement de la résilience des Communes d'Accueil (PDICA) - idrissa.ouedraogo@giz.de



Mr. Ouedraogo has over 25 years of experience working on development projects and cooperation between Burkina Faso and Germany, as well as Canada, the Netherlands, and Austria. Prior to his position as Chief Technical Advisor, he was a component leader of the GIZ Decentralization and Municipal Development Program in Burkina Faso where he worked on strategic and operational issues of decentralization and local governance.

➤ **UNDP | Blerta Cela**

Director of Stabilization Facility - blerta.cela@undp.org



Ms Cela heads the Regional Stabilization Facility of the UN Development Programme, a multi-partner facility covering both Lake Chad and Liptako Gourma countries. Prior to this, she was the UN Women Deputy Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia based in Istanbul. She was the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Ukraine. A native of Albania, Blerta brings with her 20 years of experience managing funds and programmes on socioeconomic development, peace and human rights in all regions.

➤ **AfDB | Julian-Jerome Berndt**

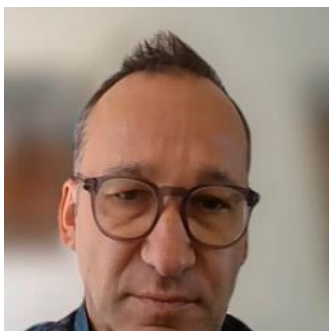
Principal Fragility and Resilience Officer - j.berndt@afdb.org



Julian-Jerome Berndt (JJ) is an experienced, multi-culturally versed development professional. He is based in Abidjan, where he works for the AfDB as Principal Fragility and Resilience Officer in the Transition States Coordination Office (RDTs). In his role he is the Humanitarian Development Peace nexus partnerships focal person supporting this office's management and team, with a specific focus on the Sahel, Lake Chad Basin and East Africa, among others.

➤ **EU / FPI | Antoine Gryn**

Programme Officer - Antoine.gryn@eeas.europa.eu



M. Gryn is currently a program manager for the European Fund's Rapid Response Instrument NDICI on issues related to Peace and Stability. He has over 20 years of experience in program management in Africa on crisis issues (humanitarian and security).

➤ **NIALS | Prof. Muhammed Ladan**

Director - mtladan@gmail.com



Prof. Ladan is coming from Niger. He is a Professor of Law with 35 years of experience in Humanitarian Policy Development, capacity building of personnel in the Humanitarian sector, and teaching. He is a renowned researcher and publisher in Human rights, Displacement and Development approaches in Africa. He is notably the author of the book titled *Migration, Trafficking, Human Rights and Refugees under international law - A case study of Africa* (2004).

Facilitator

➤ **UNHCR | Paul Absalon**

Senior Development Officer - Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa - absalon@unhcr.org



M. Absalon has more than twelve years of experience in humanitarian aid and development cooperation in fragile states in West and Central Africa with international organizations. With UNHCR, he is currently focusing on conflict and displacement sensitive partnership approaches in fragile contexts.



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