

DRC's Submission to the UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement

8 May 2020

DRC - Danish Refugee Council welcomes and appreciates this opportunity to submit its evidence- and experience-based recommendations to the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement (HLP) on three selected themes: **Protection**; **Solutions**; and the **'Whole-of-Displacement'** approach.

The three themes were carefully selected, reflecting the themes DRC recommends be prioritised by the HLP in its analysis and recommendations as areas within which there continue to be gaps in terms of preventing, responding to and resolving internal displacement. Moreover, these are areas within which DRC has years of policy and programmatic experience to contribute.

DRC's submission focuses on six of the key questions outlined by the HLP in its Call for Submissions and Inputs, namely:

- 1) Key issues, problems that should be prioritised by the Panel in its analysis of the crisis of internal displacement today and how prevention and response at large and solutions can be effectively advanced;
- 2) Across the objectives of prevention, response and solutions, how national political will, responsibility and capacity can be catalysed and cultivated;
- 3) The relevance and role of humanitarian, development, peace, climate change and disaster reduction action and how a more integrated approach in these respects can be fostered;
- 4) Focusing on solutions, what has led to many situations of internal displacement remaining stalled for many years and how effective solutions can be catalyzed, driven forward and supported;
- 5) Critical issues or questions in respect to data and evidence in the response to internal displacement, including gaps, shortcomings and challenges in approaches or implementation and how these can be addressed; and
- 6) Across the questions and elements above: i) Highlighting the protection needs, vulnerability and unique experiences and effects of displacement on people of different genders, ages, abilities and diversities; ii) Addressing the questions of meaningful participation and inclusion of the internally displaced and affected communities in the respective responses; and iii) and including examples, practices or experiences which help illustrate the questions at stake and, in particular, from which lessons or conclusions can be drawn.

The HLP and its aim to strengthen the prevention of, response to, and durable solutions to internal displacement is all the more necessary given the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 will trigger a crisis in a crisis as countries and IDPs already struggling to cope with the impact of conflict-induced internal displacement will face devastating direct and indirect consequences from the pandemic. The HLP's efforts to garner

collective action to address internal displacement, ensure IDPs are protected and able to claim their rights and entitlements, and have clear paths for durable solutions, requires immediate action.

1. Protection of IDPs

Protection of IDPs and their rights is an essential focus for the High-Level Panel's work on preventing and responding to internal displacement and supporting solutions for IDPs

The protection of, respect for, and fulfillment of the rights of IDPs must be at the core of the HLP and its analysis on how to prevent and respond to internal displacement and support solutions for IDPs. Not only should *Protection* be a crosscutting theme throughout the HLP's work, but importantly Protection should feature as a distinct area of focus that requires explicit and dedicated examination. This should be reinforced and complemented by applying a human rights-based approach in the HLP's analysis and recommendations.

Prevention of displacement, addressing root causes and achieving durable solutions are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, requiring that human rights, including rights embedded in international humanitarian and international human rights law, are respected, protected, and fulfilled. The 2016 World Humanitarian Summit affirmed that compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law is critical to saving lives, reducing suffering and safeguarding human dignity during and after conflict and in other situations of violence. This affirmation was followed by the recognition that far more has to be done to end and prevent human rights violations, including through improved compliance and greater accountability of State and Non-State actors.¹

Recommendation: Protection should feature as a distinct area of focus, with explicit and dedicated examination in the High-Level Panel's analysis and recommendations, reinforced and complemented by applying a human rights-based approach.

Strengthen Compliance and Accountability to International Humanitarian Law

20 years after the Security Council adopted resolution 1265, which included the protection of civilians on the Security Council's agenda, the state of the protection of civilians, including IDPs, today is tragically similar to that of 20 years ago. Sadly 2020 marked a new record with 45.7 million people living in displacement due to conflict and violence. In 2019 alone, 8.5 million people were newly displaced due to conflict and violence.² With this, there continues to be a significant *compliance gap* in adhering to international humanitarian law obligations, with civilians, including IDPs, bearing the brunt of armed conflicts across the globe.

The disregard, manipulation and lack of accountability for IHL by States and Armed Non-State Actors continues to take a significant toll on IDPs, impacting their short- and long-term ability to enjoy and claim their rights. During conflict, IDPs are exposed to a range of human rights violations, including death, injury, and maiming; forced displacement; the use of starvation as a method of warfare; sexual and gender-based violence, and intentional and unintentional damage and unlawful destruction of civilian infrastructure, property and livelihoods; attacks on humanitarian and medical personnel, hospitals and other medical facilities; and unlawful denial of humanitarian access. Enhancing and ensuring respect for IHL is the central challenge to preventing displacement and ensuring IDPs are protected. Critical to enhancing respect for IHL is ensuring accountability of the parties to the conflict, who in their action or inaction breach or violate IHL.

¹ United Nations General Assembly, Outcome of the World Humanitarian Summit, A/71/353, August 2016

² *Global Report on Internal Displacement*, IDMC, April 2020

At the same time, the reality of internal displacement shows us that IDPs living in areas outside of government control areas and/or fleeing from violence and abuse from government action have limited to no access to protection from traditionally mandated authorities and structures, and are in essence left to their own self, family, and community to self-protect. More attention must be paid to IDPs living in these situations due to their increased exposure to protection risks and inability to access and claim their rights.

Recommendation: Strengthen the prevention of displacement and in line with General Assembly Resolution 72/182 on the protection of and assistance to IDPs, ensure States and Armed Non-State Actors comply with IHL obligations, including its fundamental principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution and strengthen accountability for IHL violations.

Recommendation: In the High-Level Panel's analysis, specific attention must be paid to IDPs living in non-government control areas and those who have limited access to protection from traditionally mandated authorities, actors and structures, resulting in increased exposure to protection risks and inability to access and claim their rights.

Preventing conflict-induced internal displacement requires duty-bearers' attention and willingness to protect people against arbitrary displacement and exploration of all feasible alternatives to displacement. Moreover, prevention of conflict-induced internal displacement requires a multitude of actors coming together to prioritise and address its root causes. As underlined by the *Sustaining Peace Agenda* in UNSC resolution 2282 (2016) and UNGA resolution 70/262, efforts to sustain peace are necessary not only once conflict has broken out but also long beforehand, through the prevention of conflict and addressing its root causes (including to prevent displacement). Preventing conflict-induced internal displacement, through efforts to address its root causes, requires complementary and coherent action by local, national and international actors across the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding spectrum, ensuring respect for humanitarian principles, and enabling participation by (and accountability to) those who are directly affected by conflict and internal displacement, including the displaced as well as host communities.

Recommendation: Strengthen duty-bearers' commitment and willingness to take steps to put in place measures to prevent internal displacement, protect people against arbitrary displacement and ensure that all feasible alternatives are explored in order to avoid displacement altogether. Further, with the aim to strengthen the prevention of displacement, ensure complementarity and links between internal displacement frameworks and the UN Sustaining Peace Agenda.

Internal Displacement Laws and Policies

During the past 20 years, there has been a notable increase in States incorporating elements from the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and adapting existing law to address internal displacement, as well as the development of dedicated IDP laws and policies aimed at enabling IDPs to claim rights related to protection needs and establishing obligations on States. For example, Yemen enacted its National Policy for Addressing Internal Displacement in 2013, building upon the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. The development and implementation of laws and policies on internal displacement is essential to guaranteeing the rights of IDPs and to reducing displacement. To ensure States protect the rights of IDPs and live up to their obligations, further support in the development, adaptation, and not least implementation of laws and policies that secure the rights of IDPs and their ability to claim rights is needed. In particular, ensuring that provisions are incorporated to prevent and avoid forced displacement.

Having internal displacement laws and policies in place at the national level is an important first step but the implementation of and accountability for upholding these is a vital second step that continues to be a

significant obstacle to be tackled. In Iraq, while the government has taken important steps in establishing laws and policies related to internal displacement, including through actions taken by the Ministry of Migration and Displacement to ensure a focal point ministry was dedicated to responding to issues related to displacement and establishing a compensation scheme for victims of armed conflict, implementation continues to face challenges. IDPs face accessibility constraints to the compensation scheme while no payments have been paid to claimants.

States require political will, capacity and resources to adopt or amend and implement laws and policies relating to IDPs and to prevent or respond to internal displacement. Where such laws and policies have been drafted or put in place, implementation has lagged due to a lack of capacity and resources, as well as lack of accountability for non-compliance, highlighting the importance of supporting state capacity – in the short and longer term, by linking laws and policies with other domestic institutions to support accountability, buy in and accountability to domestic actors and institutions first and foremost, as well as and international actors, and importantly building strong civil society engagement.³ IDPs and those affected by displacement must be included and participate in the law and policy processes which affect them.

Recommendation: It is time to take action to further diagnose and remedy the *implementation and accountability gap* in laws and policies on internal displacement. Joint efforts and investment are needed to support State's capacity and resource constraints to, not only respect and protect the rights of IDPs, but importantly to fulfill obligations in taking positive action to facilitate the enjoyment of rights that are negatively impacted by internal displacement.

Supporting IDP Self-Protection Capacities, Agency, Inclusion and Voice

IDPs and communities affected by conflict-induced internal displacement are at the centre of protecting themselves, neighbours and community members. Indeed, IDPs fleeing conflict is in itself a protective strategy employed by IDPs when no other option remains. While internal displacement can reduce or weaken IDPs' capacities to self-protect, IDPs' agency and voice (taking into consideration Age, Gender and Diversity), and civil society must guide national and international efforts to prevent and respond to internal displacement, and build up individual, household and community self-protection capacities and solidarity strategies. A central right of all citizens of a country, including IDPs, is to access and be able to participate in political processes, including peace and reconciliation processes. States must seek to relieve all undue burdens faced by IDPs to vote or register, engage in political processes, and must enable the participation of IDPs in consultations and dialogue related to peace and reconciliation efforts, including displaced women as per UNSC resolution 1325.

Recommendation: National and international efforts to prevent and respond to internal displacement must empower, accompany and support IDPs, local organisations and civil society to find locally led solutions that contribute to IDPs' ability to claim their rights, participate in and influence political processes and build upon IDP self-protection capacities and solidarity strategies.

2. Solutions to Internal Displacement

DRC welcomes the HLP's strong focus on *Solutions to internal displacement*, while being mindful that the solutions focus should not take focus away from States' responsibilities to *prevent* of internal displacement.

³ *Implementing the GP at the domestic level*, Phil Orchard, Forced Migration Review issue 59, October 2018

Much work has been done over the past decades to research, analyse, design, operationalise and not least advocate for progressing and advancing solutions to internal displacement. Yet, we continue to witness lack of investment in measures to prevent internal displacement, lack of political will to put a stop to armed conflict, generalised violence and human rights violations leading to internal displacement; coupled with a lack of acknowledgement of the specific protection and assistance needs of IDPs, and at times even the very existence of IDPs and internal displacement. As a result, many situations of internal displacement remain stalled and become protracted which has a huge impact on the lives and rights of IDPs as well as host communities.

IDPs have a right to a durable solution to their displacement situation. The legal foundation for solutions for IDPs and to internal displacement is clear:

- *IDPs have a right to make an informed and voluntary decision on what durable solution to pursue;*
- *In light of their specific situation, IDPs determine whether to pursue return, local integration or settlement elsewhere in the country;*
- *There is no hierarchy between the different types of durable solutions;*
- *Durable solutions must be voluntary and undertaken in safety and dignity*⁴

Recommendation: Call upon humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors to mobilise and enhance the political will of States and authorities to uphold the right of IDPs to a durable solution and support the authorities' capacity to invest in and implement durable solutions for IDPs.

The development of the *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons* (FDS) 10 years ago was an important achievement and major milestone in ensuring a rights-based approach to durable solutions for IDP; in providing a definition for what constitutes a durable solution; and in establishing the eight criteria to be used to determine to what extent a durable solution has been achieved.

With the FDS in place, we (now) have further clarity and operational guidance for how collectively durable solutions for IDPs can be advanced and achieved. The FDS specifies that a rights-based approach to durable solutions for IDPs entails *ensuring non-discrimination in access to rights, protection and services for IDPs* and defines that *"..a durable solution is achieved when displaced persons no longer have any specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement and can enjoy their human rights without discrimination on account of their displacement."*⁵ With this definition, common ground has been established for facilitating, contributing to, monitoring and measuring the progress on durable solutions for IDPs and to internal displacement.

Recommendation: Use the 10th anniversary of the *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons* to take stock of its utility and ensure further application of the Framework by States, humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors to ensure that collective efforts to plan, implement and achieve durable solutions for IDPs are founded on the legal basis, a rights-based approach and the eight criteria established in the *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*.

As an operational humanitarian displacement organisation with many years of experience of analysis of, response to and advocacy in internal displacement situations, DRC offers the following **recommendations on the fundamental elements**⁶ that need to be in place to identify, implement and achieve durable solutions

⁴ *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*, The Brookings Institution, 2010

⁵ *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*, The Brookings Institution, 2010

⁶ *Key Drivers for Displacement Solutions*, Kathrine Starup – DRC, April 2014

for IDPs, under three headings; *I. Preparing for Solutions; II. A Rights-Based Approach to Solutions; and III. Collaborative, Inclusive, Whole-of-Society Efforts on Solutions:*

I. Preparing for Solutions

Understanding the Nature and Duration of Internal Displacement

The nature and specificities of internal displacement situations need to be considered when identifying, planning for and implementing durable solutions for IDPs. The protracted nature of many internal displacement situations⁷ leads to depletion of resources for both IDPs and other displacement-affected people, including hosting communities. This results in additional pressure and protection risks for IDPs, including for marginalised groups, e.g. children, women, elders who, as resources dwindle, are at risk of child labour, early / forced marriage, deprivation, increased violence, abuse and exploitation. Given the duration and protracted nature of internal displacement, IDP children, youth, at times entire generations, are at risk of spending their entire childhood or youth in dire circumstances, with no or limited access to rights and services, including to education, healthy childhood development and employment opportunities.

Recommendation: The protracted and volatile nature of conflict-induced internal displacement with risks of renewal of conflicts and displacement and further deterioration of the situation points to the need for iterative and on-going efforts to understand the nature and characteristics of internal displacement today and in the future.

Data and Evidence-informed Solutions

Data and evidence is needed to fully understand the characteristics and complexity of internal displacement and facilitate the implementation and achievement of solutions. Disaggregated data and analysis, across age, gender, diversity and location *must* inform the planning, implementation and monitoring of solutions to ensure that durable solutions are achieved. Moreover, given that many internal displacement situations are protracted, it is essential to capture changes over time in needs, vulnerabilities and preferences of IDPs and displacement-affected people. Monitoring and documenting internal displacement trends and the progress on solutions to internal displacement is an essential element to generate and sustain the accountability and political will of authorities to find and implement solutions for IDPs.

A host of frameworks, approaches and methodologies have been developed over the past decade to collect, analyse and facilitate informed decision making on internal displacement solutions, including profiling methodologies, durable solutions analysis and durable solutions indicators and frameworks. Further, global and regional data and research services and hubs like [JIPS](#) (the Joint IDP Profiling Service); the Regional Durable Solutions secretariats / platforms: [ReDSS](#) (East Africa), [DSP](#) (Middle East) and [ADSP](#) (Asia); and the [PIM Initiative](#) have come far in researching internal displacement solutions and developing frameworks, approaches and tools to facilitate efficient and collaborative data and analysis processes and not least building capacity to collect, analyse and use data and produce the much needed evidence to inform, monitor and measure solutions to internal displacement.

Recommendation: The solid data and analysis practices, shared frameworks, expertise and capacity of the data and research services and initiatives noted above should be utilised to support the capacity and willingness of authorities and facilitate shared analysis, informed decision making, facilitate coordination and ensure collaborative efforts on durable solutions.

⁷ *Global Report on Internal Displacement* (GRID), IDMC, April 2020

Creating Conducive Conditions for Solutions - Strengthen Protection & Livelihood Capacities and Resilience

The fact that the majority of IDPs today remain in displacement for years and may even be displaced multiple times before solutions can be realised, points to the need to acknowledge and work with IDPs while in displacement to preserve and enhance their self-protection and livelihood capacities.

Recommendation: Prioritise the strengthening and retainment of protection and livelihood capacities of IDPs. This way conducive conditions for solutions can be reinforced while still in displacement, which in turn will strengthen IDPs' self-reliance and resilience and enable them to seize future opportunities for durable solutions. Further, it is important to identify, support and strengthen existing local and national protection systems and mechanisms, which are critical to sustainable solutions.

II. A Rights-Based Approach to Solutions

Comprehensive, Rights-Based and AGD Sensitive and Inclusive Approach to Solutions

Planning and implementing solutions to internal displacement is a complex endeavour and points to the need for a comprehensive, rights-based and age, gender and diversity (AGD) sensitive and inclusive approach.⁸ Even as displacement becomes protracted, it is essential to start discussions on and preparations for solutions early on – and to continue these, with due regard to the rights of IDPs and their specific protection and assistance needs, vulnerabilities, capacities and aspirations, across AGD. What may be a preferred solution for one individual or family may not be feasible or relevant to another.

Moreover, support to solutions processes requires an integrated and multi-sectoral approach, taking into consideration the diverse protection and assistance needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of IDPs. For example, the physical return of IDPs to their place of origin or the provision of housing for resettled IDPs do not on their own constitute a durable solution as further and more comprehensive support for their reintegration⁹ will most often be needed.¹⁰

Recommendation: A multifaceted, rights-based and AGD sensitive and inclusive approach is required to make solutions durable and sustainable. A shift is needed away from the predominant focus on return (or relocation) movements towards sustainable (re)integration and durable solutions for IDPs, including through social and economic inclusion.

Participation, Inclusion & Informed Decisions

IDPs have a right to participate and be included in decisions that affect their lives, and to make a voluntary and informed choice on what durable solution to pursue. This calls for strong approaches to facilitate IDP participation and inclusion in solutions processes as well as supporting their access to making informed decisions on solutions to their displacement situations.

IDPs are not a homogenous group and perspectives are diverse – also when it comes to which solutions are the preferred ones. Displacement solutions need not be mutually exclusive. Yet we often see that national

⁸ DRC has contributed and signed on to the *“Leaving No One Behind: Ensuring an Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) Inclusive Approach to Internal Displacement”*, Joint submission to the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement

⁹ *Unprepared for (re-)integration - Lessons learned from Afghanistan, Somalia and Syria on Refugee Returns to Urban Areas*, IRC, NRC and DRC, 2020, DRC, IRC, NRC, 2020

¹⁰ The eight criteria set out in the Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons help us to establish what support and interventions are needed to achieve durable solutions.

and international actors prefer return to local integration (and settlement elsewhere in the country). Even when return is the solution for the majority, consideration needs to be given to marginalised and/or vulnerable IDPs who may not be able and/or wish to return. Further, it is essential to ensure IDPs' access to solutions information which is age-specific, reliable and appropriately communicated and accessible to IDPs across diversity factors. It is important that host communities also be included in solutions processes to facilitate their acceptance and support for (re)integration and peaceful co-existence and with that durable solutions for IDPs.

Recommendation: It is crucial that authorities and humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors ensure the engagement, inclusion, and participation of IDPs and other displacement-affected people in durable solution decision making, planning and implementation processes.

Civil society actors at large have an important role to play and can be a driving factor in mobilising support and solidarity by bringing attention to and documenting displacement challenges, local IDP protection needs and concerns, as well as playing a key role in pushing for appropriate displacement responses and solutions.

Recommendation: Durable solution efforts must take into account, support and complement civil society efforts, from the beginning of durable solutions processes and be championed throughout longer term durable solutions efforts.

Security, Rule of Law and Legal Frameworks

In the same way that insecurity is a major impediment to return in the aftermath of a conflict, the cessation of fighting and the establishment of security, including by way of support for national security forces by an international police presence or peace-keeping troops, can be a factor contributing to a conducive environment in which IDPs can develop confidence and can start to prepare and plan for possible solutions to their displacement situation.

Recommendation: Whether IDPs feel safe and secure can be a very individual matter and is influenced by highly subjective factors. However, a key contribution that international actors can make is to support trust and relationship-building, provide coordinated and effective support for the development of legal frameworks and not least their implementation and the (re)establishment of rule of law, inclusive and accountable security provision and a strong and trusted justice system.

The Right to Freedom of Movement

A related key driver for displacement solutions is to safeguard the core right to freedom of movement, which in concrete terms means that displaced persons are able to move around freely, choose their place of residence and pursue solutions to their displacement. Freedom of movement is a crucial factor for establishing and/or maintaining social and economic networks.

Recommendation: Protect the right to freedom of movement, thereby facilitating IDP decision making and ability to pursue durable solutions.

Housing, Land and Property Rights and Civil Documentation

We know that internal displacement situations are characterised by a multitude of housing, land and property (HLP) challenges and issues. These include, but are not limited to, issues regarding ownership, occupation, secondary occupation, evictions, land grabbing, lost HLP documents, lack of shelter and unavailability of land for livelihoods, destruction of houses and property, boundary disputes, and compensation and restitution. It is essential to address to these issues as they may otherwise constitute major impediments to solutions of return, local integration and/or settlement elsewhere in the country. Further, the (re)issuance of civil documentation is essential for IDPs to access their rights and durable

solutions. In protracted displacement situations, there is heightened risk of IDPs not having access to civil documentation, e.g. birth certificates, marriage and death certificates, without which IDPs will not be able to access services like health and education as well as restitution and compensation.

Recommendation: States must ensure that IDPs have access to civil documentation and that IDPs who have experienced gross human rights violations have access to remedies, reparations, and information on reparation mechanisms in adherence to GA resolution 60/147 on basic principles and guidelines on the right to a remedy and reparation for victims of gross violations of IHRL and IHL.

Avoid Rushed Solutions – especially Premature Return – and Explore All Options

Understandably, affected governments may be keen to resolve internal displacement and, as a preferred option, see IDPs return to their place of origin. However, rushed solutions, including premature returns, are likely to enhance the exposure of IDPs to protection risks, increase vulnerabilities and discriminatory practices and limit IDPs in accessing their rights and services - and may even result in new displacement. Further, governments and donors should be careful to not push for premature IDP return before conditions are conducive and in particular to be aware of how offers of assistance can act as a pull factor and have implications on the entitlements and rights of IDPs. States and the international community have a responsibility to avoid and put a stop to incentivizing rushed solutions and especially IDP returns to non-conducive environments. Rather, States and other actors should proactively, and together with IDPs, continue to explore different solutions, as impediments and opportunities for solutions change over time.

Recommendation: Durable solutions must be voluntary and undertaken in safety and dignity, with IDPs being included in solutions planning processes and having clear information on the situation in potential areas of return as well as the implications any movement might have on existing entitlements and rights afforded while in their area of displacement. States and other actors must ensure that local integration and settlement elsewhere can be pursued at par with return.

III. Collaborative, Inclusive, Whole-of-Society Efforts on Solutions

Contextualised Solutions - Local Authorities Taking the Lead

It is of key importance that the role and responsibility of authorities in planning and implementing durable solutions extend from the national to the local level. There are numerous strong examples of local authorities and municipalities, e.g. in the Balkan region and Georgia, taking on increasing responsibility for facilitating that IDPs are able to pursue and realise their chosen durable solution.

Recommendation: Not only should local level displacement solutions processes be linked to similar processes at national level, it is also of key importance that displacement solutions planning and implementation is not done in isolation but is fully integrated and mainstreamed in national development plans, frameworks and processes.

Collaboration between Host Governments and the International Community

While there are challenges related to balancing the involvement of the international community in internal displacement situations with claims by affected governments for respect of national sovereignty, we have seen that strong and respectful collaboration and partnership between national governments and the international community on internal displacement issues is a key driver for solutions to internal displacement. This includes support from the international community in the development and

operationalisation of frameworks, strategies and initiatives on solutions to displacement.¹¹ The attention, buy-in and presence from the international community has been seen to be a factor driving forward displacement solutions. With increased attention, interest and political will from the international community, additional resources and support will often follow. However, the influential role of international organisations may also risk delaying or hindering a nationally driven recovery process where local authorities and the national government take charge and full responsibility from the outset.

Recommendation: It is important to recognise that solutions are not brought about overnight, nor can solutions be imported into a specific national context by international actors. Rather, solutions to internal displacement, particularly in protracted displacement situations, require responsibility sharing, solidarity, sustained commitment and substantive support, including financial and in-kind support.

Collaborative Efforts by Humanitarian and Development Actors

We have seen the importance of applying comprehensive approaches and longer-term perspectives to internal displacement solutions. Such approaches call for strategic and close partnership between diverse actors, including humanitarian and development actors. We have seen the benefits of development-led approaches and responses to internal displacement and as such that development actors engage with governments and humanitarian actors from early on with the aim of promoting and jointly finding solutions to internal displacement. There is, however, a risk of compartmentalisation of solutions processes with different actors pursuing different objectives and approaches in separate forums. For example, in many cases solutions discussions tend to start quite late while the humanitarian architecture and response, with its focus on more immediate life-saving assistance and protection, is not necessarily conducive to carrying forward solutions discussions at an early stage.

Recommendation: Mutual recognition by development and humanitarian actors alike of the need for partnership and collaborative efforts in prevention, response and solutions to internal displacement as well as the need to further align coordination and collaboration structures to be able to accommodate and facilitate stronger joint efforts.

Peace Negotiations & Agreements Addressing Internal Displacement

A key factor to internal displacement solutions is the manner in which the causes of conflict-induced internal displacement are addressed in, and solutions facilitated by, peace negotiation processes and agreements. Experience shows that inclusion and participation in peace processes by those impacted most directly by conflict (including displaced youth, children and women) greatly enhances the chance of success and subsequent durability of any resulting peace agreement, as underlined for instance by UNSC resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

Recommendation: Taking into account the specific protection risks, vulnerabilities and capacities of different groups in society, including women and those affected by internal displacement in processes to negotiate, implement and sustain peace (and in reconciliation and transitional justice initiatives) enhances the chances of achieving sustainable peace, and thereby helps to ensure durable solutions for the displaced as well as prevent future conflict and ensuing displacement.

¹¹ Examples include contexts like Georgia, the Balkan region, Somalia and Sudan.

3. The Whole-of-Displacement Perspective

DRC welcomes the HLP's introduction of the "**Whole-of-Displacement**" perspective. The Whole-of-Displacement perspective brings attention to the interdependency and linkages between IDPs, refugees and returnees, especially as it pertains to solutions, and as such the Whole-of-Displacement perspective adds value to our shared understanding and joint efforts on prevention, response and solutions to internal displacement. Further, the *Whole-of-Displacement* perspective aligns very well with DRC's programme response framework within which DRC works throughout the *entire displacement spectrum* to respond to emergency assistance and protection needs, support displaced people's dignified life in and during displacement, support in unlocking and achieving solutions, and to address root causes to conflict and displacement.

Today's Refugees might be tomorrow's IDPs – and vice-versa

While internal displacement happens within the border of a country, the impact may very well transcend borders. Similarly, refugee displacement may impact on or be impacted by internal displacement, just as returning refugees and rejected asylum seekers may be at risk of becoming internally displaced. With the complex nature of displacement situations today, many of which are so-called mixed situations, it is not possible nor meaningful to focus on one type of displacement situation or one group of displaced persons only, in our effort to prevent and respond to displacement. The Whole-of-Displacement perspective is helpful in reminding us all about the interdependency and linkages between displacement situations. Further, internal displacement is seldom a result of one factor only. It is therefore important to recognise and understand the complex root causes resulting in people being displaced. A comprehensive approach to internal displacement, as well as prevention of new or further displacement, requires that actors, not only address the impact of internal displacement, but also its very root causes, including rights violations, violence, deprivation, coercion and discrimination. Prevention and response to internal displacement need to go hand in hand. Prevention requires a solid understanding of the drivers and root causes of internal displacement and a willingness and commitment to explore alternatives to displacement.

Recommendation: Recognise the interdependency between displacement situations, the multi-causality of internal displacement and the importance of addressing its root causes and give equal attention to the prevention of and response to internal displacement.

Climate- and Conflict-Induced Displacement

The effects of climate change (including droughts, flooding, food insecurity and more extreme weather events) compound the factors that drive conflict and internal displacement, while simultaneously eroding State and community capacity to build enabling environments for sustainable livelihoods and resilience to conflict. The impacts of climate change actively erode the capacity of States and communities to prevent conflict-induced displacement and support the realisation of sustainable solutions to displacement. At the same time, marginalised and disadvantaged groups (including the IDPs) are often particularly vulnerable to the effects of environmental shocks and stresses, especially in regions where rural livelihoods depend on agriculture and livestock. Measures to work in a coherent manner, across the humanitarian – development – peacebuilding spectrum, to prevent forced displacement need to take into consideration the combined effects of conflict, weak governance systems and climate change.

Recommendation: Address the combined effects of conflict, climate change and weak governance in humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts to prevent conflict and displacement.

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Submission from the GP20 Initiative to the UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement – to which DRC has contributed as a member of the GP20 Steering Group

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