

NRC Submission to the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement

Submitted: 8th May 2020

Cover note

This submission is divided into four thematic chapters, each in turn responding to most relevant questions.

1. [Housing Land and Property](#)
2. [Returns and Durable Solutions](#)
3. [Humanitarian Financing](#)
4. [Disaster Displacement and Displacement in the Context of Climate Change](#)

NRCs invites the Panel for further consultation on areas presented in this Submission which would further enhance their depth of knowledge on the matter.

The Norwegian Refugee Council has signed on to the following Submissions:

1. Written Submission from The Platform on Disaster Displacement
2. Written Submission 'Leaving no-one behind: Ensuring an Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) Inclusive Approach to Internal Displacement'

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1. Housing Land and Property

The key issues, problems or imperative which, as you see it, should be prioritised by the Panel in its analysis of the crisis of internal displacement today and **how prevention, response at large and solutions can be effectively advanced.**

- **Recognise the importance of Housing, Land and Property (HLP) rights throughout the displacement cycle.** Housing and land are not only important when looking into return. IDPs require housing and access to land (for livelihoods, for example) while displaced and in case local integration or relocation are considered as ways to end their displacement. Ensuring that host communities HLP rights are also protected and secured will also be essential toward the acceptance of IDPs and reduce secondary and tertiary displacements. HLP issues are also a frequent barrier to durable returns due to inheritance conflicts, secondary occupations, mine and UXO contamination, among other issues. As such, ensuring an understanding of HLP dynamics throughout the cycle of displacement will contribute to the sustainability of solutions for IDPs.
- **Make systematic HLP analysis and assessments when addressing displacement solutions.** Housing and land are among the main assets that IDPs lose when they are forced to leave their places of origin. IDPs often find it difficult to reclaim their homes and lands that have been either destroyed or occupied by others upon return. Moreover, access to and control over land and other HLP resources are both a root cause and consequence of displacement. Key to solving displacement situations and avoiding secondary displacement is addressing the underlying HLP violations and issues in the area of origin/return. Establishing a proper understanding of the HLP situation and rights by means of mapping, data collection and analysis is therefore crucial. In addition, it is important to understand the relevance of customary frameworks and its relations with the statutory frameworks and state institutions and to recognise and understand the asymmetries of power with regards to HLP rights that exist in most settings as well as the specific constraints women and other disadvantaged groups face.
- **Make HLP due diligence a systematic part of the conception, design and execution of all humanitarian projects which require access to housing, land or natural resources.** If these projects proceed without a solid understanding of the underlying HLP rights, these projects can add fuel to existing conflicts and/or create new layers of conflict, which can expose intended beneficiaries to substantial protection risks, harm local communities, and cause major delays in the implementation of crucial projects. Donors often do not want to cover the added costs for proper due diligence, even though these are now part of minimum global standards of practice.
- **Ensure the mainstreaming of women's HLP rights.** Despite strong constitutional guarantees of equality and non-discrimination, women are often unable to assert their HLP rights in reality. It is therefore important to clarify women's HLP rights at all levels through participatory dialogues including women, to address traditional, cultural and other sensitivities and barriers that exist around women's HLP rights. Reconstruction funding can also be conditioned on involvement of women in decisions on HLP issues as well as the respect of basic HLP rights.

Across the objectives of prevention, response and solutions, **how can national political will, responsibility and capacity be catalysed and cultivated.**

- Strategies need to analyse and identify what are the realistic incentives for national political actors if HLP issues are addressed adequately. Covid-19 offers a good example of how these incentives can be formulated. i.e. without adequate housing promoting social distancing as a measure to hinder the further spread of the disease is not realistic.
- National political will, responsibility, and capacity are not homogeneous nor always clearly allocated. Several government entities may have overlapping jurisdiction/control over an issue like HLP. As such, HLP response to internal displacement requires consulting and getting buy-in from Land registries, Housing and land ministries, planning departments, and municipalities and local government units as well.

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.** Submissions can in these respects also address the role of the Private Sector, Regional or International Financial Institutions and other development partners and actors.

- Funding for projects that rely on access to HLP resources should require that implementers meaningfully integrate due diligence and security of tenure into project design and implementation. As long as donors do not require this within their projects, HLP will remain a 'residual' issue.
- Actors involved in negotiating peace agreements and other peacebuilding activities need to systematically incorporate HLP issues into negotiations. They need to understand how they have been a driver of conflict, the effects of the conflict on the HLP rights of the population and design strategies that address these issues in a sustainable manner. Recent experiences (e.g. Colombia) show that formally addressing HLP issues in peace processes and not following through commitments with concrete policies and actions can derail peace processes.

Focusing on solutions, your perspectives on **what has led to many situations of internal displacement remaining stalled for many years and how effective solutions can be catalysed, driven forward and supported.**

- Environmental degradation has increased competition for increasingly scarce resources – leading to increased conflict. Rural livelihoods solutions must also take environmental restoration into account (akin to rebuilding adequate shelters so that people can return to their homes), which must also address resource rights and governance.
- Solutions toward land restitution often do not take collective rights to land and natural resources into account – the resources that women (in general) and pastoralists rely upon for their livelihoods.
- **Effective solutions: Promote the right to restitution of HLP, including for displaced women, as a key element to achieving durable solutions.** Advocating for the inclusion of the protection of HLP resources and the right to restitution in peace agreements is pivotal to ensure long-lasting outcomes for displaced populations. Concretely, this translates in the analysis of relevant legal frameworks, documenting of HLP resources, and estimating the current destruction and damage of HLP resources. Many countries may not have official and comprehensive HLP registries (Myanmar). Documenting HLP at the onset of the emergency or conflict is therefore crucial to facilitate the protection of such resources and, subsequently, enable future sustainable restitution processes and prevent HLP disputes and secondary displacement. Information about the current HLP status and the procedures for restitution in the area of origin/return is as well critical in facilitating return and durable return of displaced persons.

- **Find alternative or complementary solutions to the right to restitution.** Considering that the limits of restitution in certain situations, return might not be an option or solution for all IDPs, for example, there is a need to find alternative or complementary solutions to it. HLP issues should not only be considered in the perspective of restitution and return but also in the context of other durable solutions such as local integration and relocation (Myanmar). In such situations, the focus could be on the issue of compensation for the loss of HLP resources, for example, or on the obligation for Governments to provide adequate housing to their citizens including IDPs.
- **The existence of effective mechanisms for conflict resolution plays an important role in achieving durable solutions.** Strengthen and/or enable dispute resolution mechanisms to settle HLP disputes and ensure that these mechanisms are accessible for and non-discriminatory to women and other disadvantaged groups.

Critical issues or questions as you see them 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.

- The unique needs of pastoral populations in displacement and return. Responses have historically focused on providing for sedentary populations.
- A need for a better analysis/data of how the situation of IDPs is different from persons who are not displaced to inform more effective solutions/responses. The lack of identity or civil documentation is one of the challenges faced by IDPs that prevents them to access basic services, for example. However, this lack of identity and civil documentation is often as well a challenge for the populations that are not displaced within that same context.
- Displaced peoples should be encouraged and supported in the safeguarding of property documentation. This goes beyond titles and includes any documents that demonstrate a connection to the land/property.

What steps could be taken to strengthen the effectiveness of response management, coordination and accountability at all levels in contexts of internal displacement?

- The implementation of strategies/reforms/and projects is often lacking, which leads to the creation of false expectations, and tensions with local communities. Participatory design of these initiatives must be coupled with concrete and realistic implementation plans which are accompanied by donors.
- The topic of HLP should be addressed through partnerships with a variety of stakeholders across the humanitarian and development response, including displaced people and affected communities because of its complex and multi-dimensional nature. There is a need for robust coordination between humanitarian and development actors, including land and urban experts to share their respective expertise and foster the necessary partnerships and relationships to the benefit of IDPs.
- The role that local HLP sub-clusters and working groups play within the cluster system at national level should be strengthened. These mechanisms are key to develop strategies and activities involving different sectors so the various dimensions of HLP (political, legal, social and economic) are addressed in a comprehensive manner. HLP is frequently regarded as a secondary humanitarian issue and willing actors end up covering it at the expense of other activities and with diminished capacity.

2. Returns and Durable Solutions

The key issues, problems or imperative which, as you see it, should be prioritised by the Panel in its analysis of the crisis of internal displacement today and **how prevention, response at large and solutions can be effectively advanced.**

- The Panel is well positioned to make important shifts in the approach to all three durable solutions for IDPs, and to provide greater clarity on concrete steps which can give rise to opportunities for safe, dignified, voluntary and sustainable return, local integration, or relocation. It will be important for the panel to further distinguish the way in which these solutions are addressed for IDPs than the way they are often addressed for other displaced populations. However, it will be similarly essential for the panel to provide greater clarity on the ways in which concepts and principles that underpin customary law on forced displacement – namely, access to territory and non-refoulement – apply specifically to those who are displaced within their own countries.
- While IDPs have the same rights regardless of which durable solution is pursued, the most effective means for fulfilling those rights will differ across the three solutions pathways. The panel is well placed to build on progress to date in this regard, and to increase interest from and mobilization of key actors who will be essential to significantly increasing the number of IDPs able to achieve any of the three solutions. Greater focus on local governance mechanisms and actors will be particularly important in this regard.
- It will be important to move away from the notion of “return as the preferred solution,” particularly in contexts of protracted internal displacement, and to bolster the narrative around the positive contributions of displaced persons to their communities, regardless of their places of origin. Return being the preferred solution is a concept largely tied to the refugee regime, in which the State providing refuge is providing protection when the origin State cannot or will not do so. Return being the preferred solution in the refugee context is not simply about people moving back to their place of origin but is also about a State being able to resume its responsibility to protect its citizenry. This is not the case in IDP contexts. Rather than focusing on the right to return – as is common in the discussion of solutions for refugees – the panel should focus on the right to freedom of movement and address the barriers that IDPs face to fulfilling that right.

Across the objectives of prevention, response and solutions, **how can national political will, responsibility and capacity be catalysed and cultivated.**

- Mobilization of national political will requires a more robust understanding of the various incentives and disincentives for authorities at all levels to recognize and respond to internal displacement than what we currently have. While many of these incentives and disincentives will be in flux, there may be key factors that can be leveraged to provoke action over a longer period.

Focusing on solutions, your perspectives on **what has led to many situations of internal displacement remaining stalled for many years** and **how effective solutions can be catalysed, driven forward and supported.**

- Beyond the obvious observation that protracted displacement exists where the root causes of that displacement continue to go unresolved, the achievement of durable

solutions has been equally hindered by a lack of clear policies and processes to address barriers to those solutions. Similarly, the process for an individual or group achieving one of three solutions remains vague, Responsibility for providing support to IDPs trying to achieve solutions is spread inconsistently between national and local government actors, UN Agencies, and NGOs. Full integration either back in their communities of origin, in their place of displacement, or in a third location, remains a largely subjective evaluation. National policies on internal displacement and related guidance need to give greater contextualized substance to the IASC Framework's eight criteria for achieving durable solutions. Moreover, the humanitarian system needs to designate more explicit responsibility for solutions and lines of accountability for solutions support.

- The panel should call for a process to:
 - Set minimum standards for information collection and sharing in durable solutions processes. These should include time limits on the validity of collected information, standards for ensuring accessibility of information for the targeted population, and core operational components of cross-border collaboration in information collection, dissemination, and situation monitoring.
 - Explicitly limit any coercive measures which incentivise a particular solution – most notably return – such as setting targets and quotas for return, restricting legal stay in the location of displacement (including by carrying out evictions or other measures specifically targeting IDPs), or limiting access to humanitarian assistance, basic services, and livelihoods.
 - Further clarify standards of safety, which must be met in return processes with operationally relevant benchmarks for achieving these standards.
 - Expand the standard of physical safety to address all widespread threat to life and physical integrity of a person, including threats that stem from generalised violence and disasters.
 - Detail the standards for ensuring the safeguarding of dignity of IDPs in durable solutions processes, and their agency in decision-making is respected
 - Define international responsibilities for the sustainability of durable solutions in concrete and actionable terms.

Critical issues or questions as you see them 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.

- There remain significant legitimate questions about how much the international community at large can and should be held responsible for ensuring the functioning of national systems and services in any country experiencing a crisis of internal displacement. Cultivating responsibility-sharing from States not directly affected by internal displacement will require the Panel to demonstrate important ways that internal displacement in a given State can and does have an impact on other States – either regionally or globally. Such an impact may be able to be captured in economic metrics, and/or through stability metrics (among other possibilities), but they will need to be significant enough for the broader region or globe to feel compelled to act. While progress on responsibility-sharing comes down to a fundamental question about generating political will, the ability to generate that political will is currently hindered by notable gaps in data and evidence.

- There is a significant data and analysis gap around the sustainability of solutions. In part this is due to the difficulty of defining the moment when a solution is reached (with the IASC framework having set quite a high bar along 8 rights groups), but is also related to the lack of clearly defined processes and support for IDPs to pursue durable solutions, and the related lack of monitoring and follow up to such processes. Even in circumstances where IDPs are being assisted to return or relocate – which requires defined points of intervention in the solution pathway - such processes are typically managed by the responsible governments and, in the best case, only broadly follow global standards and principles. Greater technical guidance that can be used to support each solution pathway needs to be provided, and monitoring and analysis of pre-, during – and post solution support needs to be in place to ensure that interventions are contributing to sustainable solutions for IDPs.

What steps could be taken to strengthen the effectiveness of response management, coordination and accountability at all levels in contexts of internal displacement?

- The current set-up for addressing internal displacement within the humanitarian system is extremely piecemeal – with different agencies designated as being responsible for IDP issues in different contexts where they are determined to have capacity to work beyond their core mandates. There needs to be explicit responsibility for IDP protection assigned to the relevant UN Agencies and mechanisms, as appropriate to their expertise and ongoing work. Such a designation of responsibility should happen in a way that both emphasizes the importance of addressing internal displacement as a core concern rather than as an ‘addition’ to other work and allows for true accountability when operational and policy-focused agencies engage.
- We need to enhance the effectiveness of clusters at global and field level through shared leadership and responsibilities between UN lead agencies and NGOs, thus increasing inclusiveness, ownership
- There needs to be shared leadership and appropriate representation of NGOs in cluster leadership structures allowing NGOs to contribute to defining cluster strategic direction, ensuring collective oversight, transparency and accountability, allowing timely collective decision-making on critical issues, and better leveraging collective resources and expertise
- There needs to be shared leadership through systematic co-ordination of the clusters at global and field level with an NGO alongside the Cluster Lead Agency.

3. Humanitarian Financing

New or creative financing solutions which can be built up or better utilized in enabling more effective responses to displacement and the achievement of durable solutions.

Introduction

NRC is committed to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action. The current system is far from fit for purpose, and NRC has conducted multiple research projects, designed innovative solutions and consistently advocates to improve the system and to get more aid into the hands of people in need.

This section looks at the future humanitarian financing structure in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, and its five pillars for success. Each pillar draws on existing research and examples and identifies where the High-Level Panel has a vantage point in advocating for positive change to ultimately allow agencies to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their operations for Internally Displaced Populations.

The future humanitarian financing structure

Humanitarian financing is at a turning point and the search for financing solutions to enable more effective responses to displacement is very timely. The Covid-19 response has accelerated some of the processes initiated by the [Grand Bargain](#) on efficiency. This is also the moment to implement the other two main recommendations from the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing issued in 2016: 1) broadening up the resource basis, and 2) shrink the needs.

The future humanitarian financing structure emerging from the global Covid-19 crisis must learn from the well-documented and structural limitations of the current system, while being able to appropriately respond to new challenges arising from this unprecedented modern-times global shock.

The system that rises from the ashes will no doubt need to follow a ‘build back better’ approach around five pillars:

1. Quality of funding expressed as a function of the level of earmarking and predictability;
2. Reduction, simplification, and harmonisation of administrative procedures;
3. Financing the humanitarian and development nexus;
4. Innovative and diversified financing instruments;
5. Preserving and protecting principled humanitarian action and humanitarian space from politicisation and criminalisation

Crucial to the success of the **next iteration of the humanitarian financing structure** will be its ability to interpret the needs and desires of each constituency (that is NGOs, donors and UN Agencies), and ensure a full and equitable sharing of risk among donors and implementing organisations.

While the five pillars outlined below draw on existing research and best practices, NRC is further informing its approach to the future of humanitarian financing through a study to assess trends and best practices, including deep dive on protection financing. This study will be of use to the Panel and can be provided once completed at the end of July.

1. Quality of funding

The broader definition of quality funding implies the provision of unearmarked and, when relevant, multi-year funding to ensure flexibility, adaptability, and predictability of humanitarian operations. While donors made some progress as part of their engagement in the Grand Bargain, **a lot still remains to be done, by donors and implementing partners alike. Implementing partners need to do more to stockpile the evidence and examples on the benefits of quality funding so that donors can, in turn, increase this quality funding and to ensure that the benefits trickle down the implementation chain.**

NRC is working on gathering this much requested evidence. As co-convener of the clustered Grand Bargain workstreams 7+8 on quality funding, and in collaboration with Development Initiatives, NRC launched a series of initiatives to collect best practices. **We hope the analysis of these best practices will lead to a possible scale up of quality funding by donors.** At the moment, the long list of good practices does not include any example of financing for protection nor financing for displacement. It is imperative to identify opportunities for this to happen in the future.

2. Reduction, simplification, and harmonisation of administrative procedures

The humanitarian community enshrined the need for a reduced administrative burden in its most recent transformative agenda (Grand Bargain) agreed following the recommendations of the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing (2016) to improve the overall delivery of aid. Numerous initiatives were established within the Grand Bargain workstreams, but as Covid-19 crisis struck, humanitarian agencies and donors alike scrambled to put in place the flexibility measures actually needed to allow aid providers to react quickly and efficiently while dealing with *less paper and more aid*.

While we welcome the measures (e.g. no-cost extensions; increased budget flexibility; re-programming), in most cases these are ad hoc and rushed, and not sustainable in the long-term. While NGOs wholly recognise the importance of accountability, and support reasonable accountability measures, many have tried to propose and introduce simplified and harmonised procedures to lower the administrative burden but have seen very limited results. **NRC believes in the need to tackle the whole project cycle with a collective approach that prioritises the need to channel more resources to humanitarian operations and less to dealing with administrative issues.**

Many initiatives tackling the whole project cycle already, of which some will be listed below, but a lack of urgency and political will has hampered significant progress, even for those once considered to be ‘low hanging fruits’ of the Grand Bargain. One such example is the [harmonised narrative reporting template](#), which, three years after the beginning of a successful pilot project, still struggles to take hold.

The [NRC-led Money Where it Counts initiative](#)¹ for the harmonisation of cost classification and financial reporting is another of those initiatives. Others directly

¹ Link expires after 30 days – please contact issie.cobb@nrc.no for the document.

tackle the initial needs assessment, due diligence process (e.g. [UNPP](#), [CHS](#), [GFGP](#)), the proposal writing and narrative reporting (e.g. [8+3](#)), and the end-of project audit (e.g. single audit initiative).

The interpretation of transparency and accountability hardly varies among global donors, as demonstrated through their participation in pooled funds. Pooled funds, such as the OCHA-managed Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) and Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), seem to have succeeded at providing donors with sufficient accountability in a harmonised manner. Proposals, reporting, due diligence, audit, counter-terrorism legislation and more are all unified and all donors accept these procedures.

Beyond pooled funds, however, **a lack of political will and dedicated funding resources have been the two key factors hampering progress of initiatives aimed at reducing the administrative burden.** For a system to be deemed fit for purpose, the number of conditions and myriad of different ways of satisfying them needs to be greatly reduced and limited to the essence of transparency and accountability.

3. Financing the humanitarian and development nexus

The complexity of displacement crises will continue to rise due to concurring and exacerbating factors such as the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, climate change and more frequent disasters, but also more severe and recurring economic and social crises in both affected and donor countries. A single approach to the crisis is hardly fit for purpose in most cases, and humanitarian assistance needs to be part of a continuum that allows aid to flow from the early stages of an emergency to so-called durable solutions and eventually to the focus on developmental interventions.

Likewise, **financing instruments that are only tackling one phase of a crisis will become increasingly less suited if they are not adapted and properly connected to each other,** ensuring that aid organisations can continue to provide assistance throughout the different phases of a crisis.

In its study [“Financing the Nexus”](#), NRC, FAO and UNDP started exploring existing approaches in the field with the intent to **highlight best practices worth adopting in the future, as well as to stress the benefits and efficiency of such approaches.** While initial in nature, the study provided important elements for discussion especially in the context of the IASC Results Groups on Humanitarian Financing and Nexus, **but more is needed to identify the next phase of the initiative and create additional evidence and make concrete suggestions on how to adapt existing financing instruments to facilitate the humanitarian development nexus.**

4. Innovative and diversified financing instruments

Diversification is key to the success of any future humanitarian financing strategy. The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) donors are still contributing almost the entirety of the humanitarian funding channelled through traditional mechanisms.

The humanitarian community needs true selfless leadership to advance its knowledge of non-traditional and innovative humanitarian financing mechanisms and donors. UN, NGOs, and donors themselves need to invest and lengthen their return horizons to enable significant diversification. Typical humanitarian project-lengths of one- or two-

years pale in comparison to what is afforded to other sectors to research, develop, and test new ideas. Moreover, with very few donors willing to cover the true project costs, agencies are unable to dedicate any significant portion of overhead to activities – such as that of multi-year research projects - that are not deemed essential and critical to their mandate. For this to happen, **organisations need to be able to access dedicated and realistic funding streams to also allow them to attract and retain professionals not normally found within the ranks of humanitarian organisations, that bring in knowledge at the intersection of private and public financing.**

In fact, for results to happen, the **humanitarian sector will need to drastically increase its engagement with the private sector while maintaining its identity and principles** but ensuring that it is able to clearly articulate the added value of public-private partnerships. In this sense, a lot more cross-fertilisation is necessary between financing worlds (public and private) that are on two completely different wave lengths. **Exchanges, financing instruments testing, and an overall increase in risk appetite driven by current donors should form the basis of a new integrated cooperation.**

In doing so, we need to build a more inclusive humanitarian system. We need to engage with fora and initiatives in the global South and encourage leading organisations (from the global South) to include us in their strategic thinking processes, to learn and unlock resources for the broader humanitarian community in a more inclusive manner. For instance, many conversations concerning Islamic Social Financing happen without the presence of leading experts, that might not partake in the traditional humanitarian coordination mechanism.

5. Preserving and protecting principled humanitarian action and humanitarian space from politicisation and criminalisation

The main objectives of humanitarian aid are to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity. At times, achieving these aims could indirectly benefit the national interest of a donor country or align with the aims of private sector actors, for example by contributing to the reduction of poverty, conflict and the spread of infectious disease. However, the moral imperative in the provision of humanitarian assistance, rather than any potential political or financial benefits to other actors, should be what drives the provision of aid.

The humanitarian principles are the foundation of humanitarian action, giving us an ethical operational framework for carrying out our work, and ensuring our work is actually humanitarian. The principles enable humanitarian organisations to gain and maintain acceptance from communities and parties to conflicts, allowing us to access those in need, and ensuring the safety of staff. The principles are also a crucial risk management tool; to support or endorse any group's political or security aims, including through the provision of aid, contravenes the principles.

In the current environment, space for humanitarian action is increasingly under threat. Adherence to the principles is already impeded by counterterrorism measures and sanctions, as outlined in NRC's [report](#) Principles under Pressure. Approaches to the nexus often tend to be development-oriented without recognising the fact that in conflict-affected environments the humanitarian mode of action is crucial in terms of addressing urgent needs of displaced people independently of political and military dynamics. Increasing partnerships with private sector actors also risk the co-optation of humanitarian action for non-humanitarian aims. **It is crucial that the preservation of**

space for humanitarian action is placed at the centre of the search for financing solutions to enable more effective responses to displacement.

4. Disaster Displacement and displacement in the context of Climate Change

The key issues, problems or imperative which, as you see it, should be prioritized by the Panel in its analysis of the crisis of internal displacement today and how prevention, response at large and solutions can be effectively advanced.

Be better prepared, invest more in prevention, and work early on towards solutions, including with much more attention on restoring livelihoods.

To achieve these goals, it is necessary to strengthen the capacities of governments, the UN system and other relevant stakeholders. This can be supported by generating better data and knowledge, strengthening the nexus between humanitarian, development and climate change adaptation / disaster risk reduction actors and establishing robust and predictable and robust financing mechanisms.

Almost every second, a person becomes displaced by disaster. On average, 25 million people flee sudden onset disasters each year (IDMC; 2018). If we include displacement associated with slow-onset hazards such as drought, the global figure would be significantly higher. Given the scale of disaster displacement and its vast humanitarian consequences, effective disaster risk reduction must be implemented to prevent individuals and communities from becoming displaced. Recognising potential risks, mitigating them where possible and ensuring that countries and communities are robustly prepared helps to avoid displacement and respond resiliently where displacement does occur. Furthermore, measures to “build back better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction enable displaced people to rebuild their lives.

UNDRR, as the UN focal point for disaster risk reduction (DRR), published in 2019 the guidelines [“Disaster Displacement: How to Reduce Risk, Address Impacts and Strengthen Resilience”](#). Developed by the [Norwegian Refugee Council](#), in partnership with the [Platform on Disaster Displacement, UNHCR, IOM, IDMC and the German Foreign Federal Office](#), the guide offers practical guidance to help Government authorities integrate disaster displacement and other related forms of human mobility into regional, national, subnational and local disaster risk reduction strategies.

NRC proposes that *the Panel prioritise disaster risk reduction measures to prevent displacement caused by disasters in its analysis*, and it submits the guidelines [“Disaster Displacement: How to Reduce Risk, Address Impacts and Strengthen Resilience”](#) for the Panel’s review.

Across the objectives of prevention, response and solutions, how can national political **will, responsibility and capacity** be catalysed and cultivated.

In regard to **responsibility**, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework) identifies States as responsible for preventing and reducing

disaster risk.² The Sendai Framework Target (B) sets the goal of substantially reducing the number of people affected by disasters globally by 2030. “*Directly affected* are those who have suffered injury, illness or other health effects; who were evacuated, displaced, relocated or have suffered direct damage to their livelihoods, economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets.”³

To reduce disaster risk and its impacts, including displacement, the Sendai Framework encourages “the adoption of policies and programmes addressing disaster-induced human mobility to strengthen the resilience of affected people and that of host communities”.⁴ It further identifies the **development of disaster risk reduction strategies** at national and local levels to guide disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. A 2018 review of national DRR strategies⁵ revealed that the great majority of DRR strategies did not address disaster displacement. As the previous international DRR framework was silent on disaster displacement and the Sendai Framework was only adopted in 2015, this omission is partially explained. The Sendai Framework Target (E) to revise or develop DRR strategies by 2020 is thus an opportunity for Governments to include measures on disaster displacement when revising or developing their strategies.

Regarding **capacity**, the aforementioned guideline “Disaster Displacement: How to Reduce Risk, Address Impacts and Strengthen Resilience” was developed as part of the UNDRR series “Words into Action” (WiA) to offer specific advice to implement the Sendai Framework (hereafter WiA on Disaster Displacement). The WiA on Disaster Displacement is available online in several languages and will be disseminated at regional DRR platforms. The project “Reducing Disaster Risk, Supporting Resilience and Protecting Disaster Displaced People—Implementation of the Words into Action Guide on Disaster Displacement” supports interested Governments in using the WiA on Disaster Displacement for policy revision, as well as builds awareness at regional level of the need to address disaster displacement in DRR strategies, policies and programmes. The project further aims to encourage policy makers and practitioners to use the WiA on Disaster Displacement through online tools and the development of a companion checklist to assess progress in addressing disaster displacement. During 2018-2019, a previous project enabled support to South Africa and Nepal to begin the policy making process to address disaster displacement. In 2019, the current project-built capacity in the Andean Region in collaboration with the Andean Disaster Prevention and Response Committee (CAPRADE). In the period 2020-2021 the project is continuing its support to South Africa and is likely to extend it to Mozambique, as requested, as well as to the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for the Eastern Africa Region.

Regarding national **political will**, the current pandemic provides an excellent opportunity to catalyse political interest in reducing disaster risk to avoid future impacts. Governments must not only take appropriate responsive action but also

² UNISDR, ‘Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030’ 19(a)

https://www.unisdr.org/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf

³ United Nations General Assembly, ‘Report of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Indicators and Terminology Relating to Disaster Risk Reduction’ <http://undocs.org/A/71/644>

⁴ UNISDR, ‘Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030’ 30 (I).

https://www.unisdr.org/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf

⁵ Platform on Disaster Displacement, 2018. Mapping the Baseline – To What Extent Are Displacement and Other Forms of Human Mobility Integrated in National and Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies? <https://disasterdisplacement.org/portfolio-item/drrmapping>

commit to “building back better”. In the context of Covid-19, “building back better” means improving preparedness for the next biological hazard. It also means addressing the underlying vulnerabilities that the pandemic is exposing: the most vulnerable, including internally displaced people, are disproportionately affected.⁶ As Governments strengthen their DRR strategies and policies, the WiA on Disaster Displacement can assist them in including measures to effectively reduce displacement risk, address impacts and strengthen resilience.

Recommendation: Governments should adopt in the coming years, MoUs applicable to future disasters between governments of disaster prone countries and the UN, outlining the respective roles, ways of cooperation (including with regard to the cluster system), and technical support provided by the international community to national, sub-national, and, where appropriate, local authorities; DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, and regularly conducting joint government-UN-civil society simulation exercises to test whether the arrangements set out in the MoU work.

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. Submissions can in these respects also address the role of the Private Sector, Regional or International Financial Institutions and other development partners and actors.

The coordinated implementation of development objectives, based on knowledge sharing across communities of practice, can build disaster resilience and should be promoted. Coordination and joint planning within Governments across sectors promote risk-informed decision making to enable sustainable development. Many countries have disaster risk reduction platforms that bring together policy makers from relevant ministries (such as finance, housing, health, agriculture, environment, among others) with risk experts. At national level, hazard-specific forums such as a National Framework for Climate Services might bring together those who produce risk information with those requiring it for planning.

Similarly, at regional level, risk-monitoring centres share risk information such as seasonal forecasts, and regional intergovernmental institutions⁷ support the development of regional strategies to prevent and prepare for disasters that may affect the region. As disaster displacement increases, regional institutions are increasingly seeking to build the capacity of their members to address it; the project to implement

⁶ According to the IOM Statement on Covid-19 and Mobility, “In the short-term, within countries that have been hardest hit, migrants are exposed to many of the same vulnerabilities as other citizens, and often to a greater extent. Foreign nationals are more likely to be in overcrowded households or employed in short-term, or precarious work with limited provision for sick leave. Other migrants, in both regular and irregular status, may have limited access to public health services, or fear accessing such services. They may also be excluded from public health information programming or, when informed, lack the financial means to manage periods of self-isolation or quarantine. Across the world, in less affected countries, displaced populations in camps or camp-like settings are already highly vulnerable to contracting infectious disease, in conditions where a virus can more easily spread. Others caught up conflict may be some of the hardest populations to reach and monitor, yet most ill-equipped to protect themselves against infection.” See https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/iom_covid_key_messages_19-03_final.pdf

⁷ Examples include CAPRADE, CEPREDENAC, IGAD and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), among others.

the WiA on Disaster Displacement (described in response to question 2) directly responds to this need.

To foster a more integrated approach on disaster displacement, the Panel might encourage Governments to **designate a disaster displacement representative within existing coordination mechanisms and a cross cross-ministerial working group** for disaster risk reduction nationally and regionally. At international level, the Panel might **promote monitoring and reporting of disaster displacement** through the development of an indicator for the Sendai Monitor (see response to question 6).

Recommendations:

- Systematically use the Comprehensive Durable Solutions Approach with all its elements in situations of large-scale situations of protracted disaster displacement.
- Systematically involve the private sector including, in particular, through public-private partnerships in areas such as housing solutions for IDPs who cannot return, peri-urban food production and value chains for IDPs (for instance, drought-displaced pastoralists) who cannot go back to their former rural lifestyles; as well as by indirectly supporting private service providers such as private clinics and schools (e.g. through a voucher program allowing IDPs to use them) in situations where governmental services were notoriously weak or absent even before the disaster.
- Systematically use resilience and solutions markers for humanitarian and development programmes and projects.

New or creative financing solutions which can be built up or better utilized in enabling more effective responses to displacement and the achievement of durable solutions.

Facilitate access to climate change funding and financing to address disaster displacement, including through a specific displacement facility to be set up within the existing climate change funding and financing architecture. Such resources should, in particular, support efforts to help IDPs shift to new forms of livelihoods (in particular agricultural and livestock production) when they cannot return to their former lifestyles due to adverse impacts of climate change.

Recommendations for actions Governments can take:

- Provide for the flexible use of budgets allocated to relevant line ministries to prioritise support to displacement-affected communities when disasters strike;
- Allocate resources to local governments/authorities hosting substantial numbers of disaster IDPs or returnees in accordance with the needs of the de facto population rather than based on official population numbers.

Critical issues or questions as you see them 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.

Governments report on their progress toward the seven global targets of the Sendai Framework, as well as related dimensions reflected in SDGs 1, 11 and 13, through the [Sendai Monitor](#). Progress is self-measured according to 38 indicators established by the Open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction (OIEWG). There is no target explicitly on disaster displacement, but Target B calls to substantially reduce the number of people affected by disasters globally, which includes people displaced by disasters. Governments may also report progress through custom targets and indicators that are defined by Member States to measure their progress against the four priorities of the Sendai Framework.

The Panel might **encourage the development of standardized custom indicators on disaster displacement** based on the work of the [Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics](#) (EGRIS) for national reporting through the Sendai Monitor.

As the ability to report on progress depends on countries' ability to collect, analyse and monitor displacement data over time, the WiA on Disaster Displacement recommends developing capacity in this area. The Panel might **encourage national statistics bureaus to include disaster displacement data among that collected in their national statistics schemes**.

What steps could be taken to strengthen the effectiveness of response management, coordination and accountability at all levels in contexts of internal displacement?

The WiA on Disaster Displacement provides specific guidance to improve the management and coordination of disaster displacement through prevention and planning. The recommendations aim to support policy makers and practitioners increase their understanding of their disaster displacement risk; strengthen governance to better manage disaster displacement risk; invest in policies and strategies for resilience; and enhance disaster preparedness for effective response to disaster displacement and to “build back better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

A few illustrative recommendations offered by the WiA on Disaster Displacement include:

- Facilitate the replacement of lost or destroyed legal documents by establishing advance measures to reduce administrative hurdles for displaced people in accessing services;
- Allocate land for use as temporary displacement sites and for potential permanent relocation;
- Protect land, property and other productive assets during displacement through laws and policies;
- Include the participation of people at risk of displacement and those previously displaced by disasters in preparedness, contingency and disaster response plans;
- Establish and strengthen public and private employment partnerships and provide skills and language training to help match displaced people with local employers' needs and facilitate their integration into the local labour market.