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UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement  
- **Call for Submissions and Inputs** -

The Secretary General's High-Level [Panel](#) on Internal Displacement has been established to generate recommendations for stepped – up actions by Governments, the United Nations and other actors to better prevent, respond to and drive forward solutions to internal displacement<sup>1</sup>.

The Panel has been called upon to think out of the box, be bold and innovative in its analysis and practical in its recommendations. The Panel is committed to carry out face-to-face consultations with a wide range of stakeholders at global, regional, and national levels. In light however of the current situation resulting from the global coronavirus crisis, it is for now prioritizing channels for gathering inputs remotely.

As a first step, the Panel is hereby calling for written contributions. In the spirit of the approach indicated already, the submissions should be bold, creative and practical. They need not focus on the day to day activities or programmes of the contributor but rather on what can make a difference on the respective challenges and imperatives of internal displacement.

Without intending thereby to restrict the nature and scope of the inputs, the questions outlined below can be used a guide in formulating the submissions:

- 1. 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.**

Internal displacement is an area where many of the asks of the UN development system reform can materialize.

First, the imperative of prevention. Analysing and addressing the root causes and drivers of displacement, e.g. conflict, climate change, poverty, lack of access to basic services and resources, etc., in the first place is critical to prevent people from moving within their own country or across borders in search of a better life. Internal displacement has reached unprecedented levels, and prevention is the most effective way to address it. In 2018, more than 41 million people were displaced as a result of conflict or violence, and an additional 17 million people were displaced by natural disasters. More than 40 percent of the total Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) globally are in three countries: Colombia, Syria and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Climate change-related displacements are also on the rise. In 2018, heightened vulnerability and exposure to sudden onset hazards resulted in 17.2 million new disaster displacements in 144 countries and territories. Small islands, mainly in East

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<sup>1</sup> As per its Terms of Reference, the [High-Level Panel](#) has been tasked to look in these respects particularly at national responsibility and capacity; climate change and/or disaster-induced displacement; the humanitarian – development – peace nexus; the role of International Financial Institutions, the Private Sector and new forms of partnership at large; participation and inclusion of IDPs in the SDGs; improving the collection and use of data and evidence; new and creative forms of financing; and, as cross-cutting themes attention to protection needs, vulnerability and the unique experiences and effects of displacement of people of different genders, ages, abilities, and diversities.

Asia and the Pacific region, are particularly vulnerable and exposed to natural disasters driven by climate change. UN Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams can concretely contribute to prevention efforts, through their advocacy and leadership of collective support to countries. Guided by the 2030 Agenda imperative to leave no one behind, the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework represents an important opportunity to identify, analyse and respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in specific country contexts, including IDPs. The Common Country Analysis now becomes a system-wide, in-depth, impartial, evidence-based and multi-dimensional risk analysis which outlines a country's progress, but also gaps towards achieving the 2030 Agenda. It is updated regularly to respond to changes in the country situation, identifying the people left behind or at risk of being left behind- including IDPs, their vulnerabilities and the impact on their lives.

Second, the importance of cross-pillar approaches. Tackling displacement requires close collaboration and coordination across humanitarian, development and peace actors. Over time, protracted displacement has been traditionally addressed by the humanitarian community with short-term interventions. Finding durable and sustainable solutions to displacement requires greater engagement by the development community and conflict-sensitive programming that promotes social cohesion and a culture of tolerance, peace and inclusiveness among communities. The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) catalyzes long-term solutions, by supporting peacebuilding interventions, social cohesion and inclusive programming in complex contexts, including in displaced communities, such as in Darfur, Sudan. The UN reform and new Cooperation Frameworks place a heavy emphasis on cross-pillar collaboration, with new investments already made in the Development Coordination Office at HQ and regional levels to facilitate such linkages.

Third, the imperative of integrated approaches to accelerate progress towards sustainable development and sustaining peace. The connections across social, economic and environmental issues are critical to understand and respond to root causes of vulnerability and build more resilient societies vis-à-vis a broad range of threats and risks. Full-time and impartial Resident Coordinators have now more time to engage with people, communities, authorities and partners at the national and local levels and foster collective solutions. They also have greater authority, capacities and tools, and are in a better position to leverage and make effective use of expertise and assets at the global, regional and country levels to help countries address the drivers of internal displacement and find durable solutions. The UNCT capacity also reflects system-wide expertise, no longer the only expertise provided by resident organizations. There are several contexts where Resident Coordinators have taken a strong lead in convening the entire UN system in support of the joint priority of internal displacement. In Somalia, the DSRSG/RC/HC Office hosts a Durable Solutions (DS) Unit to coordinate and ensure coherent and sustained UN support, programming and funding to durable solutions in line with the National Development Plan. The DS Unit also ensures coherent support to strengthen the capacity of the government at federal, state and local levels to provide durable solutions for the internally displaced, returning refugees and their host communities.

Fourth, it is also important to note that there is an issue with some governments who do not recognize anything called 'internal displacement'. The justification is that, as a citizen of a country, people are mobile and change their place of location for multiple reasons. By asserting there is a separate category of people in this manner gives an impression that governments are complicit to making people move forcibly. The panel should make a compelling case on how internal displacement is different than say, migration to urban centers. A strong human rights component is also critical. This includes places where diplomatic ties and/or sanctions are imposed. A primary example is in Syria and Iraq where issues of internal displacement are

discussed in the context of resilience and stability programming.

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

The UN system could more effectively use the empowered role of UN Resident Coordinators, their access to the highest authorities in country, their leverage of UN Country Team entities, their access to the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General and their ability to leverage global financing instruments to create, cultivate and catalyze national political will in support of prevention and response efforts to displacement.

Involving the most marginalized countries in these discussions, many of whom are in active conflict or protracted crisis, is critical. Rather than imposing sanctions and other political restrictions on such governments, creating space and using the RC and UNCT programming are key to engage in a dialogue to find solutions.

There should also be a focus on ensuring that in contexts with a political-peacekeeping mission/envoy and a RC/HC, the political/peace and development communities work closely and coherently together and agree on collective parameters of engagement that support the RC leadership and create the development space to negotiate solutions with national actors.

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

A closer look at the international support and reliance on external remittances to secure the national budget is needed to generate a more cohesive response. In some cases, like Jordan, bilateral support, especially from ODA will be the single most important financial contribution. The UN's role is not to access, but to influence how the money is allocated on the priority areas that UN has assessed. A stronger, evidence-based and risk-informed CCA can provide the right platform for such discussions as we have seen in Lebanon, where it was the complementary piece to the World Bank's analysis that led to a joint initiative for the first national development plan in three decades. As a forward-looking analysis, the CCA has become increasingly important to create a shared understanding of structural factors affecting the lives and livelihoods of people, and identify historical, current and emerging political, security, social, economic, disaster and environmental risks that could lead to or exacerbate crises, as well as internal displacement. This is critical to identify the strategic and programmatic entry points to anticipate, prevent and mitigate displacement as well as the actors better positioned to address it.

The Islamic IFIs are a vast network of organizations that have a set of values closely aligned with the UN on equality, solidarity, protection of the poor, relief, social justice and social obligation. Relatively untapped, the network extends far beyond the Islamic Development Bank. Bahrain, Kuwait, UAE and KSA have been actively engaged in working as a partner of the UN, especially on the humanitarian work.

International Financial Institutions (IFIs) more broadly could also play a critical role to provide

the resources required to implement long-term solutions for displaced people, in coordination with the national and local governments and the UN system.

#### **4. 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 catalyzed, driven forward and supported**

Based on the experience on the ground, some factors have proven to be critical in catalyzing sustainable solutions.

The first is the engagement of local governments, such as municipalities or sub-regional governments. In most situations, local governments are the frontline responders to their communities and thus the institutions in charge of addressing people's needs, including of IDPs as well as of host communities, finding solutions for their peaceful and positive coexistence and their integration, where appropriate. Somalia is a good example where several mayors have taken the lead to coordinate delivery of immediate life-saving support to IDPs and host communities, while implementing measures to provide displaced people with sustained access to basic services, livelihoods, shelter and some property to restart their lives. The city of Baidoa, the capital of Somalia's South West State, is an example of this approach. While addressing internal displacement and devising solutions, it is critical to consider the specific consequences of displacement on women and girls. For instance, displaced women and girls face critical issues, such as risks of abuse, harassment and violence, particularly in conflict contexts, or enhanced challenges to find employment and livelihood opportunities particularly in urban settings. Local government and partners need to take these issues into account and create a conducive environment to address them.

The second factor is a whole-of-society approach. Tackling displacement in a sustainable and effective way requires engaging with multiple stakeholders, starting with the displaced people that do have aspirations for themselves and their families. It is also important to ensure all efforts undertaken by the society, i.e. governments, national and international civil society organizations, the international aid community, the private sector, academia and any other relevant stakeholders are coordinated coherently and in a mutually reinforcing way. UN Resident Coordinators are uniquely placed to leverage expertise, knowledge and resources from the whole UN system, at the country, regional and global levels, to support national and local partners in this effort, as required.

The third factor is the importance to go beyond humanitarian, short-term approaches that normally prevail in displacement settings. This requires greater funding flexibility as well as enhanced development interventions in fragile and volatile contexts to tackle the structural drivers of displacement or reduce its impact on hosting communities. The Grand Bargain and the Agenda for Humanity are important commitments by Member States and the international community towards this objective, but more efforts are needed to achieve sustainable and long-lasting results.

However, it is critical to note that this has limited effect in cases of displacement resulting from a political failure (e.g. the displacement of the Palestinians, both internally and externally) and where the UN is proposing an operational solution to a political question. In such cases, there is little the UN development system can do shy of mitigating further displacement and advocating equally among countries.

IOM can play an exceptionally important role in qualifying the context and monitoring the situation of displacement which could then be used for advocacy with Member States, individually or at a sub-regional level. OHCHR can do the same with shaping the evidence and narrative on IDPs and human rights.

There are several country examples where the UN system has collectively engaged with partners, affected people and authorities to promote complementary and mutually reinforcing interventions to catalyze and support sustainable solutions to internal displacement.

In Pakistan, the UNCT support interventions across humanitarian, development and peace for more than five million people who have gone through repeated periods of displacement over the last 30 years. The work involves coherent interventions across humanitarian, development and peace partners to rehabilitate basic service infrastructure, ensure quality education, support skills development, and create livelihoods opportunities for IDPs in the newly merged districts in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. Support to governance, legal reforms and capacity building is also provided.

In Pakistan, in 2019, the UNCT, in collaboration with the HCT, also provided humanitarian assistance to one million people affected by repeated droughts, the worst being the one from 2018-2019 in Sindh and Baluchistan, which displaced hundreds of thousands more people. The UN and its partners provided short-term humanitarian assistance but complemented it with development support on nutrition, agricultural livelihoods and improved water supplies.

In Myanmar, the UNCT support Rakhine State IDPs through an area-based programme approach. The programme delivers integrated solutions and combines the humanitarian response with developmental interventions that address the key drivers of poverty, vulnerability, exclusion, inter-communal conflict, weakness of the social contract between the state and the people, and enhanced support to communities to rebuild critical infrastructure.

In Afghanistan, in the first half of 2019, about 319,000 new displacements were recorded, 213,000 associated with conflict and 106,000 due to disasters. The UN Country Team worked together with the HCT to help them and the host communities through:

1. Increased access to basic services for community resilience and social cohesion;
2. Improved access to adequate land and housing;
3. Improved access to livelihoods and jobs through market-based programming;
4. Facilitating voluntary, gradual and safe return, regular and responsible migration and mobility by implementing well-planned and managed policies; and
5. Ensuring access of the returnees and displaced populations, and host communities to the infrastructure services in areas of high return and displacement, including (or particularly) in the returnee townships.

**5. 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.**

More flexible, less risk averse and increased development funding would be needed to facilitate a programmatic shift towards long-term solutions. The private sector plays an important role to invest in provision of services as well as creating job opportunities and

livelihoods for IDPs and host communities.

However, financing is not always the issue. Many times, when a single community, like IDPs, is singled out for financial assistance and/or livelihood support, it can cause tensions. For countries that do not recognize internal displacement or where the IDPs are ethnically, religiously or racially different to the governing class, the selective financial will only exacerbate the situation further; particularly if there is a large poor segment of the population more favorable to the government. This is the case in Syria, Yemen and Iraq. Care should be taken in framing and offering opportunities that do not inadvertently create even greater inequality or tensions.

It may also be necessary not only to create jobs and livelihood opportunities. Where IDPs or a sub-set of the IDP population do not have the requisite skill set (financial literacy, accounting, computer literacy), social mobility or access to social support services (child care, banking), the job programmes will be meaningless. Without stereotyping, this is a key barrier for many women, poor men or those without proper education.

**6. 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.**

In humanitarian analyses and responses, IDP data, needs and issues are well reflected. The Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) managed by IOM is the primary source of information for displaced people at the country level. It provides granular information about the composition of the displaced population, their needs, vulnerabilities and movements on a regular basis to inform humanitarian operations. Other ad-hoc, specific assessments, such as household-level multi-sectoral needs assessments, may also be conducted by other humanitarian organizations as required. Globally, displacement data is aggregated and analysed by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) to inform analyses of trends, forecasting, inform policies and provide decision-makers with the evidence to make informed decisions.

This information is currently not used to the same extent in development work, planning and programming. Thus, there is a great potential for collaboration across the humanitarian and development communities to come together and use this wealth of data to inform development programming to better address the vulnerabilities of displaced people and ensure they are not left behind. The new generation of Common Country Analyses (CCAs) and Cooperation Frameworks provide an excellent entry point to the UN system to create a common understanding of IDPs' needs and vulnerabilities and collectively devise a strategy to support people, communities and governments to address them. Please refer to question 4 as well.

In addition, while a lot of information, data and analyses on internal displacement are available, good practices and lessons learned are not systematically collected or shared across countries, regions or organizations (with a few exceptions). A knowledge platform gathering these practices and making them available to people, partners, organizations, and governments working on internal displacement would be a useful and practical tool to support countries.

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

Please see answer to question 4. Three main elements could be considered to strengthen the effectiveness of response management and accountability: i. Empower national and local governments, by strengthening their capacity, resources and accountability; ii. Adopt a whole-of-society approach, starting with engaging with displaced people and host communities; and iii. Go beyond humanitarian assistance, by adopting cross-pillar approaches to analysis, planning, programming and financing. Please also see question 1 above for parameters of engagement.

**8. Across the questions and elements highlighted above, it will be appreciated if the submissions:**

- i. Highlight the protection needs, vulnerability and unique experiences and effects of displacement on people of different genders, ages, abilities and diversities.**
- ii. Address the questions of meaningful participation and inclusion of the internally displaced and affected communities in the respective responses.**
- iii. Include examples, practices or experiences which help illustrate the questions at stake and, in particular, from which lessons or conclusions can be drawn.**

Agencies, Funds and Programmes implementing projects on the ground to address this question.

Submissions should be sent as either an MS Word or PDF attachment to [idpspanel@un.org](mailto:idpspanel@un.org) by **24 April 2020**. Submissions can be made in English, French and Spanish.

All submissions received by the Panel will normally be posted on the Panel's public website due to be launched shortly. Should you wish for your submission not to be published publicly, please indicate accordingly in your message transmitting it.

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