



# Chief Executives Board for Coordination

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## Report of the High-level Committee on Programmes at its forty-eighth session

### United Nations system-wide approach to internal displacement

#### I. Introduction

1. The year 2024 represents the culmination of a multi-year effort to overhaul the way in which the United Nations responds to the issue of internal displacement. In 2019, 57 States Members of the United Nations wrote to the Secretary-General and encouraged him to act on the need for increased global attention in support of internally displaced persons. Subsequently, the Secretary-General commissioned a High-level Panel on Internal Displacement to identify aspects that needed to be changed and then tasked the United Nations system with operationalizing the Panel's recommendations through the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement,<sup>1</sup> which was launched in mid-2022. Alongside these efforts, a temporary Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Solutions to Internal Displacement was appointed to coordinate and accelerate the search for solutions, and a wide-ranging, independent review of humanitarian responses to internal displacement was commissioned by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.<sup>2</sup>

2. As recognized by the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement and noted in the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, which are two foundational elements of the United Nations system-wide approach to internal displacement, the phenomenon cuts across all pillars and virtually all entities in the United Nations system, and the issues are relevant to humanitarian, development and peace actors. At the time of preparation of the present report, at least 22 United Nations system entities had already begun to advance on the 31 commitments set out in the Action Agenda towards achieving the interlinked goals of improving the prevention of and response and solutions to internal displacement. Accordingly, 12 of those entities have developed dedicated corporate plans for finding solutions to internal displacement and implementing specific institutional reforms.

3. Having recognized the need to institutionalize these important efforts and potentially draw on an even wider array of assets within the United Nations system to address the growing challenge of internal displacement, the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement submitted a proposal to the High-level Committee

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<sup>1</sup> See [www.un.org/en/solutions-to-internal-displacement/action-agenda-commitments](http://www.un.org/en/solutions-to-internal-displacement/action-agenda-commitments).

<sup>2</sup> See <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/inter-agency-standing-committee/independent-review-humanitarian-response-internal-displacement>.



on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) at its forty-sixth session. In that proposal, the Special Adviser highlighted the opportunity to integrate the overarching vision of the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement into a new system-wide framework geared towards achieving greater coherence in the approach to internally displaced persons and consolidate and sustain initial reforms in policies and behaviours that were introduced under the Action Agenda in 2023 and 2024, during the limited mandate of the Special Adviser. The Committee agreed to pursue the development of a system-wide approach to internal displacement, leveraging its broad membership and mandate to foster policy coherence. A working group on internal displacement was subsequently created within HLCP, under the leadership of the Special Adviser and with the participation of 28 entities.<sup>3</sup> The working group undertook a two-phase process, first establishing a shared understanding of the underlying systemic challenges, before developing recommendations, including on systemic changes aimed at improving the capacity of the United Nations system to address internal displacement more predictably and with greater clarity on the roles and complementarities of individual entities and existing coordination mechanisms. At the Committee's forty-seventh session, members provided feedback on the preliminary framing of the internal displacement problem and requested the working group to present the draft system-wide approach for consideration at its forty-eighth session.

4. This United Nations system-wide approach to internal displacement represents the culmination of these efforts. It articulates how the entities of the United Nations system have developed an understanding of the growing challenge of internal displacement after five years of reflection, conversation and testing of approaches at the country level. The approach places the challenge of internal displacement in the wider context of achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and recognizes the need for fundamentally different ways of working outside of established practices and beyond the traditional domain of humanitarian action. It also outlines a series of innovations, institutional reforms and mechanisms that are designed to deliver on these new demands.

5. Drawing on the lessons generated from 15 pilot countries<sup>4</sup> that are testing solutions to internal displacement, the system-wide approach is aimed at promoting country-level results that have a direct impact on the lives and livelihoods of displaced populations. Success at the country level also depends on the provision of a global support structure to ensure that United Nations country teams have the resources, capacities, tools and policies they need to deliver on their mandates. The system-wide approach therefore is designed to provide a comprehensive framework at the country

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<sup>3</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, International Monetary Fund, International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Telecommunication Union, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, United Nations Office for Project Services, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Development Coordination Office, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Department of Global Communications, Department of Peace Operations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Office of Counter-Terrorism, Public Support Office of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Universal Postal Union, World Food Programme (WFP) and World Bank Group.

<sup>4</sup> Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Libya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Vanuatu and Yemen.

and global levels that complements the work of other United Nations inter-agency structures – such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration and the United Nations Sustainable Development Group – in order to make the approach of the United Nations system to internal displacement more coherent and connect all the relevant actors. Unlike other groups of people on the move, such as refugees or migrants, internally displaced persons do not fall within the purview of a single entity in the United Nations architecture. This reality needs to be turned into a strength, rather than an impediment, so that it enables and encourages a broad level of buy-in from across the United Nations system, as befitting a problem that is profoundly multidimensional in nature. Therefore, the value of the system-wide approach should ultimately be judged on the basis of the capacity of the United Nations system to draw on all its assets to serve some of the most marginalized people on the planet and the communities in which they live.

6. Recognizing that global and country-level coordination and action must go hand in hand to effectively address the issue of internal displacement in a comprehensive and sustained manner, at its forty-eighth session, HLCP supported the draft United Nations system-wide approach to internal displacement in its entirety, with a view to promoting coherence and cross-pillar integration in the work of the United Nations system in this area.

7. In view of the extensive consultations that have taken place with the relevant actors and mechanisms to develop and agree on a design for reconfigured global support arrangements, HLCP welcomed in particular the proposal set out in section III.C below.

8. In addition, HLCP encouraged the actors and mechanisms that are responsible for the constituent parts of the system-wide approach and that have been identified to play central roles in its implementation to review the recommendations addressed to them (see sect. III and annex I) and consider whether and how those recommendations should be taken forward within their respective mandates and in the context of the overall system-wide approach.

## **II. Understanding the problem**

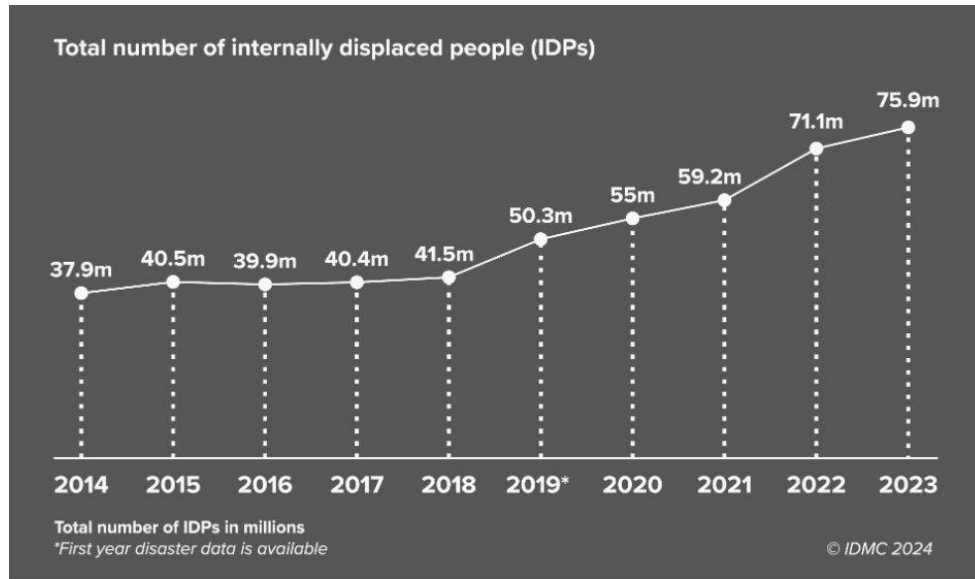
### **A. Understanding internal displacement**

9. When the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement was convened by the Secretary-General in 2019, there were 50.3 million internally displaced persons, the highest number on record at that time. Unfortunately, that record has been broken every year since then – with 75.9 million persons living in a situation of internal displacement at the end of 2023 (see figure I). Of those 75.9 million persons, 90 per cent were displaced owing to conflict, while 10 per cent were displaced following climate-related disasters.

10. While conflict is the driver behind most cases of long-term displacement, an increasing number of people are being temporarily displaced each year in the wake of disasters, such as floods, earthquakes and wildfires. A total of 26.4 million persons were affected by such disaster-related displacement and/or movements in 2023 (see figure II), compared with more than 20.5 million who were affected by conflict-related displacement (see figure III). In comparison with persons affected by conflict-related displacement, those who are displaced as a result of disasters have been more likely to return home relatively quickly and are less likely to join the ranks of persons displaced over the long-term. However, this pattern is changing, with conflict and disasters increasingly intersecting and with a growing number of persons displaced

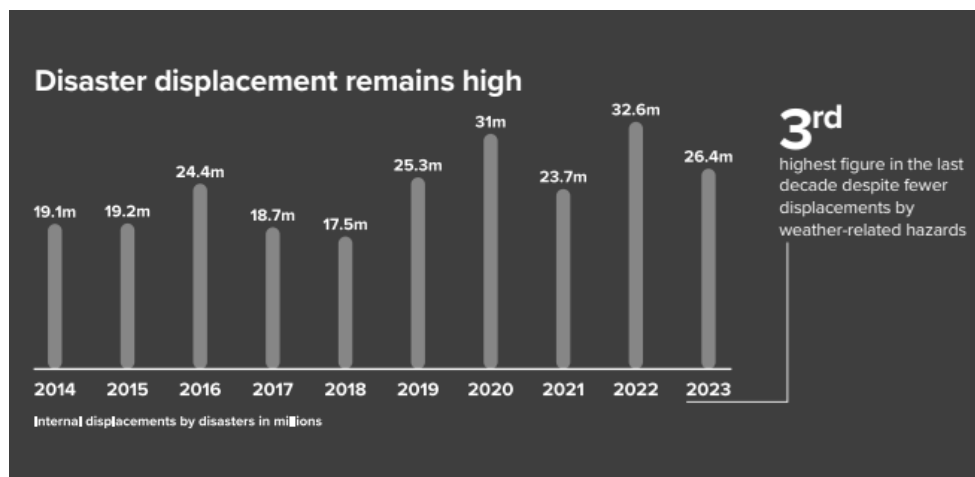
due to slow-onset disasters (such as desertification and sea-level rise) and the degradation of biodiversity and ecosystems, which makes solutions more elusive.

Figure I  
**Total number of internally displaced persons, 2014–2023**  
 (Millions of people)



Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2024* (Geneva, 2024).

Figure II  
**Trends in the number of disaster-related displacements or movements, 2014–2023**



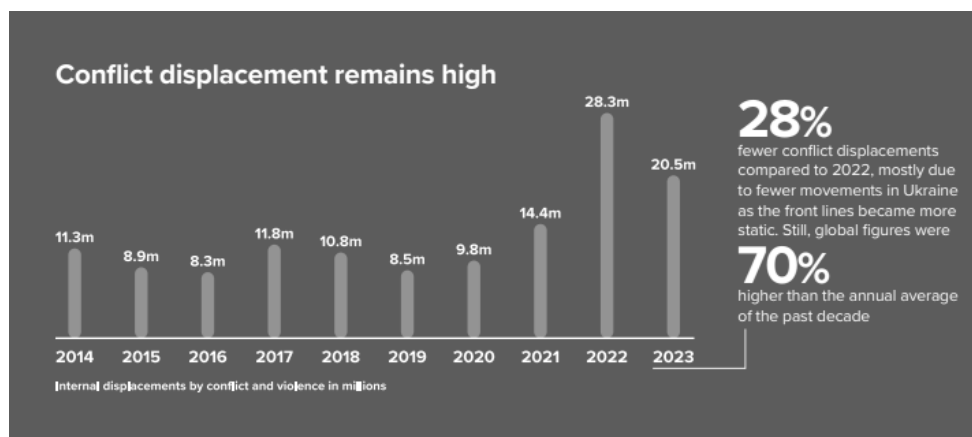
Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2024* (Geneva, 2024).

11. The primary drivers of displacement outlined by the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement in 2021, namely conflict and violence, disasters, climate change and human right violations, remain valid. The root causes of displacement are multi-dimensional and complex in nature and include the lack of development, governance and institutional weaknesses and the failure to manage and mitigate

social, economic, political, security or environmental risks. Moreover, the escalating impacts of climate change disproportionately affect low-income States. Internal displacement is both a cause and outcome of fragility and conflict, with fragile contexts generating the vast majority of internal displacement according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).<sup>5</sup> Of the 10 countries with the highest numbers of internally displaced persons, 8 are ranked at the lower end of the human development index<sup>6</sup> and 4 are among the 10 countries most affected by terrorism.<sup>7</sup>

Figure III

**Trends in the number of conflict-related displacements or movements, 2014–2023**



Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2024* (Geneva, 2024).

12. It is becoming increasingly common for internally displaced persons to remain displaced for prolonged periods, as civil wars and insurgencies extend into years and even decades, while no lasting solutions are identified. Children may experience displacement for their entire childhoods. Moreover, the impacts of climate change and slow-onset events like droughts and sea-level rise lead to more protracted displacement due to disasters, underscoring the need for increased investment in climate adaptation and measures to strengthen ecosystems, as many disaster-affected internally displaced persons may no longer have the option to return to their homes. In regions such as the Sahel, reduced rainfall, desertification and extreme heat – compounded by conflict – threaten traditional livelihoods. Low-lying island nations and coastal communities are particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels. The World Bank projects that climate change may compel 216 million people to relocate within their countries by 2050.<sup>8</sup>

13. Internal displacement is also an increasingly urban phenomenon, as internally displaced persons seek refuge in towns and cities, drawn by safety, better services and potential economic opportunities. In an assessment conducted in 2019, the Center for Global Development estimated that about 50 per cent of internally displaced persons

<sup>5</sup> See [www.oecd.org/en/publications/states-of-fragility-2022\\_c7fedf5e-en.html](http://www.oecd.org/en/publications/states-of-fragility-2022_c7fedf5e-en.html).

<sup>6</sup> Available at <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index#/indicies/HDI>.

<sup>7</sup> See [www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/GTI-2024-web-290224.pdf](http://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/GTI-2024-web-290224.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> See [www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/09/13/climate-change-could-force-216-million-people-to-migrate-within-their-own-countries-by-2050](http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/09/13/climate-change-could-force-216-million-people-to-migrate-within-their-own-countries-by-2050); and [www.ifrc.org/document/extreme-heat-preparing-heat-waves-future](http://www.ifrc.org/document/extreme-heat-preparing-heat-waves-future).

in low- and middle-income countries resided in urban areas.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, traditional internally displaced person camps are still prevalent in rural areas, with many displaced persons still living in such settings. Even in urban areas, internally displaced persons sometimes reside initially in self-settled informal camps.

### **Consequences of internal displacement**

14. Internal displacement often reflects a catastrophic breakdown in the social contract. The impact of internal displacement on an individual can be profound, with the sudden loss of that individual's home, livelihood, possessions and community. Internally displaced persons may have suffered or witnessed grave human rights violations and continue to be affected by protection concerns during their displacement. The impact of this sudden loss of assets and the challenge of securing a new livelihood in host areas can leave such persons highly dependent on humanitarian assistance for access to food, shelter, healthcare and education.<sup>10</sup>

15. As humanitarian assistance inevitably diminishes over time and access to livelihoods and resilience-building support remains limited, displaced people find it increasingly challenging to meet their basic needs. As a result, compared with non-displaced populations, internally displaced persons are more likely to live in poverty, depend on the informal sector, including long after their initial displacement, lack economic opportunities and face social and economic exclusion and discrimination, as well as challenges relating to their legal status and documentation.<sup>11</sup> Unsurprisingly, the combination of these factors can have heavy consequences on the mental health and well-being of internally displaced persons, in addition to the overall loss of agency that they experience following the initial displacement.

16. Moreover, displacement compounds existing vulnerabilities to create heightened risk and impact. Displaced women and children<sup>12</sup> are at higher risk of gender-based and other forms of violence, face greater barriers in terms of access to basic needs and services and may therefore be forced to resort to harmful coping mechanisms. Access to education is particularly challenging for children, with 10.5 million internally displaced children currently estimated to be out of school. This situation not only presents immediate protection risks, but can also result in a generational loss of skills and opportunity.<sup>13</sup> Indigenous Peoples and ethnic minorities also face additional challenges relating to cultural identity, land tenure and legal recognition.

17. Naturally, the sudden arrival of sometimes large numbers of people also affects receiving communities, with 80 per cent of internally displaced persons hosted in fragile contexts.<sup>14</sup> Internal displacement can have a significant impact on social and environmental services. Displacement into urban areas often accelerates urban

<sup>9</sup> See [www.cgdev.org/publication/how-urban-are-idps-and-what-does-mean-their-economic-integration](http://www.cgdev.org/publication/how-urban-are-idps-and-what-does-mean-their-economic-integration).

<sup>10</sup> See [www.undp.org/publications/turning-tide-internal-displacement-development-approach-solutions](http://www.undp.org/publications/turning-tide-internal-displacement-development-approach-solutions).

<sup>11</sup> See <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/761091557465113541/pdf/Volume-A-Executive-Summary.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> In 2023, over half of all internally displaced person were women and girls, while some 49 per cent were children. See UNHCR, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2023* (Copenhagen, 2024).

<sup>13</sup> UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report 2019: Arab States – Migration, Displacement and Education: Building Bridges, Not Walls* (Paris, UNESCO, 2019), chap. 5. See also, Transforming Education Summit global initiative on education in crisis situations: partnerships for transformative actions of UNESCO, available at [www.unesco.org/sdg4education2030/en/knowledge-hub/global-initiatives](http://www.unesco.org/sdg4education2030/en/knowledge-hub/global-initiatives).

<sup>14</sup> See [www.oecd.org/en/publications/states-of-fragility-2022\\_c7fedf5e-en.html](http://www.oecd.org/en/publications/states-of-fragility-2022_c7fedf5e-en.html).

growth, straining the absorptive capacity of basic services and, when unplanned, fuelling informality. Internally displaced persons either integrate into existing informal settlements or slums alongside the urban poor, who have pre-existing chronic vulnerabilities, or create new informal sites. Insecurity of tenure exacerbates protection risks and prevents the development of solution pathways. This increased strain on and competition for local resources and services can also create or exacerbate tensions between internally displaced persons and their host communities.

18. In summary, growing internal displacement poses a direct challenge to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, across the spectrum of rights and objectives pursued under the Sustainable Development Goals and the promise to leave no one behind.<sup>15</sup> None of the countries that are most affected by internal displacement is on track to achieve the Goals related to hunger, health and gender equality, for example. According to a study conducted in 2021, the direct global cost of displacement was conservatively estimated to be \$20.5 billion per annum, in terms of humanitarian support, lost livelihoods, education, health and security, without taking into account the longer-term impact on host communities and countries' development trajectories.<sup>16</sup>

## **B. Roles and responsibilities of governments**

19. The core message of the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement was that the challenge of internal displacement will be resolved only with strong leadership from the Governments of the countries concerned. National and local governments need to be both willing and able to resolve the issue and are the only entities capable of devising effective preventive strategies for reducing future internal displacement and mobilizing the financial investments needed to translate preventive strategies into action. This assertion is perhaps more applicable to disaster- and climate-related displacement, since effective risk reduction measures, climate adaptation strategies and disaster preparedness actions have proven to reduce the risk of displacement in the wake of sudden or slow-onset events. However, even in this domain, Governments have been slow to seize opportunities for early action, with 71 per cent of the 100 most climate-vulnerable countries lacking explicit provisions on climate-related displacement in their national adaptation plans and nationally determined contributions.<sup>17</sup>

20. In volatile settings, greater success in preventing the outbreak of conflicts, including through early preventive diplomacy, would dramatically reduce the number of displaced persons. The importance of the preventive actions taken by the Security Council with a view to reducing displacement can hardly be exaggerated. When preventive measures fail, the manner in which wars are conducted is equally important. All parties to a conflict must respect international humanitarian law and minimize the pressures placed on civilians to flee, while also ensuring that human rights principles and civilian protection standards are upheld when armed violence befalls communities. Counter-insurgency operations, for example, can leave significant displacement in their wake. Forcing people out of their homes and communities and severing their access to a livelihood comes at a very high human, financial and psychological cost.

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<sup>15</sup> The issue of internal displacement has been addressed by some countries in their voluntary national reviews at the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

<sup>16</sup> See [www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2021](http://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2021).

<sup>17</sup> OECD, "Addressing forced displacement in climate change adaptation: no longer a blind spot" OECD Development policy papers, No. 46 (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2023).

21. When prevention fails and governments are willing but have insufficient capacity to assist affected populations with humanitarian assistance, support should be provided by the United Nations and the wider international community, for immediate assistance and the laying of the groundwork for sustainable solutions. In their response, governments should be guided by a well-developed normative framework drawing on international humanitarian and human rights laws and enshrined in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which outline the rights of internally displaced persons and the obligation of States. Even in these situations, it is important to continue using development funding and financing to work on solutions at the local level. Development cannot be deferred pending the completion of the humanitarian phase, as such an approach would inevitably delay solutions. Development activities in these contexts should reinforce existing international human rights law and promote and advocate the fundamental values, standards and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for human rights and gender equality in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals.

22. Scenarios in which governments are unwilling to assist internally displaced persons, are actively displacing their citizens through acts of commission or omission or are responding to internal displacement during unconstitutional changes of government are more problematic. Such scenarios require a highly calibrated humanitarian response that is underpinned by the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, with an emphasis on the protection of civilians.

23. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons plays an especially critical monitoring and advocacy role under such circumstances. As the single independent global champion focusing on the protection of internally displaced persons worldwide, a key aspect of the Special Rapporteur's mandate is to support States in meeting their primary responsibility to protect and assist internally displaced persons through dialogue, advocacy, country visits, reports and other means. The Special Rapporteur also seeks to strengthen the international response to internal displacement, including by promoting the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and reporting annually to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly. The efforts of the Special Rapporteur are reinforced across the United Nations system through the Agenda for Protection. At the country level, the universal periodic review and other reviews by the United Nations human rights treaty bodies, such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child, are important entry points for discussions with Governments on their human rights obligations vis-à-vis displaced populations.

24. Ultimately, the issue of internal displacement can rarely be resolved without strong government leadership. The lessons of recent years have made it clear that solutions to displacement should be integrated into the development plans of Governments and development donors, as well as into structural commitments to leave no one behind, which should ideally be linked to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Regional and local government leadership in implementing solutions is also vital to success; governors, regional presidents, mayors and other local representatives are often best placed to coordinate the implementation of solutions strategies and need to be empowered and financed by their own national Governments in order to manage this work. Strengthening participatory and inclusive governance in that regard at the national and local levels can also help to signal political will for rebuilding the frayed social contract between the State and internally displaced persons, by fostering the socioeconomic integration of internally displaced persons and affected communities, improving security, enhancing internally displaced persons' civil and political participation and promoting social cohesion. Such measures require significant and sustained development investments that can be unlocked only by governments. Only Governments can create



clear links to national budget allocations, obtain the necessary resources from international financial institutions and international development donors and enable potential private sector investments. Government leadership, via country-level systems, is the only way to elicit a financing response that matches the scale and complexities of demands for internal displacement solutions.

### **C. Repeated structural obstacles to resolving the problem**

25. Five years have passed since Member States requested the Secretary-General to commission a high-level panel and initiated a stronger engagement within the United Nations system on internal displacement. Since then, United Nations commitments in this respect have been set out in the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, triggering the appointment of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement, internal reforms within United Nations entities to optimize their work on displacement and a special effort to test new approaches to solutions at the country level in 15 pilot countries.

26. The Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, which was launched in mid-2022, sets out 31 commitments for the United Nations in the areas of prevention, response and solutions. Some of these commitments have been met or are being implemented, such as the commitment to strengthen support to resident coordinators by establishing the Leaving No One Behind – the Internal Displacement Solutions Fund, place solutions advisers in resident coordinator offices, develop a new solutions data framework, undertake an independent review of the humanitarian response to internal displacement and implement institutional plans within United Nations entities to make them more fit for purpose in order to drive solutions to displacement. Other commitments, including to unlock new development finance at the scale required and roll out deliberate preventive strategies, are in the process of being fulfilled.

27. In the long term, maintaining this momentum will require deliberate and sustained efforts. The inter-agency consultation process informing this United Nations system-wide approach to internal displacement (see annex II) has helped to build a collective understanding of the interconnectedness of prevention, response and solutions and of the behaviours that should be adopted within the United Nations in order to respond in a different manner. The process has also served to highlight three structural challenges that will continue to undermine the system's efforts and the sustainability of reforms if they are not addressed, namely visibility, predictability and agility.

#### **1. Visibility**

28. Despite the spiralling numbers, increased complexity and protracted nature of internal displacement, internally displaced persons do not receive the global, regional or even national attention that they deserve. This is due to a host of challenges that go well beyond the question of “better communication”. The issue of internal displacement encompasses a wide range of related situations. The fact that displacement may be triggered by disasters or conflict and that it may be short- or long-term in nature, together with the absence of a single responsible United Nations agency, the existence of different narratives, competing data sets and data gaps and Member State sensitivities, are some of the factors that contribute to the chronic invisibility of internally displaced persons in international policy and aid debates. The challenges faced by internally displaced persons need to be included in discourse at all levels, depoliticized to the maximum extent possible and better understood through robust, higher-quality data that support a coherent narrative.

29. The United Nations system can do more to address this visibility challenge by ensuring that the issue of internal displacement is incorporated into policy, governance and reporting processes across United Nations ecosystems. It is also important to raise the issue at the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other relevant multilateral forums, not only as a humanitarian imperative, but also as an integral part of efforts to leave no one behind and of the peacebuilding agenda. Recent experiences have demonstrated that several Member States are willing and able to champion internal displacement issues. The United Nations will continue to advocate and collectively promote the need for some kind of periodic forum where Member States can come together and discuss internal displacement with other key stakeholders and, in particular, internally displaced persons themselves. The United Nations system recognizes that it must help to solve this broader, more structural issue of visibility if it is to make sustainable headway on solutions.

## **2. Predictability**

30. Current United Nations responses to internal displacement are highly inconsistent. In some countries, the development system is quickly mobilized to support efforts towards finding solutions; in other contexts, operations remain heavily dependent on humanitarian response plans for years. Similarly, different United Nations country teams show varying degrees of capacity and readiness to engage in the search for solutions and resident coordinator offices are not equally ready and able to play the necessary convening and coordination roles. While solutions require the deployment of a wide range of expertise within the United Nations development system, some key entities (such as the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) are often non-resident and less able to engage operationally at the country level. In some contexts, the United Nations system focuses on certain aspects of the displacement agenda and neglects others. While the principle of ensuring that the response is country-driven and customized to contextual specificities is key, inconsistencies are more often than not the product of a lack of deliberate strategy, a heavy dependence on project financing (and thus on donor priorities) and serious funding constraints in general.

31. Greater predictability in the United Nations system response to internal displacement hinges on several measures. These include the development of clear guidance with clearly assigned roles and responsibilities, an empowered and resourced resident coordinator or United Nations resident and humanitarian coordinator who is able to deconflict at the country level, funding mechanisms that are managed jointly and that can leverage the full spectrum of United Nations resources, clear expectations with respect to United Nations system leadership at the country level and robust coordination and planning processes. A strong global support and leadership infrastructure is equally critical to ensure that the United Nations system delivers on its mandates in a more predictable fashion.

## **3. Agility**

32. The United Nations is often seen as path-dependent and stuck in a posture that responds more to historical contexts than to current or future ones. Greater agility is required to keep up with fast-evolving environments. Different phases of an operation require a different mixture of inputs. There is a need for a shift in leadership and responsibilities, in keeping with situational realities in which the transition from a humanitarian situation to one of development is not linear, but rather involves a mixture of different and sometimes parallel responses from the start of a displacement situation. It is imperative to change gears, as soon as possible, from a primarily humanitarian response to a solutions-oriented posture that prioritizes self-reliance and

government ownership and leadership, in order to avoid creating dependency and minimize the risk of protracted displacement.

33. This agility has remained elusive, owing in part to financing silos and conservative donor postures that are marked by hesitation to invest in government systems while peace remains fragile. To a certain extent, this reflects the heavy dependence of the United Nations on earmarked project funding that does not provide much scope to anticipate and invest at scale, even before donors may be politically ready to do so. It also reflects the hardening of borders between humanitarian and development programming, as well as positions on principles, priorities, tools, funding and financing instruments. It further reflects inadequate protocols that impose a regular reassessment of whether the team on the ground is fit for purpose. This points to a lack of established policies, good practices and accessible expertise to help to navigate and anticipate transitions. In short, despite the need for greater agility, the system continues to struggle with rigid response models, inflexibly siloed donor parameters and blanket approaches to responding to displacement situations.

### **III. Actions and recommendations**

#### **A. Delivering on the promise of a more joined-up response: connecting the three axes of prevention, response and solutions**

34. The High-level Panel on Internal Displacement set out three imperatives for better addressing the issue of internal displacement: better prevention, better response and/or protection and better resolution and/or solutions. In practice, each of these imperatives is closely interconnected. Leveraging that interconnectedness is key to developing a successful United Nations system offer. As emphasized in the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, the leadership role of the empowered resident coordinator or resident and humanitarian coordinator is critical in this regard, as much of the connectedness should be driven through the new generation of United Nations country offices and purposeful joint action on solutions to internal displacement.

35. In order to build the political and financial case for prevention, efforts to preclude future displacement must be informed by what has been learned from failures to prevent conflict or disaster and the human and financial costs associated with such failures, scientific climate change projections, the recognition of missed opportunities and measures to better understand and address root causes. In the same vein, responses to displacement crises must lay the foundation for solutions. Early responses must take into account the requirements for transitioning from immediate stabilization and life-saving action towards resilience and lasting solutions. From the very onset of a crisis, the United Nations development system must initiate responses that develop national and local capacities. The act of moving displaced persons onto solutions pathways is profoundly shaped by early response efforts. Lasting solutions must make people safer and less at risk of being displaced again; measures to build back better should be designed with an integrated prevention, peace and resilience perspective and the acknowledgement that, in protracted situations involving conflict and climate-related displacement, a solutions pathway may not necessarily be a linear route. Future climate scenarios must be integrated into solutions. Similarly, the imperative to protect cuts across the areas of prevention, response and solutions, with solutions ultimately constituting the end state of protection efforts, whereby the rights of internally displaced persons are fully restored.

36. Preserving and promoting this interconnectedness at the country level under the leadership of the resident coordinator may be helped or hindered by global, system-wide action relating to data, analysis, planning, funding and financing.

37. To properly understand and monitor the evolving challenge of displacement and its solutions, stakeholders need good quality, timely and disaggregated data. Operational actors collect data on a regular basis, in order to understand the movements, needs and vulnerabilities of displaced populations, and data sets like those produced by the Displacement Tracking Matrix of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are critical. Different kinds of information and analysis are required to understand the drivers of displacement and how they change territories and human settlements. Information and analysis should also help to better map the barriers to and opportunities for sustainable solutions, based on the expressed needs and priorities of internally displaced persons, provide a foundation for aligning larger-scale development financing with the implementation of solutions to displacement and collectively measure progress. Urban profiles and a granular understanding of the impact of displacement on human settlements and cities are also key. While significant progress has been made, including the endorsement by Member States in 2020 of the world's first International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics<sup>18</sup> and the individual and collaborative initiatives of several actors,<sup>19</sup> data on and the profiling of internal displacement remains fragmented, with overlapping initiatives and data gaps and a lack of fully developed and agreed methodologies for Governments to use to measure progress towards solutions. Such progress is even more challenging as displacement crises are becoming increasingly multi-layered intersections of conflict and climate-related factors. In 2023, an inter-agency task force on data for solutions to internal displacement proposed a framework to improve data for solutions and address data-specific issues and gaps. That framework needs to be fully field-tested.

38. There is a need for better joint analysis across the humanitarian and development sectors, to make sense of data, reach a common vision, including with regard to the drivers of displacement and the steps required to bring about solutions pathways for persons who are currently displaced, and mitigate potential future displacement through foresight analysis, which maps growing displacement trends and the push and pull factors that determine displacement decisions and their territorial impact. Better analysis will inform better collective advocacy and policy dialogue. The Action Agenda on Internal Displacement serves to make the vision of the United Nations system on the response to the internal displacement challenge more coherent, which is an aspect that should be preserved. At the country level, United Nations country teams and humanitarian country teams need to develop joint analyses, including of the chronic and acute vulnerabilities of displacement-affected communities. This task will be greatly facilitated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's encouragement to humanitarian country teams to work with United Nations country teams to develop tailored analyses and strategies relating to internally displaced persons and by the United Nations Sustainable Development Group's guidance on the common country analysis, which promotes a people-centred approach.<sup>20</sup> Increasing efforts by the World Bank to integrate internally displaced persons into its poverty analyses is a critical breakthrough, which is supported by the World Bank-Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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<sup>18</sup> See <https://egrisstats.org/recommendations/international-recommendations-on-idp-statistics-iris>.

<sup>19</sup> For example, IOM (Displacement Tracking Matrix), UNHCR, WFP, REACH, Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Joint Internally Displaced Person Profiling Service and World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement.

<sup>20</sup> The Inter-Agency Standing Committee review encourages humanitarian country teams to have a discrete analysis of and strategic approach to internally displaced persons, recognizing the inherent risk of prolongation faced by this target population. The United Nations Sustainable Development Group's guidance on common country analysis, currently under revision, places particular emphasis on a people-centred approach with a focus on those furthest left behind.

(UNHCR) Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement. Another such breakthrough is the growing emphasis on the production of nationally owned data and the inclusion of internally displaced persons in national statistics, as championed by the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics and its many members.<sup>21</sup>

39. Joint analysis and common understanding of underlying drivers of displacement and the core pathways for displacement solutions should in turn translate into joined-up planning to prioritize United Nations support. However, real-time coordination between humanitarian, development and peace partners and between disaster risk reduction and climate actors is impeded by siloed coordination models. Key planning frameworks at the country level, such as the humanitarian response plan and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, are bifurcated by principles, purpose and nature, and are therefore incapable of capturing solution-oriented support in a holistic fashion. Solutions to displacement must be properly localized and tailored to specific contexts, in particular in urban areas, taking into consideration the expressed needs and priorities of internally displaced persons and affected communities. This requires planning and participation at the national and subnational levels. From a preventive perspective, the risk of displacement is not yet prominently featured in common country analyses. This shortcoming is mirrored in government planning processes where, for example, only a fraction of national adaptation plans or national disaster management plans capture priorities vis-à-vis the risk of displacement.

40. Funding is a key enabler – or disabler – of a joined-up approach. Pooled funding arrangements such as United Nations multi-partner trust funds and the Peacebuilding Fund have demonstrated that joint financing mechanisms can produce more coherent inter-agency responses. Global resources that would not necessarily otherwise be available at the country level are a powerful way of jump-starting action across the United Nations pillars and collaboration around such action. Global funding can also help to anticipate transitions while long-term arrangements are put in place, as demonstrated successfully in the case of the new Internal Displacement Solutions Fund. The United Nations would be hard-pressed to achieve the operational agility required to pivot quickly in support of national and local government-led solutions and related processes without a breakthrough in the anticipatory use of development financing to build the institutional and community systems needed to implement solutions at scale and with the requisite speed.

41. The High-level Panel on Internal Displacement and the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement have identified financing as one of the most critical requirements for effectively addressing internal displacement. A national and local government-led, development-oriented approach to internal displacement requires the United Nations to support those governments in thinking strategically about how development finance can effectively support investment in public policies for the development of solutions. In a global context marked by limited access to development resources and competing investment priorities, development finance should be viewed comprehensively, considering the different roles of domestic resources, official development assistance, international financial institutions and the private sector. A radical shift from the traditional humanitarian funding paradigm is needed to better align the United Nations approach to financing internal displacement solutions with broader financing for development objectives, as outlined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.

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<sup>21</sup> See <https://egrisstats.org>.

## **B. Delivering at the country level**

42. The United Nations system country-level approach is aimed at providing a range of interventions that can be adjusted to meet the needs of the local context. A priori, the objective is to prevent new internal displacement through a strengthened response to root causes, including underdevelopment, inequality, conflict, climate change and intercommunal competition for waning resources. When prevention fails, the United Nations aims to respond and protect affected communities predictably and coherently, in line with international norms. This approach places an emphasis on a rapid shift to supporting national and local governments to resolve internal displacement by laying the groundwork for solutions at an early stage and pivoting to their own development-postured solutions model as soon as possible.

43. Partnership with various affected stakeholders, in particular internally displaced and affected communities, is critical to resolving internal displacement. All interventions should be guided by meaningful engagement and the views and priorities of affected people. The Action Agenda on Internal Displacement underscores the need for a whole-of-society approach and highlights the importance of working across sectors and pillars, including with local actors, civil society organizations, national institutions, private sector actors and international financial institutions, for lasting solutions.

### **1. An enhanced approach to prevention at the country level**

44. As the numbers of displaced persons continue to rise dramatically, urgent action is needed to address the root causes of displacement, especially through the increased integration of displacement into broader conflict prevention and climate action efforts. To incorporate work on displacement into these efforts and operationalize the New Agenda for Peace at the country level, the United Nations will seek to ensure that internal displacement is prioritized in national prevention and mitigation efforts<sup>22</sup> through a coordinated, coherent approach that integrates conflict, climate and disaster mitigation risks into national prevention frameworks. When there are early signs of conflict, renewed violence or threats to civilians, the United Nations will mobilize rapid action to support de-escalation, political negotiation and conflict resolution, and systematically address internal displacement as part of these efforts.<sup>23</sup>

45. In locations where United Nations peace operations and political missions are present, displacement will be addressed as part of mission advocacy efforts towards de-escalation, political negotiations and conflict resolution within the limits of their mandate. Missions will seek to integrate displacement data and analytics into their overall analysis, to ensure that such information is a variable in the United Nations contextual understanding of a country situation, and include it in relevant reports to intergovernmental bodies such as the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council. In United Nations transition contexts, efforts will also be made to ensure that civilian protection and other critical mission-led efforts are coordinated with resident coordinators or resident and humanitarian coordinators and respective United Nations country teams and/or humanitarian country teams, as early as possible, and that clear exit strategies and delineated responsibilities are established. The Secretary-General

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<sup>22</sup> In his policy brief entitled “A New Agenda for Peace”, the Secretary-General called for universality for prevention; the approach recognizes this important imperative. This recommendation builds on that for countries where there is a response to internally displaced persons specifically to ensure that prevention is a key element of the solutions response.

<sup>23</sup> United Nations, “The United Nations Secretary-General’s Action Agenda on Internal Displacement: follow-up to the report of the UN Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Internal Displacement”, June 2022 (see commitment 16).

will continue to make the Peacebuilding Fund<sup>24</sup> available, in response to country demand for measures to prevent conflicts related to risks of and solutions to displacement, such as those concerning peaceful cohabitation and reconciliation efforts, peaceful natural resource management, integration and reintegration, protection and human rights, as well as those related to housing, land and property issues.

46. On the prevention of disaster-related displacement, the United Nations will increase support to populations at risk of being displaced through strengthened disaster risk reduction governance and resilience-building efforts, as recommended under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.<sup>25</sup> The United Nations and its partners will improve the understanding of disaster-related displacement risks through improved systems to collect, analyse and share disaggregated data on displacement. Those data will be used to inform risk and impact assessments, including of gender-sensitive impacts and responses, early warning systems, preparedness and response plans, environmental management and climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. In turn, the risk and impact assessments will feed into efforts to include specific provisions to prevent, mitigate, prepare for and respond to disaster-related displacement and strengthen resilience through comprehensive, inclusive and integrated local, national and regional disaster risk reduction strategies, plans and policies that are in line with the guidance provided by the Sendai Framework and other relevant frameworks and strategies on disaster-related displacement. These efforts will be informed by the views and priorities of people and communities who are likely to be affected in the event of a disaster.

47. Based on existing analysis (including the Index for Risk Management, humanitarian needs overviews and the World Environment Situation Room), the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) will develop criteria linked to disaster risk and disaster-induced internal displacement risk. They will also identify a set of focus countries for the potential scaling up of prevention efforts to ensure that disaster risk analysis is integrated into country-level analysis, strategy and planning documents (including common country assessments, Cooperation Frameworks and agency country programme documents), in order to enable enhanced preparedness, anticipatory action and resilience-building support.

48. The United Nations will continue to work with national partners to ensure that a displacement perspective is included in climate change adaptation and biodiversity action plans and strategies, with a view to reducing the risk of forced displacement by enhancing vulnerable communities' resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change, including by promoting resilient livelihoods, restoring ecosystems, enhancing secure and equitable access to land, supporting access to clean and sustainable sources of energy and improving climate-resilient infrastructure and social services. In addition, efforts will be made to facilitate access to climate financing and resources that are intended to prevent internal displacement associated with weather-related hazards and to address and minimize the impacts of such hazards, on the basis of the recognition that more comprehensive adaptation measures and resources are required to achieve this outcome. In some areas, long-term planning and investments will be needed to address habitability risks.

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<sup>24</sup> In total, between 2020 and 2023, more than \$50 million was allocated under the Peacebuilding Fund to the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations for projects supporting government priorities, including peaceful cohabitation and reconciliation efforts, integration and reintegration, protection and human rights, as well as for those addressing issues relating to housing, land and property.

<sup>25</sup> See [www.undrr.org/publication/sendai-framework-disaster-risk-reduction-2015-2030](http://www.undrr.org/publication/sendai-framework-disaster-risk-reduction-2015-2030).

49. The United Nations will continue to support the operationalization of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage<sup>26</sup> and strongly advocate the facilitation by the Fund of access to finance for countries and communities on the front line, in order to avert, minimize and address loss and damage as they relate to displacement, as well as the direct participation of displaced persons in related processes. Technical expertise will be provided through the Santiago network for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change,<sup>27</sup> with a view to strengthening national and local capacities to prevent and respond to displacement in the context of climate change and develop the social and governance infrastructure needed to prevent, minimize and respond to future loss and damage. Measures such as the Early Warnings for All initiative will continue to strengthen forecasts, preparedness and access to information for vulnerable communities, including internally displaced persons. The United Nations will continue to advance the dissemination and implementation of the recommendation made by the Task Force on Displacement, which was set up at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, under the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, to accelerate the roll-out of technical guidelines for integrating human mobility into national adaptation planning processes, responding to economic and non-economic loss and damage in the context of climate mobility and accessing climate finance for climate mobility, including with regard to internal displacement.

## **2. An enhanced approach to response and protection at the country level**

50. The United Nations has a well-established system for responding to internal displacement crises, in which the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator is mandated to coordinate the international response to humanitarian emergencies, including protection and humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons. At the country level, the resident coordinator or resident and humanitarian coordinator facilitates inter-agency preparedness efforts, coordinates humanitarian responses, including for displacement-affected communities, promotes links between humanitarian and development planning and programming and is supported in these efforts by Inter-Agency Standing Committee structures and protocols.

51. While United Nations-coordinated humanitarian responses to internal displacement situations target the humanitarian needs of displacement-affected persons, the system is not equipped to enable upstream solutions. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee-commissioned independent review of the humanitarian response to internal displacement revealed concerns about a general “aid until the money runs out” approach, whereby often reduced development funding is used to support investment and the continued engagement of development actors, leading to an overreliance on emergency programmes.<sup>28</sup> There is a critical need for at-scale, early development assistance to build community resilience and self-reliance and proactively reduce dependence on protracted humanitarian operations, which, on their own, are unable to deliver long-term solutions.

52. To improve the collective response to internal displacement, earlier engagement with affected communities and local and national authorities, coupled with simultaneous, early and continued complementary development investment, is

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<sup>26</sup> See <https://unfccc.int/loss-and-damage-fund-joint-interim-secretariat>.

<sup>27</sup> See <https://unfccc.int/santiago-network/about>.

<sup>28</sup> See <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/inter-agency-standing-committee/independent-review-humanitarian-response-internal-displacement>.



essential. Inter-Agency Standing Committee principals have committed to addressing the key recommendations of the review, including by: ensuring that the priorities of internally displaced persons are placed at the centre of and drive the humanitarian response; enhancing the leadership of and accountability to resident coordinators and resident and humanitarian coordinators; and testing innovative approaches, in order to encourage United Nations teams to shift as early as possible from humanitarian-only to development-focused approaches, with strong government leadership.

53. From the very start of a crisis, the United Nations will therefore apply updated protocols and mechanisms to address displacement solutions, while recognizing the specific needs of displaced populations, the high risk of displacement becoming protracted, the unique role and responsibilities of national authorities, including at the local level, and the importance of harnessing humanitarian, development, peace, climate and environmental assets to move quickly towards finding solutions. The updated protocols and mechanisms will incentivize collaboration within the United Nations system to ensure that solutions are more effectively addressed within existing processes and mechanisms, while also proposing new elements to ensure that support to the resident coordinator and resident and humanitarian coordinator cuts across humanitarian country team and United Nations country team structures.

54. Early on in the response, and drawing on the views of the humanitarian country team and the United Nations country team, stakeholders will articulate a strategic approach to internal displacement that takes into consideration and connects short- and medium- to longer-term considerations and the elements required to create pathways to sustainable solutions. The approach will be driven by the views and priorities of the displaced and affected communities themselves. The aim of a strategic approach is to transition, as soon as conditions are in place, to a solutions strategy that is based on government leadership, political will and protection safeguards. Under the leadership of the resident coordinator or the resident and humanitarian coordinator, the approach will be embedded into existing country-level strategies, unless the resident coordinator or resident and humanitarian coordinator deems it useful to have a stand-alone instrument.

55. At the country level, a solutions working group (or another appropriate mechanism building on existing structures) will be established to devise a joined-up approach with development actors, including relevant government counterparts. As much as possible, in addition to life-saving action, humanitarian assistance will include interventions that strongly promote resilience and self-reliance in terms of livelihoods, food security, housing, land and property rights, healthy ecosystems, education and access to civil documentation. United Nations teams will periodically review their overall posture to mitigate the risk of path dependency, bringing together government and other key stakeholders, including internally displaced persons and affected communities, to review whether and how to move internally displaced persons more quickly onto government-led solutions pathways.

### **3. An enhanced approach to solutions at the country and subnational levels**

56. Minimizing the duration and severity of an internal displacement crisis requires strong government leadership and the meaningful participation of internally displaced persons in decision-making. Resident coordinators will promote local political leadership and a government vision for internal displacement solutions, anchoring the efforts of the United Nations country team in the development of strategies and action plans to support this government vision.

57. United Nations teams will help to build resilient national and local institutions. Investments will help in stabilizing populations and promoting sustainable development. Progress towards solutions will be aligned with financing strategies that

blend international funds with local revenue. Progress will increasingly be measured, in collaboration with Governments, against progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, with a view to ensuring that internally displaced persons are included in Goal monitoring efforts and that they enjoy their human rights without discrimination.

58. The key determinant of the speed with which the United Nations can pivot towards a development-led solutions posture is the willingness and capacity of national and local governments to actively take ownership of and the lead on setting displaced citizens on pathways to solutions. As required by the context, the United Nations, together with development actors, will apply an area-based programming approach to solutions, to ensure that there is a multi-sectoral approach to supporting local or regional government efforts to integrate solutions for internally displaced persons into development interventions and existing systems. This includes social safety nets, health and education systems and local economies and/or job markets.

59. In making the pivot to development-led solutions, wherever and as soon as the conditions allow, the United Nations will help national and local governments to develop key components for solutions pathways, including by: articulating national policies and laws that are responsive to the needs of internally displaced persons; developing a government-led solutions strategy and subnational action plans, in line with national development plans; and building a solutions financing framework and assisting in mobilizing resources to that end, including with the private sector, finance institutions and the donor community. Building the capacity of national and local government institutions, including to collect and analyse data and to plan, coordinate and implement solutions pathways, will be at the centre of United Nations efforts. The inclusion of internally displaced persons in local population data should, for example, allow for the adjustment of fiscal transfers from the national to the local level, in recognition of the increased demands on health and education services, among others.

60. In line with the Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons, United Nations programming in support of solutions will include actions to provide: (a) physical safety and security, including long-term safety and security, social cohesion and measures to ensure that wider peace processes address the needs of internally displaced persons; (b) an adequate standard of living, including in terms of poverty reduction, social protection and access to adequate housing, land and basic services; (c) access to livelihoods, including through the integration of internally displaced persons into economies, local economic development investment plans and socioeconomic investment schemes; (d) assistance for the restoration of housing, land and property; (e) access to documentation; (f) family reunification assistance; (g) the capacity to participate in public affairs; and (h) access to effective remedies and justice, including by supporting rule of law systems and strengthening decentralized access to justice, remedies and dispute resolution. United Nations assistance will also target the building of government capacities to lead and implement solutions pathways in general.

61. The United Nations will assist national and local governments in integrating solution pathways for internally displaced persons and the prevention of further displacement into development programming and legal and policy instruments, by reinforcing participatory and inclusive governance at all levels. To address the gender-specific risks and challenges associated with internal displacement, the United Nations will support national and local governments in pursuing a holistic approach to women's economic empowerment, livelihoods, education and training opportunities, access to healthcare and protection from gender-based violence. In coordination with national and subnational governments and local women-led

organizations, evidence-based interventions will ensure that solutions also advance gender equality and women's empowerment objectives and promote women's leadership in decision-making processes.

62. The United Nations contribution to addressing internal displacement, in terms of prevention, assistance, protection and solutions, will be included in existing frameworks, in particular Cooperation Frameworks and humanitarian response plans, in accordance with existing guidance.

## **C. Reconfigured global support arrangements**

63. The aim of the United Nations system-wide approach to internal displacement is to promote country-level results that directly affect the lives and livelihoods of internally displaced persons and affected communities. However, success at the country level depends on several variables, including a global support structure that ensures that United Nations country teams have the resources, capacities, tools and policies they need to deliver on their mandates. While the structures outlined below are mainly United Nations mechanisms, every effort will be made to identify entry points for engaging a diverse set of stakeholders in these efforts, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society, the private sector, and international financial institutions.

### **1. Global coordination arrangements**

64. Since there is no entity dedicated solely to internally displaced persons, there is a need for a customized leadership model at the global level to maintain focus and efforts. The aim is to build on existing structures, in order to minimize transaction and financial costs and integrate the issue of displacement into ongoing humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts.

65. At the core of the leadership model is a new inter-agency hub for the coordination of solutions to internal displacement. This hub will support the day-to-day coordination and operations of United Nations country teams that are working on solutions. It will house the existing Solutions Advisers Facility (for support to resident coordinator offices), the secretariat of the Internal Displacement Solutions Fund and thematic advisory experts in select areas, among others, and will support short-term multidisciplinary deployments to United Nations country teams, drawing on the range of expertise in the United Nations system. The hub will be hosted by the Development Coordination Office and will submit periodic reports to the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration (see annex III).

66. To maintain broad operational engagement, an inter-agency global solutions working group will be created to essentially replace the existing steering group that was initially created to support the work of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement. This mechanism will convene a cross section of operational entities, guide and support the solutions hub, track the development and implementation of solutions in priority countries and ensure that there is coherent, quality engagement at the country level, in support of resident coordinator-led processes.

67. To maintain the widest possible engagement, an inclusive United Nations inter-agency internally displaced persons solutions consultative group will meet annually to take stock of progress and discuss high-level global strategies going forward. This forum will also serve to support joint advocacy. It is hoped that the consultative group will eventually report to a potential future intergovernmental forum on internal displacement, an initiative that was proposed by the Secretary-General in the Action

Agenda on Internal Displacement. Membership of the consultative group will be open to all interested United Nations system entities. Consideration will be given to expanding membership to key NGO and civil society partners at a future date.

## **2. Global support instruments**

68. The work of the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement and experiences in recent years of accelerated efforts relating to internal displacement, especially those geared towards finding solutions, have generated a wealth of lessons, models, templates and best practices. These lessons will be brought together in the United Nations Sustainable Development Group-Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidance on solutions to internal displacement, which will serve as the leading reference for the implementation of solutions. The guidance will be linked to a continuously updated repository of templates and best practices and to the knowledge management platform referenced below. One of the functions of the solutions hub will be to keep the guidance and linked repository up to date.

69. The Internal Displacement Solutions Fund, which was established in 2023, will continue to support United Nations country teams in their efforts to support national and local governments to advance solution strategies. Starting in 2025, the secretariat of the Fund will be housed in the Development Coordination Office and functionally attached to the new inter-agency solutions hub.

70. Knowledge management is an important source of support for resident coordinators, resident and humanitarian coordinators and United Nations country teams to share best practices and inform future policy advice. An online inter-agency repository of best practices and resources will be created and linked to the updated guidance (see para. 68 above). A United Nations community of practice on different aspects of the solutions agenda will also be established, with a view to facilitating learning and knowledge-sharing across the system. The new community of practice will build on an existing community created by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to connect solutions advisers across the 15 initial pilot countries.

## **3. Global data measures**

71. In responding to the clear need for better data coordination and coherence, an internal global solutions data platform will be established, building, to the extent possible, on existing sources. The platform will bring together actionable data from across the different pillars of the United Nations system and improve the quality and availability of data, which will in turn feed into analytic, visibility and reporting processes at the country and global levels. The platform will also include data produced by national systems on internally displaced persons solutions and will share the resources of the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics.

## **4. Global advocacy**

72. A small group of United Nations principals will comprise a solutions champions group to advocate United Nations efforts on advancing solutions. The champions group will lend its support to global advocacy efforts and continue to promote the need to establish an intergovernmental forum on internal displacement solutions in the future, thereby ensuring that the voices of internally displaced persons are heard in any such efforts. The champions group will also seek to secure the minimum financial investment necessary for the inter-agency solutions hub and ensure that the representatives of their different entities provide a first line of solution-related support to resident coordinators and resident and humanitarian coordinators at the country level. The champions group will be supported in its efforts by the solutions

hub. The principals of UNDP, UNHCR and IOM have confirmed their willingness to serve in the champions group. However, other principals may subsequently join the group. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator will also join the solutions champions group as ex officio members.

73. Beyond the champions group, the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons will continue to be the single independent global champion for internally displaced persons, conducting global advocacy and setting standards for their protection across prevention, response and solutions efforts, whatever the cause of displacement. In keeping with the mandate of the office, the Special Rapporteur will support the leadership role of national authorities in assuming primary responsibility for the protection of internally displaced persons and working with other stakeholders and internally displaced persons themselves, where possible, to highlight protection challenges, successes and opportunities to prevent, respond to and resolve internal displacement.

74. The Action Agenda on Internal Displacement serves to underscore the importance of recognizing the rights and agency of internally displaced persons and host communities in order to ensure their active participation and meaningful engagement in decision-making. In early 2024, a global advisory group of nine leaders from diverse backgrounds and displacement-affected countries was formed to advise the Office of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement. The group's recommendations stress the need for direct engagement with internally displaced persons to enhance participation, accountability and visibility, while complementing existing mechanisms. The global advisory group on internally displaced persons will continue to function with the support of UNHCR and will be engaged in global discourse and policy development on the issue of internal displacement as a permanent stakeholder group.

75. Moving forward, to bring greater attention to the issue of internal displacement solutions, the entities of the United Nations system will join forces to publish a biennial report on the state of displacement solutions, which will capture trends, data and global progress in advancing solutions to displacement. The report will build on the existing IOM Periodic Global Report on the State of Solutions to Internal Displacement (PROGRESS report), which was first published in 2023 and draws on a cross-section of United Nations assets and inputs.

76. United Nations country solutions dashboards will be established for countries with a significant displacement situation. The dashboards will be externally facing, inter-agency-curated tracking and advocacy instruments aimed at coordinating international efforts around internal displacement in those countries, improving data clarity and providing enhanced accountability to national and local governments and affected populations.

77. As originally proposed by the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement in its report, the United Nations system will continue to champion the idea of having the General Assembly establish an international day of internally displaced persons, in order to increase the visibility and consolidate the identity of internally displaced persons as a group. The international day could also serve as an opportunity for Governments and the United Nations to highlight progress on advancing solutions. Ultimately, this decision lies with Member States.

78. Finally, mainstreaming internal displacement into key development processes will help to maintain and enhance the level of engagement of the United Nations development system. In this regard, intergovernmental processes, such as the

quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and platforms, such as the various segments and thematic focuses of the Economic and Social Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council, as well as individual United Nations system governing bodies, can play a critical role in creating these linkages. The high-level political forum on sustainable development and voluntary national reviews also offer countries valuable opportunities for peer learning and the sharing of experiences and lessons learned with regard to addressing internal displacement through their national sustainable development policies and actions.

#### **D. Intergovernmental engagement**

79. The United Nations system-wide approach to internal displacement outlines reforms and actions that will be pursued by the United Nations system to improve its response to internal displacement. The successful implementation of these reforms and actions depends to a great extent on the support and cooperation of Member States. While their implementation is beyond the purview of CEB, consultations by the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement revealed the need for a platform on internal displacement to facilitate regular dialogue among States and key stakeholders. The Secretary-General supported this proposal in his Action Agenda on Internal Displacement. A global platform would help to keep internal displacement in focus, foster collaboration and provide a forum for aligning policy and supporting the deliberation processes of Member States. If such a platform is created, it would be a powerful complement to the engagements laid out by the United Nations system in the present system-wide approach.

## Annex I

## Overview of recommendations and actions

<i>What?</i>		<i>Who is responsible?</i>	<i>By when?</i>
1. Updated global guidance on solutions to internal displacement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Codified lessons learned</li> <li>– Online repository of good practices, and templates to support country offices</li> <li>– Inter-agency collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Solutions to Internal Displacement and the Steering Group on Solutions to Internal Displacement</li> <li>– United Nations Sustainable Development Group</li> <li>– Inter-Agency Standing Committee</li> </ul>	January 2025: submitted to the United Nations Sustainable Development Group and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee for endorsement
2. New global (internal) coordination structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Global solutions working group</li> <li>– Internally displaced persons solutions consultative group</li> <li>– Solutions champions group</li> </ul>	Participating entities	January 2025: endorsed by the Executive Committee and operational since 1 January 2025
3. Inter-agency hub for the coordination of solutions to internal displacement	Permanent, inter-agency team to coordinate support and advice to United Nations country teams and manage communities-of-practice and lesson learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Under the oversight of the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration</li> <li>– Hosted by the Development Coordination Office with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM)</li> </ul>	January 2025: transitional hub in place to establish full workplan and operationalize the full structure

<i>What?</i>		<i>Who is responsible?</i>	<i>By when?</i>
4. Biennial state of displacement solutions report	Inter-agency state-of-the-art report on progress on solutions to displacement, which may eventually serve as a reporting requirement at the future forum of Member States, building on the existing IOM Periodic Global Report on the State of Solutions to Internal Displacement (PROGRESS report)	New inter-agency solutions hub (see entry 3 above)	December 2025
5. United Nations country solutions dashboards	Externally facing dashboards on internal displacement issues and data for significantly affected countries	New inter-agency solutions hub (see entry 3 above)	July 2025
6. Leaving No One Behind – Internal Displacement Solutions Fund Solutions Advisers Facility for resident coordinator offices	New tools already in place to support United Nations country teams in their search for solutions	– Office of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement – Development Coordination Office (Internal Displacement Solutions Fund) – UNDP (adviser facility)	Established
7. Global solutions data platform	Data repository to deconflict numbers and maintain a consistent narrative on progress on solutions to internal displacement	Data for solutions to internal displacement mechanism	July 2025
8. International day of internally displaced persons	Awareness-raising event, first proposed by the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement	Member States with support from the solutions hub	2026
9. Set of focus countries at high risk of disaster and internal displacement	Criteria to identify set of focus countries at high risk of disaster and internal displacement, to inform scaled-up preventive action	– United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction – United Nations Environment Programme – World Meteorological Organization	July 2025



<i>What?</i>		<i>Who is responsible?</i>	<i>By when?</i>
10. Global advisory group on internally displaced persons	Consultative mechanism for leaders in the area of internal displacement to shape United Nations policy	UNHCR	Established
11. Operational and coordination protocols at the country level	Peacebuilding Fund guidance, pivot tool, voluntary national review and universal periodic review guidance, area-based programming and new mission reporting, among other things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Office of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement and the global solutions working group</li> <li>– United Nations Sustainable Development Group</li> <li>– Inter-Agency Standing Committee</li> </ul>	Ongoing

## Annex II

### Milestones in the High-Level Committee on Programmes process and key consultations held

Throughout the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) process, opportunities have been provided to HLCP members to participate in the development of the United Nations system-wide approach to internal displacement, notably at two regular sessions, through their entities' representatives to the HLCP working group on internal displacement, and in writing (see non-highlighted entries in table below). The Office of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement has also actively engaged relevant actors and mechanisms throughout the development of the draft system-wide approach (see entries highlighted in grey in table below).

3 October 2023 (forty-sixth session of the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP))	Scoping discussion on promoting system-wide coherence on internal displacement. The Committee agreed on the need for a system-wide approach and decided to establish a working group under the leadership of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement, charged with preparing a proposal for consideration at its forty-seventh session, and to deliver a proposed system-wide approach by the end of 2024
28 November 2023	Online meeting of the HLCP working group on internal displacement to discuss processes and steps for developing a paper on a system-wide approach
14 December 2023	Initial outline of the proposal for the Committee's forty-seventh session and timeline shared for feedback with members of the working group via email
16 January 2024	Online meeting of the working group to discuss the proposal for the Committee's forty-seventh session, including the timeline for drafting, and identify the lead drafting agencies for the framing of the problem in relation to prevention, response and solutions
2 February 2024	Draft proposal for the Committee's forty-seventh session shared for feedback with members of the working group via email
6 February 2024	Online meeting of the working group to discuss the proposal for the Committee's forty-seventh session, including drafted sections on the framing of the problem, the intersectionality between prevention, response and solutions and key institutional approach questions
13 February 2024	Revised draft proposal for the Committee's forty-seventh session shared for feedback with members of the working group via email
11 March 2024 (forty-seventh session of HLCP)	HLCP agreed on the process for developing the system-wide approach, shared reactions to the preliminary framing of the internal displacement problem and started discussions on approaches to addressing it
25 March 2024	Online meeting of the working group to discuss the challenge of making internal displacement more visible. Background note circulated beforehand
16 April 2024	Online meeting of the working group to discuss the challenge of preventing and mitigating internal displacement. Background note circulated beforehand
25 April 2024	Online consultation with the Steering Group on Solutions to Internal Displacement on global coordination arrangements
2 May 2024	Online discussion between the Special Adviser and members of the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration on global coordination arrangements

15 May 2024	Online meeting of the working group to discuss the capacity and response challenge for internal displacement. Background note circulated beforehand
10 June 2024	Online meeting of the working group to discuss the challenge of transitioning from humanitarian responses to internal displacement. Background note circulated beforehand
26 June 2024	Online consultation with the Steering Group on the development of solutions-related guidance
27 June 2024	Hybrid meeting of the United Nations Environment Management Group to discuss the environmental dimensions of internal displacement and identify recommendations and input to the United Nations system-wide approach
10 July 2024	Online meeting of the working group to discuss coordination within the United Nations on the issue of internal displacement. Background note circulated beforehand
19 July 2024	Zero draft of the United Nations system-wide approach and idea log shared for feedback with members of the working group
23 July 2024	Online consultation with the Steering Group on the development of solutions-related guidance
30 July 2024	Online meeting of the working group to discuss the zero draft of the HLCP paper
31 July and 21 August 2024	Online consultation with members of the global advisory group on internally displaced persons on engagement beyond the mandate of the Special Adviser
21 August 2024	Revised draft 1 of the United Nations system-wide approach and list of recommendations shared for feedback with members of the working group
27 August 2024	Online meeting of the working group to discuss revised draft 1 of the United Nations system-wide approach
29 August 2024	Online meeting of the working group to discuss recommendations relating to data, reporting and displacement response protocols
9 September 2024	Revised draft 2 of the United Nations system-wide approach shared for feedback with members of the working group
10 September 2024	In-person consultation with members of the Steering Group and United Nations entities with institutional plans on solutions to discuss global coordination arrangements
11–12 September 2024	In-person consultation with members of the Steering Group, United Nations entities with institutional plans on solutions and non-governmental organizations engaged in solutions work at the global and national levels on the development of solutions-related guidance
25 September 2024	Online meeting with the Steering Group to discuss the latest developments relating to the system-wide approach
7–8 October 2024 (forty-eighth session of HLCP)	Consideration of the United Nations system-wide approach by HLCP at its forty-seventh session. The Committee supported the approach in its entirety and welcomed the design for the reconfigured global support arrangements
29 October–5 November 2024	Online review by the reference group of the zero draft of the solutions-related guidance
18 October	Virtual consideration by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, which took note of the United Nations system-wide approach

11–25 November 2024	First draft of the solutions-related guidance submitted to the United Nations Sustainable Development Group and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee for review and feedback
9–16 December 2024	Final draft of the solutions-related guidance submitted to the United Nations Sustainable Development Group and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee for review
20 December 2024	Meeting of the Executive Committee to conclude the mandate of the Special Adviser and endorse the recommended global institutional arrangements for superseding the Office (decision 2024/41 of the Executive Committee on internal displacement)
6 January 2025	Final draft of the solutions-related guidance submitted to the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator for the formal endorsement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee

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## Annex III

### Overview of global coordination and support structures

#### Hub for the coordination of solutions to internal displacement

The hub will focus primarily on providing support at the country level by coordinating solutions-related support, offering field advisory services and facilitating technical support missions. In addition, it will maintain a live repository of lessons learned and offer strategic advice to resident coordinators. The hub will also serve as the secretariat for various inter-agency working groups involved in coordination efforts relating to solutions.

#### Global solutions working group

The global solutions working group will bring together operational entities that are working on solutions at the country level. It will guide and support the solutions hub, track the development of solutions in priority countries and ensure coherent, quality engagement at the country level in support of resident coordinator-led processes. The global solutions working group will also review progress on the operationalization of the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement. It will comprise representatives from entities that are typically part of the local solutions working group at the country level. The hub will serve as the secretariat of the working group.

#### Internally displaced persons solutions consultative group

The internally displaced persons solutions consultative group, composed of all interested United Nations system entities, will meet once a year to review progress on the United Nations system-wide approach to internal displacement and coordinate efforts to continue positioning issues relating to displacement solutions across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts.

#### The solutions champions group

The principals of the entities sponsoring the hub will form a solutions champions group to provide strategic advocacy for solutions-related approaches at the global level. Entities serving as solutions champions will commit to ensuring that their country representatives and country offices will support resident coordinator-led solutions-related efforts as a first line of support, helping to mobilize wider United Nations country team members. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator will join the solutions champions group as ex officio members. Additional solutions champions will be welcomed in the future. The solutions champions will periodically update the United Nations Sustainable Development Group on their efforts.

