



# THE IDP-INITIATIVE

## QUARTERLY UPDATE

### SEPTEMBER 2020

**Solutions** are the focus of this Quarterly Update on UNHCR's Initiative on Internal Displacement (2020-2021). Included within the content are real-time examples drawn from several IDP settings. Certain themes are also highlighted, including the importance of **partnerships**, the criticality of **data**, the primacy of **consultation**, the added-value of UNHCR's **tri-cluster coordination synergies**, and the necessity to create an **enabling environment**.

This is the second Quarterly Update on UNHCR's Step-Up on Internal Displacement<sup>1</sup> – focused on Solutions.

UNHCR is committed to being decisive, predictable and effective in situations of internal displacement. The [2019 Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement](#) provides updated guidance on our role in Preparedness, Operational Delivery, Coordination Leadership and the Search for Solutions, in cooperation with States and within the interagency framework.

While UNHCR is engaged in internal displacement response in 33 country operations, the IDP-Initiative demonstrates this Step-Up through thematic, strategic and operational dimensions in nine target operations – **Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Iraq, Sudan, South Sudan and Ukraine.**

## Five solutions-related themes are emphasized:

**1 First, partnerships bring comparative advantage which is key in unlocking solutions opportunities.** The transition to a self-reliant, normal life following displacement is a complex process, during which many need assistance, empowerment and protection. Partnerships are necessary for a comprehensive, lasting approach that encompasses humanitarian, development and peace stakeholders as well as most notably affected and supportive governments. UNHCR's efforts to leverage its experience with private sector partnerships, and to advance innovative financing for IDP solutions, have shown great promise.

**2 Second, accurate data, including microdata, opens possibilities for evidence-based analysis, planning, response and communications.** Within this Update, a promising example is highlighted from **Sudan**, where the UNHCR and UNDP co-led Durable Solutions Work Group is coordinating a substantial effort on data collection under the Peacebuilding Fund for Darfur and CERF Programming. The work combines area-based comparative profiling among displaced and non-displaced communities, intention and perception surveys, and multisectoral profiles of target localities within an innovative methodology that builds on past efforts, also within the UN Country Team.

The evidence allows for evidence-based Local Action Plans for Solutions and informs broader Humanitarian-Development-Peace interventions.

**3 Third, as stressed also within the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement<sup>2</sup>, it is vital that communication is undertaken with communities** related to decisions which have direct impact on their current lives – and their future. However, such consultation does not systematically occur at ground level. IDPs may seek options outside of organized programmes and initiatives and involuntarily be once again on the move. Through UNHCR's leadership of the Global Protection Cluster, we continue to promote protection mainstreaming across all clusters, and in all 33 IDP operations where we are engaged, thereby ensuring that interagency response through solutions is shaped by protection considerations.



**45.7 million internally displaced people** worldwide in 2019\*



**57% of the world's displaced** remain within the borders of their own country\*

\* Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.

<sup>1</sup> Update from June 2020 can be accessed here: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/idp-initiative>

<sup>2</sup> See Principle 28 (2).

**4** **Fourth**, IDPs are often constrained by a lack of available housing when returning to their area of origin, or when integrating in other areas. **Leveraging UNHCR's tri-cluster leadership** in shelter, protection and camp coordination/camp management (CCCM), together with other clusters, **can lead to an effective housing, land and property response** in an IDP-solutions setting, including in health and human security. Mechanisms for restitution and compensation require strengthening to be accessible to the most vulnerable.

**5** **Fifth**, it is necessary to take **actions towards solutions from the onset of displacement**, including to create an environment conducive to staying safe and to future solutions – with activities in **community engagement, IDP law and policy, documentation, secure land tenure, livelihoods, peaceful co-existence and conflict resolution** required accordingly.

## Examples of recent solutions initiatives

Globally, UNHCR continues to co-chair the GP20 Initiative, launched in 2018 in response to the General Assembly's call to mark the 20th anniversary of the [Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement](#). As part of this plan of action, **Niger** adopted comprehensive national legislation on internal displacement. In June 2019, **South Sudan** acceded to the [African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa](#) (Kampala Convention), the world's only regional legally binding instrument for IDPs. The GP20 Initiative is co-led by UNHCR, UN OCHA and the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs. The GP20 Plan of Action calls on stakeholders to step up efforts on four interrelated priorities: engaging IDPs in decision-making processes; promoting, developing and implementing national laws and policies; enhancing the quality of data and analysis; and addressing protracted displacement while seeking durable solutions.

The GP20 action plan has already enabled joined up and continued strategic action across four main areas which include addressing protracted internal displacement and fostering durable solutions. Solutions-related activities include a thematic event – “Protection Dimension of Solutions”, organized under the auspices of the Global Protection Cluster Forum 2020 on 28 September. The event will take stock of how coordination between the different actors occurs in the field; the main challenges and opportunities; how national governments, as main duty bearers, are mainstreaming protection in their programmes and in their search for durable solutions and how they are supported by stakeholders, including international organizations and donors, in the delivery of their responsibilities.

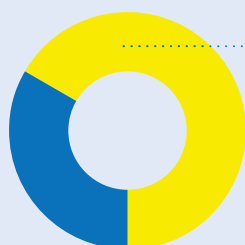
[www.globalprotectioncluster.org/gp20](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/gp20)

[www.globalprotectioncluster.org/2020/07/08/protection-dimensions-durable-solutions](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/2020/07/08/protection-dimensions-durable-solutions)



### Displacement in and to urban areas

**continued throughout the decade.** The geographic information available confirms that IDPs were predominantly located in rural areas at the start of the decade. By the end of the decade, the trend had reversed. Available data on IDPs indicates that the ratio of urban versus non-urban internally displaced populations was 2:1 at the end of 2019. In other words, where UNHCR was involved in situations of internal displacement in 2019, two out of three IDPs were in urban or semi-urban areas. Our solutions approach has been adjusted accordingly.



2/3 of IDPs live in urban or semi-urban areas

The largest IDP return movements between 2010 and 2019 took place in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)** and **Iraq**. In the DRC, returns have taken place despite the risks of new displacement due to conflict, climate and health. In Iraq, more than five million IDPs returned to their place of residence during the decade, some 85 per cent of them in the past four years.

The **Platform on Disaster Displacement** is a state-led process to address the [protection needs](#) of people displaced across borders in the context of disasters and climate change. The Platform builds partnerships between policymakers, practitioners and researchers and constitute a multi-stakeholder forum for dialogue, information sharing as well as policy and normative development. In IDP settings, UNHCR continues to work in partnership with others to conduct comprehensive durable solutions analysis adapted to the local and country context to inform effective responses.

**Fast, flexible and safe, cash support** is being increasingly used by UNHCR to help internally displaced people rebuild their lives following displacement. Cash support in some IDP settings has been used in the form of direct, unconditional grants to purchase livelihood implements or buy construction materials to repair homes. In other locations, cash provision has covered the cost of legal representation, necessary to obtain civil documentation, or visit Government facilities. The provision of cash also enables financial inclusion, as IDPs and others benefit from the establishment of a working financial relationship where previously there had been none. Much more is needed, however, in order to help persons meet their basic needs.

In **Somalia**, the Durable Solutions Initiative (DSI) was agreed between the Federal Government of Somalia, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in 2016. The DSI is based on the premise that solutions to displacement can only be attained through strong Government leadership and collective efforts of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding partners, and with the inclusion of IDPs themselves. UNHCR continues to work towards the creation of conditions conducive for solutions through partnerships with the Government, United Nations and NGO actors in the sectors of health, education, livelihoods, legal assistance and law development.

Since 2015, UNHCR **Ukraine** and the Norwegian Refugee Council have partnered to repair and rehabilitate more than 5,000 homes destroyed during the conflict in the east of Ukraine, thanks to significant financial support of international donors. In Donetsk Oblast, UNHCR repairs to multi-story apartment buildings have enabled more than 180 households to return in 2020, via funding support provided by EU/ECHO.



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*Nafissatou proudly shows the ID card she recently received. Her baby also now has a birth certificate.*

## IDP enrolment in Burkina Faso has helped provide thousands of IDPs with documents

Nafissatou is amongst the thousands of those forced to flee who have received a birth certificate or a national identity card in Burkina Faso, an active UNHCR effort to prevent statelessness.

“I just received my national ID card!” she says proudly. “I am so relieved because I was often stopped and had to pay fines. My child also received a birth certificate. I will tell other mothers to register the birth of their children too as it opens so many more opportunities. My daughter will now be able to go to school, to easily get an ID card and earn a living when she grows up.”

Since 2017, UNHCR has supported the national authorities in Burkina Faso to produce and deliver 157,850 birth certificates and identity cards to those displaced by violence and their host communities in the regions of the Boucle de Mouhoun, Centre Nord, Nord and Sahel.

**This year, some 45,000 national ID cards and 92,000 birth certificates have been produced and distributed to IDPs and to members of the local population living in the Boucle de Mouhoun, Centre Nord, Nord, Sahel and Est regions.**

With these documents, internally displaced men, women, boys and girls can now access basic services, such as health and education, and enjoy fundamental rights, including freedom of movement and the right to vote – the latter being of particular importance with the forthcoming elections planned for November 2020.

These achievements were only possible thanks to the comprehensive data collected during the enrolment process which helped UNHCR better target the communities and the vulnerable who were most in need of documentation.

Since the early stages of the emergency in 2019, the UN Refugee Agency and the National Council for Emergency Response and Rehabilitation (CONASUR) embarked on a strategic partnership to strengthen the enrolment of the displaced. Through the donation of over 650 tablets, 250 power banks, laptops as well as trainings, UNHCR supported authorities in building a unique and robust system of electronic data collection. CONASUR's decentralized nature also enables the organization to easily reach people newly displaced, even in areas where humanitarian actors may not have access.

During enrolment, individuals are asked a wide range of questions, including about biographical information, the reasons why they fled and any protection concern which they may have, but also on their thoughts about possible durable solutions.

Improving the accuracy of data provides national authorities and humanitarian organizations with a better understanding of the population and its needs. This also facilitates the planning of programmes and targeting of assistance to where it is most needed.

**The Head of the UN Refugee Agency in Burkina Faso, Ms. Ioli Kimyaci, notes:**  
“The data collected by CONASUR includes a wealth of information that can help us better understand the dynamics behind the movements of people. Even as the emergency continues to unfold, already collecting information on intentions linked to durable solutions is helping us start proactively planning for these.”

With its experience in data collection and protection analysis, UNHCR will continue to foster its strategic collaboration with development partners, in particular the World Bank, and engage in activities under the framework of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.

## The fastest growing humanitarian and protection crisis

Increased violence and insecurity have led over a million people to flee their homes in search of safety in Burkina Faso. This represents 5% of the country's population or some 2,000 individuals forcibly displaced every day since the start of 2020 – making Burkina Faso the fastest growing humanitarian and protection crisis in the world.

The on-going COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic impact have further exacerbated existing vulnerabilities, and needs remain critical in the areas of shelter, food,

water, protection, health and education. While host communities have generously shared the limited resources they have, they need further support.

In June, UNHCR launched a [\\$ 186 million](#) appeal to provide lifesaving protection and assistance to refugees, IDPs, returnees and host communities in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. So far 44 % of the funds are available for the response in Burkina Faso. More is urgently needed to ensure that those most vulnerable are protected.



# Colombia: Legalizing informal settlements for IDPs in urban areas

In Colombia, internally displaced persons have access to national services and rights as efforts to legalize informal settlements show results.

Over past decades, hundreds of thousands of persons displaced from rural areas of Colombia have taken shelter in informal settlements located on the outskirts of Colombia's largest cities. These informal settlements await legal recognition by State authorities and access to basic services, including electricity and water.

Since 2015, UNHCR is supporting the Government and efforts by partners in the legalization of these informal settlements. For 2020, with a budget of \$ 150,000, UNHCR has supported the legalization process at 16 settlements, benefitting 6,159 households, representing 24,638 persons.

UNHCR's partner *Opción Legal*, a national NGO, is leading the implementation of the project, which is funded by KOICA through the end of 2020. In 2019, 13 settlements were similarly legalized, benefitting 4,185 households (16,125 persons).

**The below story explains the impact of legalization on the situation of one internally displaced household in La Victoria.**

*Members of the Local Community Board and UNHCR staff worked hand in hand for the legalization of La Victoria. Now the community have access to energy and a sewage system, among others.*



# A better future for IDPs in *La Victoria*, Colombia

## Internal armed conflict uprooted Ana Gabriela Chalá when she was 13 years old.

Already by that time, her mother had passed away and her father had moved out. Without family, personal possessions or any idea where to go, Ana searched for safety, and her native village of Rio Arquía in Antioquia-Chocó became a part of her past.

In 2000, Ana reached the city of Quibdó, more than 50 kilometres from her hometown. Thanks to the community of catholic nuns that took her in and raised her, she received shelter and food for the following years.

"It was hard because I was used to another life. I had everything, but when one is displaced, one has to settle for very little. Displacement is something I had never experienced before, it's a very difficult situation due to the humiliations one has to go through", said Ana.

In her twenties, Ana became independent and met a man with whom she had Marilyn, her daughter. After struggles with her partner and difficulties paying rent, she packed her bags and left home a second time. Once again, Ana found herself on the streets, without a home and with a baby in her arms. "Where should I go?", she asked herself, "I knew I had to be careful to find a way out of this".

In *La Victoria*, an informal settlement in Quibdó, Ana found a place where she could rebuild her life. With the help of the host community, she got what

Residents of *La Victoria* were unable to access energy, a sewage system, garbage collection and telephone services because of the settlement's informal status. Many residents worried, however, that legalizing their settlement would result in taxes and hence heavier burdens. To address their misconceptions, Ana dedicated herself to raising awareness on the benefits of living in a legalised settlement.

"I showed them all the pros and cons so that they could have enough information when making a decision", explained Ana, who also facilitated the exchanges between UNHCR and the community.

**Now 80% of *La Victoria*'s residents have a title deed, and the remaining 20% are expected to receive theirs before the end of 2020.**

Legalization has furthermore promoted a positive perception of the settlement, with the residents feeling less stigmatized. For Ana, having facilitated the legalization of *La Victoria* changed her life for the better.

"I understood there's nothing impossible in this life, when one fights for what one desires, it can become true", concluded Ana.

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