



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT (HLP)

An InterAction Forced Displacement Working Group Paper Highlighting Essential Elements For Inclusion In The High-Level Panel On Internal Displacement

### Preamble

1. This paper outlines the priorities of InterAction members relating to the High-Level Panel (HLP) on Internal Displacement for consideration by the panelists at their inaugural meeting in February 2020. We believe the overarching goal of the HLP should be to find durable solutions for IDPs, while respecting their rights.
2. The strategies and activities of the HLP in search of durable solutions must respect the rights and responsibilities set out in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and key international legal frameworks (international human rights law and international humanitarian law). They should also adhere to definitions set forth in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) Framework on durable solutions for IDPs.
3. There are no humanitarian solutions to protracted displacement. Efforts must be focused on securing sustained political commitments—by both affected and other states—to prevent and reduce internal displacement. This includes finding solutions to the factors driving internal displacement, dismantling barriers to local integration or return, ensuring IDPs have an adequate standard of living and enabling them to fully participate in civic affairs.
4. The HLP should result in a working agenda of discrete agreements for reducing internal displacement in specific contexts that will exist beyond the life of the panel itself. By the end of the Panel's 12-month mandate, it should emerge with an actionable plan with selected affected states, donor governments, and other key stakeholders to implement its recommendations.

### Essential Aspects For Inclusion In the HLP's Efforts



**The HLP should drive international political will and long-term investments toward specific roadmap, or "compacts," that promote durable solutions for IDPs.**

- The HLP's added value among other existing initiatives aimed at addressing internal displacement is its political weight, visibility, and access to high-level engagement across a range of global stakeholders. These

features should be leveraged to drive concerted efforts towards creating country-level working agreements to reduce protracted internal displacement.

- These agreements should be outcome-oriented, with an eye toward specific actions that must be taken to achieve durable solutions for the given country's IDPs. Specific actions should include a range of areas including:
  - Legal—Revising laws and policies that discriminate against IDPs.
  - Administrative—Incorporating IDPs into national service delivery plans and in Voluntary National Reviews of Sustainable Development Goals [SDG] progress.
  - Programmatic—Concentrated investments in areas of IDP return, integration, etc.
- The agreements should be structured as “compacts” with clear commitments by affected states and communities, international donors, UN agencies, and other key stakeholders to achieve mutually agreed upon activities and targets. Orienting the actors around a common problem and solution set is necessary to take concrete steps forward in reducing internal displacement and dismantling barriers to durable solutions.



**The HLP should leverage its field visits to spur context-specific and ‘whole-of-society’ solutions with a wide range of stakeholders.**

- The HLP’s planned field visits should go beyond the stated goal of “undertaking a dialogue with relevant local and national stakeholders” in the TORs.
- Given the wide range of contexts, drivers and patterns of internal displacement and the absence of a universal solution, the HLP should leverage its field visits as an opportunity to understand the markedly context-specific needs of the internally displaced and the communities they live into broker a country-level working agenda to address them in the selected countries.
- The selection of countries should consider the magnitude and scale of displacement, the political will of stakeholders including the government, and existing momentum/efforts that can be leveraged to move the needle in a specific context.
- The selection of countries should also reflect the wide diversity of root causes, drivers, and patterns of internal displacement, including those related to complex emergencies, widespread gang violence/banditry, climate crises, and other natural disasters.
- While it may be outside the scope of the panel to engage with unwilling governments, the HLP should send a clear message to those that directly cause internal displacement by state-perpetrated violence.

- Given that 80% of today's humanitarian assistance funding is spent responding to conflict-related displacement, Member States should be encouraged to renew their commitments to uphold International Humanitarian Law and reaffirm their commitments to conflict prevention and mitigation.
- Member States should commit to, wherever possible, layering peacebuilding and livelihoods programming into lifesaving programs so that humanitarian dollars not only meet immediate needs but also help reduce the spillover of violence and support communities' resilience.



**The HLP should ensure avenues for systematic 'whole of society' engagement, including civil society partners and affected populations.**

- Ensuring robust participation of civil society and affected populations is key to the HLP's success. The HLP should maintain a community-level perspective that is crucial for ensuring efforts target the priority concerns of IDPs and affected host communities, and to avoid interventions that are disconnected from their reality.
- International and local civil society are essential partners for in-depth context and statistical analysis, identification of IDP-specific vulnerabilities, and for designing appropriate programmatic and policy interventions to address these challenges. They should be consulted meaningfully and regularly throughout the HLP's work process.
- The HLP should develop 'consultation streams' for stakeholders, including civil society and affected populations, to systematically engage with the HLP for the next 12 months. Stakeholders should have the opportunity to provide feedback on developing concepts.



**The HLP should develop follow-up mechanisms to carry forward the recommendations in its final report.**

- The Panel's final report should be viewed as the conclusion of the first part of an international process, not its end. Follow-up mechanisms and an actionable plan, driven by dedicated senior leadership with high-level visibility should be established to drive the agenda forward. The HLP should emulate the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing that gave rise to the Grand Bargain, a high-level, multi-stakeholder policy agreement that is still progressing years later.
- Accountability towards meeting the needs of IDPs is minimal and they are largely left out of the data collected to measure progress toward the SDGs. The Panel should prioritize follow-up measures to track and review progress towards IDP inclusion in the SDGs to increase accountability in delivering on the "leave no one behind" pledge contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## Conclusion

We call on the international community to seize the establishment of a High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement to chart bold plans of action to find durable solutions for IDPs. The HLP should focus its efforts on creating a clear roadmap in a handful of specific contexts to tackle the factors that prevent IDPs from returning to their places of origin, integrating locally, accessing basic essential services (health, education, etc.) and being able live decent lives. Adequate arrangements should be made during the course of the HLP to ensure these country-specific roadmaps are adopted by affected states, other member states and key stakeholders and that efforts to realize them live beyond the duration of HLP itself.

These roadmaps should be underpinned by the rights of IDPs and responsibilities toward them set out in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the international legal frameworks (international human rights law and international humanitarian law). They should also adhere to definitions set forth in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs. The roadmaps must build on the progress already made through existing legal frameworks and processes including the Kampala Convention, the GP20 Plan of Action and the ongoing work of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). Efforts should also be made to build on the work of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons.

Internally displaced persons and affected communities should be consulted, and their perspective consistently used to evaluate whether proposed actions will have a tangible impact on their circumstances. Both local and international civil society should also be regularly and meaningfully consulted as the HLP is undertaking its work. We urge that the principles and core elements outlined in this paper be used as a lens to critically evaluate the HLP TORS and future efforts of the HLP. The work of the Panel must be oriented around identifying real and actionable solutions to protracted internal displacement and securing the commitment of actors critical to implementing them. The more than 41 million IDPs globally deserve nothing less.

## About InterAction

InterAction is a convener, thought leader, and voice for nearly 200 NGOs working to eliminate extreme poverty, provide humanitarian assistance, strengthen human rights and citizen participation, safeguard a sustainable planet, promote peace, and ensure dignity for all people.