IDPs in towns and cities – working with the realities of internal displacement in an urban world

Submission to the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement
by IIED, JIPS and UN-Habitat
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In response to the call for submissions by the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS), and UN-Habitat, are delighted to provide actionable and forward-looking input that can feed into the Panel's work, with a particular focus on **internal displacement in cities and towns.**[1] The considerations and recommendations outlined have **IDPs' rights to a dignified urban life at their core.** They aim to promote a fundamental re-evaluation of how governments (local and national), donors and humanitarian and development actors can work together to address urban displacement.

Introduction

It is widely understood that the majority of IDPs across the world have relocated to towns and cities.[2] While this point is often repeated, the implications of urban displacement for policy and practice are rarely examined or developed. Urban areas feature as a *backdrop*, and yet **where IDPs are living, amongst whom, and within whose local jurisdiction** are critical factors in their ability to support themselves and their families, and contribute to local society, economy and politics. More than simply context, urban systems – including municipal authorities, networks of basic service provision, markets for goods and services, social infrastructure – should be seen as active potential contributors to IDP protection, well-being, self-reliance and integration.

Urban displacement is not a negative phenomenon *per se.* Indeed, for many IDPs urban life may serve as an interim or long-term solution to displacement. History tells us that people displaced into urban or peri-urban areas by conflict, violence or disaster often choose to remain there even once it is safe to return home. Displacement, along with other forms of migration, are factors that contribute – and have always contributed – to urbanisation. This is because alongside sanctuary, towns and cities also offer opportunities – for work, and access to healthcare and education. While life in an urban area can be difficult, for the local poor as well as IDPs, they are also places of hope and aspiration. **Accepting this fact is the first step to enabling displaced people to contribute positively to the economic and social dimensions of city life, as urban citizens and rights-holders.**

However, large flows of displaced people into urban areas can have significant impact on the local economy and society, as pressure increases on housing and labour markets, and on the provision of basic services, health and education. It can lead to the proliferation of slums or the growth of informal settlements, if demand for low-income housing outstrips supply. IDPs, particularly those living in informal settlements, may find themselves vulnerable to repeated displacement, through eviction, natural hazards or social unrest.

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[1] IIED, JIPS and UN-Habitat are all members of the Global Alliance for Urban Crises. www.urbancrises.org The authors would like to thank Aline Rahbany (World Vision International) and Dolf te Lintelo (Institute of Development Studies) – also members of the Global Alliance – as well as UN-Habitat's Urban Planning and Economic Development Section for their inputs and review.

[2] https://www.unhcr.org/innovation/the-power-of-cities/

Humanitarian actors and host governments – wary of these outcomes – often seek to prevent movement into towns and cities, attempting to divert displaced people into camps. Yet as displacement crises endure, the camp model becomes increasingly problematic. Camps are premised on the idea that there will be a clearly demarcated 'post-crisis' period when IDPs will leave, most likely to their places of origin. As crises become protracted in nature, aid dwindles, and camps become places of entrenched poverty. IDPs are left with few opportunities to become self-reliant, particularly where mobility outside of camp settings is restricted. Protracted crisis leaves affected governments without easy options: do nothing and risk accelerating the proliferation of existing and new slums in urban / peri-urban areas; or build camps and also risk creating new slum settlements and increasing poverty.

For these reasons, a **proactive urban response** to displacement is required. Instead of trying to prevent movements to towns and cities, we should be aiming for a world without long-term camps, where institutions, local authorities, service providers and society in general in urban areas are able to provide an enabling environment for their newest residents. As such, urban displacement requires a complete rethinking of how governments (local and national) and humanitarian and development actors prepare for and respond to displacement.

This submission develops four key messages. Each of these messages is underpinned by key recommendations and the need for better and actionable data:

1. *We must return the focus to the lived experiences of urban IDPs, providing an enabling urban environment for IDPs to flourish as citizens. This means identifying and removing the barriers that prevent them from benefiting and contributing to the social, political, economic and cultural life of towns and cities.*
2. *We must support and work with local governments and city leaders to recognise IDPs as rights-holding urban citizens, build their capacity to listen and respond to IDP needs, and provide concrete incentives that leverage the benefits for IDPs, host communities and the city as a whole that can result from displacement.*
3. *We must work with urban systems and institutions so that cities function in support of a dignified life and solutions for the internally displaced. This will require integrating spatial and sectoral approaches, and positioning the constellation of actors that run towns and cities as responders to and managers of displacement.*
4. *We must take active steps to ensure complementarity between the actions of humanitarian and development actors, city authorities and services providers. This means setting collective outcomes, and aligning development agendas and associated resources in support of durable solutions and impacts at scale for IDPs.*

> *Key Message 1: We must return the focus to the lived experiences of urban IDPs, providing an enabling urban environment so they flourish as citizens. This means identifying and removing the barriers that prevent IDPs from benefiting and contributing to the social, political, economic and cultural life of towns and cities.*

Why is this an imperative? IDPs may be displaced from their homes, but their citizenship should not be in question. Urban areas can offer both a response and a solution – interim or permanent – to internal displacement. Whatever the potential length of displacement, all actors should be promoting the right to urban life for IDPs, enabling them to live like any other urban citizen, contributing to the society, politics and economics of the town or city where they have sought sanctuary or to which they have returned.

The above may be widely accepted by the international community, but in practice, government, humanitarian and development actors still often fail to identify and address the barriers that prevent IDPs from leading a dignified urban life and achieving the most appropriate durable solution to their displacement.

While identifying the location and numbers of IDPs in a city is an important first step to ensure protection and assistance needs are met, the removal of barriers to urban life and enabling durable solutions in cities **requires a more comprehensive understanding of IDPs' identities and diverse lived experiences**. This remains difficult in cities, because:

- o Urban IDPs often live among the urban poor and experience similar deprivations to other marginalized groups, but they also have specific needs and vulnerabilities as a result of their displacement. Identifying and understanding these differences in urban contexts is not always simple, especially in situations of widespread urban poverty, informality and inequality. As urban IDPs are not a homogeneous group, their various skills, resources and abilities as well as cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds must be taken into consideration.
- o Informality plays a fundamental role in the economic life of many cities affected by internal displacement. Informal labour and rental housing markets are often the first and most reliable conduits for IDPs to access livelihood opportunities and housing. But exclusionary practices and policies, or the lack of recognition and engagement with informal housing, labour and service provision on the part of local and national authorities can stand in the way of a realistic response to urban displacement.
- o Discrimination is a particularly important factor that undermines IDPs' achievement of their rights. However, reliably and objectively identifying discrimination in urban areas can be highly sensitive and particularly difficult, as IDPs may choose invisibility and anonymity as a protection mechanism, but also because it is difficult to discern when discrimination is related to their displacement status and when it is arising from existing social tensions common in unequal societies and impoverished urban areas.
- o Engaging with the lived experience of IDPs also means understanding the differentiated impact on members of the same household due to gender, generational or other identity-based differences, particularly in protracted situations. For example, the desire to return may be very strong among older IDPs who have been waiting for years for the opportunity to move back to their lost home. Meanwhile, younger generations who have lived most of their lives in the city of refuge may have developed job skills for their urban life that are not needed in a rural area of origin. The ability to navigate the city may be different between older and younger generations, as well as their aspirations and preferences for the future.

The lived experience of internally displaced people is more than numbers, location and list of needs and intentions. The majority of initiatives targeted at IDPs in cities focus on meeting immediate needs and access to basic services. Even those aimed at building self-reliance rarely address the full spectrum of political, social, economic and cultural rights that contribute to a dignified life in the city. Quality disaggregated data is needed to identify differences across age, gender and identity. However, actors using and producing data on IDPs in cities and the donors that finance such assessments, should understand that the diverse experiences of displaced people require other complementarity methods and approaches. The life that IDPs are forced to leave behind, their place of origin, and their journey of displacement largely shapes IDPs' capacity to navigate life in the city, and their ability to simply survive in it or thrive and achieve a dignified urban life. Engaging with the full spectrum of IDPs' realities requires a diversity of skills, the use of sound mixed methods and tailored methodologies, meaningful engagement of IDPs in the data process. Understanding the lived experience of IDPs also requires integrating perspectives and impacts of displacement amongst host communities, in order to

reach a point where both communities can live well together over uncertain time periods. Engagement with the local actors that often constitute their support networks, including grassroots and religious organizations, local businesses and other community actors and brokers is key.

What these challenges tell us is that no single actor or agency can produce the evidence and the comprehensive response to address the diverse needs and aspirations of IDPs in cities and successfully support meaningful urban lives. The scale of this challenge requires skills, knowledge, networks and resources from a diverse group of actors, including government, humanitarian, development, civil society, academia and communities, effectively making this a whole-of-society endeavour.

The following recommendations propose a whole-of-society approach to data and interventions that can allow IDPs to flourish in cities.

Recommendations:

Humanitarian and development actors must work with the city and its communities to enhance social outcomes and well-being, and to foster active citizenship of IDPs in urban areas. The city, with its dense social fabric and multitude of actors, provides diverse entry points and opportunities to enhance social cohesion, active citizenship and participation. Nonetheless, this requires a shift, particularly in humanitarian practice. It requires a basic understanding of the social landscape of the communities where IDPs settle, so as to identify where to anchor community-based interventions. It also requires recognition of the impact the built environment can have on social relations and an understanding of how it can be leveraged to foster social cohesion and an enhanced sense of safety and belonging in areas of local integration or return. Place-making practice and participatory planning have much to contribute here, as do partnerships with built environment professionals. Underpinning all of the above must be a recognition that informality characterises the lives and livelihoods of IDPs and the urban poor, and that constructive approaches that work with informal housing, job markets and service provision are the only realistic way to respond to the needs of IDPs.

Actors addressing internal displacement in cities should strive to include a component of active citizenship in their interventions, by involving IDPs in discussions on solutions and by building their capacity to engage in the actual design and implementation of interventions. IDPs and host communities, among other stakeholders, must be allowed to take an active role in decision-making processes. Inclusive planning not only provides a platform for the voices of IDPs, and strengthens their investment in local processes, but can also drive key societal changes where it engages with civil society and experts in key issues such as women's empowerment, child protection, public health and climate change.

Stronger partnerships are needed between those responding to displacement, and development actors with experience of data collection and analysis. The latter can bring experience in methodologies to assess local governance and social cohesion, particularly for peacebuilding and stabilization efforts. **A comparative approach[3]** has proven particularly useful (see case study 1) and should be applied more widely in urban displacement contexts to identify specific IDP needs and vulnerabilities, but also similarities with hosts that require integrated responses. More **learning with host communities is also required**, particularly on successful examples of solidarity, as well as on factors that have triggered social tensions and instability. International actors should strive **to partner and benefit more from the work of academia** (including local academics) particularly on longitudinal and comparative studies in protracted

> **Case study 1**
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> 15 years on, the majority of the 1.86 million IDPs created by the conflict in Darfur live in camps that, over the years, have come to resemble permanent settlements. A collaborative profiling exercise supported by JIPS for measuring progress towards durable solutions in the town of El Fasher (North Darfur, Sudan), compared the situation of IDPs in two camps located in the periphery with that of non-displaced communities in peri-urban and urban areas. In a context where the majority of the residents (displaced and non-displaced) were living in poverty, this comparison by population, and by area, helped identify and understand specific barriers that were linked to the displacement status of IDPs. The exercise also revealed needs that were shared by the wider population and linked to urban development challenges. These required an integrated approach and the collaboration of different actors to leverage city-wide improvements for the benefit of both hosts and displaced populations. The exercise brought together the Government of Sudan – including local and national authorities, UN agencies, NGOs, communities, and the World Bank.

displacement to understand IDPs' decision-making, drivers for building self-reliance and generational differences in urban displacement contexts.

> **Key Message 2.** *We must support and work with local governments and city leaders to recognise IDPs as rights-holding urban citizens, build their capacity to respond to IDP needs, and provide concrete incentives that leverage the benefits of urban displacement for IDPs, host communities and the city as a whole.*

Why is this an imperative? A proactive urban response to internal displacement is a shared endeavour. While local and national governments must recognise IDPs as rights-holding urban citizens and take responsibility for their needs, international support can incentivise political will, as can locally-owned evidence and concrete incentives that leverage urban displacement for the benefit of IDPs and the city as a whole.

Political will and assumption of responsibility are key drivers of an enabling environment that allows IDPs to lead a dignified life and contribute to urban society, politics and economy. Yet local governments, while being asked to uphold the rights of IDPs and returnees, and ensure adequate service delivery in situations of resource scarcity, must also remain accountable to their constituents and to higher levels of government. They must navigate sensitive political situations where constituents and external actors hold diverse and competing views. Even when political will and recognition of IDPs' rights exist, local government may lack the capacity to coordinate and lead on

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[3]Examples of its application in practice can be found in the Sudan durable solutions profiling (2019), and the profiling exercises in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (2016) looking at IDPs, Refugees and host communities. The examples utilised the collaborative profiling approach outlined in the interagency durable solutions library and analysis guidance, a multi-stakeholder project, coordinated by JIPS, to operationalize the IASC framework for Durable Solutions. More information available at https://inform-durablesolutions-idp.org/

responses and can be undermined by external actors. Where there is lack of or limited political will to recognise IDPs as full citizens, this may be a result of entrenched cultural attitudes, misconceptions, misinformation or politization of internal displacement.

What this complex picture tells us is that incentivizing political will and responsibility in urban displacement contexts that have existing political and development challenges **is a process**, and **requires concerted action across three key areas**: (1) better and locally-owned evidence on IDPs to inform local decision-making and counter misconceptions and politicisation (2) better articulation and formulation of concrete incentives that leverage the positive outcomes of displacement for IDPs, host communities, local authorities, and the city as a whole and (3) meaningful international support and resources to strengthen capacity and leadership of city authorities.

We offer the following recommendations aimed primarily at donors and international actors working on IDP issues in cities, and to international networks of local authorities, that can contribute to catalysing political will and responsibility in cities.

Recommendations:

Leadership and empowerment of local authorities depends on a combination of political, administrative and operational capabilities, and the absence of one or more of them can compromise political will, accountability and capacity to acknowledge and take responsibility for upholding IDPs' rights. Thus, we recommend that capacity building should be comprehensive so as to embrace these three aspects.

Donors, international actors and international and regional networks of local authorities must invest in making concepts, definitions and frameworks on internal displacement available to city authorities and support them in translating these into practice. Local authorities must improve their understanding of internal displacement concepts and standards and the rights-based nature of durable solutions[4] (which is often reduced to the physical movement of relocation or return). Furthermore, they require support to make these concepts and frameworks - such as the IASC framework for Durable Solutions – **operational and relevant to their contexts and obligations**. This could include, for example, integrating response to IDPs into local development plans, developing city-level durable solutions strategies covering the full spectrum of possible solutions, or amending laws and policies that prevent IDPs from fulfilling their rights in the city. At lower levels of local administration, understanding of and information on IDPs' rights and entitlements are critical to ensure access to services and tailored assistance. This may require dedicated funding and reporting requirements from donors.

Local authorities must be empowered to coordinate and negotiate with humanitarian and development actors, so that agendas are aligned from the outset and urban displacement is better managed. International actors and donor working on internal displacement should ensure that city authorities have a seat in multi-stakeholder discussions and a say on interventions related to internal displacement, which are often geared only towards national authorities. **International and regional networks of local authorities** can also play an important role in advocacy, peer-to-peer exchange and knowledge sharing, and in providing insights into the capacity building needs of local authorities dealing with internal displacement.

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[4] The IASC Framework for Durable Solutions determines that, *"a durable solution is achieved when IDPs no longer have specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement and such persons can enjoy their human rights without discrimination resulting from their displacement"*

Collaborating with local governments on data collection and analysis[5] can catalyse change in their attitudes, counter misconceptions on internal displacement and help align competing agendas. Engagement and leadership of local government in data gathering and analysis that informs short-term responses and long-term planning for urban displacement are critical ways to incentivize political will and accountability and promote alignment with local development agendas. This will avoid a situation where data and analysis of internal displacement in cities is carried out by international partners to inform humanitarian decision-making and lacks the necessary buy-in from local authorities. It will also help local governments to assume their role as primary duty bearers in urban displacement contexts (see case study 2).

Case study 2

Mogadishu has drawn in thousands of IDPs over the past decades, fleeing conflict and natural disasters. Settling in informal settlements, IDPs are often victims of forced evictions and face different challenges to non-displaced population in the same settlements. Given the limited evidence on the experience of displaced populations in the city, government partners at federal and city levels as well as humanitarian actors carried out a collaborative profiling exercise, supported by JIPS, to gain understanding of the displacement situation in the city and to inform planning for durable solutions policies and programs. The results of the profiling informed the creation of a taskforce led by the Mayor of Mogadishu to develop the city's Urban Durable Solutions Strategy in line with his commitment to end displacement by 2024:

> *"The Durable Solutions Strategy for Mogadishu leaned heavily on the 2016 collaborative profiling in informal settlements, that demystified some of the assumptions and speculation surrounding displacement and outlined the inhibiting factors preventing durable solutions, and in particular, local integration in Mogadishu"* Benadir Regional Administration, Mogadishu, Somalia

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International actors must acknowledge and work with the pre-existing political and development challenges of the city, as part of their response to internal displacement. This will provide the concrete incentives necessary for a proactive response to urban displacement and may change public and political attitudes and discourses. They should support a jointly-owned strategic vision that identifies how resources brought by international actors can be better leveraged for city development. This will require positive collaboration of humanitarian actors with development partners, particularly those with specialist understanding of urban systems, urban governance and urban and territorial planning, as well as building knowledge on urban systems among humanitarian actors. And it will require resources and longer project cycles.

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[5] See for example collaborative profiling of displacement situations: https://www.jips.org/profiling/about-profiling/ and the example of the collaborative profiling in Mogadishu informing the city's durable solutions strategy: https://dsu.so/2020-2024-strategy/

Channel humanitarian and development assistance funding through local government and service providers where possible.
Often humanitarian actors implement their programmes directly or through local and international NGOs. While this can be a vital element of a response, the possibility of channelling funding through local government and statutory service providers should be considered, since this reinforces their role as primary responders in situations of displacement. Nonetheless, in many contexts, administrative and technical capacities need to be built and sound accountability mechanisms established for this to be feasible.

> **Case study 3**
> In Lebanon, UN-Habitat supported the public financial management capacity of local government to manage an increased budget, supported technical capacity in service delivery and procurement, and monitored income and expenditure. This gave UN agencies and donors the confidence to invest their resources through local government. This approach can be easily replicated and strengthens the credibility of local government and service providers since they are seen to be paying attention and responding to the priorities of the community.

> **Key Message 3.** *We must work with urban systems and institutions so that cities function in support of a dignified life and solutions for the internally displaced. This will require integrating spatial and sectoral approaches, and positioning the constellation of actors that run towns and cities as responders to and managers of displacement.*

Why is this an imperative? IDPs rely on the urban system - the built environment, available services, social fabric and economy – to provide for their basic needs and self-reliance. But cities affected by displacement often suffer from their own pre-existing development, spatial and political challenges. The arrival of IDPs can place additional strain on urban services, generating tension with the host community.

It is both possible and important to leverage the urban system to enable solutions for IDPs, to focus on interventions that benefit both IDPs and host communities, while also contributing to achieving sustainable urban development. Services in cities are delivered through systems of infrastructure and service providers. These tend to be interconnected, and pressures or dysfunctionality in one (e.g. water) can lead to challenges in another (e.g. health). In leveraging the urban system towards solutions for IDPs, it is important to assess and project strains on urban infrastructure and services, manage them through urban planning and land management interventions and ensure responsible institutions and services providers are empowered and have necessary resources to able to meet additional demands due to displacement.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations are primarily targeted at local governments, but will require the support of other stakeholders, including civil society and humanitarian and development actors.

Undertake Urban Profiles – multi-sectoral spatial analysis
Urban Profiles examine the current and pre-existing distribution of the population across the city, and overlay this with economic indicators (such as the functionality of markets, trade and production); housing demand (including changes in the rental market, occupancy density and condition); and functionality of services (including water and sanitation, electricity, waste management, health, education). It is important that actors providing services are mapped and their capacities understood.[6]

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[6] Some services may be provided by multiple actors - for instance solid waste management is often undertaken by the city, communities, and by formal and informal private sector actors. All have different capacities to respond to new demands generated by displacement.

Urban Profiles help understand IDPs' mobility and the push and pull factors that determine it. They can be used to generate scenarios of current and future movement. They can also help identify "absorption capacity", including the capacity of housing stock, water systems, garbage collection, electricity etc. and the inter-relatedness of various infrastructures to deliver basic services and ensure that rights (to health and education, for example) are upheld. Ultimately urban profiles identify neighbourhoods that are under particular strain and require promptest attention (see case study 4)[7]. They provide an evidence base to support an inclusive planning process to identify and prioritise measures that are needed to increase absorption capacity, including through urban planning, infrastructure investment and community engagement, pinpointing the actors best placed to respond.

> **Case study 4**
> The urban profiling in Syrian cities, conducted by the Urban-S consortium, utilised a multi-layered area-based analysis to assess the current physical and social conditions of the city and its populations in light of the conflict and displacement context. This included identifying strained neighborhoods and critical gaps between the population needs and the capacity of the city to provide for those needs. The goal was to propose priority areas of intervention that meet immediate needs but also contribute to responsible and sustainable urban recovery inclusive of displaced populations' specific needs.

Given that in displacement situations data is needed very quickly to inform strategy, light urban snapshots, picking up on key issues and trends and building upon local knowledge, can be very useful in the immediate term, while buying time for more comprehensive city and neighbourhood profiles.[8]

Deploy urban planning to reach solutions at scale: Internal displacement can result in rapid urban growth, often unplanned, as homes are extended and new units are built to respond to increased demand, often without access to urban services. The capacity of existing infrastructure and services should guide planning approaches in situations of large-scale displacement (or return) into a city. Where existing infrastructure can accommodate greater demand, and where the urban fabric can accommodate an increased population, planning for increased density may be appropriate. However, planned city extensions can be considered where existing basic services are significantly overstretched. Such extensions must follow sustainable urban planning principles[9], allowing adequate street networks, development densities and sufficient space allocations for public amenities and open public spaces. This is not just for immediate purposes, but to accommodate the broader spatial development needs of the city over time, regardless of whether IDPs remain.

> **Case study 5**
> In Iraq, responding to internal displacement from 2014, UN-Habitat and partners supported the development of ten IDP settlements in eight governorates. These were planned as extensions or satellites to existing cities, meeting local urban planning standards, with upgradeable infrastructure and prefabricated housing and social amenities that could be improved or replaced over time.

Investments made in planned extensions are beneficial not only to the IDP community but also to the city itself; the development of infrastructure, shelter, schools and health facilities, even if initially temporary, can be incrementally improved over time. In all planning scenarios, mixed-use and socially mixed development should be advocated. This enables neighbourhoods to be more economically and socially vibrant than those with homogeneous residential uses, and can provide employment opportunities. Mixed-use planning can also allow for internal cross subsidies

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[7] More information on JIPS' support to the Urban Analysis Network Syria (Urban-S), available at: https://www.jips.org/jips-country/syrian-arab-republic/ and the UrbAN-S web portal: www.urban-syria.org

[9] Compact, mix-use, socially inclusive, integrated, connected and resilient to shocks

where more profitable land use development can subsidize the cost of basic housing units as explored in the next chapter.

Incorporate displacement concerns into territorial planning. Territorial planning considers planning across administrative boundaries, establishing interconnected systems of villages, small and intermediary towns and major cities, and enhancing rural-urban economic value chains. IDPs tend to be attracted to the opportunities offered by major cities, despite higher costs of living. However, planning and investment in small and intermediary cities provides multiple benefits: it can enhance rural economies by bringing markets and agriculture-related industry closer to sources of agricultural production; diversify sources of livelihood, thus contributing economic resilience; and strengthen resilience to various climate impacts by providing a variety of places of refuge in proximity to affected rural areas. This in turn enables continuing connection with original sources of livelihood and ease of return. In a displacement situation, a well-functioning territorial system of human settlements, which is hinged on planning coordination at national, regional and city/district levels, can absorb displaced populations and reduces strain on major cities.

> **Case Study 6**
> In response to displacement in 2017, the Oromia Regional State Administration in Ethiopia identified 11 intermediary cities in the region that would accommodate roughly 1,000 IDP households in each, and worked with the city authorities to identify suitable land as city infills and extensions to establish planned IDP settlements. As far as possible, these were integrated into the urban fabric, received basic services and could be incrementally upgraded over time.

Combine an area-based approach with sectoral responses to displacement crises.
Area-based approaches seek to identify locations of greatest vulnerability and leverage all-of-society support for crisis recovery. They have become increasingly popular with the emergence of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. However, making urban systems work for IDPs requires both an area-based focus <u>and</u> a sectoral approach. On the one hand, locations of greatest vulnerability need to be located, and the knowledge and efforts of community actors leveraged; on the other, since institutional service delivery is sectorized, there is a need to understand priorities by sector, and the way sectors work together to meet basic needs. City profiles both locate areas of greatest need and priorities for sectoral response showing gaps in service provision. **Action planning should follow suit**, with service providers at the heart of planning and prioritization processes. Aggregating sectoral response priorities within geographic mandates of different services can aid the development of sector-wide actions and support negotiations that may be needed to increase or reallocate resources to critical service providers to respond to displacement. In the longer term, pro-poor tariffing is essential to sustain the provision of services.

Secure housing, land and property rights of IDPs within a context of multiple and potentially overlapping interests. To address the needs of IDPs in urban areas and ensure that durable solutions are found within a broader context of sustainable and inclusive urbanization, it is important that Housing, Land and Property (HLP) rights of displaced people are protected – whether they are sharing or renting existing housing or commercial spaces, or living on private or public land. When IDPs return, their properties may have been occupied or destroyed, their legal documents lost or damaged and property rights issues that emerged during displacement may need to be addressed. It is imperative in any tenure process, that land and property tenure rights of IDPs as citizens are clear, well-communicated and well-understood, not just by city authorities and legal departments but by communities and their leaders. In addition, it is essential that IDPs, often a minority in their communities of arrival, have legal and representation support as needed to ensure non-discriminatory decision making.

In urban contexts, the protection of HLP rights of the displaced, of returnees or of resettled people needs to be placed in a broader perspective that paves the way for longer-term development considerations. Beyond case-by-case legal support, it requires a functioning land administration and management system that sustainably caters for needs of IDPs, and accompanies spatial planning and development processes, to ensure various and potentially competing land interests, historical grievances and unsustainable land use patterns have been addressed.

Displacement often occurs in contexts where the land administration systems are functioning poorly, and/or where various land systems (customary, religious and institutional) co-exist and overlap. Solutions for displaced people and vulnerable groups in urban areas often require significant strengthening or reform of the land administration system. Fit for Purpose land administration[10] is a globally recognized approach that provides opportunities for land administration systems to incrementally deliver benefits, including secure tenure rights, to a wide range of stakeholders, affordably and within a relatively short time. It involves partnership between communities and land authorities and recognizes diversity of tenure arrangements. Such approaches have been successfully applied in complex displacement crises, but further efforts are needed to ensure that good examples are replicated and scaled up to provide adequate solutions to displaced people and their host communities.
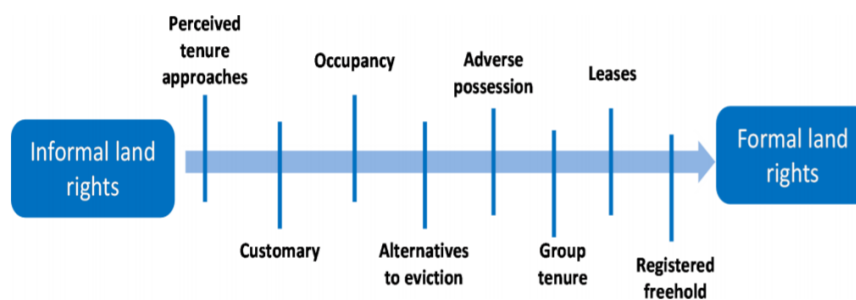

Figure 1: Continuum of Land Rights (UN-Habitat/GLTN, 2012)

> **Key Message 4** *We must take active steps to ensure complementarity between the actions of humanitarian and development actors, city authorities and services providers. This means setting collective outcomes, and aligning development agendas and associated resources in support of durable solutions and impacts at scale for IDPs.*

Why is this an imperative? City leaders may fear taking on political, financial, economic and social risks associated with inclusionary strategies for IDPs, particularly if they feel they are bearing the responsibility alone. Since displacement is not normally planned or budgeted for, they may require additional resources and capacities that are not readily available. City leaders may therefore prefer to absolve themselves of the responsibilities and risks associated with IDP integration by requesting that assistance agencies establish and manage camps, despite the longer-term unsustainability of this approach. City authorities may, however, be more willing to assume a leadership role in IDP integration if they are assured of the necessary support from national institutions, civil society, private sector and where needed, international organisations. This includes technical support, but also financial support for infrastructure development and service delivery.

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[10] https://gltn.net/download/fit-for-purpose-land-administration-guiding-principles-for-country-implementation/

Frameworks for "collective outcomes" can help assure city leaders that risk will be shared, and additional resources will be forthcoming to support approaches to integrate IDPs. [11] Collective outcomes require common understanding of the underlying causes of the protractedness of each internal displacement situation and establishing measurable and achievable results which can be integrated into planning tools, national, subnational and local development plans, UN Cooperation Frameworks and Humanitarian Response Plans. Their success in urban environments relies on a) establishing urban frameworks - laws, policies and institutional capacity at requisite levels of governance – and b) crowding in the support of multiple actors (including civil society and local private sectors as well humanitarian and development actors) in multi-year collaborative interventions,[12] that leverage existing development programmes, where possible, to strengthen capacity of urban actors, and facilitate investment. The opportunity to bring together collective resources of humanitarian and development actors, to inspire confidence in non-camp strategies, and achieve large scale impact may be lost if collective approaches are not systematised at an early stage of response.

Recommendations:

Enshrine Collective Outcomes as the norm for accelerating IDP solutions and reducing the protractedness of displacement, and establish a predictable global framework for the early activation and delivery of a collective response, to ensure urban systems work for IDP assistance and solutions. By studying the instances of protracted urban displacement over the last decade, it should be possible to derive a set of metrics that can accurately predict when urban displacement is likely to be protracted. A globally or regionally agreed set of metrics could guide an empowered RC and the broader humanitarian and development community to trigger a standardised response that commits humanitarian and development entities and their respective programmes and resources, to a collective response. This collective influence can be harnessed at early stages to support strategic decision making, nationally and locally, towards integrated solutions that allows the urban system (policies, urban fabric, and built environment institutions and service providers, private sector and civil society) to deliver assistance and durable solutions at scale, and to avoid long-term camps.

This would require:
1. Agreed criteria to trigger action across clusters
2. Agreed approaches on data collection and joint analysis – combining people, places and sectors
3. Improved knowledge and capacity among humanitarian and development actors to work in urban contexts and in collaboration with a broad range of actors
4. Set-pieces: pre-prepared mechanisms through which typical development programmes can be adapted in support of collective outcomes on IDP assistance and durable solutions

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[11] In the context of protracted displacement, collective outcomes can be understood as commonly agreed results or impacts that reduce the particular needs, risks and vulnerabilities of IDPs and increase their resilience through targets that are strategic, clear, quantifiable and measurable, and which are achieved through the combined efforts of Governments at national, subnational and local levels, international humanitarian and development actors, IDPs, local communities, civil society and the private sector. Kälin W and Entwisle Chapuisat H. (2017) *Breaking the Impasse, Reducing Protracted Internal Displacement as a Collective Outcome.* UN-OCHA

[12] ibid

Leverage multiple sources of finance for impact at scale

Traditional sources of funding are rarely adequate to reach the scale of demand in situations of urban displacement. However, the urban context provides opportunities to leverage finance at scale. While each context is unique, the principle remains that growing cities are investable. Conditions can be placed on private investment in urban development to ensure the provision of social assets, such as social housing that can be used by IDPs and other vulnerable people. The more government contributes to making development opportunities attractive, e.g. by providing land, roads, trunk and social infrastructure, the more they can demand the integration of social assets into the development. Urban environments can

> **Case Study 8**
> In Somalia a pilot project has been launched where infrastructure investments in cities made by the World Bank's urban resilience programme, coupled with investment in social infrastructure by various organisations, are expected to increase the value of publicly owned land partly settled on by IDPs through mixed use development. The pilot supports the local authority to leverage this increased land value to finance social housing stock, public spaces and basic infrastructure, which will benefit IDPs and other vulnerable people.

also offer a range of financing solutions – incremental housing finance, community managed funds etc., which can be adapted to meet circumstances of the target population. When supporting IDP integration, resettlement and return it is key to understand the variety of means of finance that could be available, particularly from private entities, and find ways to utilise development inputs to maximise their potential.

Development efforts are needed to facilitate financing from a range of sources. Efforts to strengthen own-source revenue can help the city to improve equitably distributed infrastructure and address deficiencies in deprived areas often inhabited by IDPs. Increased own-source revenue can also attract other forms of finance, including philanthropic, equity and debt financing, which can be blended with public resources to scale up infrastructure provision. Capital investment by development banks in municipal infrastructure can also be encouraged where viable, to enable local authorities to better provide services for all and sustain provision through pro-poor service charges. Development support can also enable environments where formal and informal small and medium size enterprises can operate more effectively, providing goods and service and job opportunities to serve an enlarged urban community.

> **Case Study 9**
> In Northern Kenya, a region that has been hosting displaced people and refugees for several decades, collaborations with private sector partners for the design and implementation of urban infrastructure and basic services are advancing. The Sustainable Economic Development Along the Turkana West Development Corridor through Enhanced Connectivity initiativeaims to improve connectivity between urban areas along the corridor, and build networks that enable businesses, local governments and individuals to gain access to a wider choice of goods, finance, employment and investment opportunities. This is achieved through the development of forums for cities along the major transport corridor, promoting the establishment of Economic Enterprise Zones (EEZ), expanding networks of cities for knowledge exchange and cooperation, building hard and soft infrastructure, and strengthening local capacity for coordination. This will foster investments, increase employment opportunities and increase the revenue basis of municipalities along the corridor.

Conclusion – Making cities work for IDPs

Traditional humanitarian approaches to IDP integration and durable solutions in urban areas are inadequate. Funding streams tend to focus on direct support for people of concern, are limited, and often reach only a fraction of the caseload. They fail to consider weaknesses in urban systems and service provision, and the vulnerabilities of local communities. The complexity of urban systems and the multitude of actors present in cities require strategies and coordination mechanisms that cut across sectors, for which the cluster system is ill-equipped. By contrast, the whole-of-government and whole-of society approach described here, aims to ensure **urban systems work for IDP assistance and solutions**. An approach that focuses on the urban fabric and urban service providers can ensure solutions for IDPs, while also improving living conditions for local people in vulnerable situations. This in turn encourages social cohesion and longer-term development opportunities. To achieve this, humanitarian support must be aligned with a broad range of development agendas, such as decentralisation, sustainable urban development, public sector modernisation and infrastructure development.

A focus on cities – to make them work for IDPs – will be unfamiliar for many humanitarian actors responding to displacement. Similarly, most international development organisations and donors have not prioritised tackling urban poverty and inequality over the past decades and may feel ill-prepared for such a task. The fundamental shifts in humanitarian and development practice outlined here may be daunting, but they are necessary if the international community is to make progress in mitigating the impacts of internal displacement. Crises that trigger displacement should not generate secondary, urban crises. The recommendations for cities in this submission are ambitious, and most municipal authorities hosting significant numbers of IDPs will require support to put them into practice. But they are not untested. They are based on a growing body of evidence and practice. The changes needed in the way in which the international system functions, so that it is fit for purpose in an urban world, are not insurmountable, and must be an integral and complementary component of current reform processes.

About the organisations

The **International Institute for Environment and Development – IIED's** mission is to build a fairer, more sustainable world, using evidence, action and influence, working in partnership with others. IIED's Human Settlements Group has been working on urban environmental issues since the mid-1970s. We work with local grassroots partners, with colleagues in the international research community, and globally, to influence the sustainable development agenda.

The **Joint IDP Profiling Service – JIPS'** mission is to inform collective efforts that help internally displaced people and communities to progress towards durable solutions to their displacement. We do this by providing technical support to governments, humanitarian and development actors to work together in collaborative data processes - such as profiling - and facilitate consensus, evidence-based policy making and joint responses to address internal displacement

UN-Habitat with its vision of "a better quality of life for all in an urbanizing world" works with partners to build inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities. UN-Habitat promotes urbanization as a positive transformative force for people and communities, reducing inequality, discrimination and poverty.