



Informal briefing on the status and progress of the initiative for a High-Level Panel on Internally Displaced Persons

ICVA's Conference Room, 26-28 Avenue Giuseppe-Motta
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Participants:

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Christian Aid (online), Danish Refugee Council and DRC Ethiopia, International Council of Voluntary Agencies, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, International Committee of the Red Cross, INTEROS (online), Norwegian Refugee Council, Japan Platform (online), Jesuit Refugee Service (online), Oxfam, Plan International, Platform on Disaster Displacement, Save the Children, Women's Refugee Commission, UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs mandate).

Agenda

- 1) Presentation
 - Background
 - Where we are today
 - Civil society roles
- 2) Informal exchange and dialogue

1) Presentation

Background

- Remind the IDP context linked to the UNGA resolutions adopted in Dec. 2017 and Dec. 2018, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement 20th anniversary, etc. Those brought contributions to the ongoing discussions around raising the profile of IDPs at global level.
- Progressively, the idea of creating a High-level Panel on IDPs emerged and in July 2018, [a letter was sent](#) by Norway, the EU and some Members States (MS) was sent to the UNSG raising this idea it was a vague letter but asking from the creation of an HLP.
- It took four months to get a response from the UNSG who raised several points 1) asked signatories to get more support from additional MS, especially those affected by internal displacement; 2) Requested that a stronger link was established with SDGs and the development dimension; 3) Delegated responsibility to follow-up to Mark Lowcock, UN U-SG for Humanitarian Affairs.
- Norway initiated a small working group with the aim of targeting more States to sign-on and approached other MS from autumn 2018. The group grew, although many MS were not in a position yet to indicate whether they would sign a new letter.
- Meeting in Dec 2018 with Mark Lowcock, to ask for his plans and his thinking (additional details). He mainly repeated previous points mad by UNSG.
- The working group's outreach continued, with Norway staff collaborating in Geneva; NY and in Oslo. States like Fiji, Mali, Nigeria, Zambia, Iraq became quite active, helping in outreach to others and recruiting other governments to support.



- Time was an issue. i.e. time needed for the embassies to consult capitals and for the capitals to consult their department.
- It was a transparent and inclusive process (e.g. the African Union was briefed). Even some countries who didn't sign the letter support the initiative.
A concept note was also developed and sent with a new letter signed by 57 MS on 10 May 2019, to the UNSG (see attached document). Together, the letter and the concept note aim to answer the request of showing more MS support for the idea of a HLP, highlighting possible objectives but clearly leaving it to the UN to develop ToRs for the HLP. The new letter has a strong long-term solution focus, identification of gaps and providing recommendations focus.
- Many of the 57 MS are affected by internal displacement.
- Advocacy continued after the letter was sent and a clear message was given to the UNSG that MS would not wait for 4 months for a reply this time. There was also good advocacy from NGOs and good cooperation with OCHA, UNHCR and IOM.
- IDP issues started getting more attention at global level, for example with the African Union year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally, Displaced Persons. On 24 June, there was a UNSC meeting on refugees and IDPs, where the HLP was mentioned.

Where are we today?

- On 18 June 2019: the UNSG met with the Principals of OCHA, IOM, UNHCR on the topic and an agreement was reached to set-up an HLP.
- On 25 June, Norway received an official letter from the UNSG announcing the creation of the HLP. This was felt as a huge success.
- In his letter, the UNSG repeated the needs to link the efforts to the 2030 Agenda and outline the following broad objectives:
 - 1) Increase overall attention on IDPs and the impact of internal displacement;
 - 2) Promote practical and durable solutions under the leadership of concerned governments;
 - 3) Strengthen humanitarian and development collaboration;
 - 4) Identify ways in which countries can get additional and more effective support from the international community.
- The HLP will therefore have a strong durable solutions focus; identify gaps in response; look at the long-term perspective. The intension is, however, not to reinvent the wheel.

Where do we go?

- The HLP will be supported by a small Secretariat, constituted by UN agencies and other relevant entities.
- It is envisaged that the Panel's Secretariat will be based in Geneva. Following the first meeting of the HLP, work will be undertaken towards issuing a report after 12-18 months.
- A lot is to be done before we can hold the first meeting, e.g. identify the High-Level Panel members, budget, ToRs. At the same time, we need to ensure we keep momentum alive.
- There should be about 8 members on the HLP. They should be high-level enough so as to raise attention and have access to governments. should have a strong



background in humanitarian, development, international affairs. A gender and a regional balance should be respected.

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Civil society role

- Interest in civil society, they play a crucial role.
- There should be consultations with civil society. Civil society should also be kept informed.
- Not in position to say whether civil society could be represented on the HLP and/or Secretariat but we could think of this option.
- NGOs expertise and suggestions are needed. For example, What would be NGOs expectations for the panels?

2) Informal exchange and dialogue

Questions

- What is and will be UNDP involvement?
- What about the current triple nexus reform?
- The need for durable solutions and increased funding might not always be aligned with protection concerns. How to address this?
- Any ideas of precise objectives of the panel?

Answers

- We invited UN agencies to dialogue, including UNDP. We had meeting with UN agencies and without them. OCHA has been the more active.
- Need to link with long-term development. Clear that we need to link with SDGs, triple nexus and UN reform. Given the IDP impact on socio-economic situations, it is clear to us that UNDP has to been involved, although the core is UNHCR, IOM, OCHA.
- Those 3 agencies will go forward with developing the ToRs. Next step, the 3 principals of those agencies will meet. Will be part of the Secretariat as focal point. The WB and the private sector might be linked also.
- Protection concerns are important and should be passed on to those drafting the ToRs. Nee to include all aspects of displacement.
- One important objective is to develop a dialogue but there should be a different approach than with GP20, which is more focused on the national level. We want this Panel to conduct dialogue with UN agencies, Member States, civil society, IDP, private sectors, any relevant stakeholders so as to identify gaps at global level; encourage the sharing of recommendations on how to support MS upon their requests.

Questions

- Glad to see the HLP will not be limited conflict IDPs. Does it mean the HLP could also seize itself of issues related to significant development induced internal displacement, or climate change and ecological disasters?
- What will be the High-Level segment Panel format? How to organize it? How to squeeze NGOs into that?



- There will be a Secretariat and the three UN agencies focal points: with whom should we engage?
- What will be the commitments for MS coming from the High-Level panel?

Answers

- Look at displacement at overall.
- Fiji, Philippines, Samoa signed the letter, countries affected by IDP due to climate change. There is no exclusion. We are looking at the triple nexus.
- We are at a very early stage. Still ongoing discussions but concrete work is handed over to the UN.
- Next step: meeting of the 3 UN Agencies, which started thinking about ToRs, Panel members and budget.
- There should be rooms to discuss with the UN agencies and we can ask that you are consulted on ToRs and further. With time, you will have specific contact points.
- On the financial part, MS are ready to provide financial support to the Panel including Norway. This is a priority for Norway.

Questions

- What in the global architecture that the HLP may aim to address? Legal framework approach? International IDP convention? What do you want to see?
- Prevention, mitigation, preparedness should be kept in focus, not only IDP response.
- On the panel and the secretariat, what would you like to see? Do you have people in mind?
- What NGOs can do to help at this point before the Panel is established?
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Answers

- We are not looking at a new convention or compact. Actually, before engaging MS asked the same question, with concerns. No intention to reinvent anything. The UN actually wanted the 2 compacts to be adopted first, before moving with a HLP on IDPs.
- The Guiding principles exist; the initiative will bring new attention to these.
- Outcome 1. We want MS to gather and speak on IDP; share their legal frameworks; how it works; what the challenges are. And then identify common challenges but also opportunities and draw common recommendations that can be of use; how to make response more effective, share common best practices. We hope that the HLP will not lead to another report that sit on a shelf.
- Outcome 2. UN agencies and national society itself, what are the gaps? Can national society improve their response and be effective on that?
- Several MS would like to see their own candidate on the HLP. We have been clear that signing on the letter was not a guarantee to be on the panel. It is not a negotiation process between States, but it is up to the 3 focal point UN agencies to decide on composition. The Africa Group might propose a candidate.
- We expect people on board the HLP with expertise and authority. This could theoretically include a candidate from civil society.
- The concept note is not set in stone.



Questions

- Will the HLP go on visit to the field?
- How to link the initiative with other organizations, e.g. with the Special rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs?
- Can you clarify that the HLP is not meant to be only an event ('panel') but basically a group of experts working over a period of time?
- Is Marck Lowcock still your main contact point at the UN? When will things switch from New York to Geneva?
- How much is this information public? When can we make concrete suggestions?
- A lot of resonance with the GCR for some points, isn't it?

Answers

- The members will have to go to the field it will be part of the ToRs and will have to speak with High-Level, civil society, IDPs. How, how often and where will have to be decided.
- We had close collaboration with the SRHR of IDPs. Her mandate is important and we expect the HLP will work closely with her. We have her support.
- We work with the IDP Adviser in OCHA who works closely with Mark Lowcock.
- Once the initiative is launched, the budget and the ToRs ready, it will be public. Hope to have the UNSG at the launch to bring more and more public attention on the issue. Then, will start the mandate and the first meeting in Geneva, away from media attention.
- Initially there was the idea of doing the launch in September in NY during UNGA but this might be too close to be able to settle all details by then. We don't want to lose momentum but we want things to be done right.
- It is public that the Panel will happen. The concept note is not public though. Remind that things can change.
- Convene the 1st meeting with the 3 UN principals and then we will go back to NGOs. This might take time. Let's let them do their work for the moment, no submitting names etc. Would advise NGOs to have a discussion with the Secretariat when it is established.
- The High-Level Panel is more based upon MS, with objectives and format different from the GCR. We do hope MS will share how they work with IDPs and how other MS can benefit from that.