

Summary note

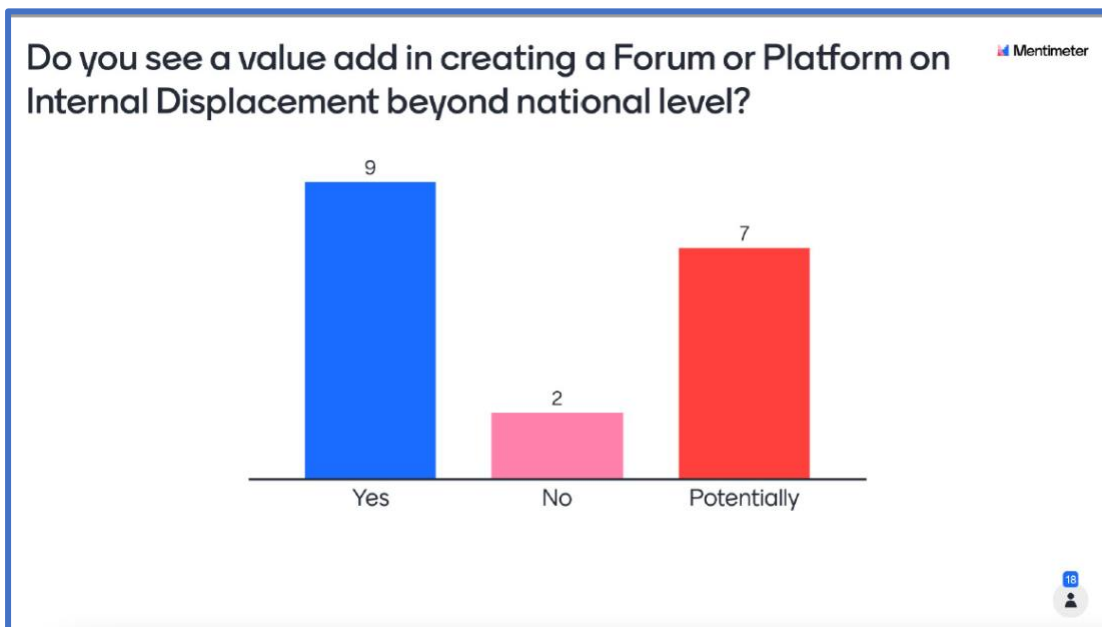
Roundtable: Realizing national accountability and international responsibility to address internal displacement

Thursday 3 June 2021 - Online

The meeting was organized by Plan International, World Vision and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies together with the High Level Panel on Internal Displacement and built on the related [interagency submission](#) to the High-Level Panel. The roundtable's overall objective was to unpack whether there is both a demand and a benefit for creating new spaces at the global level to fill the gaps, where they exist, and to help generate sustained political will and accountability for IDPs in the long term at the national level, thereby encouraging systematic change. The roundtable was organized around a set of two interlinked discussion sessions with the following topics: I) a Global Forum or Platform on Internal Displacement and/or enhance Regional Forums and II) a Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on solutions to internal displacement (or a similar/adapted position). Gathering over twenty-five participants, including representatives of NGOs, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, Secretariat staff of the High-Level Panel and Panel Member Sima Samar, the roundtable was a lively dialogue and provided for expert interventions from a variety of actors. The aim of this note is to summarise the main points made during the roundtable including recommendations for the upcoming report of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement.

1. Summary including recommendations of the session I on a Global Forum or platform on Internal Displacement and/or enhanced Regional Forums

- *Mentimeter* results to the question: *Do you feel that a Global Forum/Platform on Internal displacement would add value?* Yes: 9; Potentially: 7; No: 2.



- During the exchange, the majority of participants saw the benefit of a global or regional forums, particularly in ensuring sustained visibility to internal displacement.
- However, several of the roundtable participants advocated for a critical evaluation of the opportunities and risks associated with creating such forums, including and importantly, political issues. The format, the objectives and practical steps of establishing a global and/or regional forum would need to be assessed more thoroughly.

- Participants also identified the need for such a Forum or Platform to ensure that different stakeholders be meaningfully involved and not sidelined into parallel structures.
- A number of lessons learned as well as risks assessments can be derived from studying past and current international governance and mechanism. For instance, with the Global Refugee Forum in 2019, many of the pledges made by different actors including donors perpetuated short-term funding for short-term response and short-term visions.
- Looking at a possible Forum, some participants highlighted the importance of ensuring that it does not perpetuate hierarchical (top-down) approaches, by ensuring that it is driven by demand from IDPs, host communities and governments at the national level.
- The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) process is a probably a good example at regional level because it emerged from the community level with localization approach at humanitarian and development sides.
- Looking at Global Forum on Migration Development could be also interesting. Initially, it was a State-led process with civil society organisations (CSO) being gradually associated through a parallel forum.
- In addition, looking beyond the Global Refugee Forum experience will be useful, and might be less politicized, such as the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction and Platform on Disaster Displacement.
- Some participants also noted the necessary complementarities to find between global and regional forums if both are put in place and look at how the regional forum can feed into the global forum.

At global level

- Several participants argued that an added value of a global forum would be linked to the 'visibility' component. It would not resolve internal displacement issues in itself but would help elevating the issue at global level, while it is more difficult to have it at national level, as a dedicated space is currently inexistent.
- Some reflections were also offered on the advantage of having a marketplace where specific needs from States would be addressed (e.g., technical or financial support, to match with donors funding). Related is the idea that a forum would have to be organized in a structured way, particularly around financing mechanisms as there is currently not enough financing for internal displacement and usually not aligned with solutions.
- However, some concerns were also raised in relation to a matching exercise with potential countries coming as donors while they also host IDPs could be an issue as they would not come to seek solutions but to provide funding. A process would be best set up in two phases with those countries coming together to develop a framework linked to the global and regional levels (including the SDGs) and allowing for an organized way to conduct this global forum, not depending on voluntary commitments but on policies, systems, and capacities to report back.

At regional level

- A regional approach would allow for a more sustained engagement of stakeholders as opposed to the global approach in one recurring event.
- Giving a voice and, importantly, decision-making from IDPs could be a direct link and opportunity with a regional forum and would need to be at the core of accountability. The meaningful participation and decision-making of IDPs at global level is much more difficult to achieve.
- It was also argued that the East Africa region experience with a platform at regional level on solutions to internal displacement is a good example. In this regard, it allows connecting with other regional platforms and mechanisms, such as IGAD. In Somalia, solutions for IDPs were

incorporated into the national development plan, with more local level engagement through district level development plans. This helped with a whole of government approach and addressed some of the Nexus challenges. This example is often shared.

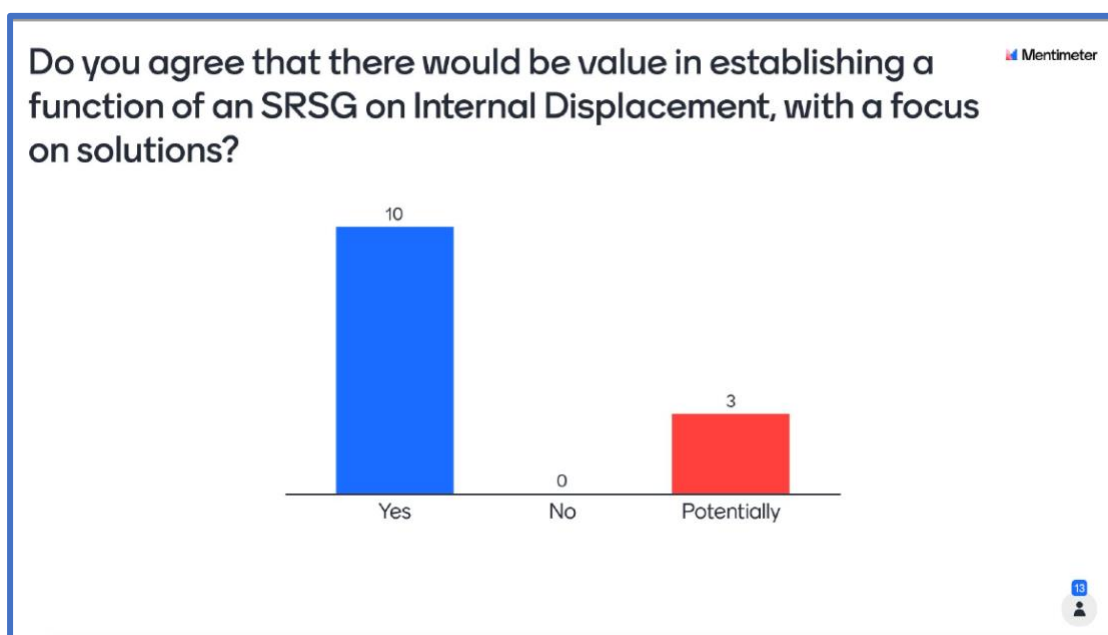
- A balance in ensuring national-driven protection and solution is key as well as looking at locally-led and area-based approach involving IDPs and host communities and civil society organizations roles. Community-based planning for IDPs and host communities is important.
- Some participants noted that on the financing aspect, it is more difficult to have discussion at global level and it fits more at regional level.

Key elements for such forum or platform, whether at global and/or regional levels

- 1) Focus on solutions and protection, including prevention is key. This is where accountability of States is core.
- 2) The forum(s) should not be purely humanitarian but engage across humanitarian and development issues.
- 3) The forum(s) should be directed towards national issues, not so much mainly looking at international policies, nor as a 'donor market' or a 'talk-shop'.
- 4) The forum (s) should not look at internal displacement as a siloed issue. For instance, internal displacement, climate change and DRR should be an important component considered.
- 5) The forum(s) should be seen as part of a puzzle of protection and solutions, connect with other mechanisms and platforms where it should complement and/or reinforce existing mechanisms and platforms. Regarding the existing mechanisms, it was argued that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights could be also emphasized, for instance within the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council.
- 6) The forum(s) should adopt a multi-stakeholder approach involving IDPs and CSOs, in which they are an integral part of decision-making.

2. Summary including recommendations of the session II on a Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) on Solutions to Internal Displacement

- *Mentimeter* results to the question: *Do you feel that a SRSG would add value?* Yes: 10; Potentially: 3; No: 0.



- Several major aspects were identified by the participants in relation to the idea of creating an SRSR position. One of them is associated with the mandate of the SRSR and how the SRSR would be able to push/influence States to be more accountable about internal displacement within their own countries.
- Similar to the creation of a global and/or regional forum(s), the mandate of an SRSR should be driven by prevention, protection and solutions perspectives with an equal focus on humanitarian and development sides. One participant warned that solutions are political and can lead to very sensitive political conversations.
- The SRSR mandate should be a leadership position.

Key functions of an SRSR and interactions with other stakeholders

- Various participants proposed the idea that the SRSR should complement the roles of the Emergency Resident Coordinators and the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of IDPs (SRHR). It will be important to have a past analysis to be clear on what the SRSR would be mandated for and whom he/she should reach out to. In addition, the SRSR in relation to ERC and SRHR, should be accompanied with the tools to make his/her work effective.
- Other interventions emphasized that the SRSR position is much more about engaging with States first and foremost and not necessarily with the UN system, so the concern around duplications risks with the ERC role is not an issue if the mandate of the SRSR is well framed, clearly defined. One participant expressed the idea that such a position could not cover everything related to internal displacement.
- There is a risk with an UN-led aspect of the position to undermine the leadership of Member States. It can also be used as an excuse for certain countries (and also regional processes) to just defer to the SRSR position.
- It was then argued that a UN approach to Solutions could be challenging from the perspective of NGOs to understand, navigate and operate with, as it is currently with the Resident Coordinator.
- Engagement with States by the SRSR should not be at global level only but also and importantly at national and local levels, for instance with cities and mayors.
- While a SRSR can keep the momentum on internal displacement, such function should be fully resourced to be meaningful, in addition to the existing mechanisms.
- For several participants, its function would have to entail development aspects and a longer-term approach.