



ReDSS Agenda for Humanity and SDGs

Leaving no one behind: a commitment to address forced displacement

Context

Displacement in Eastern Africa is predominantly of a protracted nature. At the end of February 2016, there were 11.7 million people displaced in the region, mostly in Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia (UNHCR) and at least half are children. Of the total displaced population having fled their homes mainly due to conflict, violence and human right violations, 3.2 million are refugees while 8.5 million are IDPs. Although most have been displaced for several years or even decades, few have durable solutions prospects such as returning to their home, being integrated into their host communities or settle elsewhere.

Addressing protracted displacement is a persistent, dynamic and complex political and development challenge. A fundamental shift in our approach to protracted displacement is therefore needed, one that goes beyond meeting humanitarian needs to one that preserves the dignity and improves the lives and self-reliance of displaced populations while addresses the impact on host communities. This change requires political resolve, long-term investments and a multi-sectorial rights and needs based programming approach to work towards prevention and solutions to reduce displacement levels in the region.

'*Leaving no one behind*' is a core responsibility of the UNSG's Agenda for Humanity and commitments are expected to be made at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016. It recognizes the importance of reducing long-term vulnerabilities of IDPs, refugees and host communities by complementing essential humanitarian action with sustainable development approaches. The Agenda for Humanity sets an ambitious target to reduce internal displacement, in a dignified and safe manner, by 50% by 2030. Forced displacement will also be at the centre of the UNGA Summit on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants to be held in New York on 19 September 2016. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has also placed a new responsibility on us all to ensure that displacement issues are included in the development agenda and to reach those in situations of forced displacement so that, besides receiving humanitarian assistance and protection, they benefit from and contribute to sustainable long-term development.

There have been advancements in the region over the years to enhance the protection and assistance of displaced populations, including the adoption of the African Union Kampala Convention for the protection and assistance of internally displaced persons in Africa. More recently, new initiatives have been introduced to improve planning, coordination, and joint actions in the search for durable solutions.

However, at a time when displacement levels continue to rise in Eastern Africa, there is an urgent need for comprehensive and contextualised analysis of the nuanced and complex interplay between drivers of displacement (environmental, societal, political and economic), and the more immediate triggers such as conflict in order to inform effective strategies for realising durable solutions.

New approaches are needed for effective humanitarian-development coordination to find solutions to protracted displacement and give the millions of displaced persons a chance of a better life with dignity and self-reliance.

We have a collective responsibility to challenge our structures and systems to do more and better together in the search for durable solutions for displacement affected communities¹ in the region.

In order to support that change, we ReDSS² members, through consultations with key stakeholders, national actors and displacement affected communities, have developed our agenda for humanity, contextualising global commitments and principles.

We, ReDSS members, commit to work together and to be collectively held accountable for the implementation of our joint agenda as stipulated below. Our commitments will guide our work while the actions will inform our workplan for the years to come.

¹ The term 'displacement affected communities' entails all displaced populations and host communities.

² Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS). For more information: www.regionaldss.org / info@regionaldss.org

Commitments and actions plan

Commitment 1: Support the integration of protracted displacement and durable solutions in national development plans³ and in peace negotiations and agreements

Political will and longer term investment from development actors are critical in the search of durable solutions for displacement affected communities in the region. It is key to complement humanitarian action, which is still essential in many places in Eastern Africa, with developmental approaches aimed at integrating marginalized displacement affected communities into development planning, programming and implementation with a view to make them self-sufficient. Protracted displacement is detrimental to development as a large part of the population lives in severe impoverishment, unable to integrate in the labour market and thus is not or only marginally productive. It also may undermine security as camps and settlements provide limited protection against intrusion and recruitments. **The inclusion of displacement and durable solutions into national development programming and urban development strategies**, namely by including refugees and IDPs in key sectors such as health, education, and good governance, is of critical importance. The persistent and recurrent nature of many causes of displacement fosters the need for enhanced developmental approaches, but also to ensure that National Development Plans consider displacement as a consequence of conflict and insecurity and security as a fundamental element for durable solutions.

Actions required

- **Adopt a holistic approach addressing physical, material and legal rights and needs** of displacement affected communities and **work on forced displacement as a development issue** to improve knowledge in this field.
- The process must be viewed as **a collective action in the search of durable solutions rather than mandate driven**- our common goal being to give the millions of displaced persons in the region a chance of a better life with dignity and self-reliance. In Somalia for instance, displacement has been recognized by the Federal Government (FGS) as a central priority, and the FGS along with humanitarian and development actors have come together to incorporate displacement into the Somalia's Peace and State building goals.
- **Adopt a community lens approach** so data and evidence collected should be about '*displacement affected communities*' to also include host communities. This will allow different actors to use similar indicators and to contribute to the same outcomes and measure the same impacts despite different working entry points (humanitarian versus development) while ensuring a Do No Harm approach.
- **Improve the generation and availability of data and relevant evidence and analysis⁴** to better understand and operationalize a complementary humanitarian and developmental approach in the search for durable solutions. The problem is both the type and quality of relevant data in particular contexts, but also the need for the resulting analysis to be trusted and agreed upon by all stakeholders.
- **Develop a monitoring and evaluation system including a standard data protocol** to support disaggregation of data for better analysis, targeting, coordination and accountability, together with guidance for adaptation and use in different contexts. Displacement affected populations have different vulnerabilities, protection needs and capacities depending on their age, gender and diversity. Durable solution should be approached through an Age, Gender and Diversity lens and key data disaggregated by sex and age at a minimum.
- **Support standardisation of data management** to allow for comparative analysis within and across groups to identify displacement-specific protection and assistance gaps and needs, as well as to analyse potential discrimination against displaced populations. It will also allow for cross learning, sharing of practices and comparison in approaches to durable solutions in different protracted displacement contexts (Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan, etc.). This could inform a larger (global) lessons learned analysis.
- **Peace negotiations and agreements need to address displacement and durable solutions⁵**: a key factor to displacement solutions has been the inclusion of displaced populations and solutions in the agreements and the key role played by community-based peace negotiations. It is therefore critical to ensure that durable solutions are addressed in the current negotiations on South Sudan and Burundi.

³ Including in poverty reduction strategies and UNDAFs in line with Agenda 2030.

⁴ IDMC Briefing Paper, 8 December 2015 'Understanding the Root Causes of Displacement: towards a comprehensive approach to prevention and solutions' and refer to JIPS profiling methodology to draw from good practices.

⁵ Refer to the guide on 'Integrating Internal Displacement in Peace Processes and Agreements' <http://www.unhcr.org/50f94e689.pdf>

Uganda Case study: the Settlement Transformative Agenda (STA) and UNHCR's Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE)

The Uganda Government's Settlement Transformative Agenda (STA) and UNHCR's Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) are closely interlinked strategies that seek to integrate refugee assistance within local service delivery systems whilst gradually attempting to enhance refugee and host communities' socio-economic resilience and self-reliance prospects. This is aimed at a long-term refugee and host community empowerment framework to increase the benefits of local integration. Through the STA, the government of Uganda has integrated refugees in the National Development Plan for 2016-2020. This initiative will be critical to monitor challenges and/or opportunities in achieving durable solutions, to support better coordination between humanitarian and development actors, and to be able to share lessons learnt and best practices.

Commitment 2: Support national and regional capacities and the implementation of legal and policy frameworks in the search of durable solutions for displacement affected communities

Unlocking protracted displacement and realising solutions must take their point of departure in international normative/legal frameworks and commitments. Commitments under relevant international legal frameworks must be upheld, while implementation of frameworks on ending displacement such as the UN Secretary-General's Decision on Durable Solutions, and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs should be urgently promoted.

Actions required

- **Support the African Union and its Member States to ratify and fully implement the Kampala Convention** for the protection and assistance of internally displaced persons in Africa⁶, and to **ensure that women and girls benefit from its protections**⁷. Given that women's House, Land and Property (HLP) rights are closely linked to other elements of durable solutions, such as access to livelihoods, safety, security and an adequate standard of living, failure to uphold them constitutes a serious impediment to women's prospects for return, local integration or settlement elsewhere. An important component of the convention is the **right of IDPs to participate in decisions that affect their lives**. By drawing attention to IDPs with special needs, the convention reiterates the need to assess the specific vulnerabilities and capacities of IDPs and host communities. They should be conducted in a participatory manner, ensuring that representatives of all members of displaced and host communities are consulted and are able to present their own concerns and proposed solutions.
- **Support the full and effective implementation of the international refugee norms, laws and practices** which provide protection to refugees, and commit to actively work to uphold the institution of asylum, including the fundamental principle of non-refoulement (the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol).
- **Support the adoption of procedures that provide for full implementation of the Best Interests principle** in case management for all children affected by forced displacement as per General Comments 6 and 14 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- **Support the adoption of legislations** facilitating access to civil registration and documentation for refugees and IDPs, including birth registration, national identity cards and other personal documentation. And support the establishment of IDPs focal points as set out in article 3.2 of the Kampala convention.
- **Ensure that policies are not only 'status' based but address the rights and needs of displacement affected communities, including the right to family**. There is an urgent need to create regional and national technical Durable Solutions Working groups to support governments in developing and implementing durable solutions policies and strategies.
- **Strengthen capacity to build a common understanding on** how to address durable solutions for displacement affected communities in the region. More and more actors are being involved and there is an urgent need to strengthen capacity of humanitarian and development program staff and of policy and decision makers to provide them with the required legal and technical skills to address durable solutions.
- **Support IGAD Secretariat** in leading forced displacement and mixed migration agenda in the region.

⁶ Refer to <http://www.internal-displacement.org/publications/2013/national-instruments-on-internal-displacement-a-guide-to-their-development/>

⁷ NRC December 2015 briefing paper: The Kampala Convention: Make it work for women <http://womenshlp.nrc.no/2015/12/the-kampala-convention-how-to-make-it-work-for-women/>

Support self-reliance: need for a holistic planning and programming approach addressing physical, material and legal safety- example from the ReDSS framework

ReDSS adapted the IASC Framework for Durable Solutions for IDPs to develop the ReDSS Solutions framework. It comprises 30 indicators organised around physical, material and legal safety. The framework offers a snapshot in time to assess to what extent durable solutions for displaced populations have been achieved in a particular context. A traffic light system has been developed to assess the status of each indicator. The traffic light provides a comparative assessment of conditions between the displaced and the host community. **More information:** <http://www.regionaldss.org/research-and-information-management>

IDPs Solution Initiative in Somalia

The initiative was launched in December 2015 by the RC/HC/DSRSG for Somalia and supported by UNHCR and UNDP in their respective global cluster lead responsibilities, with the aim to leverage political willingness, humanitarian and development support in order to develop a comprehensive durable solutions strategy for IDPs. The initiative is supported by Pr. Walter Kaelin who just conducted his second mission. [Click to view report](#)

Commitment 3: Strengthen initiatives that support the self-reliance of refugees, IDPs and returnees and empower their contribution to both host communities and countries of origin

The search for durable solutions to the protracted displacement situation in East and Horn of Africa is a key humanitarian and development concern. This is a regional/cross border issue, dynamic and with a strong political dimension. Creating durable solutions requires **a multi-sectoral, rights and needs based programming approach** as well as to strengthen coordination and leadership from governments and RC/HC offices to bring together humanitarian and development actors. **Addressing physical, material and legal safety of displaced people as a whole is critical in the search of durable solutions.** For instance, the inability to solve land and property problems due to their complex and entrenched nature and the absence of clear regulatory frameworks is a key issue. A comprehensive solutions strategy presumes therefore that governments recognize and are willing to address these issues, without which the sustainability of durable solutions could not be guaranteed.

Actions required

- **Ensure that the rights of displaced persons**, their protection and empowerment, is at the heart of any programme approach. **Durable solutions programming must be based on free and informed choice** of the individual, must be voluntary, and in an environment which can support safety and dignity.
- **Support a better understanding of political context and incentive structures** within which national refugee and IDPs policies are made **to have more evidence in support of local integration and the benefit of displaced people economic empowerment** for host communities and countries. Focus on voluntary return and reintegration is too narrow. It buys in to the politically preferred solution but local integration options in protracted context need to be reinforced.
- **Provide adequate long-term and predictable international political and financial support to countries and communities in the region that host refugees and IDPs**, in such ways that improve services and inclusive economic opportunities, including on housing, employment, education, access to health care and other vital public services and infrastructure for all. At least half of the forcibly displaced people in the region are children so millions are out of school. Investing in youth and education is crucial. Failing the children and youth risks creating a lost generation and sets us on a path toward new conflicts and greater displacement in the future.
- **Recognise that refugees and displaced populations are not just passive victims and that they have skills, talents, and aspirations.** While many are in need of assistance, they have capacities as well as vulnerabilities. Rather than assuming a need for indefinite care and maintenance, interventions should nurture such capacities. This involves improved opportunities for education, skills development, access to microcredit and financial markets, business incubation, and improved internet access.
- **Support secure and safe space of asylum** that can act as transitional environment, preparing and empowering displaced populations to develop capacities and engage, as right-holders, once solutions become possible. The quality and sustainability of solutions often rests on the quality of asylum.
- **Ensure close coordination with resilience initiatives and support early onset solutions planning and programing for South Sudan and Burundi regional crises:** lessons can be learned from within the region, and globally, to ensure a meaningful shift from a care and maintenance approach to displacement, to one that builds resilience and improves self-reliance to pave the way for sustainable solutions. There are opportunities to ensure a solutions lens is applied to displacement. Linking

humanitarian and development assistance is an opportunity for both sets of actors to contribute to more robust and sustainable protection and resilience programming to support self-reliance opportunities.

- **Develop an ongoing and systematic research agenda** including comparative research. Very little is known for instance about the economic lives of displaced populations. In particular, comparative case studies are needed in different regulatory environments (restrictive versus open), at different phases of a displacement crisis (e.g. emergency, protracted, and return), and for different categories of displacement (e.g. refugees, IDPs, and people displaced in the context of natural disaster).
- **Improve knowledge and solutions programing in urban context:** more and more protracted displaced people live in urban areas and in the case of Somalia for instance, it has also become clear that many IDPs living in protracted displacement in urban areas will not return to their rural areas of origin. This highlights the increased need to seek solutions in urban environments and to consider all possible options to attain a durable solutions including local integration besides return.

The need for freedom of movement for refugees

This right is strongly recognised in international law. Article 26 of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees grants freedom of movement to refugees, and Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides that everyone lawfully within the territory of a state (including refugees) shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his or her residence. At the regional level, Article 12(1) of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights stipulates the rights of refugees to seek asylum and move freely. Ultimately, nearly all other rights are contingent upon freedom of movement. Without freedom of movement, rights to employment, education, legal access, identity papers, travel documents, naturalisation, and many other fundamental entitlements are severely curtailed, if not completely blocked.

The Refugee economies- Ugandan model study⁸

Oxford University's Humanitarian Innovation Project has been instrumental in better understanding how restrictive refugee policies limit the capacity of refugees to engage with markets in ways that can lead to sustainable opportunities and self-reliance. When refugees are given the right to work and freedom of movement, they are capable of making a contribution to the national economy. Refugee communities are often integrated within vibrant and complex economic systems. Recognising and understanding this represents an opportunity to turn humanitarian challenges into sustainable opportunities. 'Refugee economies' concept is broadly defined as 'the resource allocation systems relating to a displaced population'. The concept is intended to be holistic in attempting to look at ways in which refugees' economic activities are not simply reducible to livelihoods but are part of a wider system involving consumption, production, exchange, and finance. It also reflects an attempt to provide a 'bottom-up' perspective by exploring refugees' economic lives from the perspective of the people themselves rather than from the 'top down' perspective adopted in studies concerned primarily with assessing the impact on host states or informing narrowly-defined policy interventions. The research findings show strong evidence of the many creative and enterprising ways in which refugees develop sustainable livelihood strategies. While many refugees do incorporate aid into their survival strategies, they routinely strike a complex balance in their livelihood strategies, managing diversified portfolios of income and food sources. These households and individuals rely on aid to supplement certain key shifting gaps in their income, while at the same time pursuing strategies of economic self-reliance through other means. This nuanced reality highlights the limitations of binary simplifications such as 'dependent' or 'self-reliant'.

Kenya case study on devolution as an opportunity for durable solutions

Since Kenya became a devolved state in 2013, the transfer of power has allowed counties to manage their own affairs, including displacement issues. This has created an opportunity to rethink management of refugees' caseload and opportunities for better local integration with host communities. The recently adopted **reintegration initiative in Kalobeyei settlement near Kakuma camp in Turkana**, using the Turkana CIDP as a basis, aims at building **integrated services that do not discriminate against refugees or host communities, and to develop a new out of camp model in Kenya. The Kalobeyei Integrated Social and Economic Development Program (KISED)** objective is to facilitate collaboration and coordination between the government, UN agencies, development actors, NGOs, private sector and civil society to build sustainable services and economic opportunities in Kalobeyei, which will accommodate over 60,000 refugees and host communities. The refugees and host communities in Kalobeyei and its surroundings will benefit from: investments in basic infrastructure and improvement in access to social services; and (b) increased opportunities for supporting income-generating activities. KISED will focus on both short-term humanitarian and long-term development interventions and will be implemented in 3 phases for a period of 14 years (2016-2030).

⁸ <http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/files/publications/other/refugee-economies-2014.pdf>

Commitment 4: Foster localized approaches and better engage local actors and communities in the search for durable solutions to ensure ownership, local relevance and social cohesion

National and local authorities have the primary responsibility for providing protection and assistance to displaced persons, and whenever possible, they should be supported to take charge and lead efforts in the search of durable solutions. It is also of paramount to recognise that displacement affected population have the right and the capacity to participate to any decision impacting their life and a participatory process is key to support return and reintegration processes and to ensure social inclusion.

Actions required

- **Support the direct engagement of displacement affected communities** to ensure their ownership and support in order to make solutions lasting, locally relevant and feasible.
- **Place accountability to displaced populations** at the centre of our action.
- **Support the safe and meaningful involvement of displacement affected communities in research processes**, including children and other vulnerable groups, so as to ensure their full participation in the search of durable solutions that affect their own lives.
- **Strengthen durable solutions understanding and operational capacities of local and national NGOs** at the district/county level, recognising they are instrumental in supporting local authorities and displacement affected communities in the long term.
- **Ensure that partnerships and capacity development approaches are based on transfer of skills and knowledge** through mentorship, peer to peer and long term learning.
- **Learn from countries in the region that have addressed solutions to displacement through local action plans** for refugees and IDPs at the district/ county level.
- **Invest into capacities to sustain solutions locally and nationally.** Such investments will strengthen national institutions and partnerships that can sustain locally owned solutions.