

## UNICEF's Institutional Action Plan on Internal Displacement (2023-2025) - January 2024

### Context

**Purpose:** This 'Institutional Plan' (the 'Plan') charts UNICEF's commitments to support joint UN efforts in line with the [SG Action Agenda on Internal Displacement](#). It sets out specific actions UNICEF will take to prevent and minimize risk of future internal displacement, provide protection and assistance to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)<sup>1</sup> and contribute to child sensitive solutions.

**Target audience:** This Plan is an internal document to guide UNICEF's programmatic approach at headquarters, regional and country levels. It will also 'speak to' the Institutional Plans of other UN agencies to ensure strong alignment and complementarity around joint UN action on internal displacement.

**Scope:** This Plan covers **all country contexts** with significant IDP caseloads, but implementation will **focus on the 16 priority countries** identified by the Office of the Special Adviser on Solutions (Afghanistan, CAR, Chad, Colombia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Libya, Mozambique, Niger (on hold), Nigeria, Philippines (no-longer an official pilot country), Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan (on hold), Yemen, and Vanuatu). These countries were selected based on their caseload, but also their potential to make significant progress on solutions for IDPs over the next 2 years of the Special Adviser's mandate. They represent a range of different contexts where multiple drivers of displacement are at play, including conflict, human rights violations, and disasters – both sudden and slow-onset – exacerbated by climate change. They are countries where UNICEF will need to leverage both its humanitarian and development capacities to respond to complex emergencies, manage compounding risks and support children and families often caught in protracted displacement.

**Rationale:** Internally displaced children are the invisible majority of the world's displaced population. Today, more people, and more children, than ever before are displaced within their own countries. Each year, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) regularly outpaces that of refugees – often at more than twice the total. At the end of 2021, a record 59.1 million people were internally displaced globally, including approximately 25.2 million children.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>According to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998), internally displaced persons (IDPs) are "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border."

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2022/>

In many countries, internally displaced children persistently lack access to basic services. This effectively limits or deprives them of their right to education, health, protection, and non-discrimination. These deprivations can be particularly acute in the life of a child. Removed from a stable, secure home and the communities they need to thrive – family, friends, classmates, and teachers – internally displaced children are exposed to a host of harms and dangers. Family separation, negative coping strategies such as child labour and child marriage, and violence, exploitation, abuse, psychological distress and trafficking pose direct threats to their lives and futures. Internally displaced persons can be displaced multiple times or live in protracted displacement, their needs and vulnerabilities changing during the process. Some become caught up in cyclical displacement, which can mean finding durable solutions is even more difficult.

Displacement triggers are multi-faceted and diverse. While conflict-related internal displacement continues to affect children in sub-Saharan Africa, with the region accounting for more than 80 per cent of all internal displacements triggered by conflict and violence worldwide in 2021, disaster-related internal displacement was recorded in over 130 countries across the Middle East and North Africa and parts of Asia and the Americas. As the impacts of climate change continue to intensify, children and their families will likely be displaced from their homes due to weather-related events including floods, storms, droughts, and wildfires, at an even greater and more severe rate. Making UNICEF fit for purpose for IDP children and their families means ensuring there is **coherence, consistency and predictability in our role and operational engagement in internal displacement contexts** – from prevention to humanitarian action to solutions.

Addressing internal displacement is critical for delivering on the [SDG Agenda](#) and promise to Leave No One Behind, and for lasting peace and prosperity. In view of this and to ensure a coherent and continuous response, action on internal displacement and a renewed focus on solutions must be embraced as a core priority across the UN development system, and as part of human rights, peacebuilding, climate adaptation, and disaster risk reduction efforts.

**The SG Action Agenda:** Recognizing this crisis, and responding to an appeal from 57 States, the Secretary-General established a High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement at the end of 2019. Over the course of 19 months, the Panel consulted widely and sought out new ways to better prevent and achieve lasting solutions to internal displacement. It presented its [final report](#) on 29 September 2021, with 10 overarching recommendations for improved action.

In June 2022, building on the recommendations in the report, the SG put forth a draft [SG Action Agenda on Internal Displacement](#) to ‘anchor’ the Panel’s recommendations within the UN system. It outlines **31 commitments for the UN system** to advance solutions to internal displacement, prevent future displacement crises from emerging, and strengthen the quality of protection and assistance provided to those who are already displaced. It stresses the importance of government ownership, the role of UN Resident Coordinators to lead on solutions to internal displacement and joined up UN approaches at country level, and of development actors to take a stronger role in solutions.

A key tenet of the Action Agenda is that **internal displacement can no longer be treated as a purely humanitarian issue – it must also be recognized as a development, peace, and protection priority**, especially for the large majority of IDPs living in host communities and addressed by the whole UN system through a nexus approach. Business as usual is not good enough.

By “solutions to internal displacement”, the Action Agenda means to truly resolve a situation of internal displacement, so that people are no longer displaced, either because they have reached a sustainable reintegration at their place of origin (“return”), have sustainably locally integrated in areas where they had taken refuge (“local integration”) or have sustainably integrated in another part of the country (“settlement elsewhere in the country”).

## UNICEF’s role and accountabilities

Guided by the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. UNICEF is well-placed to contribute to child-sensitive solutions for internal displacement – across the displacement continuum from prevention and preparedness to humanitarian action and solutions (local integration, resettlement, or return) – by building on the following strengths:

### Strengths to build on

- **Dual mandate and nexus approach:** UNICEF can leverage its unique position to work across the [Humanitarian-Development-Peace \(HDP\) nexus](#) by building on its dual mandate for development and humanitarian action; its universal child-rights mandate which includes adolescents; its large decentralized field presence, particularly in relation to creating safe and inclusive community spaces around social services and resources; its significant presence before, during and after crises, allowing for more longer-term prevention measures; its coordination functions and sector/cluster/Area of Responsibility (AoR) leadership accountability and sub-national offices; its experience liaising with non-state actors; its data and evidence capacity including [Post-Disaster Needs Assessments \(PDNA\)/Covid-19 Recovery Needs Assessment \(CRNA\)](#) in key sectors, child poverty and gender analysis and cross-sectoral research capacity; joint planning and partnerships with UN Agencies and other entities; a strong supply footprint for essential commodities; and rights-based focus on the meaningful participation of children, including adolescents, women and affected communities. To achieve systemic changes and address the underlying causes of displacement, poverty, vulnerability, conflict and violence, gender inequality, discrimination and exclusion, UNICEF leverages financing for children; supports rights-based, age-, gender- and conflict-sensitive and pro-peace norms, policies, practices and legislation; works to strengthen equitable access to essential services, including health, nutrition, education, child protection and social protection; and works to positively change social behaviors and norms that promote social cohesion and support meaningful and pro-peace participation.

- **Inclusive systems strengthening:** UNICEF works across sectors at subnational and national level to strengthen and expand local/national [education](#), [child protection](#), [social protection](#), [health](#), [MHPSS](#), [WASH](#) systems and [nutrition](#) to be inclusive of and appropriate for the needs of all children (including displaced and returnee children) in all their diversity. UNICEF's work on public finance for children is central to inclusive systems at all levels and ensures the inclusion of IDP children and adolescents (including returnees) in national planning processes, sector plans and budget systems (e.g. education sector analysis, inclusion in national WASH plans, national child protection systems, social protection systems or routine immunization programs). UNICEF supports governments at the subnational and national level to expand coverage and quality of systems and services, for example, to close gaps in school enrolment rates between IDP children and national children or to expand coverage, adequacy, comprehensiveness, and inclusiveness of national social protection system. UNICEF's system strengthening work aims at building systems that are strong, inclusive, shock responsive, age appropriate and equipped to address the specific needs of girls and boys. Effective inclusion in local systems and services – without discrimination based on a child's displacement status – can lay the groundwork for local integration or reintegration
- **Subnational and local programming:** Subnational and local actors are at the forefront of preparedness, response, and solutions. Cities, states, provinces, districts, municipalities, and other local actors are frontline providers of basic social services for IDPs, such as water and sanitation, health, MHPSS, nutrition, education, child protection, and social protection. They can create opportunities for displaced children and young people to actively engage and participate in local processes and provide accountability mechanisms that strengthen social cohesion. UNICEF's local and subnational programs focus on four critical pathways: providing effective and equitable financing and delivery of social services through shock responsive systems; preventative action; ensuring child-friendly infrastructure, environments and living conditions; and developing decentralized and responsive institutions and good governance at the subnational level that supports social cohesion and strengthens a sense of belonging for children and families.
- **Addressing displacement-specific discrimination and inequalities:** Helping to ensure that measures are conflict-sensitive, UNICEF works to address structural inequalities and rights violations that may threaten social cohesion with host communities and prevent solutions. UNICEF programs include, for example, targeted measures to identify and address discriminatory laws and policies and support solutions-enabling legal and policy reforms and to address specific legal, administrative, linguistic, structural, or financial barriers that prevent IDP children and families as well as vulnerable host populations from accessing essential services. This may range from mobilising the funding or developing financing models required to extend services to IDP populations and host communities; to addressing displacement-specific barriers such as lack of documentation, e.g. by supporting inclusive, flexible registration systems for school enrollment; providing bridging education or digital skills programs to children and young people; or adapting social protection program design, procedures, and delivery systems, including setting up parallel systems where needed and referral processes to address the needs of IDPs and IDP hosting

communities. UNICEF also supports children's access to justice, birth registration and legal identity, including targeted measures to end childhood statelessness. Strengthening conflict sensitivity monitoring at every phase of an intervention, such as through community-based feedback mechanisms, is critical for adaptive programming and avoiding negative impacts due to the dynamics between a displaced population and a host community.

- **Humanitarian programming:** UNICEF can harness its humanitarian programming in health, nutrition, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), education, child protection, gender-based violence (GBV) and social protection to contribute to crisis prevention and preparedness, building strong, resilient systems and strengthening social cohesion and accountability to affected populations. Guided by the [Core Commitments for Children \(CCCs\)](#), UNICEF's humanitarian response, which is based on risk-informed [humanitarian and development nexus programming](#), provides specific support, protection and assistance to the most vulnerable children in situations of displacement, such as unaccompanied and separated children, street children, adolescent girls, including child mothers, and children with disabilities. UNICEF's child protection services strengthen accountability mechanisms for grave and other violations affecting children in conflict and increase access to mechanisms to identify and respond to child protection and gender-based violence risks. UNICEF's MHPSS activities are well-tailored to meet the needs of children, adolescents and their caregivers in low resource and capacity settings, including new emergencies and ongoing protracted conflict settings. Working through national systems whenever possible, UNICEF's humanitarian cash interventions, for example, are designed to simultaneously strengthen and expand government-led social protection systems, making them inclusive, shock responsive and gender sensitive.
- **Child-, gender- and conflict-sensitive return and reintegration, including psychosocial (re)integration, and peacebuilding:** UNICEF has experience in supporting services and solutions that can facilitate community integration – whether local integration or reintegration in communities of return. This includes making provisions for returnees within local/national planning and budgeting systems and ensuring that measures are conflict-sensitive and adequately address underlying pressures that threaten social cohesion with host communities. Together with UNHCR and IOM, UNICEF developed tools to measure the inclusiveness of child protection systems for displaced children as well as [practical tools and guidance on child-sensitive returns and reintegration](#). UNICEF's approach to building individuals' capacities for peace – be it groups of children, young people and their caregivers, social service providers, duty bearers, or public servants – to contribute to and promote vertical and horizontal social cohesion is foundational. The meaningful participation of children, young people and women in community decisions and peace building efforts is key to strengthen social cohesion in communities of arrival or return and build trust in local institutions and actors. For example, UNICEF's adolescent programs support the meaningful participation of young people and women, and UNICEF's dedicated peacebuilding programs work to ensure that services are planned, delivered, monitored, and accessed in an equitable and participatory way and that pro-peace social and behaviour change is adopted. Strengthening accountability to affected populations by ensuring child-friendly feedback mechanisms are in place is a priority. UNICEF is also actively contributing to

efforts to further establish the link between MHPSS and peacebuilding efforts, including enabling and facilitating recovery by helping families and communities reduce risk factors, strengthen protective factors, and address potential generational adversity and trauma. Safe spaces (e.g. parenting groups, community youth centres, sports clubs, vocational training programs) where children, young people and parents can play, learn and socialize - whether they are displaced, from the host community, or in communities of return/reintegration - play a key role in enabling solutions.

- **Inclusive Data:** IDP-specific and age-disaggregated data remains a challenge, with only 16 per cent of countries or territories hosting conflict-related IDPs disaggregating data by age. As a founding member and Chair of the International Data Alliance for Children on the Move (IDAC), UNICEF works with partners to strengthen the availability, accessibility and quality of comparable, reliable, timely data on the vulnerabilities and needs of displaced children, their families and the communities that host them which is disaggregated by age, gender, disability and diversity. UNICEF also works to strengthen local data systems and capacities of local/national actors, including local government/authorities where appropriate, to manage, collect, monitor and analyse data, in order to enhance understanding of vulnerabilities and deprivations faced by different groups of children and adolescents in the community. A key step towards strengthening UNICEF's own corporate and program data has been the introduction of a new '[migration tag](#)' to better track spending, policy changes and reach across program interventions and humanitarian action. UNICEF is further investing in strengthening its foresight data capacities for anticipatory action to minimize risk of conflict or disaster-related displacement and increase preparedness and solutions-enabling humanitarian action. UNICEF was a member of the timebound taskforce on data issues and gaps in support of the development of the SG Action Agenda.

### Gaps in UNICEF's approach and contribution to solutions for IDPs

- **Dominance of humanitarian response and funding in IDP contexts and weak link with or absence of development-led approaches and program solutions.** UNICEF's work to provide protection and assistance to children in IDP contexts is often led by the Emergency Teams/Advisors or through sector-specific humanitarian interventions and supported by HAC-specific data, and often without a clear pathway towards solutions. Development-led solutions to internal displacement are often lacking in UNICEF development programs and are not front of mind for non-emergency staff. From the humanitarian side, UNICEF has not yet embedded a longer-term perspective – beyond immediate life-saving interventions – as part of its emergency response. Solutions for IDPs require more systematic collaboration between development, peacebuilding, climate, and disaster risk reduction (DRR) technical teams and program interventions, with solutions being embedded in UNICEF's systems strengthening approach across sectors at local/subnational and national level.

- **Lack of explicit/dedicated focus on internal displacement across the development programming cycle and no systematic use of existing guidance and tools.** Internal displacement is not systematically addressed in core development programming and risk analysis tools and guidance. Existing analysis tools focused on children on the move are not used systematically - for example, the [SITAN guidance on children on the move](#) is optional. Displacement is only scantily reflected in [UNICEF's climate, environment and DRR agenda](#). Even in high burden IDP contexts, core UNICEF programming documents are not specifically IDP-sensitive or solutions-focused (as confirmed by the review of CPDs in the identified IDP priority countries).
- **Lack of predictability and clear accountability in IDP contexts:** UNICEF's CCCs include a specific [chapter on large-scale movements](#) to guide UNICEF's response in displacement contexts. However, at Country Office level, it is unclear who is responsible for taking forward the implementation of these displacement-specific commitments at the technical level. While the primary responsibility for the CCCs is with the Country Representative, dedicated expertise and specific accountability across UNICEF CO functions are left to the Representative to decide on a case-by-case basis. The response may be initiated by sectoral leads – based on their sectoral commitments – resulting in a lack of integrated, multi-sectoral planning to deal with the intersecting needs of children specific to displacement. Similarly, UNICEF's leadership and participation in country-level solutions Working Groups (or the Action Agenda Steering Committee) are not systematic and lack predictability.
- **Lack of clarity on UNICEF's programming in the context of IDP solutions – and limited dedicated capacity (financial and human) for programming that contributes towards solutions for internally displaced children and families.** Within UNICEF there is limited knowledge and capacity on solutions for IDP children through development programming or clarity on how humanitarian action could be more solutions-enabling from the onset of a displacement crisis. Further, the role of Best Interests Procedures in solutions for IDP children is unclear – clarity is needed on UNICEF's programmatic/practical role in best interests' procedures in IDP contexts (e.g. in contexts of family reunification, return/reintegration, MHPSS, access to legal residency and associated rights that would enable equitable access to services and local integration).
- **Urban programming at local/subnational level:** Strengthening local/subnational systems, capacities and resources for evidence-based local planning and budgeting is a critical component of a solutions approach to help build solutions that reach and include IDP children living in urban settings, including slums and informal settlements or camps. UNICEF's approach to urban programming is not yet systematic, predictable or at the scale needed to deliver effective, context-sensitive and coherent multi-sectoral programming to support solutions to internal displacement. Further, local policies and investments need to be coordinated and coherent with those at the national level.

- **Lack of data investment and limited tracking and oversight on reach, spending and solutions for internally displaced children.** IDP children are not yet systematically visible in UNICEF’s work (or national data systems) and data is rarely disaggregated by migration/displacement status. There is also a lack of data on IDP children generally: on numbers, location, their wellbeing, their needs, and their access to services (or lack thereof).
- **Lack of investment and action on prevention, preparedness and minimizing risk of displacement.** While UNICEF works to address root causes of displacement, such as armed violence, structural exclusion and disparities, and extreme poverty, resources, and action in IDP contexts is often focused on emergency response and there is limited capacity and resources dedicated to preparedness, strengthening social cohesion, anticipatory action and minimizing risk. Donor appetite for prevention is limited, emergency funding is time-bound, and its predictability is limited.

### Priority action for child-sensitive solutions

#### How do we adjust our regular programming to be more solutions-enabling?

The SG’s Action Agenda is very clear: the status quo on internal displacement is not good enough. UN agencies should no longer treat internal displacement as a purely humanitarian issue. States play a primary role and have primary accountability in facilitating solutions to displacement for their citizens. Development actors need to lean in and step up their support through development approaches to solutions that truly resolve a situation of displacement. This will require following a multi-track approach in contexts of internal displacement that addresses immediate needs while concurrently investing in longer term solutions through policy influencing and direct programme measures.

The table below proposes **adaptations and adjustments** to support rights-based “solutions to internal displacement” for children and young people. These include solutions that either enable the return and sustainable reintegration in their communities of origin (“return”), support the local integration of children and families in the community or city they currently live in (“local integration”), or support children and families to settle in a different part of the country (“settlement elsewhere in the country”).

The table below is informed by the 8 benchmarks for solutions to displacement set out in the [IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons](#) – including access to long-term safety, security and freedom of movement; adequate standards of living and access to basic services; access to employment and livelihood opportunities; access to personal and other documentation without discrimination; family reunification; meaningful participation in community decisions; and access to effective mechanisms and remedies to restore housing, land, property and rights violations. The benchmarks are framed around the needs of a child to demonstrate how UNICEF will step up efforts for child-sensitive solutions.



**The proposed adaptation and adjustments are meant to ‘upgrade’ UNICEF’s institutional response and internal capacity to support government-led, child-, gender- and conflict-sensitive solutions to internal displacement and provide greater predictability on how UNICEF will support UN Resident Coordinators’ leadership on solutions.** Mindful of UNICEF’s comparative strengths and expertise in addressing child displacement, the table does not aim to provide a comprehensive overview of what UNICEF is already doing, but rather zooms in on specific gaps and suggests ways to increase the predictability and capacity to deliver on solutions.

Sustainable solutions for internally displaced children require programming that works across sectors and approaches and that engages different stakeholders at community and national level. The physical, mental, and social wellbeing of IDP children is interconnected and dependent on social norms and behaviors, environmental, socio-political, and economic factors that may enable or hinder solutions. Instead of narrowly focused sectoral programmes, solutions to internal displacement therefore **require multi-sectoral approaches** that are context- and conflict-sensitive and centered on the rights, needs, agency and meaningful participation of IDP and host community children and young people.

Taking a **multi-sectoral and development approach to solutions**, the table below proposes specific actions to strengthen, scale or adapt UNICEF’s response to be more solutions-enabling. It focuses on **key criteria for child-sensitive solutions** (legal and material safety including monetary/income safety, mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, and physical safety), **prevention** (including child-specific drivers of displacement, conflict, and climate shocks), **protection and assistance** (reflecting on how UNICEF’s humanitarian action could be more solutions-enabling from the outset), and **strategic enablers to increase UNICEF’s capacity** (covering coordination, data, capacity building measures, and resources).

We asked ourselves the following questions:

- *Can we be more deliberate in ‘not leaving any child behind’ - focused on internally displaced children – in our systems strengthening work?*
- *Are there any learnings from our new strategic partnerships with UNHCR (focused on refugees and returnees) and IOM (focused on migrant children and returnees) we can apply for solutions to internal displacement?*
- *To bridge the humanitarian/development ‘silos’, what are the internal barriers that prevent us from scaling up development programming for solutions (e.g. institutional norms, accountabilities, lack of expertise, donor funding mechanisms and conditionality)?*
- *How can we expand support to governments and local authorities, and what is our predictable program offer to support and leverage RC leadership on solutions for IDPs? Are there blind spots we need to address or opportunities we could seize to make strategic linkages with, for example, climate adaptation, urban programming, adolescent girls or inclusive social protection and child protection?*
- *What new investments (data, finance, capacity building) are needed to give this issue greater priority and visibility?*
- *How can we enhance our own institutional tracking and monitoring capacities and program coherence to support solutions?*

## Priority Actions

Area of intervention (aligned with the <a href="#">SG Action Agenda</a> )	Specific actions to strengthen, scale and adapt our response to be more solutions-enabling)	Lead/ Accountability
<b>CHILD SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS (local integration, resettlement in a different community, return)</b>		
<p><b>Legal safety</b> IDP children have required civil documents</p> <p>IDP children who are separated are reunited with their families</p> <p>IDP children are informed of their rights and can access effective remedies to child rights violations</p> <p>National and local policies and legislations are inclusive and non-discriminatory towards IDP children's right and needs</p>	<p>Target IDP priority countries to systematically address displacement-specific barriers to birth registration and legal identity (<b>leveraging the <a href="#">UN Legal Identity Agenda</a></b>)</p> <p>Support governments to address barriers/obstacles to legal identity and legal status.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create ways to support (re)issuance of documents, including by removing financial and logistical obstacles (e.g. mobile and digital registration, waiving late registration fees, cash transfers)</li> <li>- Digitize civil registry documentation to increase portability</li> <li>- Support authorities' legal and policy reforms</li> </ul> <p>Support UN-wide efforts to strengthen access to justice/redress, focusing specifically on gaps for IDP children to access justice and remedies in priority countries. This would include improving access to administrative justice with regards to legal aid, legal guardianship, issues of parental custody, inheritance, and property rights, <b>in collaboration with other UN partners.</b></p> <p>Include IDP priority countries in UNICEF's global programme to end childhood statelessness (<b>in partnership with UNHCR and as part of the <a href="#">Global Alliance to End Statelessness</a></b>) and address gender discrimination in nationality and civil registration laws and data gaps as relevant.</p> <p>Clarify UNICEF's role in Best Interests Procedures and build capacity to support national governments' decisions on solutions for children, including family reunification, in the context of strengthening national child protection systems (<b>with UNHCR and IOM</b>)</p>	<p>HQ</p> <p>CO</p> <p>HQ, RO, CO</p> <p>HQ</p> <p>HQ, CO</p>
<p><b>Material safety and access to services</b></p>	<p>Develop and roll out an <b>integrated package of targeted multi-sectoral actions</b> (across UNICEF Goal Areas) to identify and remove barriers and reduce vulnerabilities related to a child's displacement and intersection with other status, such as gender and disability, and strengthen the inclusion of displaced</p>	<p>HQ, RO, CO</p>

<p>IDP children enjoy the highest attainable standard of health and access to health care services</p> <p>Children learn and develop their skills</p> <p>Children do not suffer from poverty</p> <p>Children have equitable access to protection services</p>	<p>children in sector plans, budgets and data systems at national and local government/authority level – focused on the 16 priority countries. <b>(Building on UNICEF’s strategic collaboration framework with IOM focused on inclusion in national systems – especially social protection and child protection systems)</b>. Across all actions taken in conflict-affected contexts, <a href="#">UNICEF’s commitment to conflict sensitivity</a> needs to be upheld, both <b>externally</b>, in its interactions with partners, communities and programming, and <b>internally</b>, in its operations, practices, policies and habits</p> <p>Including, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Systematic inclusion of IDP children in sector specific surveys and measurement tools, while being cautious about representative sampling- e.g. EMIS, Health surveys, CPiMs <b>(All Sectors)</b></li> <li>- Systematic inclusion of IDP children in sector specific planning and budgeting processes (e.g. education sector plans, MHPSS/WASH needs assessments) <b>(All Sectors)</b></li> <li>- Develop context-specific vulnerability profiles to identify and address IDP specific vulnerabilities and how displacement status intersects with gender, age and other status, protection risks, service and financing gaps <b>(All Sectors)</b></li> <li>- Prioritize and support efforts to mobilise financing for the inclusion of IDP children in child-critical local and national services and delivery systems across sectors - leveraging and strengthening UNICEF’s public finance for children (PF4C) and urban programming capacities in IDP priority countries <b>(in partnership with UNDP and UN Habitat)</b></li> <li>- Identify and address context-specific discriminatory laws, policies and practices that hinder solutions, and support authorities <b>and joint UN efforts</b> to support policy reform</li> <li>- Adapt and roll out a tool to assess and measure the inclusiveness of the local/national child protection system and take steps to make it more inclusive</li> <li>- Strengthen data and evidence on child poverty in IDP and host populations and the state of inclusion in social protection systems, increasing operational capacities, expanding fiscal and policy space in high burden/high risk countries</li> <li>- Strengthen inclusive and shock responsive social protection systems, including by enhancing portability of benefits, to ensure that access to social protection measures is not disrupted by displacement</li> <li>- Strengthen the social service workforce at the local level to support access to social protection measures and linked services for children. For example, cash plus activities linked to ECD, nutrition, child protection etc.</li> <li>- Invest in UNICEF’s operational capacity to deliver cash transfers through parallel systems, where and when appropriate</li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prioritize community health interventions (focused on ‘zero dose’ communities) in the 16 priority countries and ensure IDP children, including girls and children with disabilities, are included in routine immunisation programs</li> <li>- Address legal/practical barriers for IDP communities to access health services (e.g., lack of documentation, insurance) focused on urban areas in priority countries (in partnership with WHO and UN Habitat)</li> <li>- Address displacement related barriers to accessing national education systems (supply, legal, financial, cultural) and their intersection with barriers related to gender, disability and other identities; support governments in expanding coverage and quality; and engage schools and teachers in receiving IDP and returnee children (potentially building on UNICEF and UNHCR Global Partnership Framework – adapted to IDP contexts)</li> <li>- Expand education facilities to prepare for and flexibly cater to increased numbers, including by supporting temporary learning spaces where needed</li> <li>- Support catch-up learning and/or learning continuity measures for children who have fallen behind and support social cohesion building measures between IDP and host communities</li> <li>- Expand digital learning initiatives and connectivity focused on IDPs in urban areas in priority countries</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Mental health &amp; psychosocial well being</b></p> <p>IDP children’s mental health and psychosocial wellbeing is supported</p> <p>IDP children have a sense of belonging and emotional safety</p> <p>IDP children are able to take part in decision-making on issues that impact them</p>	<p>On participation – <b>see specific actions included under ‘strategic enablers’</b></p> <p>Ensure accessibility of age appropriate, gender-sensitive MHPSS services and activities for displaced children and adolescents, across sectors, drawing on evidence-based MHPSS interventions.</p> <p>Build capacity of workforce across sectors of health, education, social services and child protection in mental health knowledge and skills, to adequately address the complex mental health and psychosocial needs of young people and caregivers in IDP contexts.</p> <p>In contexts affected by conflict, give particular attention to the linkages between MHPSS and peacebuilding. While addressing MHPSS at the individual level, give attention to restoring relationships at the family, communal and societal levels; help communities to address the wider social issues involved which directly impact the effectiveness and sustainability of peacebuilding; and prevent potential generational adversity and trauma</p> <p>Mitigate service gaps by adapting existing MHPSS interventions (e.g. Psychological First Aid, Self-Help Plus [SH+], Problem Management Plus [PM+]) to meet the needs of children and caregivers</p>	<p>CO</p> <p>CO</p> <p>CO</p>

	<p>experiencing internal displacement. Ensure multi-layered support services and effective referral pathways to meet varied mental health needs, including expanded service by non-specialist providers using evidence-based interventions contextualized and targeted to children, adolescents, and their caregivers</p>	
<p><b>Physical safety</b></p> <p>IDP children are protected from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect</p>	<p>Provide tailored protection and (re)integration support, including a range of alternative care options, for unaccompanied and separated children and child-headed households, including those facing multiple risks, such as children with disabilities and those leaving institutions.</p>	CO
	<p>Ensure child-, gender- and conflict-sensitive mechanisms for the identification and response to specific child protection risks are accessible to IDP children and women (including community-based protection, case management and referral mechanisms to specialized support services, best interests determination). Identify and address any barriers for specific groups of IDP children, including children with disabilities.</p>	CO
	<p>Target investments in strengthening the social service workforce in IDP hosting communities, and ensure displacement is covered under national social work schools' curriculums.</p>	CO
	<p>Increase portability of child protection/GBV/MHPSS response mechanisms and accountability mechanisms to increase access during displacement and ensure local child protection systems across municipalities can share information in a protection-sensitive and ethical manner.</p>	HQ, RO, CO
	<p>Convene a deep dive session on displacement and urban programming with key colleagues and partners to agree on specific actions to reinforce solutions for internal displacement. <b>(In partnership with <a href="#">Steering Group agencies</a><sup>3</sup> – UN Habitat, UNDP, UNHCR)</b></p>	HQ
<p><b>PREVENTION OF FUTURE DISPLACEMENT CRISES</b></p>		
<p><b>Addressing key drivers of internal displacement</b> (overarching)</p>	<p>Systematically consider displacement risks as part of risk-informed and conflict-sensitive programming – integrating displacement in country level Evidence Synthesis for programme planning, child-sensitive risk and/or conflict analyses (<a href="#">Strategic Plan 2022-2025</a>; <a href="#">CCCs</a>; <a href="#">HDP Nexus Procedure</a>)</p>	HQ, RO, CO

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/solutions-to-internal-displacement/steering-group>

	<p>Consistently include specific objectives and actions to address and mitigate child displacement risks in new <a href="#">CPDs</a>, <a href="#">HACs</a> and workplans. Help define collective outcomes (results) with partners to ensure <a href="#">CCAs</a>, <a href="#">UNSDCFs</a>, <a href="#">HNOs</a> and <a href="#">HRPs</a> include key considerations and actions with and for internally displaced children.</p> <p>Consider adapting existing and, where necessary, developing (additional) specific tools and guidance, for assessing displacement risks in various country contexts. Option to add stand-alone module to existing guidance, and/or include specific references to displacement risk in UNICEF’s forthcoming Peacebuilding Framework.</p> <p>Better leverage data and risk foresight capabilities to analyze potential displacement patterns (including through risk and conflict analyses and EPP updates) <b>in partnership with IDAC (UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR and OECD)</b></p> <p>Embed the prevention/minimizing risk of internal displacement as an integral priority across all DRR, resilience building and preparedness work</p> <p>Programming to address xenophobia and discrimination</p>	<p>HQ, RO, CO</p> <p>HQ</p> <p>HQ, CO</p> <p>HQ, CO</p> <p>CO</p>
<p><b>Climate change/disaster risks</b></p>	<p>Ensure that preparedness plans and early warning systems in climate disaster prone areas are updated with climate risks and prioritize the needs of internally displaced children and those living in high-risk areas for displacement <b>(In partnership with UNDRR, OCHA, IOM)</b></p> <p>Prioritize child-centered anticipatory action and integrated preparedness plans to support children and communities before disasters strike (e.g. investment in analytics, pre-agreed financing and action plans, gender analysis) so they can continue to access essential services during displacement. Community participation should be encouraged through community-based preparedness and response approaches.</p> <p>Invest in strengthening shock responsive and inclusive social protection systems to address underlying causes of vulnerability to climate change (to prevent shocks from transforming into crises) and enhance the household’s capacity to cope with crises (including preventing distress migration and investing in digitization and portability of benefits so that benefits can be accessed in other locations if/when households migrate), recover from it and adapt/build resilience in the long term.</p>	<p>HQ, RO, CO</p> <p>CO</p> <p>RO, CO</p>

	<p>Embed an analysis of climate and disaster risk in routine system building efforts (health, education, child protection, WASH, social protection) at the national and local government level and strengthen links with early warning systems</p> <p>Take steps to ensure recovery and response plans are environmentally friendly and conscious of climate-related risks for internal displacement</p> <p>Invest in data and evidence to better understand climate-induced displacement and to identify hot spots as well as understand the role of social protection in enhancing preparedness and adaptation capacity of households to ensure that children’s needs and rights are not compromised during displacement.</p> <p>To inform and align with UNICEF’s new Action Plan on Sustainability and Climate Change, convene a deep dive session on climate displacement with colleagues and partners to agree on specific actions to step up prevention of child displacement in the context of climate change and reinforce solutions.</p>	<p>HQ, RO, CO</p> <p>CO</p> <p>HQ, RO</p> <p>HQ</p>
<b>Conflict</b>	<p>Prioritise the 16 roll-out countries to build capacity on conflict analysis and conflict-sensitive and peacebuilding programming – as part of the global roll-out across pilot countries and/or in all countries prone to conflict, violence or disaster-induced displacement</p> <p>Follow an area-based approach to social protection policy and programming by supporting governments to leverage, layer and complement financing options in conflict settings.</p>	<p>CO</p> <p>CO</p>
<b>PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE (solutions-enabling)</b>		
<b>Protecting IDP children through humanitarian interventions</b>	<p>Address internal displacement in core programming and risk analysis tools/guidance</p> <p>In partnership with governments and <b>Steering Group agencies and leveraging UNICEF’s role in the cluster system</b>, plan actions to advance solutions from early on in a displacement crisis</p> <p>Identify specific ‘adaptations’ for more solutions-enabling humanitarian action across sectors - e.g., comprehensive approach to embed HCT in national systems; strengthen national social protection systems in emergencies; and document learnings for replication</p> <p>Leverage displacement crisis contexts to strengthen linkages between humanitarian action and development solutions from the onset of a displacement crisis (targeting 2-3 pilot contexts)</p>	<p>HQ, RO, CO</p> <p>HQ, CO</p> <p>HQ, RO</p> <p>CO, RO</p>

	<p>Mobilise funding for digitalising child-critical services to increase their portability and accessibility during displacement (e.g., Learning Passport, blended learning-to-earning pathways, health certification, legal identity)</p> <p>Help children and their communities be more resilient for future disasters by building disaster resilience and disaster risk reduction into humanitarian recovery.</p>	<p>HQ</p> <p>CO</p>
<b>STRATEGIC ENABLERS</b>		
<b>Coordination and partnerships to prepare for solutions</b>	Identify a designated development/programme focal point accountable for supporting the implementation of the plan at country level & convening intersectoral programming approaches for solutions (at CO/RO level)	RO, CO
	Clarify the roles and responsibilities at the technical level for delivering on the CCC chapter on large scale movements in acute emergencies ( <b>ensuring coordination with UNHCR and IOM</b> )	RO, CO
	Support the development and implementation of solutions coordination models/response plans and work with the Steering Group and national authorities to ensure that the needs of children and adolescents are adequately captured in solutions strategies.	HQ
	Explore the <b>OECD DAC-UN Dialogue</b> as a forum to collectively identify concrete development solutions to internal displacement	HQ, RO, CO
	Convene the 16 SG Action Agenda Pilot countries to document learnings through peer exchanges - supported at technical level by a Community of Practice (convened by the Migration and Displacement Hub)	HQ
<b>Data - disaggregated IDP data and tracking</b>	Operationalize the migration tag in the 16 priority countries + prioritized high-risk/high burden countries	HQ, RO, CO
	Mobilize resources to sustain UNICEF's leadership in IDAC to increase availability, disaggregation, analysis and use of data on displaced children to inform policy and programming	HQ



	<p>Increase investment in strengthening national capacity and data systems to be more inclusive of displaced children - focused on the 16 priority countries – <b>including by leveraging IDAC partners (e.g., EGRISS, UNHCR, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), Joint IDP Profiling Services (JIPS))</b></p> <p>Update the Migration and Displacement Country Profiles for the 16 priority countries <b>(in partnership with IDP data working group)</b></p> <p>Systematic roll out of MICS displacement module in priority countries and prioritized high burden/high risk countries where MICS is already planned</p> <p>Mobilise funding and invest in a flagship UNICEF report on IDP specific vulnerabilities – to leave no IDP child behind – <b>in partnership with Steering Group agencies</b> (for publication in 2024 before the high-level summit)</p> <p><b>Leverage the IDAC platform</b> to promote the exchange of experiences and good practices in addressing IDP issues through better data</p>	<p>HQ</p> <p>HQ, CO</p> <p>HQ, CO</p> <p>HQ</p> <p>HQ</p>
<p><b>Participation of children and young people</b></p>	<p>As IDP children and young people can be an extremely vulnerable group, their safety is paramount when supporting their meaningful participation in the development of government-led solutions strategies and interventions. Establishing effective mechanisms to enable children’s participation in the implementation and monitoring of solutions is critical <b>(through engagement in solutions working groups at global, regional and country level)</b></p> <p>Systematically include IDPs in UNICEF-supported mechanisms to enable children’s participation at local/subnational level (e.g. youth clubs, parliaments). Support young IDPs to participate in local representative organizations, such as women-led organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities</p> <p>Strengthen accountability and feedback mechanisms on the implementation of solutions strategies - to ensure they are accessible and responsive to age, gender, and disability-specific needs of IDPs</p> <p>Ensure solutions policies, plans and strategies are communicated in a manner that is accessible for children of different ages, abilities/disabilities, genders, cultural, ethnic, socio-economic and educational backgrounds</p>	<p>HQ, CO</p> <p>RO, CO</p>

	Strengthen child, adolescent and youth peacebuilding-relevant competencies and skills across different age groups within both the IDP populations and host communities, creating and supporting inclusive spaces and platforms for adolescent and youth agency and influence, particularly at the local level	
<b>Advocacy and communications</b>	Co-convene the interagency Advocacy and Communications Working Group to support the Office of the Solutions Adviser – leveraging UNICEFs advocacy and communication assets, experience, and reach	HQ
	Integrate advocacy commitments under this action plan across existing UNICEF advocacy and communication campaigns to support positive narrative shifts aligned with the SG Action Agenda and spotlight solutions in contexts in which children and adolescents are affected by internal displacement	HQ
	Support joint UN advocacy on solutions under RC-leadership	CO
<b>Internal capacity building on IDP solutions</b>	Develop and roll out targeted training on solutions for designated CO/RO focal points in the 16 priority countries/regions, with eventual expansion to all relevant countries/regions	RO, CO
	Review existing sectoral guidance and tools with an IDP lens and accordingly adapt to address the gaps.	HQ
	Include robust guidance on IDP solutions-enabling programming approaches in revised <a href="#">Children on the Move Programming Framework</a> (Q4 2023)	HQ
<b>Financial and human resources</b>	Provide dedicated capacity to contribute to the Steering Group – at global and country level	HQ, CO
	Leverage the SDG Window on Solutions for critical capacity and financing gaps for child-sensitive solutions in priority countries in partnership with SG partners.	HQ
	Identify the financial investments required based on real-time country experiences in the 16 priority countries and develop a resource mobilisation strategy – to strengthen UNICEF’s dedicated capacity on IDP solutions	CO

	Raise awareness and buy-in of donors to finance the nexus approach for prevention and to address root causes of displacement	HQ, RO, CO
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### Roles and accountabilities

- The plan applies in all contexts where UNICEF has a presence and there is internal displacement. Its implementation will be informed by and driven by country and regional teams to ensure context specificity, programme learning and adaptability.
- The implementation of this plan requires global-, regional-, and country-level leadership in the 16 priority countries and in key technical areas. UNICEF leadership will ensure that the commitments laid out in this plan are reflected in strategic planning, oversight, capacity and resource allocation. In addition to the 16 priority countries, regional teams are encouraged to identify additional priority countries for implementation of this Plan.
- Directors of Regions and Divisions are responsible for integrating internal displacement and the specific commitments set out in this Plan in their respective core areas of work, helping to ensure that the necessary capacities, resources and processes are in place to support country and regional offices in preventing and responding to internal displacement and contributing to solutions. This entails embedding the respective commitments into all relevant existing institutional processes including plans, Terms of Reference (ToRs) for recruiting staff, accountabilities and reporting mechanisms at all levels.
- UNICEF’s Deputy Executive Director for Programmes will oversee the implementation of the Plan and convene an annual review (proposed for Q2 of 2024) covering progress and challenges in the implementation of the plan. The Director of Programmes (with support from the Migration and Displacement Hub) will exercise leadership and oversight to support organization-wide implementation of the plan, working in close partnership with the Director of Emergency Programmes and leveraging the Children on the Move Directors Group to facilitate a whole-of-organisation approach, review progress and troubleshoot as needed.

The Plan **empowers Representatives** (in the 16 priority countries and additional high-risk/high burden countries) to:

- Ensure a consistent and predictable response that protects, includes, and empowers IDP children and their families – from prevention and preparedness to humanitarian response and throughout development programmes, towards solutions

- Mobilise and deploy resources and capacities needed to deliver on the specific commitments set out in this institutional Plan and the commitments put forth in the SG Action Agenda
- Follow through on UNICEF's corporate and interagency commitments on internal displacement to contribute to solutions-enabling inter-agency humanitarian and development response under the UN country leadership
- Leverage UNICEF's global advocacy and partnerships to design, implement and sustain a solutions-oriented and child-sensitive response to internal displacement, backed up by resource mobilisation to be developed after this plan is finalized
- Appoint and extend support to a designated lead in the country team to design and implement the appropriate intersectoral response needed to better prevent displacement and step up on solutions for IDP children

### **UNICEF's engagement with the Office of the Solutions Advisor (OSA)**

At global level:

- UNICEF supports the Action Agenda implementation as an active member of the Steering Group (Programme Group)
- UNICEF committed to develop an Institutional Action Plan (as called for in the SG Agenda) to reinforce its institutional capabilities and operational response (Led by Programme Group)
- UNICEF co-chairs an interagency advocacy and communication working group to develop and implement a joint advocacy plan in support of the SG Action Agenda- in partnership with the OSA
- UNICEF, as an active member of IASC, is also supporting the IASC review (including as a member of the reference group)

At regional/country level:

In the 16 focus countries, UNICEF country offices contribute to collective UN efforts under the leadership of the RC. This includes:

- Supporting RC leadership on solutions/Action Agenda
- Participating in solutions working groups and processes
- Contributing data, programme capabilities and resources to the implementation of national solutions strategies

### **Resources**

This institutional plan provides initial transformative steps for a more deliberate focus on solutions with current resources. This will mean adapting and stretching UNICEF's current programming capacities for a more integrated, development-focused approach in IDP contexts. At country level, additional resources will need to be mobilized for implementation, including through the new SDG Funding Window on solutions. Developing a resource mobilization strategy to strengthen UNICEF's dedicated capacity on IDPs beyond the lifespan of this plan will be a priority. This process will be led by HQ in close collaboration with Regional Offices and in consultation with priority Country Offices.