



SUMMARY

Steering Group Meeting

GP20 Plan of Action

Tuesday 4 December 2018, 15:00-17:00

UN Palais des Nations, Salle V, Geneva

Participants

Meeting participants were as follows: Afghanistan, Austria, Denmark, Ethiopia, Fiji, Germany, Honduras, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United States of America, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, UNHCR, OCHA, IOM, World Bank, Danish Refugee Council, Norwegian Refugee Council, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Joint IDP Profiling Service and International Committee of the Red Cross. The International Federation of the Red Cross, Platform on Disaster Displacement, UNDP and Interaction were unable to attend.

Introduction

This second meeting of the GP20 Steering Group was focused on law and policy related to internal displacement. GP20 Steering Group meetings serve as a space for open dialogue concerning the progress made and challenges confronted at the national level on preventing and addressing internal displacement. This meeting marked a shift from discussing the GP20 Plan of Action and its Steering Group to taking up practical discussions about experiences and lessons learned at the national and local level on internal displacement as well as implementation of the GP20 Plan of Action.

GP20 Plan of Action implementation update

Since April 2018, the Plan of Action has been rolled out at the national level through the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, members of the four work streams within the GP20 Steering Group, a joint letter to UN Resident Coordinators/Humanitarian Coordinators (RC/HC) from UNHCR, OCHA, UNDP and IOM principals, a letter from OHCHR's Head of Field Operations and the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, and other individual GP20 partners.

The GP20 Steering Group's work streams organized along the four priorities in the GP20 Plan of Action (IDP engagement, law and policy, data and analysis, and protracted displacement/durable solutions) have completed their work plans and begun implementation. Their activities focus on supporting action at the national and local level to prevent and address internal displacement and this support is joined up across the work streams where possible. The GP20 Coordinator will monitor and report on implementation of the work stream activities.

Around 20 countries have GP20 Focal Points in RC/HC offices, and there are 14 GP20 Focal Points in UNHCR country offices. These Focal Points have advanced the GP20 Plan of Action to differing degrees and on different priorities. In terms of law and policy, the focus of this Steering Group meeting, most advances during 2018 were seen in Niger, South Sudan and Central African Republic. On 3 December, Niger adopted the first national law in Africa on protection and assistance to IDPs.

The 10th anniversary of the Kampala Convention in 2019 is being celebrated as "Project 2019". Some GP20 activities will focus on Africa to align efforts with Project 2019 on internal displacement. Plans are being concretized for regional peer to peer exchanges on law and policy and durable solutions in West and East Africa, which will feed in to and follow up from other commemorative events being planned on the continent.

The multi-stakeholder GP20 Communications Working Group has been working in parallel to the GP20 work streams supporting awareness raising on internal displacement and mobilization around the GP20 Plan of Action. Eight organizations contributed photos to an exhibition bringing the Guiding Principles to life at the Human Rights Council in September 2018. The exhibition is planned to travel through to 2020.

Fiji's Draft National Guidelines on Planned Relocations

Fiji's guidelines on planned relocations were first discussed in 2012 when scientists said that 63 communities would be under water in the next four years. The development of the guidelines has taken time due to the need to consult with communities, and will be launched during COP24 in Katowice. The guidelines are a "silver lining in the cloud of climate change" as they describe and implement a new approach to consultation. Rather than the traditional approach of talking only with male elders, the consultation process has been transformative in that the government found ways to include the views of women, children and other groups such as sexual minorities. The relocations process, including the development of the guidelines, has changed how society works and converses with each other. Support from development partners such as GIZ has been essential to the efforts around planned relocations, and input from IOM, PDD, OHCHR and UNHCR on the draft guidelines was also important, and ensured the Guiding Principles were incorporated into the guidelines.

The guidelines cover three main phases:

- a) Planning of relocation, eliminating all alternate options, such as sea walls and land reclamation, and obtaining informed consent from the affected population
- b) Implementation of the process
- c) Monitoring of the displacement and relocation so as to ensure that any trauma that comes with the relocation is dealt with by the government

Afghanistan's National IDP Policy

Afghanistan launched its National IDP Policy in 2014, which is based on the national constitution of Afghanistan. The main challenges with regards to implementation continue to be related to insecurity and limited resources. This is complicated by return of refugees. In 2016, over 600,000 people returned to Afghanistan and most could not return to their place of origin. Provincial action plans were envisioned as every province has different causes of displacement.

Despite these challenges, the government together with humanitarian and development partners has supported the local integration of 10,000 IDP families in Herat, which included access to documentation, services, land allocation and housing. This was facilitated by the establishment in 2015 of a migration institution by the government. The government embraces all settlement options for IDPs: return, local integration and settlement elsewhere. Political parties have not resisted implementation of the policy.

Discussion

- Member States that are addressing internal displacement in their countries face similar experiences to those presented by Fiji and Afghanistan, including the simultaneous challenge of addressing displacement related to climate change, disasters and conflict.
- Government leadership and ownership of internal displacement situations as well as political will is key for mobilizing resources and adequate support. The political dimension of internal displacement needs to be factored into the discussion. Internal displacement can be acknowledged through the legislature, but also through the judiciary.
- There is a need to build expertise within government on internal displacement. State to state dialogues are encouraged as a way to share experience and promote cross-fertilization, and the GP20 work streams will support the organization and implementation of such dialogues.
- Acknowledging and harnessing the role and contribution of local, municipal and provincial authorities in addressing internal displacement, including the development and implementation of law and policy, is important, as is that of other members of society and the groups that represent them.
- One current government approach is to organize awareness sessions with the public to address displacement issues while bolstering political will and introducing accountability mechanisms to apprehend those responsible for displacement.
- There is a need for coherence and coordination among UN agencies and international organizations and also within governments. Partnerships should correspond to the concerned government's priorities, way of working and context.

- Development assistance and partnerships have been essential for planned relocations in Fiji. Adaptive measures have to be integrated into the development programme and vice versa, not treated in isolation.
- Planned relocations should be included in the national development plan as they are a development project in themselves. Relocations have a significant cost in terms of consultations, implementation and monitoring of whether or not and to which degree people integrate in their new places.
- Data is key for designing solutions to internal displacement. Quality data collection and analysis on internal displacement is difficult for governments as it requires significant financial resources, technical capacity and time. It also requires building trust with affected groups and overcoming difficulties of monitoring people on the move.
- Data is required in “edible form”, in the sense that it must be useful for the affected people. During consultations with communities in Fiji on their relocation, people needed to hear about the effect climate change had and will have on their food supply, and link it to their own experience.
- Addressing the drivers of forced displacement is essential for prevention and solutions. No state can be fully ready for internal displacement, but some degree of preparedness and prevention is possible.
- The overall discussion underscored the interconnectedness of issues and the need to link our work on law and policy with investments in quality data, IDP participation and solutions. GP20 partners have become more aware of the inter-linkages between the four GP20 priorities.
- Attempts are being made to secure additional GP20 staff to ensure implementation, monitoring and reporting on the GP20 Plan of Action.

Next meeting

The co-chairs proposed the next meeting take place at the beginning of March 2019 with a focus on data and evidence on internal displacement given the numerous references to data and evidence throughout the discussion at this Steering Group meeting.