

Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement ('IDP Policy')

24 March 2023

Key points

- UNHCR must be proactive in preparing for and acting to address emergencies that result in situations of internal displacement.
- Our engagement is grounded in the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.
- The commitment to the 'centrality of protection' means that protection is the goal of humanitarian action and requires a collective effort from all humanitarian actors.

1. Overview

UNHCR's IDP policy covers all aspects of UNHCR's engagement in situations of internal displacement, including when preparing for and delivering protection and solutions as part of a collective response in support of States and affected populations. It applies to the work of all UNHCR personnel at field, country, regional and headquarters level. Compliance is mandatory.

2. Main guidance

When and for what purpose

The IDP policy reaffirms UNHCR's commitment to engaging decisively and predictably in situations of internal displacement. This commitment is an integral element of our operations worldwide and our protection leadership role in humanitarian crises. The policy requires country, regional and global operations to mobilize and deploy their resources and capacities to support UNHCR's longstanding pledge to work in partnership with others to strengthen protection and secure solutions for internally displaced people (IDPs). The policy empowers and requires

Representatives to be proactive in preparing for and taking action to address emergencies that result in significant internal displacement. They act as part of a humanitarian response under the UN country leadership, based on a sound protection and context analysis. Representatives will be supported to: implement inter-agency commitments; place protection at the centre of humanitarian action; and design, implement and sustain a meaningful, solutions-oriented operational response to internal displacement that is backed up by global advocacy and resource mobilization.

Summary of guidance and/or options

The IDP policy provides guidance in situations where UNHCR engages with IDPs and wider displacement-affected communities. It covers: State responsibility; respect for human rights and international law; putting protection and solutions at the centre of humanitarian action; upholding [humanitarian principles](#); safeguards and accountability; and contributing to a multi-stakeholder whole-of-society approach through partnerships.

The policy equally provides guidance on operationalizing UNHCR's commitments at country and global level, with respect to leadership, advocacy and coordination, and operations. The guidance covers the different phases of an IDP emergency, from preparedness, through delivery of a protection and solutions response, to responsible disengagement.

To make the implementation of UNHCR's engagement effective, the guidance also addresses: integrated programming and area-based approaches; data and information management; identity management; resource mobilization and funding; and workforce management.

How to implement this at field level?

The IDP policy is accompanied by a **Guidance Package for UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement**. The guidance package includes a checklist for UNHCR Representatives, provides an IDP footprint tool for UNHCR interventions in situations of internal displacement, and discusses: inter-agency coordination arrangements; programming; resource mobilization; communications; and considerations for responsible disengagement.

Annexes

[UNHCR HCP 2019 1 Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement](#)

[Guidance Package for UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement](#)

[Risk Management – Internal Displacement Situations toolkit](#)

3. Links

[Guidance Package for UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement Risk Management – Internal Displacement Situations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement](#)

4. Main contacts

For advice or support on the policy, contact the Chief of Section (Internally Displaced Persons) in the Division of International Protection.