

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

Context

Purpose: This 'Institutional Plan' (the 'Plan') charts

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

- 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

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 intervention

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,

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 analysis 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 le/Pagination/Subtype

Priority Actions

Area of intervention (aligned with the SG Action Agenda)	Specific actions to strengthen, scale and adapt our response to be more solutions-enabling)	Lead/ Accountability
CHILD SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS (local integration, resettlement in a different community, return)		
<p>Legal safety 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 (leveraging the UN Legal Identity Agenda)</p> <p>Support governments to address barriers/obstacles to legal identity and legal status.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create ways to support (re)issuance of documents, including by removing financial and 	

IDP children enjoy the highest attainable standard of health and access to health care services

Children learn and develop their skills

Children do not suffer from poverty

Children have equitable access to protection services

children in sector plans, budgets and data systems at national and local government/authority level – focused on the 16 priority countries. [\(Building on UNICEF's strategic collaboration framework with IOM focused on inclusion in national systems – especially social protection and child protection systems\)](#). Across all actions taken in conflict-affected contexts, [UNICEF's commitment to conflict](#)

- 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
- 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)
- 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)
- Expand education facilities to prepare for and flexibly cater to increased numbers, including by supporting temporary learning spaces where needed
- 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

	<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>Physical safety</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> <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> <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> <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> <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 d</p>	

	<p>Consistently include specific objectives and actions to address and mitigate child displacement risks in new CPDs, HACs and workplans. Help define collective outcomes (results) with partners to ensure CCAs, UNSDCFs, HNOs and HRPs 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) in partnership with IDAC (UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR and OECD)</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>Climate change/disaster risks</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 (In partnership with UNDRR, OCHA, IOM)</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>



Mobilise funding for digitalising child-critical services to increase



	<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</p>	
<p>Advocacy and communications</p>	<p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>Support joint UN advocacy on solutions under RC-leadership</p>	

	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 Dt

- 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