

# FOREWORD

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An ever-growing number of internally displaced people (IDPs) remain so for long periods of time, often for many years or even decades. As time passes, returning home becomes less and less relevant as a solution to their displacement. There is no agreed formula to determine when displacement ends but making sure IDPs as citizens can enjoy equal rights to other nationals is an important part of the equation. A significant step toward durable solutions is made when they are valued for their potential contribution to society, rather than as a “burden”.

National ownership and political commitment are intrinsic to solutions. A stronger focus on national sovereignty can weaken global collaboration, but national ownership can also provide an opportunity. If solutions to displacement are considered as a national commitment, the ownership that has been missing may follow. Several countries have embraced this opportunity by integrating the concerns of IDPs and returning refugees into their national development plans.

The international media still gives relatively little attention to internal displacement, but coverage of families fleeing bombing in Syria, floods in India and violence in Nigeria has raised awareness of their dire situations among national and global leaders and the world at large. As a result, the issue has started to gain visibility which may fuel our collective will to do something about it.

There is further cause for hope. This year marks the start of UN secretary general António Guterres’ “decade of action”. The world has 10 years to show it is serious about global equality and sustainable development. A high-level UN panel on internal displacement began its work earlier this year. Fifty-seven countries have endorsed the initiative, creating a unique opportunity to take a fresh look at the political and operational barriers to durable solutions and to lay the groundwork for real advances on prevention and risk reduction. It is hoped that the panel’s focus will generate concrete and more forward-thinking recommendations on addressing internal displacement as it relates to other global phenomena such as urbanisation and climate change.

This year’s Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID), the international community’s flagship publication on the phenomenon, is an indispensable evidence base for national and global efforts towards addressing internal displacement. It highlights the scale of displacement around the world and efforts to address it and provides an overview of major regional patterns, impacts and risks. It also casts light on the highly specific nature of each displacement situation and discusses some of the collaborative steps and tools that could be used to help millions of IDPs achieve a sustainable end to their predicament.

2020 marks the end of IDMC’s current strategy and the beginning of a new era. Efforts to reduce and address internal displacement over the next decade will be shaped by the decisions we make today. Will we recognise or ignore the triggers, drivers and impacts of displacement? Will we invest more in our collective ability to act? And perhaps most importantly, will we find the political commitment to affect lasting change?

As IDMC’s advisors, we are encouraged by the focus of this year’s GRID on solutions. We need to identify and invest in initiatives rooted in the principles of inclusive development and equal opportunity and promote pragmatic and progressive solutions. Now is the time to begin in earnest.



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on behalf of the IDMC Advisory Group