

## ECOSOC Operational Segment, 2025

### Development Needs and Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons

#### Initial intervention – Robert Piper

Thank you for this kind invitation. And congratulations to the Bureau of ECOSOC for placing the issue of internal displacement on the development agenda. It is so important that the QCPR has seized on this issue of internal displacement now as well.

With my initial intervention of 4 minutes I want to just share 4 main points:

- First, the break-through of recent years on solutions has been first and foremost about **Government leadership**. At the national level. At the regional and local level. To go to scale, is to go through Government. To find real solutions, requires unlocking political leadership. In our pilot countries we have watched the international aid system switch from delivery, to support and accompaniment. The field is now more ‘crowded’ with development actors like the IFIs, UNDP, FAO and beyond. This is the pivot we so need to break patterns of protracted crises.
- **My second point is that Resident Coordinators** have been a Force-Multiplier, as we had hoped with the 2017 reforms. RCs have worked with Governments to move the issue out of the purely humanitarian into the political and development realms. They have bridged the humanitarian and development community. They have mediated when multiple agencies are converging around the same challenge.
  - The Solutions Fund which provides catalytic funding to UNCTs to make this switch from response, to accompanying Government for solutions, has been a true game-changer. Placing flexible resources quickly at the disposal of the UNCT. Putting some muscle behind RC authority. Our thanks to

Switzerland. Norway. Germany. UK. And most recently Spain. I hope others in this room will join soon.

- Placing a temporary advisor in the RC Office via the UNDP deployment facility has also made a big difference to RCs. This is a model potentially worth replicating on other issues like climate or risk reduction - Not permanent roles. Temporary roles.
- Importantly, RCs are not expected to maintain this much attention on internal displacement forever. We need to use **RC leadership catalytically** as well. Repositioning the issue. Reconfiguring the UN team and donors. Then stepping-back and letting the agencies provide the leadership and momentum – as we have seen at the Global Level where UNDP, UNHCR and IOM have stepped forward to underwrite the global Hub and serve as convenors on a rotating annual basis.
- **I think its fair to say we have made great strides on Government leadership, UN inter-agency systems, planning and policy. Our understanding of what needs to be done has progressed substantially. Awareness has never been higher.**

**But we still have some major challenges.**

- **My third point then is about speed - because time is our greatest enemy in this solutions work.** Every day an internally displaced person remains displaced, the more vulnerable they become. The more they dip into their savings. The more they erode their coping systems and make irreversible decisions like taking daughters out of school. The longer they are unable to farm the more their dependency grows. Building the necessary Government policies and systems to design and implement solutions takes time but there are no shortcuts. My appeal is not that this capacity building goes faster. Rather, I want to make the point that donors need to be willing to provide resources for these kinds of no-regret investments **much earlier**. After everything has settled, is too late. We need a lower risk-

threshold for early capacity-building investments in these environments if we are to break patterns of protracted crisis.

- **And fourth, and finally, funding also remains an Achilles-heel** for these solutions efforts. Not volume. Quality. No amount of humanitarian funding will bring existing IDP numbers down. Humanitarian spending is already more than \$5 billion per annum. These are critical, life-saving investments. But they don't provide an exit ramp. Governments themselves have understood and are responding. The Iraq Government, the Libyan Government, the Colombian government, the Somali Government for example, have committed in some cases very substantial national funds to the task. Local and regional Governments also – the State Governors of NE Iraq, the Mayor of Bogota, the Regional President of Somali Region in Ethiopia. But many IDP-affected countries need some substantial, new development investments to move the needle – Somalia will need \$2 billion for 1 million solutions. Ethiopia a similar amount for about 2 million solutions and so forth. Mozambique \$600,000 for almost 900,000 solutions. Our proposition to the donor community – captured in a pre-feasibility we published last December – is that if development donors were to invest the equivalent of 10% of their humanitarian spending into an IFI-administered concessional financing mechanism, we could create the necessary incentives, and scale of response, to reverse the trend-line.

Thank you and I look forward to the conversation