

**The end of displacement:
Return, local integration and settlement in third areas of Internally
Displaced Persons in the context of Rakhine State, Myanmar
April 2015**

There are three solutions to internal displacement¹:

- Return to the place of origin
- Local integration in areas where internally displaced persons took refuge
- Settlement in another part of the country

This paper aims at providing guidance in the context of Rakhine State where the Government of the Union of Myanmar started in March 2015 to implement steps towards in order to end the displacement of some 140,000 persons, who have been internally displaced since 2012.

The below-mentioned principles only relate to the process of ending displacement of the concerned populations (i.e. ensuring that IDPs no longer have needs specifically related to their displacement). They do not address the broader and multifaceted issues of freedom of movement restrictions, restricted access to basic services, discrimination of minority groups, rights abuses, lack of documentation (including birth certificates), statelessness or risk thereof, lack of access to livelihoods, and development needs for example, which are likely to continue to affect a large number of men, women, boys and girls in Rakhine State, even if IDPs find a solution to their current displacement situation.

Should the aforementioned issues continue to prevail, affect the daily lives of formerly displaced persons as well as other communities in Rakhine, and, result in protection and assistance needs, they will require the Government of Myanmar, with the support of the international community, to address them through a wide range of political, legal and social actions in line with international standards, primarily in the area of human rights protection, rule of law, social cohesion, civil documentation, statelessness reduction and prevention, and, socio-economic development.

Regardless of the type of solution (return, local integration or settlement elsewhere) pursued to end the current displacement of IDPs within Rakhine State, the process led by the Government of the Union of Myanmar should at all times:

1. Be voluntary, safe and take place in a dignified manner.
2. Aim at finding a sustainable solution to each displacement situation, location by location.

¹ See IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs, April 2010.

3. Aim at facilitating returns to places of origin as a matter of priority or otherwise respecting the choices of the displaced.

4. Foresee the possibility that there may be reasons why some households and individuals may choose not to return to their original plots justifying a careful review of these reasons and the finding of alternative solutions in these cases.

5. Ensure that IDPs fully participate in the planning and management of their return, local integration or settlement in alternative locations. Consultations with concerned IDP communities should specifically target the participation of women to give them an opportunity to relay their own concerns and those of their children. Beyond information sharing and consultations with IDPs from different sex, age and background from the onset, the actual involvement of all IDPs in the planning and management of the process itself (from the actual selection of sites to the reconstruction of shelters and identification of potential concerns and assistance needs) is crucial to contribute to the resumption by concerned families and individuals of a normal life in safety and with dignity.

6. Ensure an environment of safety and personal security of the concerned IDPs in the area of return, local integration or settlement elsewhere, and, that measures for social cohesion are considered in selecting sites so as to encourage intra-community reconciliation and peaceful coexistence.

7. Address the specific needs of the most vulnerable individuals and households (such as single and child-headed households) and take into consideration possible changes in family compositions (including recent marriages and the needs for family reunifications).

8. Address any land tenure rights and other property ownership concerns prior to the relocation or return.

9. Not result in non-voluntary population movements or unnecessary secondary displacements.

10. Not result in the settlement or local integration of IDPs in areas that would be considered sub-standard because of lack of access to basic services or livelihoods, because the selected site would not be conducive to a dignified habitat, or because the security and safety of the concerned IDPs could not be ensured.

11. Allow conflict-sensitive monitoring and consultations with concerned communities by UN and NGO partners at all times, in line with international standards.

The above mentioned principles will be guiding the protection monitoring activities of agencies involved in the Protection Sector in Rakhine State.