Unlocking Displacement Solutions - Storyline

1980s UNHCR promoted the concept of Refugee Aid and Development (RAD) during the 1980s which formed the basis of the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA) in 1981 and 1984, and the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Central America (CIREFCA) in 1989. The ICARA process and CIREFCA were notable international efforts in mobilising development partners and additional funding to address the socio-economic impact of refugee situations and durable solutions. It created awareness and recognition that displacement has development challenges which can only be addressed by linking relief and development.

1990-2000s Since the ICARA process, a number of initiatives have been introduced to bring a comprehensive approach to displacement issues, and to address "the gap" between short-term humanitarian assistance and longer-term development. In the mid-1990s the PRODERE (Programa de Desarollo para Desplazados, Refugiados y Repatriados) programme – a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency programme for reintegration and rehabilitation of war affected populations in Central America – was generally considered successful. The PRODERE model inspired similar approaches in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Bosnia, Croatia, Eritrea, Guatemala, Mozambique, Somalia, Tajikistan and many others.

In 1999 the "Brookings Process" was launched, reflecting an emerging consensus on the need to address "transition issues", including linkages between short-term humanitarian assistance and longer-term sustainable development interventions. Building on the lessons of the Brookings Process, the Framework for Durable Solutions for Refugees and Persons of Concern was launched in 2003 with three components: (1) the 4Rs framework (repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation, reconstruction); (2) Development Assistance for Refugees (DAR) and (3) Development through Local Integration (DLI).

Mid-2000s: As part of the Humanitarian Reform process, the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) introduced the "cluster approach". This aimed at addressing gaps and strengthening the coordination and effectiveness of humanitarian response by dividing response activities according to predictable sectors (health, nutrition, food security etc.), with the most relevant UN agency designated to lead its sector. The Early Recovery Cluster was established as part of humanitarian reform, with the explicit purpose of linking humanitarian and development work and engaging early in humanitarian response to positively influence the immediate and longer term challenges.

September 2011 After successive initiatives to counter protracted displacement, UNHCR and UNDP, in collaboration with the World Bank, embarked on a renewed effort with the launch of the Transitional Solutions Initiative (TSI) to solve certain longstanding protracted situations and to effectively integrate displacement issues into the development agenda. TSI pilot projects were initiated in East Sudan and Colombia in 2011/2.

1. GA Resolution 37/197 (1982), requests the Secretary-General, in close co-operation with the Secretary General of the Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to convene such a conference "...to consider the continuing need for assistance with a view to providing, as necessary, additional assistance to refugees and returnees in Africa for the implementation of programmes for their relief, rehabilitation and resettlement..." and to "consider the impact imposed on the national economies of the African countries concerned and to provide them with required assistance to strengthen their social and economic infrastructure to cope with the burden of dealing with large numbers of refugees and returnees".

October 2011 The UN Secretary General's Policy Committee adopted a decision on Durable Solutions that informs the way the UN system approaches solutions for returning refugees and IDPs. Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Ivory Coast were selected in 2012 to pilot the Decision. Similar to TSI, the SG's decision aims to strengthen the mainstreaming of displacement issues into recovery and development strategies and programming as a crucial step towards peacebuilding. As such both initiatives present new opportunities to strengthen coordination and partnership on solutions broadly.

April 2013 The Amsterdam Roundtable offered an important opportunity to reflect on lessons learned from previous initiatives and chart more strategic and innovative directions for TSI. As a result of the Roundtable, TSI has emerged as an approach that works across different stages of displacement to find solutions for affected populations (refugees, IDPs, returnees, host communities) and affected communities and governments with support from donors, humanitarian and development actors, academia and the private sector. At the end of the meeting, there was consensus among participants to move forward towards a more ambitious, redefined initiative with a global reach. To operationalize TSI, there was also agreement to move ahead towards establishing a Strategic Engagement Group (SEG) for TSI+ (the 'plus' signifying the coming together of TSI and the SG Decision on Durable Solutions into one discussion forum).

June and October 2013 Since the Amsterdam Roundtable smaller working groups have worked to prepare the TSI Mission Statement and the SEG Terms of Reference. Follow up consultations on the Amsterdam process were held in the Geneva-based 'Friends of TSI+' meetings hosted by the Netherlands and Japan Permanent Missions in June and October, respectively. The Netherlands and Japan have also shared their respective experiences on "Bridging the Divide within Governments" through informal papers.

February 2014 These follow up discussions have reinforced again the importance of including affected governments in the process to amplify the voices of those most affected – displaced people themselves. The Government of Denmark committed to host a second Roundtable event to continue the momentum.

Consultations around the process have ensued on the goals and format of the Roundtable II event. During the process of these consultations, UNHCR, UNDP, IRC, the Government of Denmark and the Government of Colombia have emerged as co-chairs of the process to take discussions and plans forward. The result of these discussions is an emerging consensus along the lines described below.

April 2014 A Roundtable on Solutions (or Roundtable II) will be hosted by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To ensure appropriate participation, Roundtable II will be co-chaired by UNHCR, UNDP, IRC, Denmark and Colombia, and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) will serve as Secretariat for the meeting. The overall purpose of this second roundtable is to reach consensus and agree that promoting and enabling the transition of displaced people away from dependency towards increased resilience, sustainable self-reliance and development is critical for addressing the protracted nature of displacement. The sub-objectives of the Roundtable will be:

1. Formal endorsement of a mission statement for the Initiative and establishment of the [Initiative's Engagement Group, or "the Members"], i.e., a new, fully inclusive global network of Members who will support the Initiative.
2. Development and joint agreement of a set of global messages and principles to i) inform the global policy agenda to recognise and include displacement as a development challenge as well as a humanitarian and protection issue; ii) establish an understanding in affected countries towards the inclusion of displacement issues as a cross cutting theme in national and local development plans; iii) encourage cooperation and networking of all relevant actors that have a role to play in preventing and responding to displacement challenges.
3. Agreement on a framework for rolling out the Initiative to selected displacement situations or countries/regions. This will include agreement on types of situations most suited to roll out; what a roll out process is expected to achieve/what success looks like; what the role of local Initiative Champions could be; and finally, a game plan for implementing roll out processes in a select number of situations.

ROUNDTABLE ON SOLUTIONS
COPENHAGEN 2 - 3 APRIL 2014