



A GUIDE TO DESIGNING DURABLE SOLUTIONS- ORIENTED PROGRAMS

This document provides some guidance on how to design solutions-oriented programs. The primary audience is ReDSS member agencies who want to understand how to better program towards durable solutions in the East and Horn of Africa. This brief guide should be considered as a starting point- and more detailed guidance should be developed in collaboration with sector specialists.

This durable solutions programming guide is presented in 3 sections:

- 1. Core elements of solutions-oriented programs:** this section outlines general requirements of solutions-oriented programs.
- 2. Incorporating a solutions-focus into assessments:** this section outlines the key areas of enquiry that should be incorporated into sector-specific assessments.
- 3. Solutions outcomes, indicators and illustrative activities:** this section presents “solutions log frames” for each of the 8 IASC criteria that appear in the ReDSS Solutions Framework.

This document is an accompanying guide to the ReDSS Solutions Framework Guidance Manual, which outlines how to conduct a solutions analysis using the ReDSS Solutions Framework. A solution analysis is a crucial step in understanding the extent to which the environment is conducive to solutions and the extent to which progress has been made towards solutions. The solutions analysis will highlight areas/sectors where there are gaps and problems to address but it will not generate findings that will fully inform program design. Following on from a solutions analysis, agencies will need to design programs and interventions that address gaps and advance solutions- this companion guide provides support in this process. Although ideally a solutions analysis should always be conducted to understand the totality of the solutions environment, it is also possible to use this document in situations where no solutions analysis has been conducted.

This programming guide may be used along with the [Durable Solutions in Practice Handbook](#)¹ which aims at providing a practical methodology for a bottom-up approach to durable solutions planning, based on durable solutions targets identified by displacement affected communities at decentralized level, as well as the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS) library of durable solutions indicators for IDPs. The library of indicators is based on an inter-agency process led by the Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, and coordinated by JIPS to operationalize the IASC Framework. While the ReDSS Framework indicators are considered outcome level indicators, the JIPS indicator library provides a comprehensive list of output indicators to conduct house hold surveys which agencies can pick and choose from to conduct sector specific assessments. More information can be found here: <http://www.jips.org/en/profiling/durable-solutions>.

¹ Global Cluster for early recovery (September 2017) Durable solutions in practice handbook

I. CORE ELEMENTS OF SOLUTIONS-ORIENTED PROGRAMS

The following guidance should be applied to all programming in displacement-affected communities, regardless of the sector.

- 1. Programs should ensure that assistance and services are provided on an equitable basis in displacement-affected communities.** The needs of the host population should not be overlooked, as these often mirror those of the displaced population. Where possible, displaced and host populations should be able to access the same assistance and services, and programming should facilitate this. This does not mean that displaced and host populations should receive equal support, but rather that assistance and services should be provided fairly and on the basis of need. In most contexts, it is likely that there will still be some protection and assistance needs that are specifically related to displacement, and therefore specific interventions targeting the displaced population will be required.
- 2. Creating durable solutions requires a multi-stakeholder and sectorial, rights and needs based programming approach. Program design should be cognizant of the relevant interventions of other actors and sectors, and opportunities for collaboration and synergy should be maximized during implementation.** Relevant actors and interventions should be mapped and consulted with during the design process. In doing so, actors should look beyond the planned sector of intervention of work to consider other areas of intersection. Consideration should be given to how the program will interact with the humanitarian, development, human rights and peace-building spheres. Relevant coordination mechanisms, particularly those that consider solutions, should be engaged with. It is also important for actors to be aware of existing plans and strategies that have a focus on solutions and/or area-based development of displacement-affected areas. This includes making sure programs contribute to the achievement of any specified outcomes/results articulated in these plans. Project proposal documents should clearly articulate how the intervention outlined is aligned to these plans and strategies.
- 3. Program design should recognize and support the leadership of regional, national and local authorities in finding solutions to displacement and implementing area-based plans.** The State bears the primary responsibility for finding solutions and all programs should support the State in this role. This includes local government, line ministries, central government and national ministries, and departments and agencies that have a specific focus on addressing forced displacement, as well as regional inter-governmental organizations. The program design process should consider how best to strengthen 1) the capacity and 2) the incentives of the authorities to tackle forced displacement. Programs should support service delivery by state actors where possible rather than delivering parallel services for displaced populations.
- 4. There must be meaningful participation of displaced/returnee populations, host populations and local institutions in program design, and adequate measures to ensure people's voices and accountability during program implementation.** Feedback mechanisms should also be established to allow for the voices of the displacement-affected community to be heard during implementation. This is a general principle of good program design.
- 5. Support to displacement-affected communities should be based upon a strong understanding of national/local context as it pertains to solutions (area based approaches) tailored to the specific skills, assets and vulnerabilities of displaced/returnee populations and host populations.** Program design should be informed by a number of factors specific to the sector(s) of intervention, including:
 - An understanding of who the displaced population are- what are their skills, capacities and assets, and what are the specific differences in these based on age, gender, and other diversities?
 - The absorptive capacity of local services, and how local service delivery plans should change as a result of displacement.
 - The impact of refugee/IDP/returnee hosting on social cohesion, focusing particularly on tensions/conflict related to land, access to services and employment opportunities.
 - Mapping of existing development activities, funding and priorities in refugee hosting locations, and understanding how displacement is and should be impacting upon these.

More detailed guidance on incorporating a solutions focus into assessments is provided in section II of this document.

- 6. Programs should be designed to generate evidence of what works in terms of advancing solutions.** Building an evidence base on solutions-oriented approaches within different sectors will help to inform the future design of solutions-oriented programs. To enable this, program strategies should incorporate solutions-oriented outcomes and indicators (see section III below), and program evaluations should seek to understand the extent to which the program has contributed to the achievement of solutions for displaced/returnee populations.

II. INCORPORATING A SOLUTIONS FOCUS INTO ASSESSMENTS

A solutions focus should be mainstreamed into sector-specific assessments, through including assessment questions relevant to the core elements of solutions-oriented programming (see Section I above). A starting point is to review secondary data- if there has been a solutions analysis conducted using the ReDSS Framework this will be particularly useful. Although a solutions analysis will not be detailed enough to replace a sector-specific needs assessment, it will be useful in informing one.

Detailed questions that sector-specific assessments should try to answer, organized according to the 8 IASC durable solutions criteria, can be found in Indicator definition matrix. Generally speaking, sector-specific assessments should try to answer the following questions:

- Do IDPs/refugees/returnees access the same services/assistance/institutions (relevant to the sector) as the host population? If not, why.
- Do IDPs/refugees/returnees face different/more/less barriers in accessing services/assistance/institutions related to the sector than the host population?
- Does the provision and utilization of services and assistance relevant to the sector result in any tensions between IDPs/refugees/returnees and the host population?
- Which organizations/institutions provide services/assistance/protection relevant to the sector within the displacement-affected community?
- What is role of different actors in terms of providing services and assistance relevant to the sector? (Government, private sector, development actors etc.).
- Are there still displacement-specific vulnerabilities for IDPs/refugees/returnees relevant to the sector? (this includes specific protection and assistance needs, or specific forms of discrimination, related to displacement).
- Does the response to forced displacement within the sector adopt an area-based approach? If so, what outcomes is this approach working towards within the sector?

It is also essential when designing programs to consider broader environmental factors, including the legal and policy environment, the capacity and willingness of the institutions with responsibility for addressing forced displacement, the profile of the displacement-affected community and the nature of the current response to forced displacement. Such information helps the assessment team to understand the extent to which the environment is conducive to the achievement of durable solutions. The key questions to answer as part of this “environmental analysis” can be found in environmental analysis matrix template. An environmental analysis is a key component of a solutions analysis- therefore, if a solutions analysis has already been conducted this information will be readily available.

III. SOLUTIONS OUTCOMES, INDICATORS AND ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

8 solutions log frames are presented in the tables below. These log frames correspond to each of the 8 IASC durable solutions criteria. Each log frame contains the following:

- An overall goal.
- Outcomes that contribute to the achievement of that goal
- Indicators to measure the outcomes (these are the indicators and alternative indicators from the ReDSS Solutions Framework).
- Illustrative solutions-oriented activities. These are aligned to the core elements of solutions-oriented programming (see section I), and contribute to the achievement of the outcomes. NOTE: the aim here was not to produce an exhaustive list of activities but rather to highlight some solutions-oriented approaches in different sectors.

The process for using the log frames in program design is as follows:

1. Identify which goal(s) you are working towards.
2. Identify which outcome(s) you are working towards under these goals.
3. Consider which indicators can be incorporated and/or adapted for inclusion into project log frames.
4. Consider whether the illustrative activities/approaches are relevant to the intervention.

These log frames have been developed as a starting point by ReDSS to guide solutions programming. Further development would require consultations and engagement with sector specialists.



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