

# Faith Action for Children on the Move: Unique and Critical Contribution of Local Faith Communities for Internally Displaced children

Submission to the High -Level Panel on Internal Displacement (HLP)

Submitted by:

## 1) The Consideration of the Unique and Essential Partnership with Local Faith actors

The HighLevel Panel on Internal Displacement (HLP) is a unique opportunity to provide clear recommendations reflecting effective partnerships that can play a vital role in responding to the unique challenges internally displaced children face. Conflict and disasters triggered 33.4 million new internal displacements across 145 countries and territories in 2019. Local Faith Communities, and specifically local faith leaders, have an essential role to play. As trusted community leaders, faith leaders have vital social, access and spiritual capital. They play an essential role in sharing accurate, trusted messages,

This submission opens the conversation between faith-based organizations and the HLP to consider the unique and essential role of local faith actors and international faith-based organizations, who have trusted relationships with local faith communities will promote innovative partnerships focused on

Request to the HLP before finalising its Recommendations:

Ef We request the HLP initial recommendations highlight the unique and essential role of local faith actors and invite Faith Action for Children on the move to co-convene a conversation about equitable, mutually beneficial and transparent partnerships.

## 2) What are the unique vulnerabilities of displaced children, made more evident with the current COVID -19 epidemics?

COVID-19 is likely to be disastrous for children, particularly children on the move. Familial systems that children rely on are already precarious for children on the move as they may be separated from family networks and even their own parents. Further, the interruption or total breakdown of already stretched or limited health systems, formal and informal child protection systems and education systems. Also, steps being taken to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 are resulting in essential service suspension, restricted freedom of movement and limiting humanitarian access.

36 million children representing more than 52% of Refugees and 40% of Internally Displaced Persons forcibly displaced by conflict are already living in precarious and insecure conditions in low-income and fragile countries. Many of these children are in large-overcrowded camps or densely populated urban settings with limited or no access to basic services like sanitation, education, health and protection and support including basic healthcare. These children are subject to increased threats of disease as physical distancing is often not possible. They also face threats of violence



provide an essential engagement platform, leverage the faith literacy of the FBO and ensure more equitable communication and relationships.

- Ef Governments, donors and the United Nations should commit to building their own internal capacity to engage with faith-based organizations by building essential faith literacy in partnership with FBOs.
- Ef Governments should prioritise faith leaders/faith partners as essential stakeholders with clearly outlined mechanisms for engagement to help prepare and protect internally displaced individuals, families, and children.
- Ef Governments should make child protection and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) core components of support for internally displaced children. They should implement sensitive