



Voices for Displaced Syrians

Voices for Displaced Syrians forum calls to the establishment of monitoring mechanisms The weakness of regular reporting mechanisms impacts, and risks the lives of refugees and IDPs.

The Syrian refugee's crisis is one of the largest in this century. For more than a decade all efforts and demands to find a political solution have failed. This situation resulted in having 6.7 million Syrians internally displaced from their original Homes (1.9m living in informal settlement, and planned camps, it is 20% increase than 2020), and 5.6 million¹, turned to be refugees in neighboring countries and all over the world.

The monitoring and oversight mechanisms that observe the situation inside Syria, or the violations that IDPs or refugees in other countries of asylum are exposed to are weak, dispersed and almost absent; especially for returning refugees. The weakness of such a mechanism leads to unfair and prejudiced policies issued by the host countries, donors, and other stakeholders towards refugees. The majority of the discussions and policies toward displaced Syrians are not based on accurate information that reflect the reality; although there are huge number of reports coming from Syria and the host countries, but yet there isn't regular reporting that engage all stakeholders including IDPs, and refugees themselves, which allow stakeholders to develop their policies based on well established & structured mechanisms Which aims to guarantee a safe, voluntary, dignified and informed return.

Human Rights Watch in its recent report on returnees from Lebanon and Jordan² found that Syria is not safe for return. Among 65 returnees 21 cases of arrest and arbitrary detention, 13 cases of torture, 3 kidnappings, 5 extrajudicial killings, 17 enforced disappearances, and 1 case of alleged sexual violence were documented. Those reports come in a time where we see pushing factors are increasing in many hosting countries who are building their policies on misinformation about safe areas in Syria.

On the other side there is no regular reporting on the violations and abuses that refugees are subject to in their hosting countries in spite UN agencies, INGOs, and other relevant stakeholders have more access in those countries.

NGOs and media resources have been reporting on increasing hate speech against refugees, instability of their legal status, and limited access to civil status documents which affect their access to labor, housing, health, education and other services. Durable solutions for the housing of IDPs looks more complicated considering the complicated HLP situation in both NW, and NE of Syria.

The weakness in monitoring mechanisms and regular reporting on returnees' safety and access to basic services, and the reporting on the conditions of IDPs and refugees is a key issue which impacts the lives of refugees and IDPs and results in forced returns.

1 - https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/3_2021/09/2021RP_Progress_Report.pdf

2 - <https://www.hrw.org/report/20/10/2021/our-lives-are-death/syrian-refugee-returns-lebanon-and-jordan#>

VDSF calls on:

- a) 1- Establishment of a joint monitoring mechanism which brings together the expertise and operational capacity of key stakeholders including local CSOs, UN agencies such as UNHCR, OCHA and OHCHR, and International NGOs. This mechanism should report on regular basis on the following:
 - b) The security situation in Syria, safety of returnees, and their access to all services and rights, and legal status. Those mechanisms should report any barriers depriving returnees to access their rights, and basic services and any discrimination based on their political affiliation, religions, gender, clines and tribes, their areas of origin or any other factor.
 - c) Refugees' conditions in hosting countries, including the safety of refugees, and their access to all services, rights, and legal status. Those mechanisms should report any violations against refugees with special focus on any policies encouraging hate speech.

Those mechanism will be targeting the following audiences:

- a) Syrian refugees, and IDPs so they make well informed decisions.
 - b) International stakeholders including hosting countries, donors, UN agencies and others so they can build well informed policies.
- 2- UN human rights council to request from both COI and OHCHR regular reporting on the situation in Syria with special attention to the conditions of returnees and IDPs in Syria, and refugees in their hosting countries.
- 3- Donors to allocate the needed fund to support the mechanism, and to increase the fund to researching and reporting on the security situation in Syria, the safety of returnees, IDPs in Syria, and refugees in their hosting countries and their access to all their needs and rights.