

20th Anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement: A Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People 2018-2020

DRAFT

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Executive summary

In commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (henceforth GP20), this multi-stakeholder Plan of Action aims to resolve and reduce internal displacement through prevention, protection and solutions for internally displaced people (IDPs). Action to achieve this goal will be carried out primarily at the national, but also at the regional and global levels.

This Plan of Action centres around four priority issues identified at a 2017 IDP stakeholder meeting led by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs: participation of IDPs; national laws and policies on internal displacement; data and analysis on internal displacement; and addressing protracted displacement and supporting durable solutions. Collaborative activities on these issues will create changes that will contribute to reaching the Plan of Action's goal and lay the groundwork for a possible high-level initiative on internal displacement.

National and local authorities, IDPs, host communities, UN entities, NGOs, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, academia, development finance institutions, human rights bodies and the private sector are called to rally around the goal and objectives of this Plan of Action and take individual or collective action in support of it. Stakeholders may wish to implement the activities suggested herein, or pursue bold initiatives, especially in situations where IDPs face significant protection risks and humanitarian access is limited.

To map and track this first-ever effort, stakeholders are requested to share their planned and anticipated activities and initiatives with the GP20 Coordinator at GP20@unhcr.org. A Steering Group will oversee implementation and monitor progress of this three-year Plan of Action, while also contributing towards promoting stakeholder engagement and cooperation at national, regional and global level towards the goal of resolving and reducing internal displacement through prevention, protection and solutions for IDPs in line with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

Rationale

In its 2017 resolution on IDPs, the UN General Assembly called on States, UN entities, the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), regional organizations, national human rights institutions, NGOs and other stakeholders to mark the 20th anniversary in 2018 of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (henceforth the Guiding Principles).¹ As a complex human rights, humanitarian and development challenge, internal displacement requires a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach. This Plan of Action thus acts on the General Assembly resolution's call by bringing together stakeholders on internal displacement to work more effectively and collaboratively to promote and support the common goal of resolving and reducing displacement through prevention, protection and solutions for IDPs.

¹ UN General Assembly, 14 November 2017, Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, A/C.3/72/L.46/Rev.1, available at: <http://undocs.org/A/C.3/72/L.46/Rev.1>

The Guiding Principles are an appropriate and internationally recognized framework for this work, with their emphasis on “sovereignty as responsibility,” the participation of IDPs in decisions that affect them, and their applicability in displacement mitigation through to solutions. Confirmed by the UN General Assembly on numerous occasions,² the Guiding Principles are authoritative, restating the rights of IDPs as enshrined in international human rights and international humanitarian law. There nevertheless remains considerable room to improve awareness, knowledge and application of the Guiding Principles. Their 20th anniversary is therefore a strategic opportunity to foster multi-year action aimed at protection, prevention and solutions for IDPs.

Progress to date

Since the early 1990s when internal displacement was recognized as a global phenomenon, there has been progress in enhancing protection and mobilizing a coordinated response to the plight of IDPs.³ This includes the development of normative standards, the first being the Guiding Principles in 1998, from which, for instance, the IDP Protocol of the Great Lakes Pact (2006), and the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of IDPs (Kampala Convention) (2009) draw substantially. These standards and other key guidance have inspired dozens of national policies and laws on internal displacement and helped numerous States design effective responses to internal displacement. Endorsement of the Nansen Initiative’s Protection Agenda⁴ by more than 100 States in a global consultation in 2015 demonstrates wide acknowledgement of the challenge of disaster displacement.

Another marker of progress is that internal displacement has increasingly been recognized as a complex development challenge in addition to being a human rights and humanitarian issue. Underscoring the link between internal displacement and development, Member States pledged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind, including IDPs.⁵ Efforts to increase the engagement of development actors on internal displacement in coordination with humanitarian organizations are also gaining traction.⁶ Meanwhile, key reforms such as the introduction of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee’s (IASC) cluster system have sought to enhance the international response to internal displacement, including through strengthened coordination and agency-specific policies.

Driving many of these developments, including the drafting of the Guiding Principles, has been the mandate of the UN Representative of the Secretary-General on IDPs. Created in 1992, renamed in 2004 the Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human Rights of IDPs and succeeded in 2010 by the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs (henceforth the Special Rapporteur), the mandate has played an important role in highlighting the human rights, humanitarian and development dimensions of internal displacement. It has also been key in emphasizing national responsibility for prevention, protection and solutions for IDPs, providing concrete recommendations for governments and international organizations to address internal displacement challenges, and drawing attention to key concerns on global internal displacement issues in its thematic reports.

² UN General Assembly, Resolution 60/1. 2005 World Summit Outcome, A/RES/60/1, available at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ods/A-RES-60-1-E.pdf>

³ UN Commission on Human Rights, 55th meeting, 1992/73, Internally displaced persons, 5 March 1992, <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IDPersons/E%20CN.4.RES.1992.73.pdf>

⁴ Agenda for the Protection of Cross-border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change. The Agenda acknowledges that most disaster displacement takes place within countries and the protection of IDPs is particularly important (p.9).

⁵ UN General Assembly, 25 September 2015, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development, para 23, available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

⁶ UN General Assembly, 14 November 2017, Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, A/C.3/72/L.46/Rev.1; See also World Bank, 2016, Forcibly Displaced: Toward a Development Approach Supporting Refugees, the Internally Displaced, and their Hosts, available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2016/09/15/report-launch-forcibly-displaced-toward-a-development-approach-supporting-refugees-the-internally-displaced-and-their-hosts>, World Bank, 2009, Forced Displacement : The Development Challenge, available at :

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/27717/638920WP0Force00Box0361531B0PUBLIC0.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>; and UNDP, no date, Sustainable development, available at: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development/economic-recovery/migration-and-displacement.html>

Problem statement

Despite these markers of progress, the number of people affected by internal displacement has been on an upward trajectory for decades. At the end of 2016, there were an estimated 40 million people internally displaced by conflict and violence, while during the same year alone over 24 million people were estimated to have been displaced by disasters.⁷ An additional estimated 15 million people are displaced every year by development projects, a cause of displacement recognized in the Guiding Principles and the Kampala Convention.⁸ Millions of other displacements are not systematically captured including those caused by land grabs, criminal violence and slow-onset disasters, such as drought. Without more attention to prevention, protection and solutions, and projected shocks related to the environment, economy, demographics and geopolitics, people will continue to be displaced.⁹

Numerous factors contribute to new and prolonged internal displacement. Some States exhibit limited capacity and willingness to acknowledge and fulfill their responsibilities toward IDPs and achieve progress toward durable solutions. Forward momentum on addressing internal displacement has waned in recent years in some cases because it has been perceived as infringing on state sovereignty, though sovereignty and the primary responsibility of States to protect IDPs complement one another.¹⁰ Meanwhile, the consistency and reliability of the humanitarian response to the urgent protection needs of IDPs has been limited, development actors have been inadequately engaged and UN senior-level attention to internal displacement has been absent. Compounding these factors are challenges in addressing the conditions that trigger crises and displacement, as well as displacement situations with significant protection issues and limited humanitarian access.

Theory of change

Four additional issues were identified as priority areas for more strategic, coordinated and collaborative action on internal displacement in a discussion led by the Special Rapporteur with IDP stakeholders in Geneva in September 2017 and during consultations on this Plan of Action. These issues are: participation of IDPs, national law and policy on internal displacement, data and analysis on internal displacement and addressing protracted displacement. Multi-stakeholder collaboration on these four issues is considered essential for producing the changes needed to reduce and resolve internal displacement through prevention, protection and solutions for IDPs, the goal of this Plan of Action.

IDP participation

IDPs report a lack of information provided to them during all phases of displacement.¹¹ Mechanisms and processes for their consultation and participation are absent or inadequate and decision-making processes often fail to take their views, needs and objectives fully into account. As a key contributor to protection and solutions, host and receiving families and communities should also participate in the design, planning and implementation of actions and decisions that affect them.

National law and policy on internal displacement

There is an absence or limited integration of IDPs' specific issues in relevant national laws and policies, the failure to commit adequate financial resources to resolving internal displacement, and the lack of or weak durable solutions strategies. Where there is political will, implementation of laws and policies on internal displacement is often limited.

Data and analysis on internal displacement

Quality data and analysis on internal displacement, including the number of displaced, disaggregated by age, sex, location, and diversity, the needs, intentions and capacities of IDPs as compared to host communities, as well as

⁷ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, May 2017, Global Report on Internal Displacement, available at: <http://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2017/pdfs/2017-GRID-part-1.pdf>

⁸ Cernea, Michael. 2007. IRR: An Operational Risks Reduction Model for Population Resettlement. *Hydro Nepal: Journal of Water, Energy and Environment* 1(1): 35-39.

⁹ World Economic Forum, Global Risks Report 2018, available at: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GRR18_Report.pdf

¹⁰ Deng, F. et al, 1996, Sovereignty as Responsibility: Conflict Management in Africa, Brookings Institution Press

¹¹ UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs, 24 July 2017, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, A/72/202, available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IDPersons/A-72-202.pdf>

their progress towards durable solutions, is often scarce.¹² This inhibits the design of effective policies and responses at the local and national levels, as well as an understanding of the relative severity of displacement situations globally.

Addressing protracted displacement and supporting solutions

Durable solutions for the majority of the world's IDPs living in protracted displacement are slow to materialize or remain elusive. Protracted displacement can erode the resilience of IDPs and host communities, and entrench impoverishment, marginalization, inequality and vulnerability. This impedes sustainable development for entire regions or countries. It can also contribute to renewed crises and displacement, which can reverse development gains.

Goal

The goal of this Plan of Action is to resolve and reduce internal displacement through prevention, protection and solutions for IDPs. Consistent with the Guiding Principles, this means taking measures to ensure that the conditions leading to displacement are averted, IDPs are protected, assisted and empowered during displacement, and that they achieve durable solutions.

Objectives

This Plan of Action will therefore contribute to the realization of the goal from 2018 to 2020 through the following objectives which centre on the four priority issues listed above:

- Strengthen the participation of IDPs in decisions that affect them, including IDPs who may be particularly vulnerable or marginalized
- Expand the development and implementation of national laws and policies on internal displacement
- Increase the number of States with the capacity to collect, analyze and use quality data on internal displacement for designing an effective response to internal displacement
- Scale up engagement on solutions for IDPs, including through Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs') implementation

In meeting these objectives, this Plan of Action will galvanize more strategic and collaborative dialogue, action and resources at the national, regional and global levels to prevent the conditions leading to displacement and address and resolve internal displacement. It will also lay a foundation for and contribute to a possible high-level initiative to address internal displacement, with synergies and coordination with this GP20 Plan of Action maximized.

Action to meet these objectives will focus largely but not exclusively on the national level. Given the primary responsibility of States for preventing, alleviating and resolving internal displacement, collective action must start at the national and local level with States taking the lead. This is consistent with a growing recognition in humanitarian circles of the need to shift investments, resources and agency towards local actors. National and local level action on internal displacement can also help States meet international policy commitments in the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction and the Paris Climate Agreement. This Plan of Action can feed common messages and help make the voices of IDPs heard in these and other policy fora and processes.

Opportunities will also be pursued regionally and globally to ensure that actors at those levels support national action to address internal displacement and that displacement is included in all relevant policy processes. Regional opportunities to advance the plight of IDPs include institutions such as the Inter-American human rights system of the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe. The tenth anniversary of the Kampala Convention in 2019 is also a chance to drive progress on preventing, responding to and resolving internal displacement in Africa at the regional level in collaboration with the African Union, the African human rights system as well as with regional African bodies.

¹² An Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics was commissioned by the UN Statistical Commission to take stock of the current state of IDP-statistics. Their report, endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2018, shows that few countries produce quality statistics and offers recommendations for how to transform the Guiding Principles into practice through official statistics. See <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/49th-session/documents/BG-Item3m-IDPStat-E.pdf> for the report

Steps all stakeholders can take

National and local authorities, IDPs, host communities, UN entities, NGOs, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, academia, development finance institutions, human rights bodies and the private sector are called to take on actions suggested hereunder and form multi-stakeholder partnerships for implementation during 2018 to 2020. The actions suggested below are meant to initiate and reinvigorate reflection and action at the national, regional and global level on internal displacement in line with the Plan of Action's objectives and goal.

Initial GP20 actions at the national, regional and global level may include, for example:

- Raise awareness and generate debate with colleagues and other contacts about the Plan of Action and potential activities
- Table ideas for GP20 initiatives for discussion in the relevant local fora, for example government led IDP-related entities, HCT, UNCT, NGO consortia
- Ensure the Plan of Action and information on the Guiding Principles and other key resources on internal displacement are on institutional websites
- Raise the profile of the Guiding Principles as appropriate, including through their inclusion in induction packages for new staff and developing learning opportunities that emphasize the foundational importance of the Guiding Principles.

Activities

Building on the initial activities suggested above to raise awareness, spark reflection and inspire action to commemorate GP20, more substantial activities are suggested below along the four priority issues: participation of IDPs, national law and policy on internal displacement, data and analysis on internal displacement and addressing protracted displacement. Stakeholders are encouraged to go beyond these activities and be as bold, ambitious and concrete as possible.

GP20 initiatives may be guided by the following parameters:

- Multi-year and multi-stakeholder activities on national priorities that contribute to supporting the leadership of States affected by internal displacement and reinforce the primary responsibility of States for displacement prevention, protection and solutions as outlined in the Guiding Principles;
- Use of the Guiding Principles as a framework for preventing, addressing and resolving displacement and their 20th anniversary as a fitting time to reinvigorate a dialogue and action on prevention, protection and solutions with States affected by internal displacement;
- Municipal, provincial and national authorities lead the GP20 activity, which is owned by a diverse range of stakeholders at the national level such as IDPs and their associations and leaders, the private sector, local NGOs, National Human Rights Institutions, academia.

Facilitating and strengthening IDP participation

The Guiding Principles restate the right of IDPs to participate in programmes and decision-making processes affecting them.¹³ This includes data collection and analysis, laws and policies on internal displacement, national and local development planning, peacebuilding and durable solutions. Attention should be paid to ensuring that IDPs who may be particularly vulnerable or marginalized, including women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities are specifically included.

Suggested actions for stakeholders include, for example:

- Facilitate and support IDP and host community participation in key processes for development and peacebuilding, e.g. providing a platform for IDP's experience and advice on achieving durable solutions in peace building discussions, as well as international policy dialogues such as the 2030 Agenda, UN Secretary General's prevention agenda and UN reform more generally

¹³ UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs, 24 July 2017, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, A/72/202, available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IDPersons/A-72-202.pdf>

- Ensure IDPs face no barriers to political participation, including access to documentation, voting and standing for office, e.g. an information and awareness raising campaign to inform IDPs about their right to vote and the process to do so
- Support IDPs to build or strengthen a platform to determine and realize their priorities and feed these into inter-agency fora to help shape programme design, strategy development or data collection and analysis, e.g. strengthen the capacity and visibility of an existing IDP network to put forward its priorities

Promoting the development and implementation of laws and policies on internal displacement

Dozens of States have adopted laws and policies on internal displacement in line with the Guiding Principles. GP20 efforts can increase advocacy calling on more States to incorporate the Guiding Principles into their national laws and policies, provide technical support for further development and implementation of existing national laws and policies on internal displacement, and encourage the establishment of national monitoring mechanisms to oversee the effective implementation of laws and policies. Linking such laws and policies to national development strategies and targets, and monitoring their implementation, can help identify solutions for IDPs.

Suggested actions for stakeholders include, for example:

- Organize consultations with IDPs to raise awareness of the Guiding Principles and solicit their views and participation in the development of a national IDP law or policy
- Support the creation of a government chaired working group on development and implementation of IDP law and policy
- Organize seminars on the Guiding Principles and development and implementation of IDP law and policies with a diverse range of stakeholders, bringing in examples of best practices from other countries

Producing quality data and analysis for preventing, responding to and finding solutions for internal displacement

States will need adequate baseline figures and age, gender, location and diversity-disaggregated data on IDPs to confirm that IDPs have not been left behind in meeting the SDGs as pledged. GP20 can contribute to enhancing local and national capacity to collect, analyze and effectively use data on internal displacement situations, in line with the recommendations made by the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS). It can also focus attention on the need for data on crisis and displacement risk factors alongside a methodology to measure the progress towards the achievement of durable solutions.

Suggested actions for stakeholders include, for example:

- Strengthen national capacity to collect, analyze and use data on internal displacement, in line with recommendations from the EGRIS, which will develop tools and guidance in 2018-2019 for the production of official IDP statistics
- Work towards improving comparability of statistics about IDPs vis-à-vis the host population and the general population at the national level, as well as with other groups at the international level
- Investigate the social and economic impact of internal displacement on local and national development indicators and include IDPs in national development plans accordingly

Addressing protracted internal displacement and support for durable solutions

GP20 can galvanize multi-stakeholder engagement for increased self-sufficiency and resilience of IDPs and support for durable solutions in line with the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs. This can be achieved through, for example, the inclusion of IDPs and host communities in national development plans and social safety nets, increasing income-generation and livelihood opportunities for IDPs and host communities, addressing housing and land disputes, joint humanitarian and development approaches including through the definition of measurable collective outcomes, and the collection and dissemination of good practices.¹⁴

Suggested actions for stakeholders include, for example:

¹⁴ UN OCHA, May 2017, Breaking the Impasse: Reducing Protracted Displacement as a Collective Outcome, available at: <https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Breaking-the-impasse.pdf>

- Review priorities and programmes in countries affected by internal displacement to ensure that initiatives helping IDPs to move towards self-sufficiency are in place, and that the impact on host communities is factored into the response
- Engage in a dialogue with national governments and IDPs to ensure that they prioritize durable solutions to internal displacement in their national and regional planning using the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions, and factor in displacement in their SDGs' implementation plan
- States, IDPs, humanitarian and development partners, donors, civil society, the private sector, as well as other actors as relevant, can jointly: 1) analyze the protection risks, needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of IDPs and their hosts, 2) identify the reasons why displacement is protracted, 3) agree on and implement strategic, clear and quantified collective outcomes.

Coordination and support

All stakeholders are invited to share their planned and anticipated activities to commemorate GP20. These can be shared with the GP20 Coordinator directly at GP20@unhcr.org or through the dedicated GP20 web page located at <http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/en/news-and-events/gp20-activities-and-initiatives.html> on the Global Protection Cluster website. Stakeholders are also invited to create their own GP20 hubs in line with this Plan of Action. As a first step towards implementation of this Plan of Action, a GP20 Coordinator will map planned GP20 initiatives and activities in order to promote and follow them as well as encourage collaboration to reinforce impact. Initiatives requiring financial or technical support can be shared in concept note format with the GP20 Coordinator who will seek to identify avenues for support.

A Steering Group, to be initially co-chaired by UNHCR and OCHA, will oversee implementation of the GP20 Plan of Action and contribute to outreach and engaging stakeholders at national, regional and global level in achieving the overall goal of resolve and reduce internal displacement through prevention, protection and solutions. The GP20 Coordinator will support the Steering Group by designing a methodology for monitoring implementation and measuring progress of the Plan of Action, particularly with regard to its underpinning priority issues. The Coordinator will also compile and disseminate progress reports on the Plan of Action, while facilitating outreach and mobilizing stakeholder engagement and support for the Plan of Action.

Membership of the Steering Group, which will be reviewed annually along with the chairmanship, will include a core group of stakeholders from among Member States, UN entities, NGOs, the World Bank and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The Special Rapporteur will continue to act as a Special Advisor. The Steering Group will draw on existing capacity to implement the Plan of Action, give visibility to GP20 activities and promote efforts to address internal displacement, particularly ensuring attention is drawn to situations with major protection and humanitarian access issues.

Communication plan

A communication plan will support the implementation of the Plan of Action through the development of common messages. These joint messages aim to create more visibility and raise awareness on the toll conflicts and disasters and other types of displacement have on IDPs. A multi-stakeholder GP20 Working Group on Communication in Geneva, chaired by the mandate of the Special Rapporteur, will oversee implementation of the communication plan and communicate progress to the GP20 Coordinator who will report this back to the Steering Group. The communication plan proposes key messages, timelines with key dates as well as joint communication initiatives, including channels and tools for joint use by all stakeholders. The plan will be posted online in April 2018 and the link will be communicated to all stakeholders.

Timeline and action points

April 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stakeholders share planned and potential GP20 initiatives• Stakeholder meeting with the Special Rapporteur in Geneva• Launch and validation of GP20 Plan of Action• Formation of GP20 Steering Group and adoption of ToR• Geneva reception to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles¹⁵
May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First meeting of GP20 Steering Group• Adoption of GP20 Plan of Action for 2018 by the Steering Group
2018-2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action in support of the GP20 Plan of Action
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Event to mark the 10th anniversary of the Kampala Convention
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-level event on internal displacement (TBC)

¹⁵ The UN Commission on Human Rights first took note of the Guiding Principles on 17 April 1998.

Annex – Development of this Plan of Action

The development of this Plan of Action was driven by the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, UNHCR, OCHA and the Global Protection Cluster. The Special Rapporteur held an IDP stakeholder meeting in Geneva in September 2017 where there was broad support for commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles and agreement on four priority issues for collaborative work for reducing and resolving internal displacement.

The process for drafting this Plan of Action began in December 2017. Over fifty stakeholders were consulted, including various UN entities, international NGOs, NGO consortia, academia, Member States, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and other internal displacement experts.

This Plan of Action will be launched in Geneva at an event convened by the Special Rapporteur on 17 April 2018, which marks the 20th anniversary of the date when the UN Commission on Human Rights noted the Guiding Principles in 1998. Following the launch, there will be a celebratory event and the Plan of Action will be handed to the Steering Group to oversee implementation.

This Plan of Action also aspires to lay the groundwork for and contribute to a possible high-level initiative to support States coping with internal displacement and other stakeholders in looking at the regional and global significance of internal displacement and the measures that have been and can be taken to prevent, respond to and find solutions to this phenomenon.

Among others, such an initiative would help identify key commitments for achieving the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development's pledge to "leave no-one behind," the Secretary-General's prevention agenda and reform of the UN development system that can support IDPs through prevention, protection and solutions to displacement.