

# HOLDING ON

A VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT



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When I pick it up, I remember the difficulties  
I faced, and tears fall from my eyes."*

Hannatu Yusuf, Internally Displaced in Nigeria by Boko Haram

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A VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

A UN MIGRATION AGENCY CAMPAIGN  
ON THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GUIDING  
PRINCIPLES ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT



## HANNATU YUSUF, INTERNALLY DISPLACED IN NIGERIA BY BOKO HARAM

There are few personal tragedies worse than having to flee for one's life. Each year millions of men, women, and children are displaced within the borders of their own countries by conflict, violence, disasters, natural hazards, and climate stresses. Internally displaced persons are among the world's most vulnerable people, facing poverty, lost educational opportunities, unemployment, marginalization, and insecurity, to name but a few challenges. Yet, generations of internally displaced persons have been the most neglected in many of the world's crises.

In 1998, the UN launched the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which continues to serve as the global standard for States and humanitarian actors for protecting and assisting internally displaced people. Over the last 20 years, the Guiding Principles remain the most important international framework for the protection of internally displaced persons and addressing and reducing internal displacement.

In recognition of the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (#GP20), IOM will launch, Holding On - a global art exhibition and digital campaign showcasing individual stories of displacement and the possessions internally displaced persons hold on to for hope.

*"This t-shirt kept me safer. It's very valuable to me and I don't want to lose it. When I pick it up, I remember the difficulties I faced, and tears fall from my eyes."*

## ABU JASSIM, INTERNALLY DISPLACED SINCE 2014 WHEN ISIL ATTACKED HIS HOMETOWN IN SALAH AL-DIN, IRAQ.

Whether due to conflict, violence, disasters, natural hazards, or climate stresses, displacement is often a life-saving necessity and forces individuals and families to flee their homes with little more than what they can carry. Over weeks, months, or years of displacement, everyday items, whether taken from their lost homes or acquired on their journey, become the physical representation of a world that has since disappeared and for many a promise of return.



*"Often times I sit here and just watch my birds. They remind me of everything dear to me in my life in Yathrib, Salah al-Din: my farm, the fields, the livestock, having family and friends around me."*

A key, a shirt, a photo, a certificate, these pieces of a life that once was, now serve both as a symbol of struggle and a beacon of hope. The Holding On global art exhibition and digital campaign will showcase the cherished possessions of internally displaced people from across the globe. Using VR technology audiences will be able to enter the "makeshift" home and community of

an internally displaced individual to watch them share their story of displacement and the significance of the possession they are holding on to.

Addressing internal displacement is a global humanitarian imperative. IOM will use Holding On to raise awareness for the plight of internally displaced persons and celebrate their courage, tenacity, and resilience of spirit, while ensuring that their voices are front and centre.

BE PART OF THE CAMPAIGN BY HOSTING AN EXHIBITION,  
PARTNERING IN THE CAMPAIGN OR DONATE!

For more information, please contact [holdingoncampaign@iom.int](mailto:holdingoncampaign@iom.int).

 IOM  
UN MIGRATION

**GP20**  
PREVENT  
PROTECT  
RESOLVE