

External Evaluation of IDMC's 2015-2020 strategy

IDMC Management Response

Date of Management Response: 04 May 2021

Manager/Management Response Focal Point: Dawn Vout, Head of External Relations

Person(s) responsible for ensuring execution of the action plan: Dawn Vout, Head of External Relations

How regularly will the management response implementation be tracked? Annually

A. Overall response to the evaluation

The findings of the external evaluation provide valuable insight into how effectively the organisation has been able to achieve the targets and objectives set in its 2015-2020 strategy and provide useful input for continuous learning.

The evaluation found that IDMC has overall achieved its objectives. Its mandate remains as relevant as ever and the organisation has managed to consolidate its role as the global data provider on internal displacement. IDMC's products and services are valued and used by policymakers and operational actors around the world, and its messaging and advocacy contribute to the global discussion on internal displacement.

Nevertheless, the evaluation did find various areas for improvement and provides a set of formal recommendations, found on pages 34 and 35 of the evaluation. Main learnings from these findings include the need to become better at measuring the impact of our work and tracking progress towards our objectives and targets through the strengthening of our Monitoring and Evaluation system; as well as the need to streamline and systematise our communication and outreach efforts while developing a more targeted dissemination strategy.

Other important findings refer to the need of fostering greater coordination and synergies and adopting a more structured and consistent approach to identifying strategic partnerships. The environment in which IDMC operates has seen significant changes with new actors and initiatives being established in the last few years, and IDMC is mindful of the need to promote greater cooperation and collaboration.

Despite our general agreement with the outcomes of the evaluation, we felt there were some limitations in the process, scope and resources/time allocated to complete this evaluation. The evaluation was based entirely on desk research and stakeholder interviews. A total of 32 stakeholder interviews were conducted, of which 18 were external interviews. Due to this, and the open-ended nature of questions asked to stakeholders, the outcomes of the evaluation presented do not offer very specific advice and serve more to provide general recommendations.

The recommendations listed, however, resonate strongly with IDMC's own reflections. As such, we've already begun to make plans to achieve and address many of the recommendations, while noting that some require significant investments in time and resourcing to fully achieve. All of the recommendations have been transferred into IDMC's new 10-year strategy and are helping to define our implementation approach.

Further detail on the key findings from the evaluation and IDMC's response to the recommendations is included below.

B. Key findings from the evaluation

The evaluation was measured by five main criteria: effectiveness, coherence, relevance, and financial sustainability.

Effectiveness

The evaluation report notes that IDMC has successfully implemented the activities planned in its 2015-2020 strategy, while also noting limitations in IDMC's Monitoring and Evaluation system that constrained the assessment of effectiveness. Nevertheless, evaluators found that the overall effectiveness of IDMC's activities was good and identified specific areas that contributed to the achievement of objectives, namely IDMC's organisational structure and team, and IDMC's communication and outreach strategy.

The evaluation provides a series of recommendations in relation to the strengthening of IDMC's Monitoring and Evaluation System that IDMC fully shares and is committed to prioritise in the next strategic period. The first step in addressing this recommendation has already been taken, with the hiring of a consultant who will lead the process of developing a monitoring and evaluation framework aligned with IDMC's 2030 strategy.

In addition to the M&E gaps identified, the evaluation found that IDMC's communication and outreach strategy could also be improved. While noting that IDMC's dissemination strategy has evolved significantly over the past five years, there are still some obstacles in assessing the effectiveness of the strategy and evaluators recommend that IDMC track its outreach and communication activities more consistently. The evaluation also observed that responsibility for dissemination of IDMC's work to the media is clearly defined, but that this is not the case for dissemination of outputs to policymakers. This results in a less systematic approach, resulting in varying degrees of knowledge and understanding of the organisation among stakeholders.

It was also noted that there has been an increase in the number of publications produced since 2018, reaching more than 50 publications per year, but that this increase has not been accompanied by an increase in the communications team, who has remained relatively small over the past ten years. The report therefore observes a lack of sufficient communication capacity to disseminate such an important number of publications per year. Recommendations include investing efforts in more targeted outreach and developing a more systematic approach to dissemination. This requires a deep understanding of IDMC's target audience.

IDMC agrees with these observations and plans to expand its communication and outreach activities. To this purpose, IDMC has already begun mapping its target audience to have a more complete picture of our users and the best channels to engage with them. This has been paired with investments in our in-house capacities to produce digital products with the recent additions of a Digital Content Manager and Graphic and Digital Design Coordinator to our team, allowing us to release various forms of digital products. This has ranged from explainer videos to animated storytelling to crowd-sourced audio-visual material, with an aim to present the results of IDMC's research and analysis in a more user-friendly format and ensure our data and evidence reach a broader audience. Additionally, a new product recently launched – the policy blog - is specifically aimed at targeting key policy forums with tailored messaging and is intended to contribute to a more targeted communication and outreach strategy.

Relevance

The evaluation found IDMC's mandate and activities to be highly relevant. Stakeholders appreciate the fact that IDMC has managed to go beyond global IDP estimates to provide in-depth analysis of the drivers, trends and patterns of internal displacement through its thematic research agenda. The focus and thematic areas of IDMC's research agenda developed over the past five years are valued by stakeholders and highly relevant for responding to the needs of policymakers and programming officers in terms of data and evidence. The evaluation's recommendations point to the need to maintain the focus on the areas in which IDMC can add the most value, as well as to foster coordination with other relevant actors, as is not feasible for a single organisation to try to cover all existing intelligence needs. IDMC is mindful of this need for coordination and the need to remain focused in order to maximise its added value. As we continue to grow and expand our activities, IDMC will continue to apply a collaborative approach to ensure the outcomes of its work are relevant and tailored to the needs of our partners and users.

Impact

The evaluation found that IDMC makes a significant contribution to the conversation on internal displacement at the global level. Stakeholders interviewed confirm the regular use of IDMC's data and evidence and appreciate IDMC's

methodological rigour in producing these. The most used and valued output are the aggregate number of IDPs, confirming the GRID as IDMC's flagship product, while interviews also indicate the regular use of country specific information and interest in the thematic research areas. IDMC's data and evidence constitute a valuable input for both humanitarian and development action plans, while also serving as arguments to change and consolidate the priorities of a country's foreign policy in relation to internal displacement.

The report notes that IDMC helps shape the discussion on internal displacement, but it is difficult to directly link IDMC's activities to policy action. Stakeholders suggested that this may be due to the fact that IDMC provides data but few policy recommendations, and when recommendations are provided, these are hardly actionable and not precise enough. Stakeholders suggested that IDMC should provide ready-to-use policy recommendations backed by IDMC's evidence.

IDMC partially disagrees with these observations. The generation of evidence and analysis is always accompanied by policy recommendations and efforts to support stakeholders in operationalising these. IDMC's puts particular effort in promoting the uptake of policy recommendations resulting from its research, and engages with governments, UN agencies and other international organisations to open a space for discussion about research findings and develop joint recommendations and action plans.

Additionally, IDMC staff actively disseminate data and evidence and contribute with tailored messaging to international, regional and national policy forums and processes. IDMC plays an important role in various processes and forums that develop policy recommendations, for instance through its participation in the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS), and the participation of IDMC's Director as a member of the Expert Advisory Group of the UN High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement.

Coherence

The report notes that IDMC has been coherent in its choice of strategic partners, and that it has been successful in increasing its partners base over the past five years. Nevertheless, there might be room for improvement in terms of consistency of the engagement.

IDMC is cognizant of the need to use a coherent approach to its partnership strategy. IDMC plans to conduct a partner mapping exercise to assess current partnerships and identify gaps and opportunities to promote a more consistent and structured engagement with partners.

Financial Sustainability

The evaluation found that IDMC's financial resources have increased over the past five years and that this can be attributed to the significant efforts of the organisation to diversify its sources of funding. IDMC has indeed implemented an ambitious fundraising strategy to grow and diversify its donor base, resulting in a steady increase in IDMC's budget and greater predictability through the securing of multi-year grants.

Our increased efforts to diversify our funding base have not only resulted in partnerships with new donors, but also in the funding, for the first time, of projects by development partners, such as the EU Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development and the Asian Development Bank, when IDMC had been traditionally funded by humanitarian organisations. This represents a positive new step into ensuring that we address both the humanitarian and longer-term developmental needs regarding internal displacement.

C. Planned use of the evaluation

Evaluation findings have directly informed the development of IDMC's new 2030 strategy. Its recommendations will guide the definition of priority actions to tackle challenges and areas for improvement identified in the evaluation, which will be reflected in the activities included in the workplans that will be developed to facilitate implementation

of the 2020-2030 strategy. IDMC will also develop a communication plan identifying key partners and donors to disseminate evaluation findings.

D. Priority actions

In light of the evaluation's recommendations, IDMC will prioritise the strengthening of its Monitoring and Evaluation framework to ensure the organisation is able to measure progress in the achievement of outcomes and results under its 2020-2030 strategy. IDMC will contract a consultant to support the organisation in the development of this framework and the operationalisation of the evaluation's recommendations.

IDMC will also seek to gain a better understanding of the target audience of our products and services by completing the target audience mapping already underway. The results of this exercise will enable us to develop a more targeted dissemination strategy and improve our outreach efforts, thus addressing one of the areas for improvement highlighted in the external evaluation report.

E. Management response to the recommendations and key findings of the report:

Evaluation recommendation 1: In order to facilitate tracking of achievements and a clear understanding of IDMC's strategy and objectives, consider establishing tangible performance indicators in the future strategy and start systematically tracking progress and activities. Systematic tracking of where and in what way IDMC had influence (e.g. through participation and organisation of workshops, formulation of recommendations / advocacy messages) could help IDMC in providing a clearer overview of the organisation's effectiveness in the eyes of its partners and donors and allow adjustments in the strategy on the basis of monitoring evidence. This recommendation is particularly relevant for new activities, e.g. the monitoring of capacity development activities would benefit from the adoption of monitoring approaches such as the Kirkpatrick model.

Priority level (1 to 3): 1

Management Response: Agree – IDMC develops performance indicators on an annual basis to track progress of its work. As the majority of IDMC's funding is provided on an annual basis, these indicators do not allow us to measure longer-term impact or performance, nor to draw strong correlations from our work to outcomes in global policy and programming. With the adoption of the new 10-year strategy however, IDMC plans to work with a Monitoring and Evaluation specialist to develop a more robust M&E framework that will better equip the organisation to improve performance measurement and tracking of activities, outputs and outcomes to more accurately measure progress on the achievement of our 2030 Strategy objectives, and to better measure the impact of IDMC's work.

Key Actions	Timeframe	Responsible Unit	Tracking or Monitoring	
			Actions taken	Status
- Establish SMART performance indicators that allow IDMC to track progress on the achievement of our 2030 Strategy objectives	Completed by 15 September 2021	External Relations Department	Initiated – hired a consultant for support	- Initiated - Not initiated - Completed
- Establish formal Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning framework	By December 2021	External Relations Department	Initiated	- No longer applicable
- Establish internal M&E working group to review progress and make recommendations for adjustments needed.	By 15 June 2021	All departments	Initiated	

- **Evaluation recommendation 2:** In the future, IDMC needs to continue exploring its added-value to remain a relevant and credible data provider in a rapidly changing environment. IDMC also needs to further build on the progress it made over the past five years and yield the results, including in terms of innovative partnerships (e.g. with the private sector), expansion and further deepening of thematic research areas and the development of innovative tools.

Priority level (1 to 3): 2

Management Response: The evaluation found that stakeholders interviewed valued IDMC for fulfilling a unique role, specifically through its sole focus on internal displacement, its triangulation of displacement data sources, and its transparency. Nevertheless, the report also indicated that, while IDMC has a clear and well-established mandate, the creation of a few newer displacement data agencies and initiatives has led to some confusion amongst stakeholders hence the need to continually explore its added value and efforts to remain a relevant and credible data provider.

While IDMC agrees to the importance of delineating clear roles and responsibilities amongst the overall community of displacement data providers, we feel that IDMC’s specific niche and mandate has been well-established and remains as relevant as ever. IDMC has also been enhancing coordination in the sector through its convening of a series of roundtable discussions with displacement data providers, both globally and at country-level. Through these discussions, IDMC is able to map out the existing displacement data ecosystem and establish a better understanding of the displacement data network, therefore informing its strategy for building synergies and collaboration with key data partners and improving harmonisation and coordination among stakeholders. These efforts are also being commended for providing specific support on key data issues in certain contexts.

In addition, IDMC’s Advisory Group was established in 2019 to open up a channel for regular feedback and guidance with key actors in the field of internal displacement. UN agencies such as UNHCR, IOM, OCHA, and UNDP are represented in the Advisory Group and contribute to guiding IDMC’s strategic vision and direction, ensuring that IDMC’s products, services and methods continue to serve the needs of stakeholders in the internal displacement ecosystem. The combination of government representatives from countries affected by internal displacement also continually ensures that IDMC’s priorities and direction align with needs expressed by government at the country-level.

The evaluation also recommends that IDMC continues building on progress made including through the expansion and further deepening of IDMC’s research areas. Over the past five years IDMC has continued to consolidate its research agenda and to identify new thematic areas where evidence is needed, resulting in the launch of a new research area in 2020: ‘Hidden in plain sight: the differentiated impacts on internal displacement’. IDMC will continue to analyse internal displacement trends, patterns and drivers to identify areas of need for knowledge and research and continue contributing to the body of evidence. In addition, IDMC will now build its research themes in a more integrated manner out of the recognition that displacement is driven by multiple factors, and the solutions to displacement also need to be multifaceted.

Key Actions	Timeframe		Tracking or Monitoring
-------------	-----------	--	------------------------

		Responsible Unit	Actions taken	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to convene regular meetings with donors and displacement data collection partners to enhance coordination and fill persistent data gaps. - Convene displacement data roundtables with key data collection partners to address issues such as: monitoring the end of displacement, decaying data, reporting on displacement/contested territories. - Continue to actively participate in inter-agency coordination meetings and support existing processes and initiatives in close collaboration with key actors - Continue to convene Advisory Group meetings twice a year - Actively participate in key policy and programmatic fora such as the UN High Level Panel on Internal Displacement, the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics, climate change negotiations, etc. 	<p>Throughout the year</p> <p>3/year</p> <p>Throughout the year</p> <p>At least twice a year</p> <p>8/year</p>	<p>All departments</p> <p>Programmes Department</p> <p>Director's Office</p>	<p>Initiated/ongoing</p> <p>Initiated/ongoing</p> <p>Initiated/ongoing</p> <p>Initiated/ongoing at 2/year or more</p> <p>Initiated/ongoing</p>	<p>- Initiated</p> <p>- Not initiated</p> <p>- Completed</p> <p>- No longer applicable</p>
<p>Evaluation recommendation 3: With a view to ensuring stakeholder engagement with the future strategy, IDMC's next strategy needs to be clear in terms of focus and related activities, and just as importantly, it is recommended to communicate on the strategy with key partners (both bilaterally, and with groups of relevant partners).</p>				
<p>Priority level (1 to 3): 2</p>				

Management Response: This recommendation falls outside of the scope of the evaluation. Nevertheless, IDMC has been addressing this and has already convened a number of meetings to ensure that its key partners are both aware and supportive of IDMC's new strategy.

Key Actions	Timeframe	Responsible Unit	Tracking or Monitoring	
			Actions taken	Status
- Develop clear and focused theory of change and 10-year strategy document.	By September 2020	All departments	Completed	- Initiated - Not initiated
- Continue to meet with IDMC's key partners and donors and share strategy draft for feedback	From June – December 2020	All departments	Completed	- Completed - No longer applicable

Evaluation recommendation 4: To increase outreach and advocacy and further support the implementation of activities (e.g. research), explore the possibility to have regional focal points to help with facilitating and maintaining partnerships.

Priority level (1 to 3): 3

Management Response: As described in the report, the recommendation suggests that IDMC invest resources into engaging more consistently with in-country institutions and governments. In so doing, it suggests that IDMC establish regional focal points. IDMC is looking into the feasibility of recruiting regional staff as focal points and has begun to pilot this approach in the Pacific. We generally agree with the need for stronger regional presence, but there are additional possibilities which include staff secondments and short-term assignments and working through partners that have local presence that would also enable us to grow our partnership base and networks in-country. In addition, considerations around staff registration, security, and access to basic support services without a formal office need to be taken into consideration. Hence this decision will need to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and when funding is available.

Key Actions	Timeframe	Responsible Unit	Tracking or Monitoring	
			Actions taken	Status

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review feasibility of posting staff members in regional hubs, in terms of hosting arrangements, costs vs. benefits, etc. - Develop strategy for gradual expansion with country-level engagement. - Develop and implement communication and dissemination strategy. 	<p>Case-by-case basis</p> <p>December 2021</p> <p>January – June 2021</p>	<p>All departments</p> <p>External Relations Department</p> <p>External Relations Department</p>	<p>Initiated - Two staff members outposted in Fiji.</p> <p>Initiated</p> <p>Initiated</p>	<p>- Initiated</p> <p>- Not initiated</p> <p>- Completed</p> <p>- No longer applicable</p>		
<p>➤ Evaluation recommendation 5: To increase awareness and the visibility of IDMC and IDPs, IDMC could consider more systematic targeted communication towards policy makers and the strategic audience of each output. IDMC could consider linking its communication more directly to relevant developments in the international institutions (e.g. sending briefs on research related to topics being discussed at the UN Council about a week before meetings take place).</p>						
<p>Priority level (1 to 3): 1</p>						
<p>Management Response: IDMC is investing resources to ensure more systematic and targeted communication to increase the visibility and impact of its work. This is being initiated through a target audience mapping exercise to first understand our audience and their needs better, which will be followed through with the development and implementation of a more targeted communication and dissemination strategy. IDMC will also develop a process for collecting feedback in-country to continually tailor its products and tools to the needs of policy and operational actors. IDMC currently prioritises relevant global and regional policy processes and continually prioritises which processes to engage in more strategically. It has also developed a new product –the policy blog- specifically targeted at policy makers and strategic audiences primarily from donor and IDP-hosting countries, as well as UN agencies. Building on IDMC’s research and publications, the policy blog will look at international policy processes through an internal displacement lens and will seek to draw public attention to the impacts of these processes on internal displacement. A targeted dissemination strategy will promote maximum reach to our strategic audiences.</p>						
<p>Key Actions</p>	<p>Timeframe</p>	<p>Responsible Unit</p>	<p>Tracking or Monitoring</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>Actions taken</td> <td>Status</td> </tr> </table>		Actions taken	Status
Actions taken	Status					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct target audience mapping and market research to understand users' needs better and target communication products to needs. - Continue identifying key international policy processes to contribute with messaging and evidence to positively influence policy outcomes. 	<p>September 2020 – March 2021</p> <p>Throughout the year</p>	<p>External Relations Department</p> <p>Programmes Department</p>	<p>Initiated</p> <p>Initiated/ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiated - Not initiated - Completed - No longer applicable
<p>Evaluation recommendation 6: To avoid potential tensions with partners, continue and deepen the collaborative approach implemented during the past five years and continue building on meaningful partnerships</p>				
<p>Priority level (1 to 3): 2</p>				
<p>Management Response: The evaluation found that IDMC operates in a rapidly evolving environment which in recent years has seen the establishment of new initiatives and actors operating in the field of internal displacement. IDMC has been successful in navigating this complex environment and has consolidated its role as a trusted and reliable source of intelligence on internal displacement, as recognised by the stakeholders interviewed. As we move into our new strategy and seek to build on our added-value, IDMC will continue using a collaborative approach to build partnerships and foster synergies with other key actors in the field of internal displacement.</p>				
Key Actions	Timeframe	Responsible Unit	Tracking or Monitoring	
			Actions taken	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage current partnerships and foster greater collaboration and coordination with key stakeholders • Continue to hold regular exchanges with our partners and put in place adequate mechanisms to receive feedback as a way of ensuring the outcomes of our work meet their needs 	<p>Throughout the year</p> <p>Throughout the year</p>	<p>All departments</p> <p>Programmes Department</p>	<p>Initiated/ongoing</p> <p>Initiated/ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiated - Not initiated - Completed - No longer applicable

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to identify opportunities for partnership and collaboration with relevant actors at the international, regional and national level	Throughout the year	Programmes Department	Initiated/ongoing	
---	---------------------	-----------------------	-------------------	--

