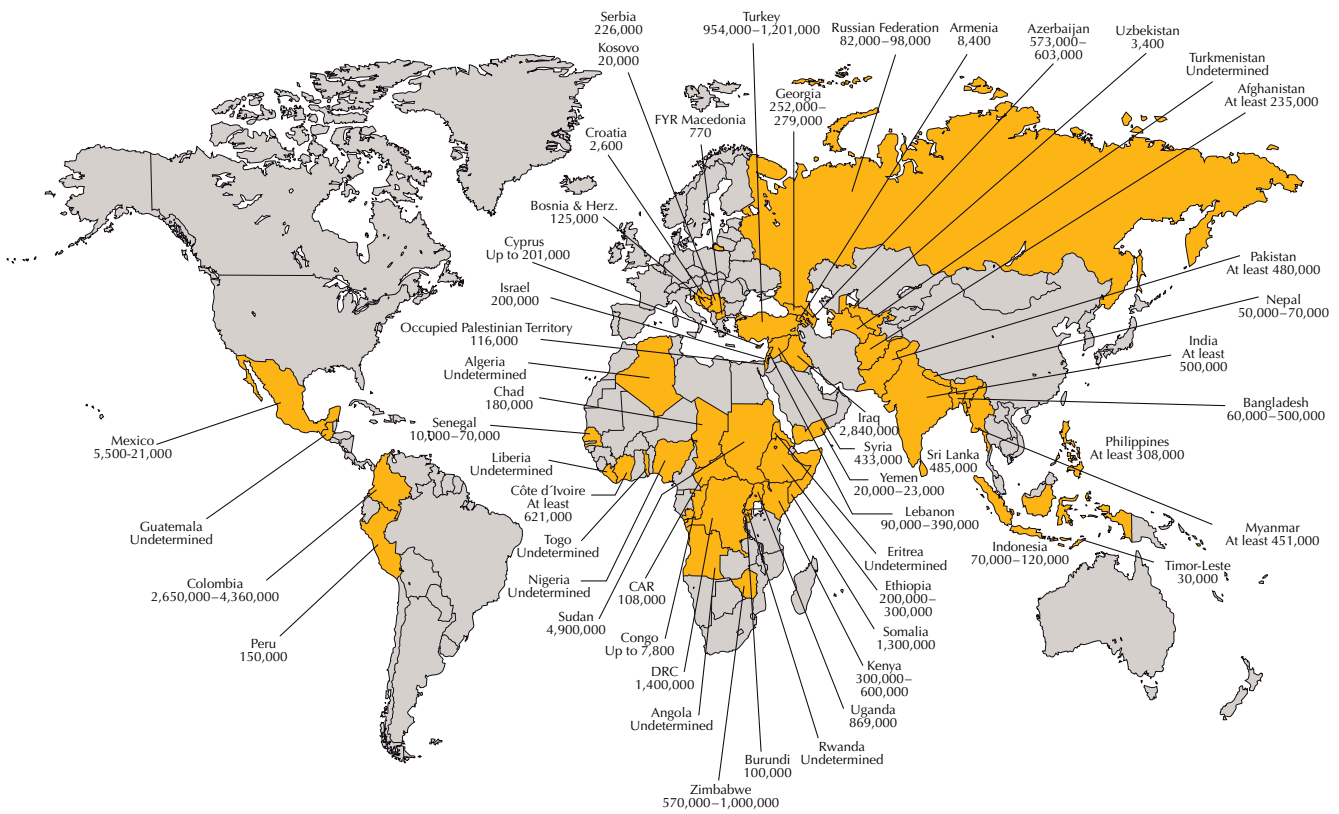




Internal Displacement

Global Overview of Trends and
Developments in 2008

Internally displaced people worldwide December 2008



Internal Displacement

Global Overview of Trends and
Developments in 2008

April 2009

People fleeing from the city of Kibati to Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo
(Photo: Reuters/Stringer, courtesy www.alertnet.org, October 2008).



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Thanks to Simone Cosma, Véronique de Crouy, Jacqueline Shahinian, Nina Sluga and Matthias Thiemig at IDMC, to the staff of the Norwegian Refugee Council, and external readers for their assistance and advice.

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Design: Laris(s)a, laris-s-a.com

Printing: Imprimerie Lenzi, Geneva

Cover photo: Internally displaced people receive emergency food aid after fleeing fighting between the Sudan Armed Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army, Agok, Southern Sudan (Photo: UN Photo by Tim McKulka, May 2008).

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The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) was established by the Norwegian Refugee Council following the request of the United Nations Inter-Agency Standing Committee to set up an IDP database in 1998. The Geneva-based Centre has since evolved into the leading international body monitoring internal displacement caused by conflict and violence in some 50 countries worldwide. IDMC is funded by a wide range of institutional donors and foundations.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre focuses on the following activities:

- monitoring internal displacement worldwide and maintaining an online database on conflict and violence related internal displacement;
- increasing visibility and awareness of internal displacement and advocating for the rights of internally displaced people;
- providing training on the protection of IDPs;
- contributing to the development of guides and standards for the provision of assistance and protection to internally displaced people.

IDMC thanks the donors who supported its work in 2008 and thereby made it possible to compile this report:

USA's USAID, the Norwegian MFA, UK's DFID, Australia's AusAID, Sweden's SIDA, the Danish MFA, UNHCR, the Swiss FDFA, the Dutch MFA, the Canadian DFAIT, Tides Foundation, the Luxembourg MFA, the South African MFA, Stichting Vluchteling and other supporters.

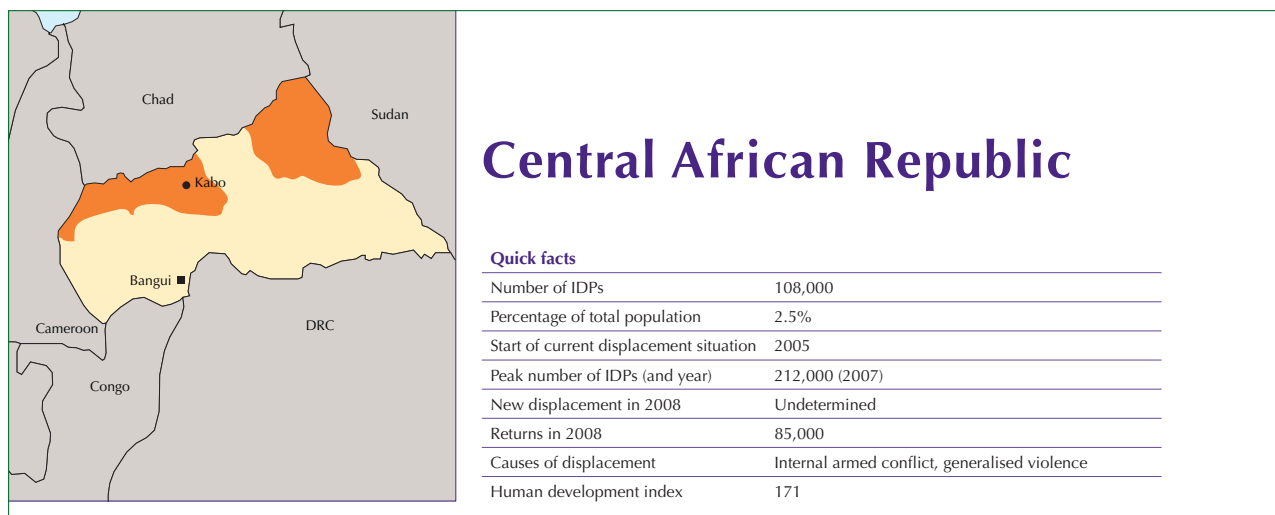


TIDES FOUNDATION



Guide to country pages

Maps and quick facts tables



The maps and tables are intended to make the most essential information on a situation of internal displacement accessible at a glance. Where displacement affects or has affected certain areas of the country, those areas are marked in darker orange. If the situation affects or has affected most or all areas, the country is marked in stripes.

The estimated number of IDPs is rounded (for example, to the nearest hundred or ten thousand) according to the size of the population displaced.

Where the estimated number is given, the percentage of the country population is also included. Percentages are based on those country population figures listed in UNFPA's State of World Population 2008 at www.unfpa.org/swp. It should be noted that there is a good deal of uncertainty over the population of several countries in this report and using other available population estimates would give significantly different percentage results.

In countries where the number of IDPs has been significantly larger in the past, the highest recorded number and year are noted.

New displacements and returns in 2008 are noted where they were specifically reported; however the actual number of new displacements or returns may well be higher. Reports of returns do not necessarily indicate that IDPs have found durable solutions to their displacement.

The causes of displacement listed include internal, international and internationalised armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, and violations of human rights. IDMC did not in 2008 monitor situations of disaster-related internal displacement.

The Human Development Index ranking gives an idea of the level of development of a country based on the population's life expectancy, literacy, educational attainment, and the gross domestic product per capita. Countries with a ranking of up to 75 are considered highly developed, and those with a ranking between 154 and 179 are the least developed countries in the list. A small number of countries facing ongoing conflict are not ranked.

Glossary of acronyms used

AU	African Union
EU	European Union
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

RSG on IDPs	Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme

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Key findings of the report

Facts and Figures

Number of people internally displaced by conflict or violence as of December 2008	26 million
Number of countries covered by this report	52
Most affected continent	Africa (11.6 million IDPs in 19 countries)
Region with largest relative change in number of IDPs in 2008	South and South-East Asia (with 13 per cent increase from the end of 2007)
Number of countries with new or ongoing conflicts or violence which generated internal displacement in 2008	24
Number of countries with a significant proportion of IDPs living in protracted displacement	At least 35
Countries with at least 200,000 people newly displaced in 2008 (in order of scale)	Philippines, Sudan, Kenya, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia, Colombia, Sri Lanka and India
Countries with at least 80,000 people returning during 2008 (in order of scale)	DRC, Uganda, Sudan, Kenya, Philippines, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Georgia, Yemen, Côte d'Ivoire, Central African Republic (CAR) and Timor-Leste
Number of countries in which internally displaced children were recruited into armed forces or groups	At least 13
Number of countries in which internally displaced women and children were exposed to rape, sexual exploitation and gender-based violence	At least 18
Number of countries in which IDPs were still exposed to violence in the area of refuge, although they fled to escape violence	At least 26
Number of governments denying the forced displacement of ethnic minorities	At least 36
Countries denying situations of internal displacement caused by conflict, generalised violence or human rights violations	Ethiopia, Indonesia (in Papua), Israel (including in OPT), Myanmar, Sudan (Darfur), Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe
Number of countries where the absence of a political settlement or peace agreement was a main obstacle to durable solutions	21
Number of countries with legislation or policies specifically addressing internal displacement	14
Number of countries with conflict-induced IDPs with a UN Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) at the end of 2008	24 (out of 27 complex emergencies)

Key findings of the report

Numbers

At the end of 2008, the number of people internally displaced by conflict, generalised violence or human rights violations across the world stood at approximately 26 million, the same figure as in 2007.

Some 4.6 million people were forced to flee their homes as a result of new outbreaks of conflict and violence in 24 of the 52 countries monitored. Of these, ten countries had large-scale new displacements of 200,000 people or more. The figure of 4.6 million people newly displaced in 2008 represented an increase of 900,000 compared to the same total in 2007.

Some 2.6 million people in 18 countries were reported to have returned, slightly fewer than the 2.7 million in 2007. Large-scale returns of 200,000 people or more were reported in five countries: Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sudan, Kenya and the Philippines. All of these countries except Uganda are also among the countries which experienced new large-scale displacements. The largest reported return movement in relation to the size of the displaced population took place in Timor-Leste, where the IDP figure fell by two-thirds in 2008.

Three countries had a significantly larger internally displaced population than any others: Sudan, Colombia and Iraq together accounted for 45 per cent of the world's internally displaced people (IDPs).

The number of IDPs in Africa was the lowest recorded in this decade, at 11.6 million. With the exception of Europe and Central Asia, the number of IDPs increased in all other regions. South and South-East Asia was the region with the largest relative increase in the IDP population: it grew by 13 per cent during 2008 to reach 3.5 million.

Most forced internal displacement in the last decade was caused by internal armed conflicts rather than international or internationalised conflicts. This trend continued in 2008.

Protracted displacement

Some 35 countries have a significant number of IDPs living in protracted situations, where the search for durable solutions to their plight was stalled or they continued to be marginalised as a result of their displacement. It is difficult to isolate the number of IDPs in protracted situations as protracted and new displacement can be ongoing at the same time in one country.

Governments continued to promote return as the preferred durable solution for IDPs, over local integration and settlement

to another area. In half the countries monitored, return was the only solution actively supported by national authorities.

The obstacles to durable solutions which IDPs in protracted situations most frequently face include lack of access to livelihoods, inadequate housing and the inability to enjoy their homes and land. Property reinstatement and compensation mechanisms are essential for activating the durable solutions process as IDPs thereby gain the means to improve their lives. They may return to their homes and land, or use compensation or the income earned from selling or renting their homes and land to integrate locally or resettle elsewhere.

In almost half the countries surveyed, there was a lack of information about whether IDPs had found durable solutions. In protracted internal displacement situations, governments and international agencies should better monitor the process of attaining durable solutions, to identify and address the obstacles to return, local integration and resettlement.

Protection concerns

IDPs in 2008 were exposed to a wide range of discrimination and human rights violations as a result of deliberate policies or simple neglect.

After fleeing the effects of armed conflicts, generalised violence or human rights violations, IDPs often failed to find security and safety in the place of displacement. In 26 countries, IDPs moved to areas where they still faced attacks and violence, which in most cases specifically targeted their settlements. In 14 countries, government forces or associated armed groups were among the main perpetrators. Attacks and violence were also perpetrated against IDPs in countries where international peacekeeping operations were deployed with specific mandates to provide protection to IDPs and returnees, as in Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR), Côte d'Ivoire, DRC and Sudan.

In eight countries (Ethiopia, Indonesia (in Papua), Israel (including in OPT), Myanmar, Sudan (Darfur), Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe), the displacement of some four million IDPs was not acknowledged by the national authorities.

IDPs faced particular problems in maintaining livelihoods as a result of their displacement. In almost half of the countries monitored, IDPs were deprived of access to livelihoods, and many remained dependent on assistance from host communities or humanitarian organisations. This made them particularly vulnerable in situations of protracted displacement where humanitarian assistance was declining and development plans had not yet been implemented.

In several countries, displaced children were particularly at risk of abduction and forced recruitment into armed groups. Displaced women and children were also exposed to serious risks of sexual and gender-based violence and abuses, for which perpetrators generally enjoyed impunity. In addition, many displaced women were unable to access essential reproductive health services, due to prohibitive fees, lack of health care infrastructure or insecurity.

Elderly people were among the most vulnerable IDPs and lacked support to assert their rights. Inadequate housing, insufficient access to healthcare and loss of income seriously affected their ability to achieve durable solutions in safety and with dignity.

Ethnic minorities were among the main groups affected by internal displacement. In at least 36 countries, ethnic minorities were forcibly displaced, as a mechanism to eliminate them or their claims for recognition or autonomy, to access natural resources in their collective territories or because they were caught up in external conflicts.

Information and profiling

Information on the profile of IDP populations, including their location and their number disaggregated by age and sex, was still limited in 2008, despite an increased awareness of the importance of such information to plan and deliver responses. Only in six countries and situations of internal displacement was there up-to-date information in 2008. For the rest, data was outdated, incomplete or non-existent.

Information was particularly scarce for the less “visible” groups of IDPs. In more than half of the displacement situations monitored in 2008, IDPs were dispersed, having in many cases found refuge with host communities either in rural or urban areas. Urban IDPs were often difficult to distinguish from other migrants and urban poor. However, even in countries where they were more “visible” because they were concentrated in collective centres or in IDP sites, essential data was still lacking. It was equally difficult to ascertain when and if IDPs ceased to be displaced, as there was little or no information on IDPs who had returned and even less on those who had integrated locally or resettled.

Several new standards were made available to humanitarian agencies and governments in 2008, including a comprehensive guidance and a methodology to help profile urban IDPs. The challenge lies in ensuring that they are widely disseminated and used so that better data is more consistently available in the future. Particular attention should be paid to less visible IDP populations. In this case, profiling exercises that include information on the rest of the population or host communities could help identify the specific needs and concerns of both IDPs and non-IDPs.

Responses

There was considerable progress in the recognition by governments of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and in the development of national legal instruments based on them. By the end of 2008, a total of 14 countries had adopted such national legislation, and 11 countries of the Great Lakes Region in Africa had adopted the first binding multilateral instrument in the world aimed at implementing the Guiding Principles. Despite such positive developments, many of these governments were not fulfilling their national responsibility towards IDPs.

The humanitarian reform process has had significant impact at country level in strengthening leadership, predictability, response capacity, coordination and accountability of the international humanitarian response. Nevertheless, in 2008, IDPs’ right to security and life saving assistance continued to be under threat in a number of countries including Afghanistan, Colombia, DRC, Iraq, Myanmar, the Philippines and Sudan. In these countries, their basic needs were not met by governments, and humanitarian agencies were unable to operate effectively due to insecurity and limited access.

In 2008, international funding remained focused on life-saving interventions, with limited follow-up for early recovery and durable solutions.

Introduction

IDMC's Global Overview provides a comprehensive review of the 2008 situation of internal displacement, based on the information gathered in its database at www.internal-displacement.org. In 2008, IDMC continued to focus exclusively on monitoring conflict- and violence-induced internal displacement, without covering disaster-induced displacement.

2008 saw the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. Participants at the international conference held in Oslo in October reviewed the considerable progress which has been achieved since the Guiding Principles were first issued, in terms of their influence on states, most of which have now accepted them, and as the foundation for humanitarian and protection standards.

Participants at the conference also examined the main challenges ahead, identified as the need to prevent displacement when possible, to prioritise resources and capacities to deliver durable solutions, and to recognise and act upon the specific protection needs of different groups and sub-groups among displaced populations.

Going back through ten years of publications on internal displacement trends and developments by the Norwegian Refugee Council's Global IDP Project, which became the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre in 2006, it appears that while a number of countries, including Guinea-Bissau (2002), Sierra Leone (2004) and Guinea (2007) ceased to be monitored during the period as a result of displacement having come to an end, little changed in 2008 for the millions of people in the world who have had to flee their homes as a result of armed conflict and violence, but who have not crossed an international border. People internally displaced in 2008 were still as likely to be under threat of attack, even after they had left their place of

residence, as they were ten years ago. A large proportion of IDPs remained subject to governments which rather than protecting them were hostile, or at best indifferent.

The international response remained focused on life-saving needs during the worst of the emergency, without following up with sufficient resources for early recovery and durable solutions. As a result of inadequate political will and capacity and limited resources, the majority of IDPs were still living in situations of protracted displacement, in a limbo without hope of recovering livelihoods and offering a dignified future to their children.

Despite this bleak situation, there have been some positive developments for displaced populations. Increasingly, states have been developing legal instruments based on the Guiding Principles. Regional instruments which make it binding for states to develop such legislation are being developed in Africa, the continent with the highest number of conflict and violence related IDPs. The humanitarian reform process initiated in 2005 with a view to reinforce humanitarian leadership and coordination has been rolled out to the countries affected by the bulk of IDPs, and increasing efforts are being made to implement early recovery strategies as soon as the worst of the emergency is over.

This year's publication provides country-specific overviews as well as introductions to internal displacement in five regions. In addition it includes thematic sections, which relate on the one hand to IDP data gaps and underline the need for these to be addressed if the specific protection requirements of every group or sub-group are to be understood, and on the other to the achievements and limitations of the responses to these requirements.



Internally displaced people moving to government camps in the eastern Indian state of Orissa. Thousands of people, most of them Christians, had spent days in hiding in a forest after being driven from their homes by religious violence
(Photo: Reuters/Parth Sanyal, August 2008).

Global and thematic developments

Global trends in 2008

At the end of 2008, the number of people internally displaced by conflict, generalised violence or human rights violations across the world stood at approximately 26 million.

The figures alone do not give much insight into the long-term plight and daily problems of internally displaced people (IDPs), but they do provide measurable indicators of the challenge which internal displacement continues to pose to humanitarian organisations and human rights defenders. In the words of the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes, "Internal displacement remains one of the most significant challenges facing the humanitarian community"¹. Despite ever-wider recognition of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and their progressive adoption into national and regional frameworks, and improvement to international response mechanisms within the humanitarian reform process, the global IDP figure stands at the same level as at the end of 2007.

Internal displacement continued in many countries to result from failures by parties to armed conflicts to respect the rights of civilian populations, including by taking necessary steps to prevent displacement. Some 4.6 million people were forced to flee their homes as a result of new outbreaks of conflict and violence. Ten countries experienced new large-scale displacements of 200,000 people or more.

The Guiding Principles state that competent authorities are responsible for establishing the conditions for durable solutions for IDPs². Not all countries work to promote the rights of IDPs enough for them to achieve durable solutions (return, local integration or settlement elsewhere in the country) to their displacement, and the focus of most governments is too narrowly limited to return assistance. Information on the achievements of durable solutions is ad hoc or inconsistent, partly because of the lack of commonly-agreed criteria and monitoring. Information on returns is most readily available while information on IDPs who have chosen to resettle elsewhere in the country or integrate at the place of displacement is largely missing. Thus, while the overall global figure did not change over the course of the year, an estimated 2.6 million people returned to their homes or areas of origin in 2008.

Effective peace building processes must go hand in hand with sustained reconstruction and economic regeneration efforts to ensure durable solutions; in Uganda, for example, the returns of 2008 remained precarious, as the leader of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army Joseph Kony repeatedly failed to sign a final peace agreement and national and international investment in reconstruction and rehabilitation remained on hold. In countries like Colombia, where the scale of conflict increased during the year, almost no returns were possible.

1 Forced Migration Review, special issue on the conference on the Ten Years of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (GP10), October 2008.

2 Guiding Principle 28.

Global figures and hotspots

At the end of 2008, the global IDP figure remained at an estimated 26 million. This reflects the new displacement of 4.6 million people, as well as an equivalent decrease in the number of IDPs as a result of the revision of some national figures or the achievement of durable solutions. There were 900,000 more people newly displaced in 2008 than in 2007, when 3.7 million people were newly displaced. Many IDPs found other durable solutions than return: integration in their place of displacement, or settlement elsewhere in the country. In some countries IDPs were de-registered, and elsewhere estimates of their numbers were amended.

Five countries had larger IDP populations than any other, of which the top four remained the same as at the end of 2007. The number of IDPs in Somalia rose to 1.3 million following a year of sustained conflict, while the number in Uganda fell below the one million mark as return movements continued.

Countries with most IDPs

Country	IDPs at end of 2008
Sudan	4,900,000
Colombia	2,650,000–4,360,000
Iraq	2,840,000
DRC	1,400,000
Somalia	1,300,000

When looking at the proportion of IDPs out of the total national population, two types of situations emerged: the very large IDP populations in Somalia, Sudan, Iraq and Colombia made up at least ten per cent of the entire population of each country. A number of smaller countries also had relatively large IDP situations in terms of population percentage, notably including Cyprus, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Zimbabwe and Lebanon. (see country summaries for further details)

Countries with most IDPs as a percentage of their population

Country	IDPs as percentage of population
Cyprus	Up to 23%
Somalia	13%
Sudan	12.4%
Iraq	9.6%
Colombia	5.7%–9.3%
Zimbabwe	4.2%–7.4%
Azerbaijan	6.7%–7.1%
Georgia	5.7%–6.3%
Lebanon	2%–9%

New displacements and returns in 2008

In total, new displacement occurred in 24 of the 52 countries monitored and reported on by IDMC. Of these, ten countries had large-scale new displacements of at least 200,000 people (see the box). Of these, only the displacement in Kenya and in India (two situations) followed new outbreak of violence; in Georgia (South Ossetia) it was the first time that Russia was a direct party to the conflict. The other new displacements related to causes that had been ongoing before 2008.

New large scale displacements reported

Country	New displacement in 2008
Philippines	600,000
Sudan	550,000 (315,000 in Darfur, 187,000 in Southern Sudan and 50,000 in Abyei)
Kenya	500,000
DRC	At least 400,000
Iraq	360,000
Pakistan	Over 310,000
Somalia	300,000
Colombia	270,000 to June 2008
Sri Lanka	230,000
India	Over 220,000

Large scale returns of 200,000 people or more were reported in five countries: Uganda, DRC, Sudan, Kenya and the Philippines. All of these countries except Uganda are also among the list above of countries with new large-scale displacements. The largest reported return movement in relation to the size of the displaced population took place in Timor-Leste, where the IDP figure fell by two-thirds in 2008. Likewise, in the Central African Republic (CAR) the number nearly halved and in Uganda the downward trend from 2007 continued and the IDP figure fell from 1.3 million to below 900,000 by the end of 2008.

Return movements reported

Country	Returns reported in 2008
DRC	At least 400,000
Uganda	400,000
Sudan	350,000 (in Southern Sudan)
Kenya	300,000
Philippines	250,000
Iraq	167,000
Sri Lanka	126,000
Georgia	96,000
Côte d'Ivoire	89,000
CAR	85,000
Timor-Leste	80,000
Yemen	55,000–90,000

Protracted displacement and ongoing conflicts

The majority of the IDPs worldwide live in protracted displacement. It is difficult to assess their number, particularly in countries with both protracted and new displacement, but IDMC's survey found that 35 countries have a significant number of IDPs in this situation. Their plight is often overshadowed by new and high-profile crises. For example, in the August 2008 conflict between Russian and Georgian forces, the situation of people displaced since the 1990s was overlooked in favour of the people affected by the new displacement crisis.

Protracted displacement

The definition of protracted displacement was agreed by participants at a 2007 expert seminar on protracted IDP situations, hosted by UNHCR and the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal displacement: "Protracted internal displacement situations are those in which the processes of finding durable solutions have stalled and/or IDPs are marginalised as a consequence of violations or a lack of protection of human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights." Factors such as the amount of time in displacement or the number of people affected are not a primary consideration in determining whether a situation is protracted.

The second largest group of situations of internal displacement are caused by ongoing conflicts with significant new displacement and returns. This includes the top five countries with the largest reported IDP populations: Sudan, Colombia, Iraq, DRC and Somalia.

Displacement by region

IDP estimates by region (end 2008)

Region	Countries monitored	IDPs (million)	Change from end 2007
Africa	19	11.6	-9%
Americas	4	4.5	+7%
Middle East	6	3.9	+11%
South and South-East Asia	10	3.5	+13%
Europe and Central Asia	13	2.5	0%
Total	52	26.0	

At the end of 2008 the number of IDPs in Africa was the lowest recorded in this decade, at 11.6 million. This represented an enormously positive development for a region that has always had a larger number of IDPs than any other. Three out of five of the world's largest internal displacement situations are found in the region, and Africa still hosts 45 per cent of the world's IDPs, but compared to the region's total population the ratio of IDPs has fallen. There were no new conflicts in Africa causing displacement in 2008, but several ongoing conflicts caused new forced displacement – close to two million people in Africa were newly displaced during the year.

In Somalia, the figure continued to increase, reaching 1.3 million by the end of the year. DRC remains the world's fourth largest displacement situation with 1.4 million people displaced, with 400,000 returning home in some parts of the country and 400,000 being newly displaced by armed conflict in the East. Sudan too saw both large numbers of newly displaced people and large numbers of returns. In Darfur, 315,000 people were newly displaced in the course of 2008, bringing the total to 2.7 million IDPs. In Southern Sudan, an estimated 187,000 people were newly displaced, mostly as a result of inter-communal violence, while 350,000 IDPs were able to return to their homes. The total IDP population in Sudan stood at 4.9 million by the end of 2008.

In the Americas there were 4.5 million IDPs at the end of the year; this was the highest figure since IDMC started to monitor internal displacement in the region ten years ago. The rise was due to an acceleration in new displacement in Colombia, leading to the highest number yet of IDPs in the country with the world's second-largest displaced population. Despite increased efforts in the national and international response to the displacement crisis, IDPs in Colombia continued to face widespread protection problems.

The Middle East continued to experience an increase in population displacement. At the end of 2008 there were around 3.9 million IDPs in the region, the highest total in the past decade. Most of them have been displaced for decades, and there is little information on these long-term IDPs. Around 470,000 were displaced during 2008, principally by armed conflict in Iraq and Yemen. The largest return movements took place in Iraq where 167,000 people were reported to have returned, and in Yemen where an estimated 70,000 people returned.

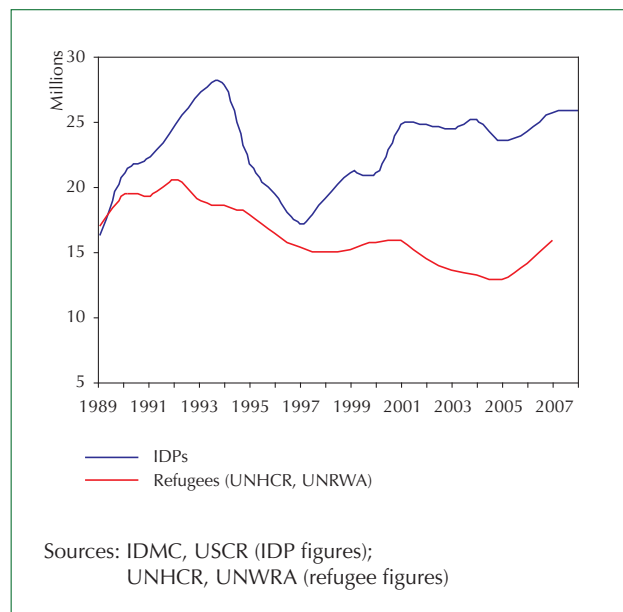
South and South-East Asia was more affected by internal displacement in 2008 than in previous years, and as a region had an internally displaced population which grew by 13 per cent during 2008 to reach 3.5 million. New displacement was particularly significant in the Philippines where 600,000 people fled an upsurge in fighting between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation front (MILF), and in Pakistan where over 310,000 people were forced from their homes due to fighting between the government and armed groups. In Sri Lanka, an estimated 230,000 people were displaced as the conflict between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) intensified. The majority of the 530,000 or so people who reportedly returned in South and South-East Asia did so after a relatively short period of displacement. In the Philippines 250,000 people returned within a few weeks or months of their displacement. In Sri Lanka an estimated 126,000 people displaced since 2006 managed to return to areas no longer affected by conflict. Only in Timor-Leste was return linked to peace building and overall national progress in tackling the displacement situation.

The figure for Europe and Central Asia (including Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) changed little, and remained at around 2.5 million IDPs. New conflict broke out in Georgia in August, which caused the displacement of 128,000 people of whom around one in four were still displaced at the end of the year. Elsewhere small numbers of IDPs managed to achieve durable solutions to end their situations of protracted displacement,

but in 2008 some 390,000 IDPs in the region were still living in temporary shelter and collective centres in desperate conditions, often without security of tenure many years after their displacement.

IDP and refugee numbers over 20 years

Although the number of refugees rose to 16 million by the end of 2007, it remained ten million below the number of IDPs worldwide. UNHCR publishes updated refugee figures in its annual Global Trends in June.



Note on figures

Producing reliable figures on conflict-induced internal displacement in politically-sensitive contexts is challenging (as described in the next section). In most countries affected by internal displacement, existing data on IDPs are often incomplete, unreliable, out of date or inaccurate. Disaggregated data is only available in a few countries. Arriving at a commonly agreed numbers of IDPs implies government recognition of the displacement crisis, and a complex identification and registration of IDPs who are often mixed with other affected populations. The best quality data is normally available for the number of displaced, whereas figures on return or other durable solutions are systematically more incomplete or totally unavailable. IDMC seeks and compiles data from national governments, UN and other international organisations, national and international NGOs, human rights organisations and the media. IDMC also carries out field missions to a number of countries every year.

Monitoring and profiling displaced populations

Gathering information on the location, size, and demographic characteristics of populations in need – their “profile” – is crucial for their effective protection. Commonly-agreed figures on the number of IDPs, with disaggregated information on their sex and age, their location and the patterns and causes of their displacement, enable targeted responses and persuasive advocacy where responses are not forthcoming.

A profiling exercise is an essential instrument for monitoring and reporting on IDP populations and can be carried out at any stage of an emergency or protracted displacement situation. In new displacement crises, gathering baseline data can help ensure an appropriate first emergency response and enable further tracking of the population. In protracted displacement situations, an updated profile can help to ensure that affected people participate in recovery programmes according to their need and on the basis of transparent selection criteria. According to its objectives and circumstances, a profiling exercise may apply a range of surveying and counting methods and can provide the basis for in-depth needs assessments.

However, these “core” profiles of IDP populations were still generally scarce in 2008. Only in six out of the 52 countries surveyed (or 56 “situations” including, for example Darfur and Southern Sudan) was there up-to-date information on IDPs, which gave either their disaggregated numbers or their location. Only in two countries, Azerbaijan and Colombia, was there information on both. For the most part, across countries and in all regions, only rough estimates were available.

While the collection of core data on IDPs is generally considered to be a responsibility of national authorities³, only four governments had profiled IDPs in a comprehensive manner, for a number of reasons. In emergency settings, data collection may have been viewed as too challenging, while populations in situations of protracted displacement may have often disappeared from the radar of national protection agencies. In some cases, the government may not have acknowledged the displacement situation at all (see the section on national responses to displacement). In others, data may have been available only for certain parts of the country, as some areas with IDPs are not under government control. For example, in Sri Lanka in 2008, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) insurgents still controlled parts of the northern Vanni region, where the country’s largest number of displaced people was believed to be located. As government forces advanced into the Vanni, the LTTE forced the IDPs to move with it as human shields, making it impossible for authorities to access and collect data on them.

Where a profile or other information was available on displaced populations, its accuracy was often difficult to verify

and inconsistencies between sources were common, due either to the use of different methodologies, or to the interests of parties in inflating or under-representing the figures.

The availability of consistent information from numerous sources did not always represent an accurate understanding of the displacement situation, as it may have been due to the use by different agencies of data derived from one source. In Azerbaijan, the government has been the sole country-wide collector of information on the numbers and locations of IDPs, though international organisations have conducted small data collection exercises. As a result, the government’s data has been used by various sources and this has ensured that the government’s depiction of the situation has prevailed.

Hidden IDP populations

It is not easy to profile a forcibly-displaced population. It is often difficult to determine who is or is not an IDP, and whether people who were displaced have ceased to be so. However the suspected outstanding needs of “hidden” IDPs call for more effort in this regard. Although camp settings may offer easier opportunities for regular provision of assistance, the majority of IDPs are not in camp-like situations where registration is a normal practice. In more than half of the displacement situations monitored in 2008, IDPs were dispersed, having in many cases found refuge with host communities either in rural or urban areas. The relatively low visibility of these groups meant that most received limited or no support from government agencies or local or international organisations.

In the Central African Republic (CAR), IDPs have depended almost entirely on help from host communities, especially in areas difficult to access where only limited rapid assessments were conducted. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including in North Kivu province where most camps are located, host families are believed to be assisting three quarters of the displaced population. Organised support to the IDPs and their host families was not systematic, as details of their location and profiles were rarely known. This failure to replicate the targeted assistance available in camps put enormous strain on host communities and reportedly forced more and more IDPs to seek assistance and protection in camps⁴.

Internal displacement to towns and cities has received increasing attention over the years but the data collected on most of these populations has remained limited and even anecdotal. Profiling urban IDP populations has indeed been particularly challenging as conflict-induced displacement has coincided with massive and complex urbanisation processes which make it difficult to distinguish between IDPs,

³ Addressing Internal Displacement: A Framework for National Responsibility, Brookings/Bern Project on Internal Displacement, April 2005, pp.14-15.

⁴ Oxfam, Out of Site, October 2008, p. 17.

other migrants and other urban residents. More than 70 per cent of IDPs in Côte d'Ivoire found refuge in Abidjan, the main economic centre, where the population has increased by more than twenty times in the past 50 years⁵. IDPs typically disperse within urban areas, in some cases relying on "invisibility" for security reasons, and in others being forced to move again within the city limits by local conflicts and actions of city authorities. IDPs in Khartoum, Sudan, were more likely than non-IDPs to have been evicted because of government relocation programmes. People's choice of housing can also contribute to their "invisibility", as in cities in western Russia where the IDPs from Chechnya in 2008 were living in private rented accommodation, discouraging any effective profiling and monitoring of their needs as they sought to integrate.

Progress in monitoring and profiling IDPs

Notwithstanding the challenges mentioned above, significant steps have been taken to promote the systematic monitoring and profiling of IDPs since the launch of the Guiding Principles in 1998 through the development of standards and guides. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee working group agreed in 2004 on the need to develop a framework for the collection of IDP-related information. Marking the ten-year anniversary of the Guiding Principles, IDMC and OCHA's Displacement and Protection Support Section launched the Guidance on Profiling Internally Displaced Persons in 2008 to help obtain jointly-agreed information on the number and location of IDPs.

5 UN-HABITAT, *State of the World's Cities 2008/2009*, 2008, p. 15.

Other guidelines developed by the global camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) and protection cluster working groups have highlighted the importance of IDP profiling, while new profiling methodologies have been designed, for example to profile IDPs in urban areas⁶.

These new standards have started to be applied in countries, and profiling exercises carried out have provided valuable lessons for ongoing initiatives. Field exercises carried out in Somalia and CAR have shown the importance of effective collaboration between government, NGOs and international agencies, not only to avoid double counting and duplication of resources, but also to ensure greater predictability, accountability and partnership in the resulting response. To achieve this, a clear definition of the scope of the exercise and of its leadership structure is essential, while a process of continuous review ensures that challenges can be addressed as they arise and evolving protection risks are taken into account.

Profiling IDPs does not preclude the gathering of information on the rest of the population or host communities. In some cases, especially where IDPs have found shelter with family, friends or host communities in urban or rural areas, conducting household surveys will provide valuable information on all these groups.

Collecting core data is the first step to understanding and responding to a situation of internal displacement. The long-term challenge lies in ensuring that the information collected is used effectively to address the needs and protect, promote and fulfil the rights of IDPs and support their coping strategies.

6 Tufts University and IDMC launched one such methodology at a seminar in Geneva in May 2008: see www.internal-displacement.org/profiling for details.



Internally displaced children in a shelter for recently arrived IDPs in Pasto, Nariño province, Colombia. In 2008 Colombia was one of only two countries in which there was information on IDPs including their age, sex and location (Photo: Truls Brekke, NRC, February 2009).

Age, gender and diversity among internally displaced groups

Internally displaced people are not a homogeneous group. They have specific vulnerabilities, needs, and coping strategies based, among other things, on their sex, age and membership of a social or ethnic group. Accordingly, different members of a displaced population need a differentiated response if the protection or assistance they receive is to be effective. However, as the previous section makes clear, despite the specific protection issues facing certain groups, basic disaggregated data on their number and location is still unavailable in most displacement situations.

Internally displaced children

The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, reflecting international law as enacted in the Convention on the Right of the Child and its additional protocols, underline that “children and unaccompanied minors...shall be entitled to protection and assistance required by their condition and to treatment which takes into account their special needs.”⁷ All the Guiding Principles apply equally to displaced children, but some provisions specifically address their situation, prohibiting any violation of their right to dignity and integrity or their participation and recruitment in armed hostilities, and clarifying the right to family unity and to education⁸. In practice however, children displaced in many conflict situations continued in 2008 to suffer grave violations of these and other basic rights as they were exposed to extremes of violence and deprivation.

The recruitment and use of children has become the means of choice of many armed groups for waging war⁹, and internally displaced children bore the impact in at least 13 countries (see box). The social upheaval and poverty created by hostilities make children vulnerable to recruitment, and internally displaced children – some of whom may have been separated from their families – are at high risk¹⁰. In 2008, internally displaced children were abducted and recruited from IDP camps or host families, sometimes on their way to or from school. Some followed armed groups or soldiers to find protection, while others were recruited by local self-defence militias. They were used as combatants, porters, domestic servants or sexual slaves. Girls were involved in combat and non-combat roles in the majority of these countries, and many were raped or subjected to other forms of sexual violence. The vast majority of child soldiers were in the ranks of non-state armed groups.

During conflict and displacement, children and adolescents are often separated from their families or caretakers. These are

Recruitment of internally displaced children

IDMC found reports of recruitment of internally displaced children by government forces and non-state armed groups in 13 countries in 2008: Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), India, Iraq, Myanmar, Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka and Sudan.

the most vulnerable displaced children: they are more likely to be neglected and exposed to abuses including recruitment, trafficking and sexual exploitation. In at least ten countries, many displaced children had sole responsibility for caring for their family, either because they were the heads of their household or because family members were too sick or too old to work.

Cases of forced labour or economic exploitation of displaced children were frequent in at least 20 countries. In Nepal, many unaccompanied displaced children lived on the streets, where they were exposed to trafficking, sexual exploitation and various forms of child labour.

Education offers an important source of stability and security for children affected by displacement. Yet, during the year, most displaced children had no access to schooling in at least 12 countries (see box). They were unable to attend school due to the prohibitive costs of school fees, uniforms and supplies, because they had to work to supplement the family income, or because there were no schools in areas of displacement. Insecurity also stopped them attending school, as in Afghanistan where several hundred thousand displaced and non-displaced children alike were unable to go to school as of April 2008, and in Kenya, where many displaced children missed school in early 2008 at the height of the post-election violence.

Countries where the majority of internally displaced children had no access to education

Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Guatemala, Indonesia (Papua and West Timor Provinces), Iraq, Nepal, Nigeria, Philippines, Senegal, Somalia, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

Internally displaced women

The Guiding Principles explicitly provide protection for displaced women against violence and exploitation, and promote their equal access to assistance, services and participation in decisions affecting them, reflecting international law such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women¹¹. Provisions in favour of

7 Guiding Principle 4(2).

8 Guiding Principles 11(b), 13(1), 17(3) and 23(2) respectively.

9 UNGA, 6 August 2008, Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, para.43.

10 Coalition Against the Use of Child Soldiers, 2008, Global Report.

11 Guiding Principles 7, 11.2, 18, 19, 20 and 23.

displaced women are guided by the need to safeguard them from gender-specific violence, and to uphold their rights to equal access to services. In practice the rights of displaced women were violated in many countries surveyed by IDMC in 2008, with often devastating physical and psychological consequences for them and their family.

Rape and sexual exploitation of children and women have remained a frequent characteristic of conflict, and displaced women and children have been at particular risk. In conflicts with an ethnic dimension, systematic rape has commonly been used to destabilise populations, and destroy community and family bonds. Displaced women have faced an increase in abuses such as domestic violence, and exploitation by people in positions of power, including those who control and distribute humanitarian assistance¹². Despite the lack of comprehensive statistics on sexual or gender-based attacks in countries undergoing internal displacement, reports in 2008 clearly indicated that sexual or gender-based violence against displaced women or children was a serious problem in 18 countries, 13 of them in Africa. Government troops were cited as the primary perpetrators of sexual abuses, followed by members of armed non-state groups, criminal groups and the general population (for example, relatives or neighbours), and in a few countries peacekeeping troops. Abuses were generally perpetrated with total impunity. In addition, many displaced women were unable to access essential reproductive health services, due to prohibitive fees, lack of health care infrastructure and insecurity.

In some 30 countries, many displaced women were reported to have taken sole responsibility for their families. In countries like Chad and Somalia, female-headed households

made up the majority of internally displaced families and so women were the main breadwinners in situations offering few livelihood opportunities.

Displaced women faced particular obstacles to obtaining documentation in 14 countries. In at least half of them, this meant that displaced women could not receive assistance due to them as IDPs, take possession of or receive compensation for their land or property, or travel freely in their country. In as many as half of the countries affected by conflict-induced displacement, displaced women, and widows in particular, faced obstacles to owning or inheriting property or land. They and their dependents were thus deprived of adequate housing and land, and denied the chance to return to their former homes.

Elderly displaced people

The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement state that “elderly persons... shall be entitled to protection and assistance required by their condition and to treatment which takes into account their special needs”¹³. Older people can have more difficulty accessing services, and are less able to flee quickly or to protect themselves from harm during conflict. Among them, older widows are often the most vulnerable¹⁴. In some countries in 2008 elderly IDPs were unable to return to home areas once the security situation improved. In Uganda, elderly IDPs were prevented from returning home by the lack of support to build new huts there or because health centres were too far away.

In the few countries affected by internal displacement in which older people received a state pension, IDPs often lacked

12 Arlington, Virginia, JSI Research and Training Institute, Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium (RHRC), 2004, Gender-Based Violence Global Technical Support Project.

13 Guiding Principle 4(2).

14 IASC, 2008, Humanitarian actions and older persons.



Elderly IDPs in Gori, Georgia
(Photo: Roald Høvring, NRC, October 2008).

Internally displaced Peuhl children in Bocaranga, Central African Republic
(Photo: Laura Perez, IDMC, July 2008).



the documentation needed to claim their entitlements. For example in the Russian Federation, older IDPs struggled to get their full pensions as archives had been destroyed and they had no way of replacing documents lost during the conflict. As a result, they received a minimum pension and had to continue to work or rely on the care of relatives who often themselves had limited means following their displacement. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, different entitlements to pensions within the country led to reduced pension entitlements for IDPs, while in Croatia the non-recognition of years worked in areas not under state control had the same impact.

Internally displaced minorities

Indigenous peoples, minorities, pastoralists and groups with a special dependency on and attachment to their lands make up a disproportionate share of internally displaced populations across the world. A number of international norms recognise the vulnerabilities these groups face in the context of displacement: the Guiding Principles emphasise the obligation of States to protect indigenous peoples and minorities from displacement¹⁵; acknowledging the dependence on their land for survival and the continuation of their way of life, Article 10 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states that they “shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories”; and Article 16.3 of ILO Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples commits ratifying states to respect their dependence on and relationship with their collective lands.

Nevertheless, minorities were internally displaced in at least 36 countries surveyed, as a mechanism to eliminate them or their claims for recognition or autonomy, to access natural resources in their collective territories, or because they were caught up in external conflicts. Minorities make up virtually the entire population displaced in Sri Lanka (Tamil and Muslim

groups) since 2006, and also in eastern Myanmar (including Karenni, Karen, Shan and Mon people); and more than half of the displaced population, the Philippines (Moro peoples) and Croatia (Croatian Serbs). In Colombia, a disproportionate number of indigenous tribal groups and Afro-Colombians have been displaced. In almost all countries surveyed, loss of ancestral land was the most serious threat faced by ethnic minorities as a result of displacement. Other threats, such as assassination or forced disappearance, forced assimilation, and destruction of their identity were also frequent. After being displaced, in most countries, loss of livelihoods was reported as the most important protection challenge, followed by discriminatory access to assistance and services. For example, the traditionally nomadic Peuhl in CAR were displaced after losing their cattle to road bandits. As a result, they were forced to give up their traditional way of life, and had to settle among subsistence farmers in CAR or flee to neighbouring countries.

Language problems and lack of government officials trained to deal with their special needs further complicate the situation of displaced minorities, especially when they have been displaced beyond their own region.

Availability of disaggregated data

Humanitarian clusters and agencies, and some governments, have collected data by sex and age, although not necessarily specifically on IDPs. UNHCR, for example, conducts annual registries of populations of concern, with detailed information broken down according to sex and age¹⁶. The agency has also mainstreamed age and gender in all its operations. However, the comparative lack of disaggregated data on internally displaced populations means that the various groups among them are unlikely to receive the targeted protection which meets their diverse needs.

15 Guiding Principle 9.

16 IASC Gender Sub-Working Group, 10 December 2008, Sex and Age Disaggregated Data in Humanitarian Action, SADD Project, p.32.

IDPs' protection needs and risks

People caught in situations of internal displacement face various barriers to their enjoyment of rights, which may threaten their immediate safety or deny them equal access to entitlements. These barriers are discussed here based on examples illustrating the four groups of rights at risk as distinguished by the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the human rights of IDPs¹⁷: rights related to physical security and integrity; rights to basic necessities of life; other economic, social and cultural rights; and other civil and political rights. In many situations of internal displacement, IDPs have shared several protection risks with other groups, but the fact remains that internal displacement commonly exposes IDPs to additional discrimination and human rights violations directly resulting from their being uprooted.

Protection and assistance programmes should not target IDPs per se, but rather based on their needs as identified in each specific situation. The objective of this review is to highlight displacement as an important “indicator of potential vulnerability”¹⁸ for governments, national and international agencies assessing the situations of populations affected by armed conflict and situations of generalised violence, or developing human rights monitoring frameworks.

Physical security and integrity

The search for conditions where their physical safety and integrity may be protected is a major motive for people to flee their homes. As restated in the Guiding Principles, IDPs have the right to be protected from violent attacks on their life, safety and integrity¹⁹. However, in 26 countries surveyed, IDPs have continued to be exposed to insecurity and violence in the places they fled to. IDPs in camps or settlements were specifically targeted in Darfur, in DRC, in Kenya and in Myanmar. IDPs in Chad were victims of attacks and violence in areas surrounding camps and settlements, in particular women going out to collect water or firewood. In Somalia and in Chad, armed groups were using the camps and settlements as cover and to hide weapons. Their use of the IDPs around them as a shield heightened the risks of often disproportionate and indiscriminate attacks by government forces, with the IDPs being equally affected. The militarisation of camps also implied more risks of displaced people, including children, being forcibly recruited into armed groups.

Attacks and violence against IDPs in countries hosting international peacekeeping operations indicated that they were

unable to provide comprehensive protection. UN or EU peacekeepers with a specific mandate to protect IDPs and returnees directly, or to help national security forces to do so, were deployed in 2008 in CAR and Chad, in DRC, Côte d'Ivoire, Sudan and Timor-Leste.

In 14 countries, government forces or armed groups allied to the government were among the main perpetrators of attacks and violence against IDPs. Armed groups fighting against the government were also involved in violations of IDPs' physical security and integrity in ten countries. In some countries, including the Central African Republic (CAR), Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Iraq, Kenya and Somalia, IDPs were also exposed to violence from criminal groups, while hostile communities were responsible for violence against IDPs in Bangladesh, Kenya and India. IDPs returning to their home areas were exposed to violence which forced them to flee again, for example in Côte d'Ivoire and to a lesser extent in Timor-Leste.

Basic necessities of life

Displacement dramatically disrupts livelihoods, and leads to a severe reduction in access to the basic necessities of life including food, clean water, shelter, adequate clothing, health services and sanitation. The right of IDPs to these necessities is strongly anchored in existing international human rights and humanitarian law, and should be protected both in emergency and non-emergency situations²⁰. In nine countries or situations in 2008, the majority of IDPs lacked access to all these basic necessities (see box).

Countries or situations in which the majority of IDPs lacked access to sufficient food and water, adequate shelter, health care and sanitation

CAR, Ethiopia, Iraq, Nigeria, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Darfur, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

In several situations, IDPs' living conditions differed little from those of non-displaced communities around them. Reports in 2008 suggested displaced and non-displaced populations faced similar levels of deprivation in Burundi, CAR, Somalia and Zimbabwe. In Côte d'Ivoire and Sri Lanka, the influx of IDPs put existing health care services under considerable strain, reducing the access to health care for both IDPs and local populations. Often, IDPs living in urban centres, as in Afghanistan and in Colombia, faced similar living conditions as other poor urban residents.

17 Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Walter Kälin, submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 2004/55, E/CN.4/2005/85, 31 December 2005, paras. 42ff.

18 Support to Internally Displaced Persons, Learning from Evaluations, John Burton, Margie Buchanan-Smith, Ralf Otto, Sida 2005, p. 15.

19 Guiding Principles 10 and 11.

20 See Guiding Principles 7 and 18.

However, forced displacement often led to a particular lack of access to the basic necessities of life. In DRC, Myanmar and in Bangladesh, IDPs hiding in forests suffered a particular lack of access to food, water, health care and shelter. In Somalia, IDPs' poor shelter conditions combined with the lack of medical and sanitation services and insufficient food to result in significantly higher disease levels.

Other social, economic and cultural rights

Beyond the provision of humanitarian assistance, generating a serious risk of dependency, the right of IDPs to an adequate standard of living, as restated in Guiding Principle 18, is best achieved by protecting IDPs' right to participate in economic opportunities, referred to in Guiding Principle 22. IDPs are often deprived of the means to restore self-reliance, as they lack access to livelihoods and work opportunities. This is particularly a problem for people trapped in situations of protracted displacement.

IDPs seeking to become self-reliant faced an array of problems in 2008. Insecurity in 14 countries prevented IDPs cultivating land or livestock in rural home areas or around their settlements. As a result of landmines and other explosive remnants of war, IDPs or returnees in several countries were unable to develop agricultural activities. In Kosovo, security risks facing IDPs and other members of the Serbian minority prevented them from finding job opportunities outside their enclaves. In some countries, armed forces or groups seriously undermined the ability of IDPs to restore their self-reliance, as in Myanmar where the army imposed taxes on villagers'

and IDPs' crops, and in CAR, where rebel groups and bandits robbed IDPs and civilians along the roads.

Areas of displacement, of return or resettlement was another major obstacle to the restoration of livelihoods for IDPs. Return areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Nepal, the Philippines and Uganda lacked the infrastructure necessary for economic activities to develop. IDPs in towns and cities typically had to compete with other urban poor for low-paid work. In such cases, economic exploitation and discrimination made it harder for them to access the labour market on an equal footing. In Indonesia's West Timor, IDPs were employed as underpaid labourers by local communities in areas of displacement.

Abusive restrictions on the movements of IDPs, as in Sri Lanka (both by the LTTE in the Vanni, and by government forces in IDP camps) and in Myanmar (by the army) reinforced their state of poverty and dependence. In Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation, restrictions on IDPs' free choice of residence continued to obstruct them from accessing official jobs in cities, though the government of Azerbaijan was reportedly revising its registration system to increase IDPs' freedom of movement and choice of residence.

In several cases, the capacity of IDPs to earn a living was seriously limited by their lack of skills suitable for areas of displacement, return or resettlement. In Colombia and in Nepal, IDPs from rural areas were unprepared for making a living in the cities they fled to, and had to accept low-paid, insecure jobs. Conversely, returning long-term refugees became displaced again in Afghanistan because they lacked the skills to resume life in rural areas.

A distinctive consequence of displacement is the violation of IDPs' property rights, protected both under international

People displaced during post-election violence in a temporary shelter in Burnt Forest, Kenya
(Photo: Reuters/Mike Hutchings, courtesy www.alertnet.org, January 2008).



human rights and humanitarian law²¹. In 33 countries or situations, IDPs were deprived of their land and houses as a result of destruction and looting. For example, in CAR, the parties in the armed conflict frequently looted and burned down villages and other assets of IDPs. In Papua, villages were also burnt down during counter-insurgency campaigns by the government forces, while in Myanmar, government troops burned villages and farms, hindering IDPs' return. The destruction of entire urban neighbourhoods has been used in Zimbabwe to curb opposition movements and in Nigeria against militias and criminal gangs.

Occupation of IDPs' land and houses, often by members of armed forces or groups and their families, was reported in 29 situations. In Côte d'Ivoire, members of the Forces Nouvelles were occupying IDPs' properties in Central and Northern areas, while in Senegal MFDC rebels were exploiting parts of the IDPs' land for timber, cashew and cannabis production. In Southern Sudan, the authorities failed to take action against the occupation of IDPs' land by SPLA soldiers. In Colombia, land left behind by IDPs was occupied by the paramilitary groups whose actions caused the displacement.

Displacement is often followed by the settlement of other groups in properties left behind. In Iraq one of the principal barriers to return was the secondary occupation of houses, often by families which had been displaced themselves. The government in Bangladesh actively sponsored the settlement of Bengali families in villages formerly inhabited by indigenous tribal groups, while IDPs' land in Mexico was often given to other indigenous groups and peasants allied to the local government forces. In Cyprus, IDPs' houses and businesses

21 See Guiding Principle 21.

on both sides of the "green line" have been reallocated to other IDPs who have been using these properties for almost 35 years; on the north side, IDPs' property was also allocated to migrants from Turkey.

In most of these situations, IDPs have had little hope of recovering their lost property and rebuilding their lives in their home areas. Many areas affected by decades of war and violence, such as Southern Sudan, lack the legal framework to address disputes based on contested occupancy. In countries including Uganda where land issues are also governed by customary law, the right of widows and orphans to recover land left behind has often been ignored.

In some countries standard mechanisms have been marked with inefficiency and corruption, as in Afghanistan, Guatemala and Kenya. Even where a legal and institutional framework has been established for the restitution of lost properties or the provision of compensation, it has not always led to an effective remedy: in Croatia, the legislative framework does not allow for restitution of occupancy rights cancelled arbitrarily during and after the war, while compensation granted to IDPs in the Russian Federation and Turkey has proved insufficient to replace homes that were destroyed. IDPs in Turkey have lacked information on their rights to property restitution or compensation.

Other civil and political rights

IDPs' movements and free choice of residence are often arbitrarily restricted²². In India, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, national and regional authorities confined IDPs in camps, to separate

22 See Guiding Principle 14.



Displaced Arab women fetch water in Qalawa IDP camp, Suleimaniya, northern Iraq (Photo: Sabah Arar, UNICEF, 2008, at <http://ochairaq.org/photobank>).

Displaced Bru people from India's northeastern state of Mizoram display their voter identity cards for Mizoram Assembly elections outside a polling booth in Tripura state (Photo: Reuters/Jayanta Dey, courtesy www.alertnet.org, November 2008).



them from the host population for alleged security reasons. In Sri Lanka, the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the human rights of IDPs acknowledged the authorities' need to separate "armed elements" from the civilian population, but he underlined that screening must be concluded promptly and in accordance with clearly established and transparent criteria and procedures, in order to limit the restrictive impact of the confinement²³. In Sri Lanka's Vanni region, the LTTE also restricted IDPs' freedom to seek safety in another part of the country.

Access to personal documentation which had been lost in flight or had become inaccessible was a problem affecting IDPs in 20 countries in 2008. This hindered their enjoyment of the right to recognition before the law²⁴ and other related rights. IDPs without valid documentation were unable to enrol their children in schools, access health care services and welfare and pensions entitlements and claim their property. IDPs in Côte d'Ivoire faced particular difficulties in registering on voting lists, particularly those who had lost their birth certificate during their displacement. IDPs' ability to move freely was also curtailed by the lack of documentation. In Ethiopia and Myanmar, IDPs were unable to cross security checkpoints for this reason.

The denial of IDPs' right to vote²⁵ in many instances reflected the continuing widespread failure to ensure their participation in decision-making processes. IDPs in nine countries were denied the right to participate in elections or referendums on an equal footing with other citizens. In Azerbaijan, displaced people could vote in municipal elections in their current places of residence, but they continued to be prohibited from

running for office there. Although the revised IDP policy in Nepal confirmed IDPs' right to vote, the necessary changes to the electoral law were not made, and so IDPs who wanted to vote in areas of displacement were obliged to obtain a "migration certificate" from their place of origin. As a result, up to 50,000 IDPs were unable to take part in the April 2008 elections for the Constituent Assembly.

A specific response for IDPs?

Displacement remains a critical factor of vulnerability for people across the world. While the wider non-displaced population, particularly in areas of displacement, may be exposed to the same abuses and barriers, the fact of having been displaced tends to further reduce IDPs' access to physical security, the basic necessities of life and other rights. They are liable to have lost property, livelihoods and documentation in their flight, as well as the support of family members and community networks, and to have suffered severe trauma in the process.

It is crucial to consider and address the protection and assistance needs of host populations in areas of displacement, resettlement and return. As local communities are frequently called to provide protection and assistance to IDPs, they also merit adequate support to accommodate displaced people in conditions of safety and dignity. Therefore, efforts should be strengthened to assess the impact of displacement on all the populations affected by a displacement situation, and identify the specific needs of each.

23 "UN expert appeals to LTTE and Government of Sri Lanka to save lives of internally displaced persons trapped by conflict", UN Press Release, 7 April 2008.

24 See Guiding Principle 20.

25 See Guiding Principle 22.

Achieving durable solutions

IDPs may find solutions to their displacement in three ways: through returning to their place of origin, integrating in the place to which they have been displaced, or settling in a third location. These options can be considered to be durable once IDPs enjoy their rights in a non-discriminatory manner and have no more protection or assistance needs related to their displacement.

There is little reliable or precise information on the number of IDPs who have found durable solutions, because it is the culmination of a gradual process and must be assessed on the basis of multiple criteria. Political considerations can also complicate the picture, as governments wishing to declare that situations have been resolved may claim that IDPs have found durable solutions, or put pressure on them to choose one solution over others. It is therefore essential to assess whether there are outstanding protection and assistance needs related to displacement before concluding that a durable solution has been found.

What are durable solutions to internal displacement?

The Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement and the Institute for the Study of International Migration at Georgetown University led the development in 2007 of a framework to show when internal displacement ends. According to the resulting Framework for Durable Solutions²⁶, the extent to which a durable solution has been achieved depends on both the process that led to the solution and the fulfilment of certain conditions. The process includes the provision of relevant information so that IDPs can freely choose their preferred solution, and their consultation and involvement in the process of designing programmes and policies. Conditions for durable solutions include a safe environment, access to documentation, restitution of property or compensation for property lost or destroyed, and access to basic necessities of life, services and livelihood opportunities.

The fulfilment of both process and conditions criteria can take years of progressive improvement from the end of a conflict. Information from the IDMC database illustrates the difficulty in assessing durable solutions: in 18 countries out of 46 surveyed it was impossible to determine whether durable solutions had been found due to the lack of information and monitoring of the situation.

The process of seeking durable solutions should not be confused with their achievement. Return, for instance, is not in itself a durable solution. Therefore returnee figures do not necessarily reflect the achievement of a durable solution as some may still have specific protection and assistance needs that should be monitored. Security risks, for example, can be higher after return than during displacement, and returnees facing unsustainable conditions can be displaced again, as has

happened in Afghanistan and in the Central African Republic (CAR) in recent years. To mitigate these risks, returnees in countries such as Turkey, Uganda or Kosovo have decided to commute between their places of displacement and villages of origin to cultivate their fields there, and to assess conditions before leaving the life they have built while displaced. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, many returnees did not register their return so they could continue to receive the health care which they were entitled to as IDPs in their place of displacement, but which they feared losing due to discrimination or bureaucratic hurdles in return areas. The lack of income or access to education also led some families to split, with adults returning and children staying in areas of displacement or travelling back daily to continue their education. In Indonesia, IDPs returning to their former homes in Central Aceh left their families behind until their coffee plantations were partly back in shape.

While IDPs who return or settle elsewhere may be identifiable, the transition from long-term displacement to sustainable local integration is harder to track. This is particularly the case where temporary IDP settlements gradually become permanent or where displaced groups progressively merge into the local population. Forced displacement often mirrors other migrations from rural to urban areas, with IDPs and migrants joining the existing residents of slum neighbourhoods. In cities across the world, the challenge remains to distinguish the needs of those forcibly displaced in order to facilitate durable solutions to their displacement.

Measures designed to ensure IDPs' full enjoyment of their rights, in particular an adequate standard of living (shelter, livelihood opportunities), will facilitate local integration either on a temporary basis until return is possible, or on a permanent basis if IDPs do not wish to return. Local integration can therefore be a durable solution in itself or a way to live a decent life until other durable solutions become feasible.

Obstacles to durable solutions

A wide range of material and political obstacles may stand in the way of durable solutions, whose impacts vary according to the solution at stake. Insecurity was a main obstacle to return in nearly all countries which IDMC surveyed, but seemed significantly less of a barrier to local integration or settlement elsewhere, as people are more likely to seek to integrate locally or resettle elsewhere because it is safer than to return to areas of origin. The lack of access to education was also cited as a major obstacle to return, but less frequently to local integration or settlement elsewhere.

The most frequent obstacles both to durable return and local integration are the lack of livelihood opportunities (in over 90 per cent of situations), and also access to adequate housing and the basic necessities of life and enjoyment of land and property rights, which were all obstacles in over 80 per cent of cases.

²⁶ When Displacement Ends: A Framework for Durable Solutions, Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, June 2007.

An internally displaced woman in Nepalgunj, mid-western Nepal, who takes care of her family with the income from a roadside shop. The lack of livelihood opportunities is one of the most frequent obstacles to durable solutions

(Photo: NRC Nepal, February 2009).



However, the specific impact of these obstacles on IDPs when compared to the rest of the population varies significantly. Generally non-displaced groups share IDPs' difficulties in accessing basic needs. The barriers which are higher for IDPs than for the rest of the population are access to livelihoods, adequate housing, and in particular the enjoyment of land and property rights.

These findings confirm the particular impact of forced displacement on protection needs. They indicate the value of restitution and compensation mechanisms to enable IDPs to return to their homes and land, and help those who do not wish to return to sell or rent their property (or claim compensation for property destroyed) and use the income to integrate locally or resettle elsewhere.

The absence of a political settlement or peace agreement was in 2008 one of the main obstacles to durable solutions in 21 countries. Parties to a conflict can be reluctant or unable to facilitate durable solutions until a political settlement is reached, and so the displaced population becomes a hostage to political negotiations. The lack of full control over areas of origin has prevented governments from developing and implementing return or resettlement programmes in 15 countries (see box). The continuing presence of IDPs can be used to legitimate claims over lost territories, and so some governments make less efforts to find alternative solutions for them.

The role of governments in supporting durable solutions

Governments are responsible for securing durable solutions for IDPs on their territory. Most provide support to durable solutions through legislation, policies and programmes. In the majority of cases, national policies developed to address internal displacement do indeed focus on durable

solutions and particularly on return: governments in 32 countries actively supported return, compared to only ten which supported resettlement and eight which supported local integration.

According to IDMC's survey, return and local integration have taken place in more situations than resettlement in a third location. Despite the support mentioned above, all three durable solutions were overwhelmingly achieved by IDPs acting independently, with little or no direct involvement of national authorities or the international community. The survey did suggest possible links between the effectiveness of attempts to achieve durable solutions and the national or international support available: support was lent primarily to return, less frequently to resettlement and yet more rarely to local integration; and return was also the most frequently successful and durable option, followed again by resettlement and local integration. However these figures may rather reflect the prevalence of successful returns after short-term displacement.

Return has sometimes been promoted through pressure on or even coercion of IDPs, before conditions allow for it to be sustainable. IDPs have been forced to return in nine countries, while pressure to favour return has been more frequent, for example when assistance is only provided to IDPs who intend to return. In half of the countries monitored, return was the only durable solution actively supported by authorities, so IDPs were rarely in a position to make a free choice.

Countries in which lack of government control over IDPs' areas of origin has prevented return or resettlement programmes

Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, DRC, Ethiopia, Georgia, Mexico, Nepal, Philippines, Senegal, Serbia and Syria.

Governments may favour return for a number of reasons. Return is a way to remedy forced displacement and some of the human rights violations resulting from displacement. They may hope that by returning to their area of origin, IDPs will be able to access their lands and previous sources of livelihood. They may also prefer to help people to return to their own land and homes, rather than try to accommodate them permanently in places they do not own. The political focus on return underlines the necessity to monitor return situations to ensure that conditions exist for it to be sustainable, and that national authorities have not used return to give the impression that an internal displacement situation has been addressed.

Support to local integration involves the provision of permanent and adequate housing through the development of social housing programmes or the upgrading of temporary accommodation while ensuring security of tenure for residents. Because so few governments have supported local integration or settlement elsewhere, when conditions have not allowed for return IDPs have tended to remain without support in inadequate living conditions, often for many years. This has particularly been the case in countries where supporting local integration has been perceived as endorsing ethnic cleansing. For this reason, authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina are still reluctant to openly facilitate local integration more than 13 years after the end of conflict there. In contrast, Georgia and Afghanistan changed their policy in 2008 to facilitate the local integration of IDPs.

In order to address reluctance to support durable solutions other than return, the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the human rights of IDPs has argued that local integration and settlement elsewhere are not incompatible with return, underlining that IDPs who enjoy decent living conditions and access to livelihood opportunities will be in a

better position to rebuild their lives in places of return when it becomes possible.

The obstacles to durable solutions highlighted above indicate the areas where national and international efforts should focus to create conditions for durable solutions. Once security conditions are established, and consolidated through reconciliation activities to address possible discrimination, programmes should facilitate access to livelihoods and to the housing, land and property which so often support those livelihoods. Social housing schemes should also be set up for those who cannot return or repossess their properties. Ensuring non-discriminatory access to services such as health care, education and pensions is also necessary to ensure durable solutions.

Programmes to support durable solutions should promote income-generating activities, and address land and property disputes arising when properties left behind by IDPs are occupied by others or destroyed. Addressing these issues requires immediate and long-term action, first to register abandoned land and property, and then to rebuild properties and implement restitution and compensation mechanisms.

In countries where ownership is mostly customary and the government elects to address the issue through global land reform combining recognition of customary ownership and measures for the landless, it is essential to ensure that measures do not discriminate against IDPs, for example by making continuous and peaceful occupation a pre-condition to formalise a customary ownership.

The role of the international community is to support national governments' efforts towards durable solutions. The considerable financial support offered during emergencies tends to diminish rapidly and this lack of sustained support is generally reflected in the absence of programmes monitoring the achievement of durable solutions and the scarcity of information on the issue.



A displaced child in a disused railway carriage in Azerbaijan. The family lived there from their displacement in 1993 until they were resettled by the government in 2008 (Photo: Knud Elverskov/ UNHCR, March 2008).

National responses to internal displacement

Since the release of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, the international community and in particular the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the human rights of IDPs (the RSG on IDPs) has worked to provide national authorities with the necessary guidance to fulfil their responsibility towards IDPs. For example, the Framework for National Responsibility of 2005 established 12 benchmarks which identified steps to be taken by governments to provide an effective response to internal displacement in line with their obligations under international law.

As a starting point, national authorities have to acknowledge the displacement crisis in their country, and the resulting protection and assistance needs of victims of displacement. At the end of 2008, eight governments continued to deny situations of internal displacement (see box), in countries with over four million IDPs. It should be noted that displacement in these countries is mainly caused by the national authorities themselves, and that, in most of them, new forced population movements were still reported during 2008.

Governments denying situations of internal displacement caused by conflict, generalised violence or human rights violations

Ethiopia, Indonesia (in Papua), Israel (including in OPT), Myanmar, Sudan (Darfur), Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

In seven other situations, national authorities had by 2008 decided that IDPs should no longer be regarded as such as they officially considered displacement to have ended, often without any field-based assessments to substantiate these decisions. For instance, IDPs in Indonesia (Aceh, Central Sulawesi and West Timor), in Liberia and in Peru were no longer displaced in the eyes of their governments although many still had specific needs linked to their displacement. Within the Russian Federation, local authorities in Chechnya declared there were no more IDPs in the republic, despite the absence of durable solutions for many of them.

Advances in national response frameworks

One indicator of national authorities' acknowledgement of the protection needs of IDPs is the adoption of a national legal framework upholding their rights, or a national policy or action plan in response to internal displacement. Governments which have taken these steps deserve recognition, even if they have lacked the capacity to ensure that IDPs benefit fully. At the end of 2008, a total of 14 countries facing conflict- or violence-induced displacement had a national law, a policy or strategy relating to the protection of IDPs. In all of these countries except Colombia and the Russian Federation, they had been adopted or amended

during the past ten years. Draft laws and policies were also awaiting amendment or adoption in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Côte d'Ivoire, which already have a framework document, as well as in the Central African Republic, Chad, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Sudan, which had no IDP-specific legal or policy framework as of 2008. Other countries limited their response to the development of an action plan with time bound objectives for the implementation of durable solutions (Afghanistan, Burundi, Indonesia and Timor-Leste).

2008 also marked a potential breakthrough for IDPs in Africa's Great Lakes region, where 11 states adopted the first binding multilateral instrument in the world dedicated to the implementation of the Guiding Principles. The Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, and more specifically its two Protocols on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons and on the Property Rights of Returning Persons, provide states parties with a comprehensive policy framework for their national response to internal displacement²⁷. The African Union was also preparing a regional binding instrument pertaining to the protection and assistance of IDPs.

Countries with legislation or policies specifically addressing internal displacement

Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Georgia, Iraq, Liberia, Nepal, Peru, Russian Federation, Serbia, Kosovo, Turkey and Uganda.

National laws and policies may have very different scope and objectives. In several countries, such as Georgia, Azerbaijan, Cyprus and Bosnia and Herzegovina, laws and policies entitle people with IDP status to relief assistance (such as food aid or temporary shelter) and other social benefits. In Colombia and the Russian Federation, IDPs benefit from this legal status for a limited period of time only. In the majority of cases, laws and policies focus on durable solutions and are developed to provide adequate support to IDPs willing to return home. Specific legal frameworks have also been developed to address claims for lost property and to create mechanisms for their restitution (as in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Croatia and Iraq) or provide compensation and reparation (as in Turkey, Iraq, and the Russian Federation).

Some countries (namely Iraq, Georgia, Peru and Uganda) have gone further, and adopted comprehensive legal or policy frameworks for protection, restating IDPs' rights and the various actions to be taken by responsible parties at the various stages of displacement, including protection from arbitrary displacement, the emergency and post-emergency phases of displacement, and durable solutions.

²⁷ See The Great Lakes Pact and the Rights of Displaced People: A Guide for Civil Society, IDMC September 2008.



IDPs at the start of their journey home in the district of Ermera, Timor-Leste. The Ministry of Social Solidarity organised their return with the support of international agencies (Photo: UN Photo by Martine Perret, March 2008).

Implementation of laws and policies

Considerable achievements have been made in the last ten years in the implementation of national laws and policies, due in part to advocacy by the RSG on IDPs, UN agencies and civil society bodies. In Georgia for example, the government committed in 2007 to facilitate local integration in its State Strategy on IDPs, after years of exclusive emphasis on return. The RSG has provided important support to governments in several countries, including Turkey, and advocated for the adoption or the revision of laws or policy frameworks on IDPs in line with international standards, as in Nepal, Croatia, Serbia and Côte d'Ivoire. In this regard, the 2008 Manual for Law and Policymakers, developed under the leadership of the RSG and the Brookings/Bern Project on Internal Displacement, should be widely promoted to help the development of domestic legislation and policies.

However, in a number of countries the content and the implementation of laws and policies have remained problematic. A policy adopted in Kenya in 2008 aimed to accelerate the return of IDPs in violation of the principle of voluntary return in safety and dignity. In several countries, the application of laws and policies on internal displacement was restricted to specific groups or areas. In Peru, the 2004 policy on return exclusively focused on IDPs going to their home areas, and failed to provide support to IDPs willing to resettle elsewhere in the country, in particular in urban areas. In Indonesia, the 2001 IDP policy was not applied to IDPs displaced by armed conflicts and violence in Aceh and in Papua. In the Russian Federation, IDPs displaced within their own republic, in Chechnya for example, do not have access to benefits under the Federal Law on Forced Migrants. The lack of consultation with IDPs themselves frequently affected both the development and the implementation of national laws and policies, as in Azerbaijan, Côte d'Ivoire, Indonesia, Iraq, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Uganda.

Numerous obstacles hampered the impact of national laws, policies and strategies. In Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, Georgia, Iraq, Kosovo and Turkey, national authorities were unable to ensure the implementation of their laws and policies in areas exposed to insecurity or outside their effective control. In Nepal, the government has still not adopted the directives on implementing the IDP policy developed in 2007.

The national response to the protection and assistance needs of IDPs is also more effective if the responsibility for coordination and mobilisation is allocated to a national institutional focal point, which can be an existing body, a newly created agency or ministry, or a cross-sectoral working group. Such focal points were identified in 33 countries facing internal displacement, but their effectiveness was also often limited by the lack of funds and technical and operational capacity. Government measures were not always backed up by financial commitment. The lack of funds dedicated to the implementation of national laws and policies was a major problem in Armenia, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Indonesia, Iraq, Nepal, Timor-Leste, Turkey and Uganda. The implementation was also limited by problems of corruption, as in Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Iraq and the Russian Federation.

In several countries, national authorities chose not to cooperate with the international community's offers to help them fulfil their responsibility towards IDPs and fill the gaps in their own response, openly rejecting international assistance, imposing serious bureaucratic obstacles, and harassing humanitarian workers. In 2008, this was the case in 11 situations (see box).

Governments rejecting or hindering offers of international assistance to respond to internal displacement caused by conflict or human rights violations

Ethiopia, Israel (for OPT), Syria, Myanmar, Somalia, Sri Lanka (in the Vanni region), Sudan (in Darfur), Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Yemen (in the Saada conflict area) and Zimbabwe.

While international support and capacity building of authorities remain important to the effectiveness and sustainability of national IDP protection, the international community should continue to advocate for the allocation of adequate human and financial resources by national authorities to address the plight of IDPs and promote durable solutions.

National non-governmental institutions

Civil society organisations have made essential contributions to the national protection of IDPs. NGOs are instrumental in many countries in raising the awareness of the general public and the authorities of internal displacement, as in Burundi, Colombia, the Philippines, Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), and Turkey. They also provide essential support to IDPs to access their rights, by providing humanitarian assistance, psycho-social counselling, education (as in Colombia, Georgia and Senegal) or legal information and advice (as in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Serbia and Kosovo). The role of national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies in the provision of protection and assistance to IDPs is of particular importance, thanks to their unique capacity to reach out to displaced populations in many countries (including Iraq, Kenya, Nigeria and Senegal). In addition to NGOs, organisations with clear political affiliation also contributed to the provision of relief aid and reconstruction assistance, as in Iraq, Lebanon and Gaza (OPT).

Other institutions, including those within the judicial system, can make a strong contribution to the protection of

IDPs, as in Colombia, where the Constitutional Court has ordered the government to remedy failures in the protection and assistance of IDPs, and continues to monitor the government's response with the support of civil society organisations. National human rights institutions (NHRIs) can play an important role in strengthening IDPs' protection. Out of the 19 internationally "accredited" NHRIs²⁸ in countries facing displacement, 14 contributed to an improved protection of IDPs during the past ten years, through awareness raising campaigns, the provision of information for IDPs, the review of legislation, the delivery of training on IDP protection, fact-finding missions and reports, monitoring, protective presence on the ground, and advocacy towards governments. During this period, notable work has been done by NHRIs in the Philippines, Indonesia, Kenya and Uganda to promote the human rights of IDPs.

The contribution of these institutions should be encouraged, both as watchdog of national authorities' response and as providers of essential assistance, and they should be regarded as partners by national authorities and international organisations. Efforts to empower and mobilise NHRIs in the protection of IDPs should also be continued, and those whose effectiveness has been recognised should be more systematically engaged in protection coordination mechanisms.

²⁸ See <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/ChartStatusNIs.pdf> for a list of NHRIs complying with the Paris Principles by the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.

A shack occupied by a displaced person in Zimbabwe, where in 2008 the government denied the presence of IDPs, referring to them as "Mobile and Vulnerable Populations" (Photo: Katinka Ridderbos, IDMC, February 2008).



UN response and humanitarian reform

Over the past decade, the international community's response to situations of internal displacement has ranged from emergency humanitarian assistance to post-conflict recovery and reconstruction activity, development aid, activities to reinforce democracy, governance and rule of law, judicial interventions, and in some cases the management of national executive and administrative functions (as in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Timor-Leste).

As previous sections have noted, international attention to internal displacement has too frequently faded following the initial emergency phase, and longer-term support has tended to become less predictable as displacement situations become protracted. It has also depended frequently on the regional context of the country, the presence, interests and capacity of regional institutions and the willingness of the host government to cooperate with them. Post-emergency and development support has also tended not to target IDPs as a separate group and so has often failed to meet their specific needs.

It is most often in the emergency phase that people displaced by conflict or violence have a reasonable expectation of benefiting from coordinated international support. This review focuses on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's humanitarian reform process, and on the UN's country-level coordination, and considers the early indicators of their impact for IDPs.

UN coordination in countries with IDPs

The composition of the UN presence in a country depends on the priorities of the government and those of the international community. It also determines the effectiveness of IDP protection. In around half of the countries which IDMC monitors, most of them characterised by protracted internal displacement, the UN's Resident Coordinator (RC) does not also take the role of Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) (see box). However most of the 26 million IDPs at the end of 2008 are in countries where there is an RC/HC.

Typically in these countries, the RC does not have the support of a senior advisor on IDPs nor do they designate a "lead agency" formally tasked with IDP response. This suggests that RCs should be encouraged to request humanitarian expertise in displacement-affected countries in order to support an appropriate response to IDPs' protection and assistance needs.

Over the past year the UN has carried out coordination through combining the RC and HC roles in countries with "complex emergencies"²⁹. In 2008, the RC in Georgia was

29 A complex emergency is "a humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing United Nations country program". IASC, December 1994.

Countries in IDMC's survey with a UN Resident Coordinator / Humanitarian Coordinator

Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Georgia, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Liberia, Myanmar, Nepal, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Pakistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Other countries in IDMC's survey (all except Cyprus and Israel have a Resident Coordinator)

Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Guatemala, India, Israel, Lebanon, Macedonia, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Republic of the Congo, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia (including Kosovo), Syria, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Yemen.

designated RC/HC, bringing to 27 the total number of RC/HCs (see the box for those in surveyed countries). While the advantages and disadvantages of the joint RC/HC role continue to be debated, the significant increase in HC appointments in 2008 represents an improvement in the UN's commitment to institutional leadership on humanitarian issues.

Humanitarian reform in 2008

2008 marked an intensified effort by the international community to introduce humanitarian reform in countries affected by complex emergencies. These efforts focused on applying the cluster approach, an inter-agency approved method of addressing gaps and strengthening the effectiveness of humanitarian response through building partnerships and assigning leadership for key sectors of the humanitarian response.

Humanitarian reform implementation has also included the practical application of new funding instruments such as the expanded Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and Common Humanitarian Funds (CHF). Donor contributions to CERF increased by around 18 per cent between 2007 and 2008, and the main recipients of CERF funding in 2008 were the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Kenya, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

In 2006, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) noted that the cluster approach should make a significant improvement in the quality, level and predictability of the response to crises of internal displacement³⁰. However, IDPs are not the only category for which the humanitarian reform was put in place. Assistance is provided to all populations affected by complex

30 IASC Guidance Note on using the cluster approach to strengthen humanitarian response, 24 November 2006.

An IDP camp in Nakuru, Rift Valley, Kenya. The cluster approach was formally launched in Kenya following the post-election displacement of late 2007 and early 2008 (Photo: Helene Caux, May 2008).



emergencies or situations of natural or human-made disasters. These populations usually include host communities and people remaining in their place of origin, as well as those displaced.

Whereas it is still early days to consider the impact on IDPs of humanitarian reform measures, the resolve and steps taken towards enhancing the effectiveness of humanitarian responses in 2008 were significant. The main indicators for measuring progress achieved through the cluster approach are strengthened predictability, response capacity, coordination and accountability. Towards the end of 2008, cluster lead agencies reported that operational actors observed real benefits from the partnerships generated by clusters, particularly in terms of the greater range and coverage of humanitarian assistance provided by an increased number of operational partners. However, NGOs were still struggling to be treated as equal partners by the UN agencies in several situations.

In November 2007, the first independent cluster evaluation found that improvements had been made in filling gaps and extending capacity, while the predictability of leadership had been enhanced by agencies taking lead responsibility for sectors³¹. The second phase of the cluster evaluation, to be completed early in 2010, will assess in more detail the extent to which humanitarian reform, in particular the cluster approach, has produced improved humanitarian responses and outcomes at country level.

Cluster roll-out in 2008

In 2008, the cluster approach was formally launched in 11 new countries: Afghanistan, Burundi (though it was not implemented within the country in 2008), Georgia, Guinea, Haiti, Iraq, Kenya, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Zimbabwe.

³¹ Cluster Approach Evaluation, Final Report submitted by a joint research team, November 2007.

24 complex emergencies were being addressed through the cluster approach at the end of 2008. In addition, clusters are applied in numerous situations of disaster response. The plan is to apply the cluster approach in all 27 countries with RC/HCs. Three countries had yet to formally implement the cluster approach at the end of 2008: Timor-Leste, Eritrea and Niger.

Local implementation and inclusiveness of clusters

More local implementation of clusters is essential for a better response to IDPs and other affected populations. The fact that cluster implementation has generated more meeting activity in capitals and increased reporting requirements to headquarters does not guarantee a positive impact on people affected by an emergency, and may in fact divert resources from the actual delivery of protection and assistance on the ground. While most clusters have been rolled out at capital level, regional and local activation has been more variable. For example, in Kenya and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), most clusters were rolled out locally, whereas in Afghanistan and Georgia, local implementation was limited.

Although it is the responsibility of sector or cluster leads to ensure that all humanitarian actors are given the opportunity to participate fully in setting the direction, strategies, and activities of the group³², the participation of non-UN institutions remain problematic. While country-level clusters have increasingly included representatives of international NGOs, participation of national NGOs has remained limited. In conflict situations, local NGOs may lack the resources required to participate, or refrain out of fear of compromising their relationship with the government. Although international NGOs have been regularly invited to become cluster members, they have sometimes

³² IASC Guidance Note on using the cluster approach to strengthen humanitarian response, 24 November 2006.



Residents of Al-Sadr City, Iraq, walk through the rubble of their destroyed neighbourhood in the aftermath of severe fighting between militiamen and government forces. Continuing insecurity limited the reach of international support in Iraq in 2008 (Photo: Sabah Arar, UNICEF, 2008, at <http://ochairaq.org/photobank>).

reported (for example in Afghanistan and Burundi) that they are not sufficiently involved in strategic discussions and decisions on the direction of work of the clusters.

Impact of humanitarian reform on IDP protection

The cluster approach in itself does not guarantee that the humanitarian community provides better protection to IDPs. However, on a positive note, in countries such as DRC, Liberia, Georgia and Central African Republic, it has led to some improvement in assistance to IDPs and more predictability in the humanitarian response. In Georgia, assistance to IDPs became more systematic as a result of the new approach; and in Afghanistan the protection cluster was instrumental in persuading the National IDP Taskforce to be more responsive to the protection needs of IDPs and also to develop an action plan for 2009.

Responses to displacement caused by conflicts and natural disasters

In countries where there has been internal displacement due both to disaster and to conflict, IDMC found that the international response to the disaster-induced displacement was in most cases better organised. This may be because governments of countries affected by natural disasters have better capacity to lead the response than governments of countries affected by complex emergencies, but the capacity of international agencies to respond may also vary, due to better cooperation with national authorities (as in Ethiopia, Myanmar and the Philippines), better physical access (as in Pakistan), greater international attention and funding (as in Aceh in Indonesia and in India), and better cooperation between international agencies (Kenya, Nepal). Denial of humanitarian space in

conflicts (as in Iraq and Afghanistan) may also stop humanitarian agencies providing services to IDPs. Thus there appear to be fewer political barriers to international support in disaster-induced displacement situations.

Variations in international response

High-profile crises continue to attract international response and funding. In the wake of the August 2008 crisis in Georgia, the international community mobilised quickly to assist the newly displaced. Agencies brought in additional staff, raised funds through various appeals; the Resident Coordinator was designated as Humanitarian Coordinator and the cluster approach replaced the former sectoral arrangement. As a result, improved protection for people newly displaced was notable. While the IDPs displaced since 1991 did not immediately benefit from improved assistance or protection, more attention was nevertheless afforded to their situation after the August 2008 crisis. This manifested itself in terms of funding, and a strategic approach covering the needs of both the new and old caseloads.

The international response to some other major humanitarian crises of internal displacement is far less comprehensive, for example in Colombia, Ethiopia, the Philippines and India. These countries are characterised by protracted displacement situations which have drawn a lesser degree of international attention than they merit.

Political and material obstacles remain in the way of effective protection of IDPs in almost all countries and regions. Obstacles outside the control of the international community include the inability or unwillingness of governments to protect people displaced within their territory, the denial by governments of conflict-induced displacement, and the lack of humanitarian space due to conflict. However, problems related to inadequate funding and “donor fatigue” in protracted situations, and to poor inter-agency coordination and staff capacity, cannot be attributed to national bodies.



Internally displaced children attend an outdoor class at Gassire camp, eastern Chad. They fled fighting around the town of Goz Beida near the Sudanese border (Photo: Reuters/Finbarr O'Reilly, courtesy www.alertnet.org, June 2008).

Internal displacement in Africa

Central African Republic	38	Uganda	48
Chad	39	Zimbabwe	49
Côte d'Ivoire	40	Rwanda	50
Democratic Republic of the Congo	41	Burundi	50
Ethiopia	42	Algeria	51
Kenya	43	Eritrea	51
Nigeria	44	Senegal	52
Somalia	45	Liberia	52
Sudan	46	Republic of Congo	53
		Angola	53

Internal displacement in Africa

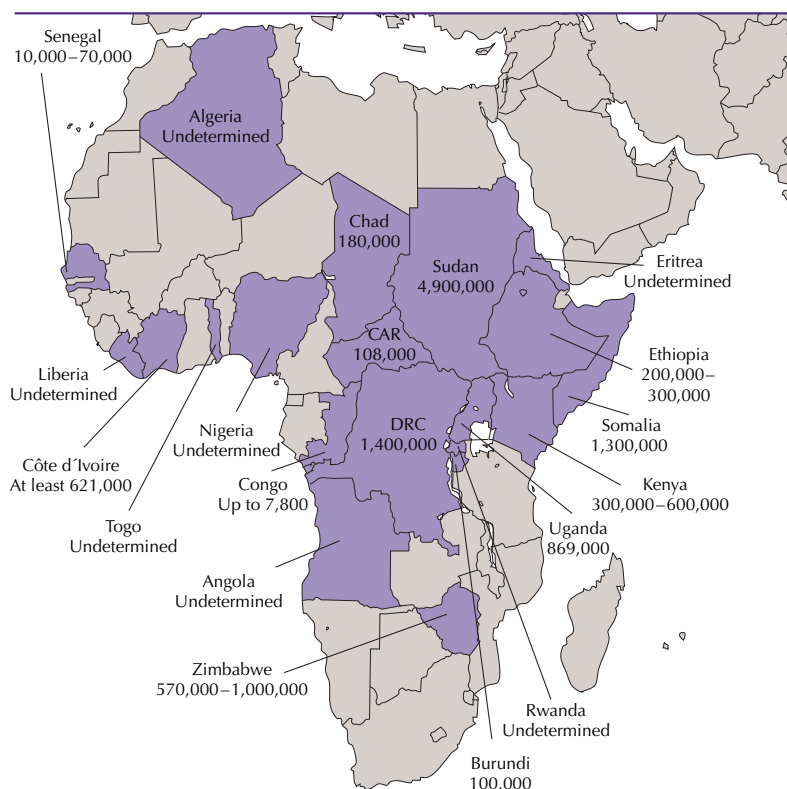
In 2008, IDMC monitored internal displacement in 19 African countries. There were an estimated 11.6 million IDPs in these countries, the lowest internal displacement figure in Africa in a decade but still nearly half of the world's total IDP population. Countries which IDMC monitored included Algeria, Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe. It is likely that smaller groups of people remained displaced by conflict or violence in other African countries, for example the thousands of Togolese which the government reported as IDPs in 2008.

Forced displacement in 2008 did not result from the eruption of new conflicts in the region, but rather from fighting which was ongoing or recurred after ceasefire agreements or peace negotiations failed. Generalised violence caused widespread displacement, as armed criminal groups forced people to flee and inter-communal tensions flared up between indigenous groups and others perceived as new arrivals, between pastoralists and sedentary farmers, and between supporters of election candidates.

New displacements were reported in Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia and Zimbabwe, but the largest were in Kenya with 500,000 new IDPs, DRC with 400,000, Sudan (Darfur) with 315,000 and Somalia with 300,000. The highest numbers of returns were in DRC and Uganda, both with 400,000, and in South Sudan with 350,000, while returns were also reported in Algeria, CAR, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea and Kenya. Obstacles to durable solutions in the region included insecurity, the lack of basic services and infrastructure in areas of return, limited livelihood opportunities, and land and property issues.

Internally displaced communities in African countries faced myriad risks, due to immediate threats to their safety in some cases, and long-term neglect in others. Two particularly insidious and widespread protection problems facing IDPs in 2008 were rape and sexual violence against women and girls, and the forced recruitment of children into armed forces and groups. Rape and sexual violence were reported in Burundi, CAR, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Nigeria, Senegal, and Sudan; forced recruitment of children was reported in Burundi, CAR, Chad, DRC, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda.

More international attention has been paid to these two specific human rights violations in the last few years, with the entry into force of the Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children of the Great Lakes Pact, and war crimes investigations and indictments by the International Criminal Court on rape and torture in CAR and murder, sexual slavery and recruitment of children in DRC. However, the problem of rape has continued



to be widely under-reported, with few response programmes on the ground helping victims to cope with the trauma and impact of these crimes.

While several countries including CAR, Chad, and Sudan were in the process of drafting national policies or laws to assist and protect IDPs in 2008, only Uganda had a national IDP policy and only Liberia had incorporated the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement into domestic law. Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire had developed draft IDP policies or laws, but their respective governments had yet to enact them. As in previous years, most governments with internally displaced populations were unable or unwilling to respond to their assistance and protection needs, either because of a lack of resources and properly trained staff, or because of a lack of political will.

In 2008, a positive regional development for the protection of IDPs was the entry into force of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in Africa's Great Lakes region (the Great Lakes Pact). It represented a commitment by eleven states to work to end the conflicts plaguing the region, and to cooperate on security, governance, development, humanitarian and social issues. The Pact was ratified by Burundi, CAR, DRC, Kenya, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. Angola, Sudan and Zambia had yet to finalise the ratification process at the end of the year.

Two protocols of the Great Lakes Pact, on protection and assistance to internally displaced persons, and on the property rights of returning populations, represented recognition by ratifying states of the crucial link between protecting the rights of IDPs and achieving peace, security and development in the region. The Pact was also the world's first binding multilateral instrument dedicated to the incorporation into national law of the Guiding Principles.

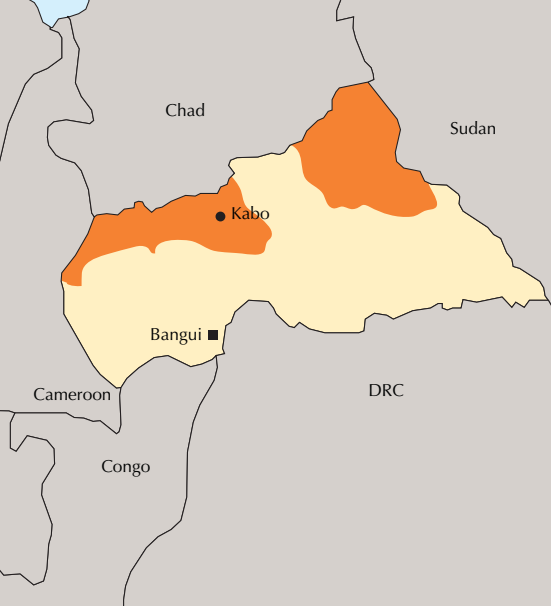
The international response to internal displacement varied widely between countries such as Zimbabwe where response mechanisms for IDPs were very limited, to those where the UN's humanitarian reform was fully implemented to coordinate the delivery of assistance and improve the protection of IDPs. By the end of 2008, 11 countries in Africa had implemented the cluster approach, including Burundi, CAR, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Somalia, Uganda and Zimbabwe (although in Côte d'Ivoire, only the protection cluster was operational, while Zimbabwe had activated five clusters excluding the protection cluster).

International peacekeepers were deployed to six countries following UN Security Council Resolutions: EUFOR in CAR and Chad, UNOCI in Côte d'Ivoire, MONUC in DRC, UNMIL in Liberia and UNAMID and UNMIS in Sudan. While not all the peacekeeping operations had mandates that were directly linked to the protection of IDPs, they were all related to restoring security and supporting the implementation of peace agreements, two fundamental preconditions for achieving durable solutions for IDPs. The forces in DRC and the two missions in Sudan were among the largest peacekeeping operations in the world.

Regional peacekeeping forces were also deployed in several African countries to deal with the ongoing problem of insecurity caused by internal armed conflict. The deployment of regional peacekeeping forces represented an important commitment by African countries to invest in security, rule of law and sustainable development in order to achieve lasting peace. Regional peacekeepers included MICOPAX (formerly FOMUC) of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, deployed to CAR, and the African Union troops deployed to Somalia and Sudan.

Country	Number of IDPs (rounded)	Government figures	UN figures	Other figures	Comments
Algeria	Undetermined			1,000,000 (EU, 2002)	No recent figures available.
Angola	Undetermined		19,566 (UN-TCU, November 2005)		UN figure refers to the number of IDPs in the Cabinda region. No recent figure is available.
Burundi	100,000		100,000 (OCHA, November 2006)		
Central African Republic	108,000		108,000 (OCHA, November 2008)		
Chad	180,000		180,000 (UNHCR, September 2008)		
Congo	Up to 7,800	7,800 (2006)	0–7,800 (OCHA, December 2008)		
Côte d'Ivoire	At least 621,000	709,000 (ENSEA national statistical institute with UNFPA, 2006)	709,000 (UNHCR, January 2008)		The number of 621,000 is obtained by subtracting the 70,000 registered IDPs who have returned to western regions and the 18,000 civil servants redeployed from the 2006 figure. UNHCR has worked with the ENSEA figure in the absence of updated country-wide data.
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1,400,000		1,373,000 (OCHA, December 2008)		While the total estimate did not change from 2007 to 2008, at least 400,000 people returned home, while 400,000 were displaced, primarily in North Kivu. Estimates are approximate, as most IDPs are with host families and are not registered, and many areas are difficult to reach.
Eritrea	Undetermined				According to UN agencies, all camp-based IDPs had been resettled or returned to home areas by March 2008, but some may still be living with host communities. There has not been a UN assessment since 2006.

Ethiopia	200,000–300,000		200,000–300,000 (UN agencies, June 2008)		The UN estimate is not based on any profiling exercise due to government restrictions on access to conflict areas.
Kenya	300,000–600,000		300,000–600,000 (OCHA)		Verification exercise to determine the number still pending.
Liberia	Undetermined		0–23,000 (UNHCR, July 2007)		UNHCR estimated 23,000 people still in former IDP camps in 2007, but no profiling carried out to confirm their status. An unknown number are also still displaced in Monrovia.
Nigeria	Undetermined	1,210,000 (National Commission for Refugees, September 2007)			No reliable figures available. NCR figure does not clearly differentiate between people still displaced and those who have returned.
Rwanda	Undetermined				Unclear if people displaced before 1994 have found durable solutions.
Senegal	10,000–70,000		40,000–70,000 (OCHA, April 2008)	64,000 (IOM, June 2003); 10,000 (ProCas-GTZ, April 2008)	
Somalia	1,300,000		1,300,000 (OCHA/UNHCR, December 2008)		
Sudan	4,900,000		4,576,250 (OCHA, December 2008)	Southern Kordofan: 96,827 IDPs (IOM, 2008). Southern Sudan (displaced by inter-communal violence in 2008): 187,000 (UN RC/HC).	The OCHA figure for December 2008 includes IDPs in Darfur; Khartoum and other northern states; eastern states; Blue Nile; and Abyei. The figure does not include IDPs in Southern Kordofan and in the ten states of Southern Sudan.
Togo	Undetermined	10,000 (2008)	1,500 (OCHA, November 2006)		No more recent figures available.
Uganda	869,000		869,000 (IASC Uganda, November 2008)		Includes 537,000 IDPs in camps and 332,000 in transit sites. A further 603,000 IDPs had returned to their homes villages by November 2008. These figures do not include urban IDPs in cities such as Kampala and Jinja, or IDPs in Karamoja.
Zimbabwe	570,000–1,000,000		569,685 (Operation Murambatsvina: UN Special Envoy, July 2005); 1,000,000 (Fast-track land reform programme: UNDP, September 2008)	2008 political violence: 36,000 (UN); 200,000 (MDC, International Crisis Group).	Some people have been displaced more than once, so the figures overlap. Eight per cent of respondents to the June 2007 Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee survey stated they had been “asked to move” in the last five years, implying between 880,000 and 960,000 people nationwide involuntarily displaced in that period.



Central African Republic

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	108,000
Percentage of total population	2.5%
Start of current displacement situation	2005
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	212,000 (2007)
New displacement in 2008	Undetermined
Returns in 2008	85,000
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, generalised violence
Human development index	171

The number of people displaced within the Central African Republic fell in 2008 as ceasefire agreements between the government and rebel groups led to an “Inclusive Political Dialogue” in Bangui in December between the government, its political and armed opposition, and civil society. However, neither the army nor international troops have been able to protect civilians from attacks by road bandits, causing new displacements and affecting the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Over 100,000 people were still displaced at the end of 2008 in northern CAR, though almost as many had returned to their villages of origin during the year, as had about 4,000 people who had fled to Chad. With the exception of the residents of the one IDP site in the town of Kobo, most IDPs were dispersed in remote rural towns after periods of living in small groups in the bush without social services. They were relying almost entirely on these host communities for support.

The political conflict broke out in 2005 between the government of president François Bozizé and armed opposition groups seeking representation and power sharing. However, in 2008, human rights abuses caused by road bandits known as “coupeurs de route” or Zaraguina became the main cause of internal displacement. OCHA estimates that a third of all people displaced in CAR were displaced by road bandits operating with impunity in the absence of government forces.

Since 2005, IDPs in CAR have suffered from a range of human rights violations and abuses, including unlawful killings, the looting and destruction of their villages and fields, loss of livelihoods, sexual violence, and the abduction and recruitment of children. All armed groups have perpetrated these crimes. Government forces committed atrocities against civilians until late 2007 in retaliation for their support of opposition groups which, as the de facto authorities in some areas, punished civilians when their authority was not respected. The road bandits have in turn committed atrocities for financial gain; and self-defence militias, created with the support of the government in response to attacks by road bandits, have recruited children.

Although 85,000 IDPs returned home in 2008, durable solutions will be unattainable until north-western CAR is more secure. The primary challenge facing the government is to

re-establish and strengthen state presence by restoring services including health care, water and sanitation, and primary education, and by training, outfitting and deploying security forces to protect communities including those displaced.

There are no laws or policies to protect IDPs, but CAR has ratified the Great Lakes Pact and is expected to enact an IDP law by December 2009 which should incorporate the Guiding Principles. This law is being drafted with the support of UNHCR and the National Commission for Refugees.

International military forces deployed as peacekeeping troops have had little impact in areas of displacement. The regional peacekeeping forces FOMUC and subsequently MICOPAX have attempted to provide security by patrolling main roads, but their numbers and area of operations have been limited. In 2008, a European Union force was deployed to Chad and CAR with a Security Council mandate to protect refugees and IDPs affected by the spill-over of violence from Darfur, and to safeguard the delivery of humanitarian assistance. However only 250 EUFOR troops were deployed, near the north-eastern border with Sudan, and road bandits and conflict have mostly caused displacement near the borders with Chad and Cameroon.

UN agencies and international NGOs provide protection and assistance to conflict-affected communities in CAR, and some are also working on early recovery and development programmes. The cluster approach was implemented in CAR in July 2007. Since then, ten clusters have been activated, grouped under the Humanitarian and Development Partnership Team (HDPT), a platform that has been instrumental in increasing visibility and funding. However the Humanitarian Coordinator has yet to ensure a coordinated response to the needs of IDPs, and continued lobbying is still needed for urgent humanitarian resources and funding for assistance programmes that improve the living conditions of IDPs in particular.

Chad

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	180,000
Percentage of total population	1.6%
Start of current displacement situation	2006
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	185,000 (2007)
New displacement in 2008	Undetermined
Returns in 2008	15,000–30,000
Causes of displacement	Internal and internationalised armed conflict, human rights violations, generalised violence
Human development index	170



At the end of 2008 around 180,000 people were displaced in eastern Chad, either being supported by host communities or gathered in 30 sites where they could access some level of international aid. They had fled cross-border raids in 2006 and 2007 by Sudanese Janjaweed militias, who exploited long-standing disputes between Chadian ethnic groups sparking inter-ethnic violence that led to massacres and caused widespread displacement.

Other causes of displacement involved fighting between the army and Chadian rebel groups, and attacks by road bandits. Internal armed conflict erupted when Chadian president Idriss Déby reformed the constitution to run for a third term. Rebel groups accused the government of limiting government posts to members of the President's Zaghawa ethnic group, and of using oil revenues to buy arms and bolster the government. Meanwhile, the Chadian government has allowed Darfuri rebel groups (also Zaghawa) to operate from bases in eastern Chad.

Widespread attacks by road bandits known as “coupeurs de route” against civilians including IDPs and humanitarian workers have gone unpunished. In 2008, more than 3,000 European Union troops (EUFOR) were deployed to eastern Chad to protect IDPs and Sudanese refugees, safeguard humanitarian operations, and help restore stability. The UN Mission, MINURCAT, also trained Chadian police officers to provide security in IDP sites and refugee camps. Nonetheless, insecurity remained rampant, with more than 160 serious incidents including physical attacks against humanitarian workers resulting in repeated interruptions in the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

IDPs have faced grave threats to their physical security and integrity, due to attacks, the militarisation of IDP sites and proliferation of small arms there. Displaced women and girls have faced high levels of sexual violence, and are particularly at risk when collecting firewood or farming land which they have rented from host communities. Displaced children have faced a range of threats. In IDP sites they have had limited access to primary education and no chance of further schooling. Government forces have continued to recruit children despite a 2007 commitment to desist, while Sudanese and Chadian

rebel groups have actively recruited children from refugee camps and IDP sites.

National and international responses have been shaped by fear of the Darfur conflict spreading rather than a will to solve Chad's internal problems. Although the governments of Chad and Sudan signed the Dakar Agreement in 2008 to normalise relations and end the support of each other's rebel groups, there has been no parallel process for Chad's internal crisis. Peacekeeping missions have focused on resolving cross-border insecurity rather than conflict resolution and peace building in Chad. At the same time the situation of Sudanese refugees there has received more attention and thus funding.

Despite EUFOR's mandate to help secure areas of origin, insecurity has continued to block returns. In 2008 some IDPs did still return despite a lack of access to basic services in their home areas. For these movements to become more widespread, an inclusive political dialogue would be needed to end the internal armed conflict and inter-communal violence, and the government would have to demonstrate its commitment to invest in infrastructure and basic social services in the east.

The government has taken some steps to respond to the situation of IDPs, but their impact has been limited. In 2007, it set up a national committee to assist IDPs known as the CNAPD, but it has limited resources and staff, and delivered only sporadic assistance. In 2008, the government also created the CONAFIT committee to coordinate humanitarian activities with MINURCAT, EUFOR and the humanitarian organisations working in Chad. The government has yet to enact national legislation to protect IDPs.

The UN's humanitarian response in Chad is led by a Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator supported by a Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator in eastern Chad. The cluster approach was introduced in Chad in July 2007 to coordinate the delivery of assistance and improve the protection of IDPs. Eleven clusters were operational at the end of 2008, with the environmental and early recovery clusters to be implemented in 2009.



Côte d'Ivoire

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	At least 621,000
Percentage of total population	3.2%
Start of current displacement situation	2002
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	1,100,000 (2003)
New displacement in 2008	700
Returns in 2008	89,000
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, generalised violence
Human development index	166

Over 600,000 people were still displaced in Côte d'Ivoire in 2008, six years after civil war erupted in 2002. The politicisation of ethnicity during the economic decline of the 1990s had caused escalating tensions and eventually armed conflict which led the country to be split between the government-controlled south and the north held by the rebels of the Forces Nouvelles ("New Forces"). Thousands of civilians, especially government and public-sector employees, left the north to seek shelter in the south, mostly within the economic capital Abidjan. Meanwhile, in the western "cocoa belt" of Moyen Cavally and Dix-huit Montagnes, tensions around land between indigenous communities and economic migrants escalated and caused massive displacement.

The 2007 Ouagadougou Peace Agreement gave IDPs real hope for an end to their displacement. However the lack of comprehensive figures on return movements since then does not allow for a clear indication of the number still displaced. In 2006 the national statistical institute ENSEA estimated that there were some 709,000 IDPs in southern regions. Up to the end of 2008 around 70,000 registered IDPs returned to western Côte d'Ivoire and 18,000 civil servants were redeployed in the north, and so at the end of 2008 an estimated 621,000 IDPs remained. However this figure does not include those newly displaced who did not return within the year, and people displaced within the north. The only managed IDP site in the country, the Guiglo transit centre which hosted up to 7,900 IDPs at its peak, closed in July 2008 although some IDPs remained there.

In 2008, new displacement continued in the west, due to land disputes and inter-communal tensions which sometimes followed the return of IDPs. Ongoing tensions over land and property also prevented many from returning. Notwithstanding the progress in implementing the peace accord, political setbacks and continued insecurity in many areas of return helped to prolong the displacement situation. There was limited progress in demobilising and reintegrating rebel troops and pro-government militias, and the presidential elections which had been rescheduled for November 2008 were cancelled once again.

There was in 2008 a resurgence in banditry and armed robberies, especially along highways in the west, which joint government and Forces Nouvelles patrols were unable to address. Displaced women and girls were particularly vulnerable to the widespread threat of sexual violence.

Accessing the basic necessities of life has proved difficult in areas of displacement and return, for IDPs and host communities. Social services are inadequate or absent, particularly in the north and west, and food insecurity is high where displacement has interrupted agricultural cycles. Displaced women and girls have more frequently had to resort to prostitution as a means to ensure they and their family have some income.

Return has been the only durable solution considered thus far, but until the causes of the conflict are addressed, foremost legal identity and access to land, and better services and infrastructure are in place to enable livelihoods for returnees, durable returns are still a distant prospect. The restitution of IDPs' property and access to their land remain politically charged; in the north there are concerns about restitution of property illegally occupied or taken by members of the Forces Nouvelles, and in the west land has been occupied by people who remained in villages, by other IDPs or by newly-arrived migrant workers.

Funding and capacity constraints have generally hampered the provision of assistance. UNHCR heads the only cluster in the country, for the protection sector, while the same model has been adopted for other sectors. In 2008, in response to queries over the operational abilities of the national and district cluster working groups, UNHCR enhanced its field presence by deploying protection monitoring teams to the west and north. However, more efficient coordination and increased staff capacity is still needed.

The Ministry of Solidarity and War Victims is the government's focal point on IDP issues. Its impact is limited by the lack of coordination within the government, institutional support and funding. An inter-ministerial committee set up to coordinate the response to the displacement situation has lacked high-level representation, while the government's focus on reducing foreign debt has come at the expense of financial commitments in support to durable solutions.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	1,400,000
Percentage of total population	2.2%
Start of current displacement situation	1996
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	3,400,000 (2003)
New displacement in 2008	At least 400,000
Returns in 2008	At least 400,000
Causes of displacement	Internal and internationalised armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	177



It was estimated in December 2008 that almost 1.4 million people were displaced by the various conflicts which have killed several million people and continue to affect the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The situation was dynamic with at least 400,000 returning home and at least 400,000 being newly displaced by armed conflict, generalised violence and widespread human rights violations during the year. The UN’s Emergency Relief Coordinator described the situation in North Kivu Province in November 2008: “Congolese civilians found themselves in the worst of all worlds: subject to attacks, displacement, sexual violence and forced recruitment perpetrated by advancing rebel forces; and to acts of violence, rape and looting carried out by members of the official Congolese armed forces and Mai Mai and other militias.”

The majority of the new displacements were in North Kivu, followed by Ituri and Haut-Uélé Districts (Orientale Province) and South Kivu. People there have been displaced several times since the mid-1990s; the latest wave followed fighting between government forces and militia of the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP), and between the CNDP and the Hutu Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR) and local Mai Mai militia groups. The violence and displacement in North Kivu between government and CNDP forces peaked between the end of August and the end of November. In Haut-Uélé, Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) attacks led to the displacement of tens of thousands of villagers at the end of 2008, and DRC’s armed forces worked alongside those of Uganda and Southern Sudan to root the LRA out.

All these groups, including government soldiers, have frequently attacked civilians to seize food and belongings, or punish people for perceived or real allegiance to other groups. Armed non-state actors have also abducted children to fight. The government’s troops are ill-equipped, poorly trained, and barely paid. All of them prey on the population, and aim both to defeat historic enemies and secure territory in order to benefit from the extraction of natural resources.

Most IDPs live with host communities. In North Kivu, they have sought shelter in camps, with hosts in areas out of the immediate firing line, or in forests. The majority are support-

ing themselves or relying entirely on the limited resources of their hosts, as humanitarian access has been severely limited by the fighting.

Thus eastern DRC’s IDPs face a range of severe threats. IDP sites have come under attack. They have been victims of widespread killings, rapes, and the destruction and looting of their homes and camps. The vast majority of IDPs and returnees lack access to basic infrastructure such as health centres, schools and roads, clean water, food, seeds, tools, clothes and straw to build houses. In North Kivu, the conflict in 2008 led them to lose access to their fields and so miss the planting season, and caused the disruption of education for many children. There were many reports of separated families in 2008, and few IDPs in North Kivu had the identity documents needed to help them to be reunited.

IDPs at particular risk include children, and particularly those separated from their family, and female-headed households and pregnant women. Women and children are at great risk of sexual violence, and children risk being recruited in armed groups. People from ethnic groups which are in the minority in their displacement area are also particularly vulnerable.

The government has tasked the Ministry for Solidarity and Humanitarian Affairs to address the situation of IDPs, but it has had no impact and there has been no legislation to support their protection. Some national NGOs have distributed food and other items, provided counselling for rape victims, and training and education; they have also worked with international NGOs and UN agencies to register and monitor IDPs.

International responsibility for IDP protection has fallen in the first instance to MONUC. The UN peacekeeping mission has had some successes, but was overwhelmed during the second half of 2008 due to a lack of manpower and clear rules of engagement to protect civilians. The cluster approach was introduced in 2006 and did lead to a better-coordinated response. UN agencies and international NGOs have provided assistance to IDPs in zones they could access, and have made efforts to reach IDPs in host communities despite the access difficulties.

Where peace has returned to their areas of origin, people have been able to return home and restart their lives with very little external help.

Ethiopia

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	200,000–300,000
Percentage of total population	0.2%–0.4%
Start of current displacement situation	2006
New displacement in 2008	700
Returns in 2008	50,000
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	169



Ethiopia has been vulnerable to conflict for many years. During the cold war it was used as a proxy state by the USSR, while in more recent years a border conflict with Eritrea, irredentist insurgencies and problems associated with ethnic boundaries and pastoral conflicts have led to displacements. Also, the US-led “war on terror” has found a willing partner in Ethiopia and critics suggest that this has helped enable the government to apply repressive practices which have led to displacement, especially in Somali region.

In 2008, displacement was reported in Somali and Oromiya regions, due to conflict between the army and the Ogaden National Liberation Front and the Oromo Liberation Front, and due to conflicts over pasture and water. 50,000 people reportedly fled territorial conflicts between members of the Borena, Somali and Guji tribes, and OCHA reported in December that there were 300,000 people displaced by conflict in the country. Most of them were in Somali, Oromiya and Gambella.

Most IDPs have relied on support from members of their family or community rather than national or international assistance. Some of them have moved to urban areas in search of livelihoods, but most have remained in rural conflict-affected areas.

The government’s exclusive control of humanitarian response mechanisms in the country has left many emergency situations either unreported or under-reported. Responses have been fragmented, inadequate and delayed, compounding the impact on affected populations and leaving their needs unmet. Situations of displacement resulting from internal conflicts have been obscured and the plight of conflict-induced IDPs quickly forgotten.

Depending on the causes and areas of displacement, Ethiopia’s conflict-induced IDPs have complex protection needs, due to the actions of government forces, allied militias and insurgent groups, and due to the recurrence of violence in pastoral areas over natural resources.

Pastoralists face specific protection needs given that their livelihoods rely heavily on mobility. They have historically been marginalised by successive Ethiopian governments promoting settled agriculture over nomadic lifestyles. Conflicts

have denied them freedom of movement and made it difficult for them to maintain their livelihoods, forcing them into sedentary destitution.

The prospects for Ethiopians internally displaced by conflict were not good at the end of 2008. For sustainable peace to prevail in areas of insurgency and conflict, the central government would have to do more to recognise the diversity of its population, and meet its constitutional commitment to ethnic federalism by devolving more powers to state governments. The government would also have to work more closely with international and national institutions to find durable solutions for them. Meanwhile, international donors should step up attempts to prevail on the government to respect and protect the human rights of conflict-affected groups.

In 2008, the Government of Ethiopia prepared a draft law that would criminalise human rights activity and seriously undermine civil society groups. If enacted, the law would bar both foreign and Ethiopian organisations receiving more than ten per cent of their funding from abroad from undertaking any activities in human rights, gender equality, children’s rights, disabled people’s rights, conflict resolution or the strengthening of judicial and law enforcement practices. The law would also exclude groups funded by Ethiopians living outside the country.

In 2008 there were no ministries or government focal points with a mandate to respond to conflict-induced displacement; there were no national NGOs or monitoring bodies following IDPs, and there were no laws or national policies to provide a framework for their protection. For the national response to improve, the government would have to establish or encourage these elements, after first of all acknowledging that populations have been displaced by conflict within the country’s borders. For this to happen, donors and international organisations need to maintain a proactive approach in engaging the government.

Kenya

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	300,000–600,000
Percentage of total population	0.8%–1.6%
Start of current displacement situation	2007
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	600,000 (February 2008)
New displacement in 2008	500,000
Returns in 2008	300,000 (Government estimate)
Causes of displacement	Generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	148



Generalised violence and human rights violations caused the displacement of an estimated 500,000 Kenyans in the wake of the December 2007 elections. The violence which followed the election was mostly concentrated around the Rift Valley, and to some extent in Nairobi slums and Nyanza and Western Provinces. In early 2008, swift international mediation culminated in a peace agreement and formation of a coalition government. However, the causes of the displacement are yet to be addressed conclusively, and tensions between communities remain high in areas such as the Rift Valley.

Violence in Kenya has recurred over many years, often due to grievances between the Kikuyu and indigenous communities like the Kalenjin and Maasai over land and the distribution of economic and political resources. Election-related violence in 1992 and 1997 also led to displacement in the Rift Valley.

In northern Kenya, small-scale displacement has been common due to fighting over water and pasture resources. A government security operation in Mandera in the north-east also led to displacement between September and December 2008. In the western area of Mount Elgon, displacement has since 2006 been caused by the activities of the Sabaot Land Defence Force militia and government operations to flush them out.

In the Rift Valley, many of the post-election IDPs spent 2008 in the large camps to which they fled, and subsequently in smaller transit sites to which the government encouraged them to move until the situation in their home areas allowed their return. According to the government, 300,000 IDPs returned home during the year; however, at the end of 2008 many of these were still relying on the support of host communities.

IDPs in the north-east faced added protection risks from security forces in what has historically been a “security zone”. Residents have fled in fear of mistreatment, and in September 2008 the Kenya National Commission for Human Rights (KNCHR) documented cases of gross human rights violations by security forces there. Pastoralists are also marginalised and pastoral areas lag behind in development. The State has made very little investment in transport, schools, health care or livelihoods development.

Generally, IDPs face myriad protection needs whether they are in camps, transit sites, or even where they have been

deemed to have returned or resettled. Livelihood opportunities in camps are virtually non-existent and education and health facilities are rudimentary. There were reports of school drop-outs, early marriages and child labour in most camps. Given that land disputes were at the heart of the conflict in all the IDPs’ areas of origin, many displaced people have remained unsuccessful in their attempts to return to their lands.

For durable solutions to become possible it would be necessary to address issues of land ownership and distribution across Kenya, strengthen democratic institutions, create employment opportunities, prosecute perpetrators of violence, and develop a coherent national policy on internal displacement. Nonetheless the government has started to address some of these issues. Kenya has ratified the Great Lakes Pact and is in the process of setting up local tribunals to deal with the issue of impunity. The Commission of Inquiry set up to look into the causes of the post-election violence has also recommended that a national IDP policy be enacted in line with the UN Guiding Principles.

The government’s return programme has been criticised for failing to adhere to the Guiding Principles in some instances. The Department for Mitigation and Resettlement in the Ministry of Special Programmes is responsible for resettling the post-election IDPs. The Department helped the majority of IDPs to return in 2008, but achieved little in its peace building or community relations roles, and it is yet to embark on a country-wide IDP profiling exercise, a necessary prerequisite to effective targeting of assistance.

The Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) became the official government partner and the first and principal organisation to respond to the crisis. The agency’s timely intervention and experience in responding to disasters such as drought and floods saved many lives. However, KRCS’ lack of experience in camp management left it ill-prepared for a crisis of this scale.

Though this crisis was not anticipated, the UN quickly adopted a cluster approach in January 2008, with UNHCR leading the protection cluster. The cluster approach has been broadly effective though critics have noted an excess of national coordination meetings in Nairobi at the expense of local coordination.



Nigeria

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Undetermined
Start of current displacement situation	1999
New displacement in 2008	At least 10,000
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	154

People have been forcibly displaced across Nigeria, for short or longer periods, since the end of military rule in 1999. Against a background of systematic patterns of inequality and intense competition for resources, Africa's most populous nation has had little success in bringing together its diverse ethnic, religious and linguistic groups. Perhaps the most significant cause of violence has been the entrenched division between people considered indigenous to an area, and those regarded as settlers. Indigenous groups have routinely prevented settlers from owning land or businesses, or accessing jobs and education, inevitably leading to tensions.

There were both new displacements and returns reported in 2008. In August, Nigeria handed over the Bakassi peninsula to Cameroon following a 2002 ruling of the International Court of Justice, and thousands of people fled to neighbouring states in Nigeria in fear of repression by Cameroonian security forces. The situation in the Niger Delta deteriorated, as violence between local militia groups and security forces, and inter-militia fighting, led to widespread destruction of property and the displacement of thousands of people. New incidents of post-electoral violence causing displacement were reported in 2008, the worst recorded being the inter-communal unrest in November in the city of Jos.

In Lagos and in Port Harcourt in the Niger Delta, the local governments have displaced an unknown number of residents in measures to combat local militia groups.

Only rough estimates of the number of IDPs and their locations are available, while relatively little is known of the fate of IDPs. Most have been supported by their family or friends, and only some groups have received assistance from local government bodies or the Nigerian Red Cross. However their protection needs appear to have been significant. Human rights organisations have regularly accused the security forces of failing to provide protection during outbreaks of inter-communal violence, while people displaced into makeshift camps in schools or army barracks have had to endure overcrowded and insanitary conditions.

Many children have been unable to go to school, and displaced women and girls have risked sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation. Though there is no evidence of

children being used in the armed forces, there have been reports of children being recruited by armed groups, especially in the Niger Delta.

In the absence of any national IDP policy, responses have generally featured gaps in support and competing mandates between institutions. The Federal Ministry of Special Duties coordinates the activities of the three bodies charged with responding to situations of internal displacement: the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) focuses on conflict prevention; the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), which coordinates emergency relief operations, has often supported IDPs in the emergency phase of a crisis but lacks the resources to assist people displaced for a longer period or to help returnees reintegrate, and it has no age-specific or gender-specific policies. The National Commission for Refugees (NCFR) has taken responsibility for post-emergency and long-term programmes for IDPs. However, the Nigerian Red Cross has often been first to provide aid, as it has the structure and the capacity necessary to respond at short notice.

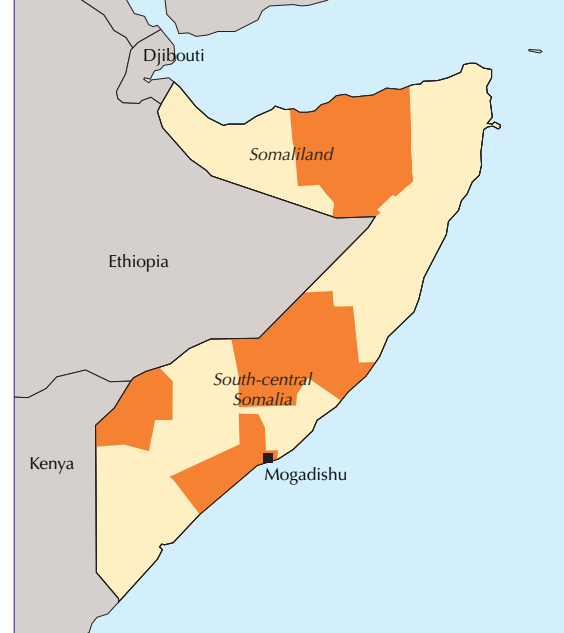
There has been no consistent drive for durable solutions; in many cases there has been no support for the rebuilding of homes and livelihoods in areas of return, and where IDPs have sought to integrate locally or resettle in another part of the country, material support has been scarce. Apart from addressing the root causes of communal violence, comprehensive compensation and restitution mechanisms and reconstruction efforts in areas of return are needed. These would depend on clearer mandates, greater institutional support to IDP focal points, better and more efficient funding, and greater staff capacity.

The UN in Nigeria has focused on development rather than humanitarian issues, where it feels there is more to be gained in tackling the recurrent conflicts. Coordination between humanitarian agencies at all levels has been inconsistent.

Somalia

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	1,300,000
Percentage of total population	13%
Start of current displacement situation	2007
New displacement in 2008	300,000
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal and internationalised armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	–



In December 2006 Ethiopian forces joined those of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to defeat the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) which had taken control of much of South-Central Somalia including the capital Mogadishu. Two years later, fighting between those forces and insurgent groups has displaced 1.3 million people and left nearly half the population in need of urgent humanitarian support. Some 300,000 people were displaced in 2008 as a result of continued fighting.

IDPs in South-Central Somalia face a profound humanitarian crisis. Insurgent groups operating from IDP camps have led to TFG soldiers and their Ethiopian allies attacking and harassing IDPs. Humanitarian access is severely limited by insecurity which makes it difficult to provide food aid and other life saving assistance to IDPs. IDP camps lack basic facilities like schools, health care, and water and sanitation, leading to widespread acute malnutrition and diarrhoea. Poor shelter compromises the safety and integrity of IDP families.

The position of displaced women and girls has been extremely precarious. This has been accentuated as the armed conflict has gone hand-in-hand with strict enforcement of clan rules, and many displaced families are headed by women, the men either being casualties of war or migrating in search of work. Women are disadvantaged when it comes to property ownership and inheritance, and the risk of girls missing out on education is higher due to a bias towards the education of boys.

This situation of IDPs worsened in 2008 due to the continuing conflict, the lack of any national institutions providing services or security, and the difficulties international humanitarian agencies have had in getting support to IDPs. While some people staying in towns were able to maintain livelihoods, IDPs fleeing to rural areas generally looked to other members of their clan to provide a degree of community support. However the resilience of communities was increasingly strained by a rise in food prices, currency devaluation, and greater insecurity. In this context, IDPs from minority groups such as the Bantu, Bajuni, and the Bravanese were particularly vulnerable as they were unable to benefit from the protection of major clans.

The durable peace needed for IDPs' situations to improve may take some years to achieve. UN member states have

not shown great enthusiasm in the establishment of a widely accepted peacekeeping force to supplement the current AU mission, nor has the international community's support brought about a government acceptable to the majority of Somalis. The limited capacity of the TFG and its inability to provide security in most parts of the country has greatly undermined its credibility and compromised the delivery of aid to displaced people and the general population.

Some national NGOs have partnered UN and other international agencies in programme implementation and protection monitoring. However they have suffered not only from a lack of funds and human resources capacity, but also (in the case of human rights organisations) from attacks by both the insurgents and government forces. Their continued contribution depends firstly on greater security and space to operate, and also on continued capacity building and improved funding.

Coordination between UN and other international agencies follows the cluster approach. The UNHCR-led protection cluster has collected data remotely to analyse and disseminate information on population movements, protection concerns and coping strategies. The efforts of the WASH cluster under UNICEF coordination have also been affected by shrinking access. UNICEF reported in December 2008 that some 70 per cent of people in Somalia had no access to safe water.

The UN has been facilitating a peace-building process in Djibouti since May 2008. However, the deep division between groups and regional strategic interests still stand in the way of a durable peace.

Sudan

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	4,900,000 (including 2,700,000 in Darfur, 1,200,000 in Khartoum and northern states, 420,000 in eastern states, 356,000 in transitional areas, 187,000 in Southern Sudan)
Percentage of total population	12.4%
Start of current displacement situation	1983 (Southern Sudan); 1997 (eastern states); 2003 (Darfur)
Peak number of IDPs (and year):	2,700,000 in Darfur (2008); 4,000,000 in Southern Sudan (2004)
New displacement in 2008	315,000 (Darfur); 187,000 (Southern Sudan); 50,000 (Abyei)
Returns in 2008	350,000 (Southern Sudan)
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflicts
Human development index	147

By the end of 2008, 4.9 million people in Sudan were displaced by the numerous conflicts which had afflicted the country for over two decades; together they made up the single largest internally displaced population in the world.

Sudan has long been the scene of internal conflicts instigated by various rebel groups in response to an unequal distribution of resources and a concentration of power in Khartoum. In Southern Sudan, armed conflict broke out soon after Sudan gained independence in 1956. That conflict ended in 1972, but in 1983 civil war started again between the government in Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). In 2005 the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed, establishing home rule for the southern states under the Autonomous Government of Southern Sudan, and providing for a referendum on secession in 2011. However the status of some border areas was not resolved by the CPA, and outbreaks of fighting continued to displace thousands of people in these areas in 2008.

In Eastern Sudan, conflict between the army and an insurgent coalition which became known as the Eastern Front continued from 1997 to 2006; by the end of 2008 there were still up to 420,000 people displaced within a region that is among the poorest in Sudan.

Armed conflict broke out in Darfur in 2003. As with Sudan's other conflicts, the causes of the war in Darfur lay in a history of neglect by the central government, and a failure to share resources and wealth. The dynamics of the conflict have changed over time, with the rebel movement fracturing into a number of rival factions.

People displaced within Sudan by all these conflicts have sought shelter within their own region or have fled to Khartoum and other cities in Sudan's northern states. In Southern Sudan, IDPs are mostly dispersed among host communities. Many IDPs in Darfur have sought refuge in organised camps and in smaller settlements that share land and resources with nearby villages, but substantial numbers live in towns and villages among the local population. IDPs in Eastern Sudan live in camps as well as in urban and semi-urban areas, notably

in Port Sudan and Kassala. Some of the people recently displaced in the so-called Transitional Areas (Blue Nile, Southern Kordofan and Abyei) are dispersed, while others are gathered in IDP settlements.

The Greater Khartoum area has continued to host an estimated 1.2 million people who fled the various conflicts. They have mostly supported themselves, both among Khartoum's urban poor and in four areas designated as "IDP camps" by the authorities. Since 2005, many southern IDPs have returned from Khartoum to the south, but some have since returned to Khartoum after failing to re-establish themselves in their places of origin. As in previous years, IDPs in Khartoum were at risk of new displacement in 2008, with the city authorities demolishing homes in the Mandela camp in November.

In 2008 the government was in the process of drafting a national IDP policy, setting out IDPs' rights during different phases of displacement and the required responses to their needs. In December, the international humanitarian community decided to adopt the cluster approach in Sudan. However, ultimately the prospect of solutions for the many displaced groups depended more on achieving sustainable peace across Sudan, and the delivery of effective development support to areas ravaged by long-term conflict.

Darfur

By far the largest displaced population in 2008 was in Darfur. The number of IDPs grew by some 315,000 during the course of the year, to 2.7 million, as attacks on civilians by the Sudan Armed Forces, allied militia groups and various rebel factions continued. The hybrid UN and African Union peacekeeping mission UNAMID took over from the beleaguered African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), but troop levels remained significantly lower than promised and security across the region continued to deteriorate. The security problems forced WFP to reduce rations for over three million people dependent on food aid, and led the UN to increase its security level in July,

leading to the withdrawal of staff and a reduction in access to displaced populations. By September, the UN could only reach 65 per cent of affected populations. NGOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent still working in UN “no-go” areas were facing rising levels of banditry and armed confrontation.

IDPs in Darfur faced many threats to their physical security and integrity and to their access to the basic necessities of life and other rights. In August, Sudanese government forces opened fire in Kalma camp, killing 33 civilians and wounding at least 85 people. Women and children in and around IDP camps and settlements were especially vulnerable. Rape and sexual violence continued to be systematic and widespread, while children continued to be recruited and used by all parties to the conflict. Human rights and protection monitors were frequently unable to enter areas due to widespread insecurity and to efforts by the government or armed groups to deny them access.

Some IDPs tried, without success, to prevent the 2008 census from taking place in Darfur, fearing that the results were unlikely to be representative as long as hundreds of thousands of people remained displaced, and that the census would instead legitimise the presence of people who had occupied IDPs’ homes and land. While the census went ahead, the results were yet to be released at the end of the year.

The prospects for Darfur’s IDPs remained grim in 2008. Efforts to obtain a peace agreement for Darfur remained without success, and the government continued to obstruct international relief efforts. UNAMID has hardly provided more effective protection to IDPs than the AU force which preceded it, and is unlikely to do so until the international community commits all the troops and equipment authorised by the UN Security Council.

Southern Sudan and transitional areas

The civil war led to the internal displacement of an estimated four million Southern Sudanese, while half a million fled abroad. The UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) estimated that by December 2008, a total of 2.4 million IDPs and refugees had returned to their homes in Southern Sudan. However, the achievement of durable solutions by these returnees was difficult to confirm in a region where access to clean water, basic services and livelihood opportunities were still very limited, and malnutrition widespread. In many cases, members of receiving communities, many of whom had themselves been displaced at some point during the war, were just as vulnerable as the returnees, and had little capacity to help returnees to rebuild their lives. IOM has estimated that ten per cent of returns have not lasted and have led to secondary displacement. At the same time, inter-communal conflicts over land and resources caused significant new displacement in Southern Sudan in 2008.

The authorities in Southern Sudan have so far focused exclusively on return as the only durable solution, but many IDPs would prefer to integrate in the towns they fled to, or to settle in other urban areas. Local authorities, including in the southern capital Juba, demolished some IDPs’ homes, notably where IDPs had been squatting on private land or on land designated

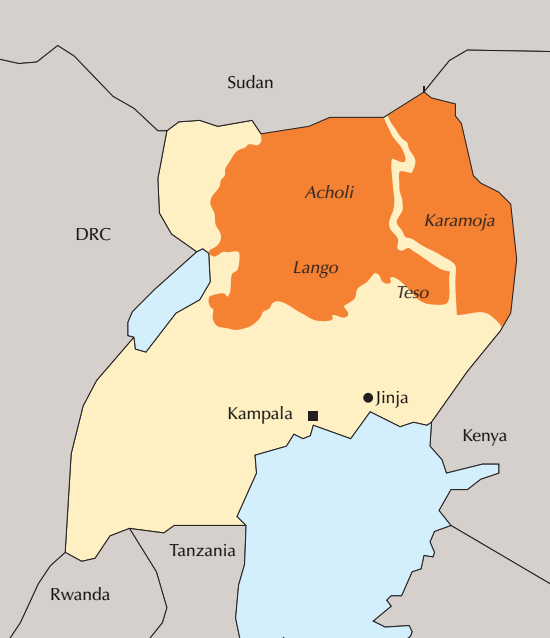


for public use. In some towns, including Yei and Nimule, wives and children of SPLA soldiers were living on land owned by people displaced by the war who now wanted to return. The local authorities tended not to get involved in these cases for fear of displeasing the SPLA.

The South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission has responsibility for the situation of IDPs and returnees, but it has been hampered by a lack of resources and manpower, and has faced allegations of corruption in the distribution of food aid. The Southern Sudan Human Rights Commission could in theory play an important role in protecting the rights of IDPs, but it too is struggling with a lack of manpower and resources.

The UN mission in Southern Sudan, UNMIS, has contributed to improving the situation of IDPs and returnees through its Protection of Civilians section and the Return, Reintegration and Recovery section. However UNMIS has been criticised for not doing enough to protect civilians, and the international response which the UN leads has also faced criticism for an excess of coordination activities at the expense of actual delivery of support.

Tensions have remained high in Abyei and Southern Kordofan, two of the “transitional areas” recognised by the CPA. In May 2008, fighting between northern and southern forces in the town of Abyei, which is close to lucrative oil fields and an important oil pipeline, led to the displacement of between 50,000 and 60,000 people and the almost complete destruction of the town. By December, up to 10,000 residents had returned, but fresh fighting forced almost all of them to flee again. By the end of 2008 it was estimated that over 200,000 people remained internally displaced in Blue Nile State, and more than 100,000 in Southern Kordofan.



Uganda

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	869,000 (Northern Uganda)
Percentage of total population	2.7%
Start of current displacement situation	1988
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	1,800,000 (2005)
New displacement in 2008	0 (Northern Uganda); undetermined (Karamoja)
Returns in 2008	400,000
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict (Northern Uganda), generalised violence and human rights violations (Karamoja)
Human development index	154

Around half of the 1.8 million people originally displaced in camps in northern Uganda's Acholi, Lango and Teso sub-regions had returned to their home areas by the end of 2008 (with 400,000 IDPs returning in 2008 alone), two years after the government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) signed the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. The conflict began in 1988, but most of the displacement dates back to 1996, when people were forced into camps under the government's "protected villages" policy, and 2002 and 2004, when military operations against the LRA caused further waves of displacement. Unknown numbers of people fled to towns and cities in other parts of Uganda.

Neighbouring Karamoja sub-region saw further displacement in 2008 due to inter-clan fighting among Karamojong pastoralists and an ongoing disarmament campaign by the army which was accompanied by human rights violations.

The sustainability of the return movements in northern Uganda is not yet guaranteed. The LRA's leader Joseph Kony repeatedly failed to show up to sign a final peace agreement, and while it carried out no attacks in northern Uganda in 2008, the LRA has continued to kill and abduct civilians in Southern Sudan, DRC and CAR from bases in DRC.

Moreover, while the situation in the IDP camps has been far from perfect, returnees face difficult circumstances in their home areas too, not least the severe lack of basic services, including access to clean water, clinics and schools. In Lira district of Lango sub-region, malnutrition and mortality rates increased from 2006 to 2007 as IDPs who had left the camps faced reduced access to food and services. Many children in the Acholi sub-region have stayed behind in the camps to continue their education, putting them at risk of abuse. There is an urgent need for infrastructure to enhance livelihood opportunities, for example by improving access to local markets.

Some returnees are facing difficulties in asserting their customary ownership of land, including widows, orphans and members of other vulnerable groups such as former child soldiers and single women with children born out of wedlock. Meanwhile, disputes between IDPs and the owners of land on which the camps were based have hampered local integration as a durable solution. The authorities have not done enough to solve these

disputes and so facilitate local integration; instead they have mainly pressed for return as the only durable solution.

A disproportionate number of the IDPs who are still in the camps are elderly, sick and disabled people, including people living with HIV/AIDS. They face serious obstacles in returning home, such as their inability to build a hut and lack of access to health care in the return areas. At the same time, the support structures in the camps are disintegrating because so many other people have returned home. While guidelines for the phasing out of camps have been adopted, at the end of 2008 the authorities had yet to develop a comprehensive plan for addressing these vulnerable people's needs.

To address the causes of the conflict, the government must develop the north to bring it up to the same levels as the rest of the country. However, the postponement of the implementation of the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) for Northern Uganda until July 2009 made this prospect more distant.

The impact of Uganda's national IDP policy has so far been limited. The policy designates the Department of Disaster Preparedness and Refugees and the District Disaster Management Committees as the national and local lead agencies for IDPs, but the government has allocated insufficient resources to these bodies. In practice the international humanitarian community has taken the lead in responding to the crisis.

The Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) has fulfilled a valuable role in protecting IDP rights through advising the government on the national IDP policy and reporting on the implementation of the policy in its annual reports to Parliament.

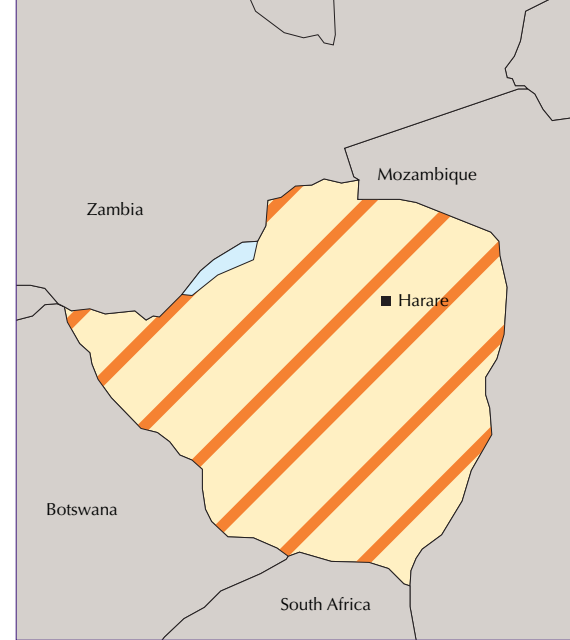
Uganda was one of the pilot countries for humanitarian reform, with the cluster approach being adopted in January 2006. UNHCR is the lead agency on protection. While the cluster approach has generally led to better coordination, humanitarian agencies and Uganda's donors have struggled to formulate an adequate strategy to manage the transition from emergency to recovery and development.

By the end of the year, the clusters were in the process of formulating phase-out strategies, and OCHA was planning to end its presence in northern Uganda by September 2009.

Zimbabwe

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	570,000–1,000,000
Percentage of total population	4.2%–7.4%
Start of current displacement situation	2000 (fast-track land reform programme); 2005 (Operation Murambatsvina); 2006 (Operation Chikoro-koza Chaperera); 2008 (political violence)
New displacement in 2008	36,000
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Generalised violence (2008 political displacement), human rights violations (all other displacement)
Human development index	151



It is impossible to say with confidence how many Zimbabweans are internally displaced. UNDP estimated that a million farm workers and their families lost their homes and livelihoods as a result of the fast-track land reform programme which started in 2000 and which led to the almost complete collapse of the commercial farming sector in Zimbabwe. The UN estimated that 570,000 people were made homeless by the urban demolitions of Operation Murambatsvina (“clear the filth”) in 2005, while the government destroyed the homes of thousands of informal mine workers in Operation Chikorokoza Chaperera (“stop the gold panning”) in late 2006 and early 2007. Estimates of the number of people displaced by the 2008 electoral violence range between 36,000 and 200,000. To complicate matters, a substantial proportion of the displaced have been displaced multiple times by successive operations. Thus many displaced farm workers who went to the towns and cities or to mining areas were later caught up in Operation Murambatsvina or Operation Chikorokoza Chaperera. Moreover, some people who were internally displaced have since joined the estimated three to four million Zimbabweans who have left the country altogether.

The ZANU-PF government led by President Mugabe refused to acknowledge that its policies and actions had led to internal displacement. Indeed it objected to the use of the phrase “internally displaced people” with reference to displaced Zimbabweans, and agencies used the phrase “mobile and vulnerable populations” instead. As a result, it has been impossible for comprehensive surveys of IDPs in Zimbabwe to be conducted. However, the 2007 Food Security and Nutrition Assessment conducted by the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) found that about eight per cent of respondents had been involuntarily displaced in the past five years. Based on recent population estimates for Zimbabwe of between 11 and 12 million people, this would indicate a total number of IDPs in Zimbabwe of between 880,000 and 960,000 people.

Political violence in the run-up to the second round of the presidential elections in June 2008 led to the displacement of tens of thousands as the homes of suspected opposition supporters were burned down and people were

threatened, attacked and forced to flee the constituencies in which they were registered to vote. By the end of the year most of these displaced people had returned home, but some continued to fear for their safety because of ongoing political violence. Further farm invasions connected to the political violence led to new displacement of both farmers and farm workers during the year. Meanwhile a ban on humanitarian operations between June and August 2008 made it impossible for agencies to reach beneficiaries including displaced people.

Lack of access to adequate shelter, food, clean water and medical services are all serious concerns for IDPs, as are access to education and livelihoods. However, with the rapidly deteriorating economic situation in Zimbabwe which has brought the country to the brink of a humanitarian emergency, many non-displaced people are faced with similar problems. Estimates put the unemployment rate at the end of 2008 at 94 per cent, and Zimbabwe’s health and education systems had all but collapsed.

Although almost the entire population could thus be considered as vulnerable, IDPs are likely to find it much harder to rebuild their lives following political changes and to make use of new opportunities brought by an improvement in Zimbabwe’s general economic situation. Displaced people, and particularly those people who have been displaced more than once, start from a much lower base than non-displaced people. At the same time, tens of thousands of former farm workers and their families who have nowhere else to go are currently stuck on commercial farms that no longer operate due to the fast-track land reform programme; they continue to be at risk of displacement by whoever claims ownership of the land.

UN agencies and international NGOs have struggled to respond to the needs of IDPs, in part because of obstruction by the authorities and in part because of a lack of clear arrangements for leadership on IDP protection. Durable solutions for Zimbabwe’s displaced people will depend on effective urban planning and the adoption of new building regulations for towns and cities, as well as a new programme for the distribution of farm land.

Rwanda

In 1998 and 1999 around 650,000 people, most of them Hutus, were displaced into makeshift camps in the north-western prefectures of Ruhengeri and Gisenyi, when an insurgency there was put down by the Tutsi-dominated government. In 2000, the UN considered that “governmental and international efforts to stabilise the situation through durable solutions have advanced beyond the threshold of what still could be called internal displacement”. These efforts consisted largely of the implementation of the 1996 “villagisation” policy to relocate all Rwandans from scattered homesteads into new villages.

However, difficult conditions in the villages subsequently called into question whether the resettled IDPs had really achieved durable solutions. IDMC observed in 2005 that many of them still lived in inadequate conditions.

In late 2008, the return of refugees from DRC created new reintegration challenges and the risk of their renewed displacement in Burundi. In eastern DRC, joint operations from November between the governments of the two countries weakened the Rwandan Hutu rebels of the Democra-

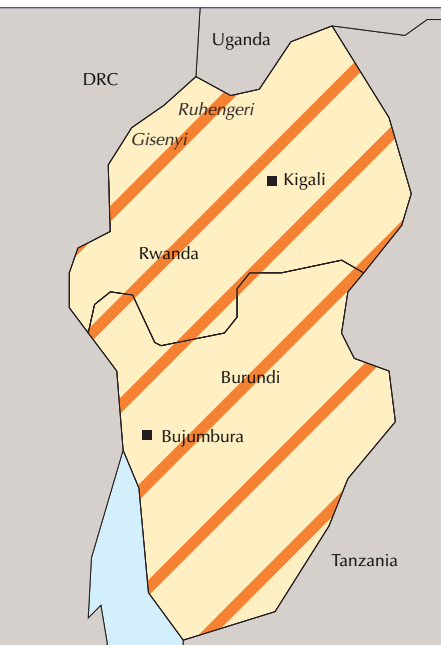
Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Undetermined
Start of current displacement situation	1997
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	650,000 (1999)
New displacement in 2008	Undetermined
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal and internationalised armed conflict, generalised violence
Human development index	165

tic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR) and presented a new chance for thousands of refugees to return to Rwanda.

Some refugees had been prevented from returning home by the FDLR, but they had also been reluctant to return because did not trust the Rwandan Gacaca courts and did not think they would be able to reintegrate. The prospects of returnees and those resettled depends on continuing reconciliation and the equitable distribution and management of scarce land.

Despite ongoing ethnic mistrust and regional instability, their prospects appear fair. The Rwandan government encourages returns and considers returnees as a vulnerable group, at least in the context of economic development.



fighting between the army and rebel groups. The sites are being gradually transformed into villages and local authorities are often reluctant to consider the inhabitants displaced.

In April 2008, the shaky ceasefire between the government and the Party for the Liberation of Hutu People National Forces for Liberation (Palipehutu-FNL) broke, and Palipehutu-FNL attacks in and around Bujumbura killed more than 30 people and caused the temporary displacement of several thousand. In addition, an unknown number of people returned or were expelled from Tanzania, where they had fled from conflict in 1972, and they were housed in temporary accommodation centres as their homes had been occupied.

Most IDPs are struggling to support themselves, and many of their difficulties are shared by the rest of the population in one of the ten least-developed countries in the world. In this context women and children’s enjoyment of rights is often at risk, and sexual violence remains widespread. IDPs have additional problems: those without valid property documents (such as those living in IDP sites with unclear legal status or built

Most of the 100,000 people who remain in IDP sites across the country were displaced in the 1990s and early 2000s by ethnic violence and

Burundi

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	100,000
Percentage of total population	1.1%
Start of current displacement situation	1993
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	800,000 (1999)
New displacement in 2008	Undetermined
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, human rights violations
Human development index	172

on land belonging to someone else) risk being evicted. Single female heads of households especially struggle to raise their family and ensure the basic necessities of life in IDP sites.

The international agencies in Burundi adopted the cluster approach in October 2008, with UNHCR taking the lead protection role. UNHCR has funded and guided the Project of Support for Repatriation and reinsertion of War Affected Persons (PARES!), a government agency providing basic housing and infrastructure for returning refugees and IDPs. Since 2006, the UN Peace Building Commission has also worked with the government to support post-conflict recovery, including for IDPs, but it has had no measurable impact on their lives.

Algeria

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Undetermined
Start of current displacement situation	1992
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	1,500,000 (2002)
New displacement in 2008	Undetermined
Returns in 2008	1,400 reported
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict
Human development index	100

An unknown number of people – estimates range between 500,000 and 1.5 million – have been displaced in Algeria since 1992 due to ongoing conflict between insurgent Islamist groups and the government. In particular, large-scale massacres of civilians between 1996 and 1998 by the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) forced many Algerians to flee affected areas. Security has improved considerably during recent years, but Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) emerged in 2007 with attacks against Western targets and the Algerian security forces. In 2008 low-level armed conflict continued but there were no reports of new displacement.

Because of limited access to displacement-affected areas, no reliable figures are available. The newspaper El Watan suggested there were 500,000 IDPs in 2004; since then there has been no

official reference to internal displacement. The Government considers that practically all IDPs have returned.

In partnership with international development agencies, the government committed to build some 475,000 new homes between 2005 and 2009 to facilitate the durable return of both economic migrants and IDPs to rural areas affected by the conflict. In 2008, infrastructural rehabilitation allowed for the return of some 240 families to the commune of Sidi Moussa.

There have been no reports of projects to promote local integration or resettlement to another area of the country, and a number of obstacles remain in the way of durable return. AQIM is still active, especially in the provinces of Boumerdés, Tizi-Ouzou, Bejaïa, Batna, Khenchela and in the regions of Aurés and Jijel. The north of the country is contaminated by an unknown number of home-made explosives laid by insurgents and by some 15,000 antipersonnel mines laid by the Algerian army. Finally, notwithstanding reconstruction programmes, people have been discouraged from returning to their home villages with no safe drinking water, poor general infrastructure and a lack of health facilities. Durable solutions are unlikely while the armed conflict and the state of emergency (in place since 1992) continue.



Eritrea

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Undetermined
Start of current displacement situation	1998
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	1,100,000 (2000)
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	20,000–30,000
Causes of displacement	International armed conflict
Human development index	164

Massive displacement was witnessed in May 1998 as a result of border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Out of a population of 3.8 million Eritreans, over a million people were uprooted from their homes in the regions of Gash Barka and Debub.

Following a ceasefire in 2000 most of the people displaced returned to their home areas. In March 2001, 4,200 UN peacekeeping troops were deployed under the auspices of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) to monitor the ceasefire, and in April 2002 an independent Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission (EEBC) announced a virtual demarcation of the border which placed Badme in Eritrea. This decision was contested by the Ethiopian government, and no progress was made towards the implementation of the decision.

UN sources have reported that by March 2008, all IDPs had either returned or been resettled in new villages, though it was acknowledged that some might still be living with hosts.

The government in 2005 instituted a new policy which promoted self-reliance and discouraged international involvement, and the number of NGOs operating in the country fell sharply. UNDP did manage to engage the government in assisting with return and resettlement in areas of development, and remains as the lead UN agency on the reintegration of IDPs. However, the uneasy relationship between the government and UN and other international agencies has undermined efforts to find durable solutions for IDPs.

Concerns have been voiced about the viability of the returns, in particular because limited access to infrastructure, and livelihoods have threatened their sustainability. In 2007, UNICEF called for the urgent delivery of emergency items and basic social services for some 10,000 returnees.

For sustainable peace to be achieved, both Eritrea and Ethiopia need to have constructive dialogue and honour the binding decision of the Boundary Commission.



Senegal

Senegal's Casamance region, to the south of Gambia, has witnessed protracted low-intensity conflict since 1982 between government forces and the separatist Movement of Democratic Forces in the Casamance (MFDC). A 2004 peace agreement was rejected by an MFDC faction, and occasional armed skirmishes, violent attacks and political killings continued into 2008, leaving an unknown number of people still displaced across Casamance. Current estimates range between 10,000 and 70,000 IDPs.

The extent to which those who were displaced merit a specific response is not clear, as the conflict has generated different types of vulnerable groups, including people remaining in conflict areas. IDPs were being supported by family members or host communities while commuting in some cases to their home areas by day, to tend their orchards and engage in those agricultural activities that did not require their constant presence. Long-standing land disputes and population movements have generally complicated their efforts to access compensation for lost property or assert their land rights.

According to the evidence available, most IDP returns have been spontaneous and unassisted, to insecure com-

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	10,000–70,000
Percentage of total population	0.1%–0.6%
Start of current displacement situation	1982
New displacement in 2008	Undetermined
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict
Human development index	153

munities without basic infrastructure. In some cases in 2008, armed men attacked IDPs to prevent them from returning. Because of landmines planted by the MFDC, freedom of movement has generally remained limited. Gender-based violence is believed to be widespread, but has tended to go unreported.

Senegal has no IDP-mandated bodies but regional development plans have targeted IDPs among others. Because of the lack of access, international organisations have outsourced most programme implementation to local NGOs. The ICRC resumed as the only international body present in conflict areas in April 2008, after a fatal mine accident in 2006.

For the situation to improve, recovery and reintegration efforts should be undertaken regardless of the final resolution of the conflict, based on a clear profile of the IDP population.



The internal displacement of up to 500,000 people in Liberia was caused by the 14-year civil war that ended in 2003 with the Accra Peace Agree-

ment. IDP camps were officially closed in 2006 and the return of IDPs and refugees was completed in mid-2007. However, later that year, UNHCR and NGOs found some 23,000 people remaining in and around former IDP camps, of whom 16,000 had received a return package but had not managed to restart their lives in return areas. In addition, an undetermined number of people who had found refuge in public buildings in the capital Monrovia were left out of the registration process, and were still displaced there at the end of 2008. Small-scale displacements due to land-related conflicts were reported in 2008.

Liberia is facing extraordinary reconstruction challenges and many of the vulnerabilities shown by the remaining IDPs and returnees are shared by the rest of the population. As evidenced by the return of some IDPs to their former camps, there is a severe lack of basic services and infrastructure in areas of return. There is also continuing insecurity, with clashes between rival ethnic groups over land ownership becoming increasingly frequent. Durable solutions will depend on better services and infrastructure and the peaceful resolution of land conflicts, and

Liberia

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Undetermined
Start of current displacement situation	1989
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	500,000 (2003)
New displacement in 2008	Undetermined
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflicts, generalised violence
Human development index	176

improved security of tenure for those who exercised their right to local integration or settlement in another part of the country.

The Guiding Principles were adopted into national legislation in 2004 but there is still room for better governance and wider access to justice to guarantee durable solutions, while the remaining IDPs are yet to have their needs assessed. The introduction in 2006 of the cluster approach, and the creation of an Inter-Agency Standing Committee country team including non-UN organisations, appear to have addressed some of the initial coordination problems. The current challenge is, however, to implement the cluster's phase-out strategy effectively, to enable the transition to recovery and development without leaving unsustainable gaps in assistance.

Republic of Congo

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Up to 7,800
Percentage of total population	Up to 0.2%
Start of current displacement situation	1992
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	800,000 (1998)
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	0
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict
Human development index	130

Up to 800,000 people were displaced during the 1990s by conflict in the Pool region around Brazzaville, between government forces and rebels originating from among the Lari people. Fighting flared up again in 2002 but transformation of the rebel group into a political party gave hope by 2007 of an end to the violence. By 2006, according to a government estimate, only 7,800 people remained displaced in Pool. Since then no new assessments of the number of IDPs have been conducted, but the UN estimated in 2008 that the number had decreased considerably, and reported that there were no more IDPs in its last Displaced Populations Report of December 2008.

However, IDPs have long been hard to identify as most sought refuge with families and host communities, often in the

Angola

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Undetermined
Start of current displacement situation	1975 (Angola proper); 1975, 2002 (Cabinda)
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	4,100,000 (2001)
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	0
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflicts, human rights violations
Human development index	157

According to the government and most international observers, internal displacement in Angola proper (excluding the exclave of Cabinda) has come to an end. At the height of the civil wars which raged from 1975 and 2002 between the governing Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), over four million people were displaced, but since 2005 displacement and return have no longer been monitored.

However, not all IDPs found truly durable solutions to their situation. Many settled in the towns and cities they had originally fled to, hoping to build livelihoods there, and so many

Bacongo and Makelekélé neighbourhoods of the capital Brazzaville. Sites in which IDPs received assistance from humanitarian organisations, in Brazzaville or elsewhere, were closed by the government following a small-scale return exercise.

In 2008 any remaining IDPs and returnees continued to share considerable hardship with other residents of Pool. For example, due to extreme poverty and the government's incapacity to deliver basic services, less than half of the population had access to clean water. According to Médecins Sans Frontières in 2007, the medical needs of the region were still indicative of a chronic crisis. While the situation is no longer considered as a humanitarian emergency, two million dollars were nonetheless disbursed to UN agencies in 2008 by the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), to assist returnees and local communities, as well as 50,000 refugees from DRC. The funds were used to provide health care services including emergency obstetrics, agriculture and food security support, and nutrition, water and sanitation projects.



of the urban poor are former IDPs living on land that is not theirs. Over the past six years they have frequently experienced forced evictions.

Angola's reconstruction has progressed slowly, but in the rural areas most affected by the war and resulting displacement, the enduring inadequacy of infrastructure and social services have made it very difficult for returnees and others to access health care, livelihoods and education. In an often forced and hasty return and reintegration process, many IDPs returned to villages with conditions well below the standards outlined in the government's "Norms for the Resettlement of the Internally Displaced".

The latest information on IDPs in Cabinda, the small, oil-rich exclave to Angola's north, dates from the end of 2005, when 19,500 people were unable or unwilling to return home because of a low-intensity separatist conflict between government forces and the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave in Cabinda (FLEC). Despite a 2006 peace agreement, serious human rights violations have since been carried out by both sides.

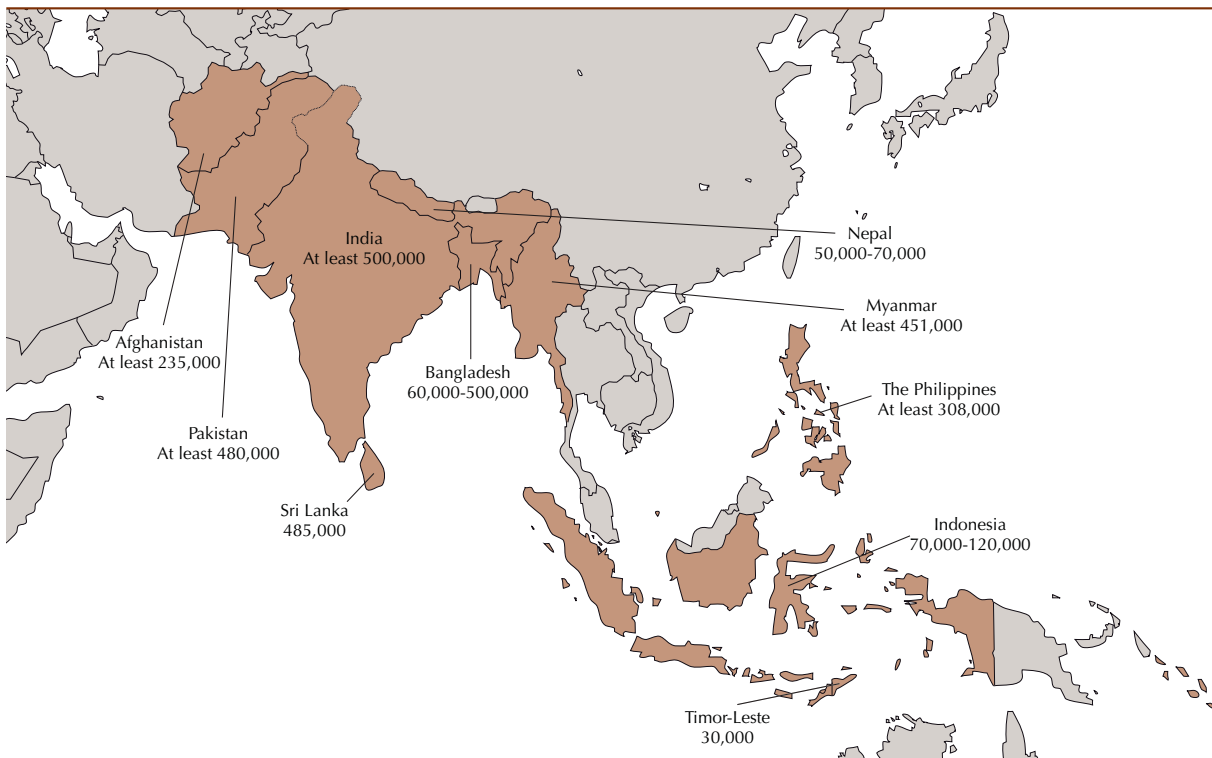


An elderly woman in front of her home in an IDP camp in Kabul, Afghanistan
(Photo: Manoocher Deghati, IRIN, June 2008).

Internal displacement in South and South-East Asia

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Internal displacement in South and South-East Asia



Some 3.5 million people in South and South-East Asia were estimated to be internally displaced by violence or human rights abuses at the end of 2008, and the majority of them were trapped in situations of protracted displacement. This represented an increase of around 400,000 since the end of 2007. In addition to the ten countries monitored by IDMC, displacement was also reported in other countries of the region such as Thailand and Laos, although little or no information was available.

Nearly 1.5 million people were newly displaced in South and South-East Asia during the year, mainly as a result of existing conflicts that escalated. Displacement was particularly significant in the Philippines where over 600,000 people fled an upsurge in fighting between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation front (MILF) and in Pakistan where perhaps 310,000 people were forced from their homes due to fighting between the government and pro-Taliban forces. In Sri Lanka, an estimated 230,000 people were displaced as a result of the intensification of the conflict between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Tens of thousands of people were also estimated to be displaced in Afghanistan and in Myanmar where the conflicts showed no signs of ending. In addition, new conflicts in India's Assam state between the Bodo tribal people and Muslim settlers, and in Orissa state between the majority Hindu population and Christian min-

orities, led to the displacement of at least 220,000 people during the year.

Conflict-induced displacement in South and South-East Asia was mainly caused by fighting between government forces and rebel groups striving for autonomy or control of the state, or trying to resist assimilation or migration policies resulting in their political and economic marginalisation. Competition for land and other natural resources, and the exclusion of ethnic or religious minorities from the economic development process, lay at the heart of many of the conflicts of the region. In addition to national armies and rebel groups, agents of displacement often included militias or vigilante groups but also communities mobilised along religious or ethnic lines competing for power and access to scarce resources or fighting for recognition of their rights.

Millions of people are also displaced each year in the region due to development projects linked to infrastructure projects, the production of energy or the extraction of natural resources, often in resource-rich areas inhabited by ethnic minorities and indigenous groups. Forced to abandon their land by authorities who did not recognise their ownership rights, many of these groups end up impoverished and further marginalised. This has at times led to increased tension with other communities, in particular migrant groups, and sometimes resulted in further conflict and displacement.

IDPs in a number of countries in 2008 faced risks to their safety due to fighting, counter-insurgency campaigns or persecution by armed actors, including governments who were themselves the perpetrators of human rights violations. While more efforts were reportedly made by coalition forces in Afghanistan to differentiate between civilians and combatants during airstrikes, the sharp increase in munitions dropped by air in southern provinces did result in significant civilian casualties, property damage and displacement. In the Philippines, civilians in conflict areas, including IDPs, were at risk of attacks by rebels of the MILF and retaliation by the army, which sometimes considered as legitimate targets civilians suspected of associating with rebels. Civilians, including IDPs, were also sometimes used as human shields by insurgents looking to protect themselves from military attacks. In Sri Lanka, the LTTE prevented an estimated 150,000 IDPs from leaving the Vanni where they remained trapped.

In most countries, the lack of monitoring of return or re-settlement movements made it difficult to estimate how many were able to return or find durable solutions during the year. The majority of those who were reported to return did so after a relatively short period of displacement, as in the Philippines where 250,000 returned after a few weeks or months. In Sri Lanka an estimated 126,000 people displaced since 2006 managed to return to areas no longer affected by conflict. Only in Timor-Leste was return linked to a near resolution of the displacement situation. Out of the 16,000 families that registered in early 2008 to take part in the government return programme, by the end of the year 11,700 had received the cash compensation package and left the camps set up in the capital Dili to return home.

Return and other durable solutions were limited in many countries by insecurity (as in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Myanmar and the Philippines), limited freedom of movement (in Sri Lanka and India), unresolved land and property issues

(in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Indonesia) and the lack of political will and assistance by governments (India, Nepal). The majority of the displaced in the region had been living in displacement for years with few prospects for return or rehabilitation. Many were living in camps or relocation sites with limited access to basic services, land or livelihood opportunities.

Among those experiencing the most critical lack of access to basic necessities were IDPs hiding in jungles, as in Myanmar, Indonesia's Papua province and India's Orissa state, and those trapped in a conflict zone, as in the Vanni in Sri Lanka. These IDPs had acute need of food, shelter, water and health care.

Female IDPs faced particular vulnerabilities such as in eastern Myanmar where access to maternal health care was extremely limited and poor nutrition, anaemia and malaria prevalent.

IDP children faced various obstacles to education, including school buildings destroyed by the conflict or turned into relief or military camps as in the Philippines. In Afghanistan, however, displacement led to an increase in the number of female students as IDP families from rural areas congregated in provincial capitals to escape the insurgency, and girls had more opportunities to access schools.

The response provided by most governments of the region remained insufficient to meet the needs and protect the rights of the displaced. Insecurity and restrictions imposed by governments in countries such as Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar prevented aid agencies from accessing displaced people caught in the midst of combat. While ongoing efforts were reported in some countries to draft IDP laws (as in Sri Lanka and the Philippines), in countries such as Afghanistan and Nepal where national IDP strategies and policies already existed, their effectiveness was limited by poor coordination, insufficient resources or the absence of any implementation guidelines.

Countries	Number of IDPs (rounded)	Government figures	UN figures	Other figures	Comments
Afghanistan	At least 235,000		At least 235,000 (information from 2008 UNHCR profiling under auspices of National IDP Task Force and Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation)		The figure largely reflects a protracted caseload, and does not cover most of those displaced since around 2004, including by the conflict between the Afghan army and international coalition forces and the armed opposition groups, due to severe limits on access to conflict areas. It also does not reflect "invisible" IDPs in large cities.
Bangladesh	60,000–500,000	500,000 (Government Task Force, 2000)		60,000 (Amnesty International, 2000)	In 2000 the government reported 128,364 displaced families, or 500,000-550,000 IDPs, in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, though Amnesty International and others reported an IDP figure as low as 60,000. No more recent information is available.
India	At least 500,000			At least 500,000 (IDMC, December 2008)	Compiled from various available figures.

Indonesia	70,000–120,000			70,000–120,000 (IDMC, March 2009)	Compiled from various available figures.
Myanmar	At least 451,000			451,000 (Thailand Burma Border Consortium, October 2008)	Estimate relates to rural areas of eastern Myanmar and does not include IDPs in the rest of the country. The estimated number of IDPs in the country is likely to be over one million.
Nepal	50,000–70,000		50,000–70,000 (OCHA, January 2009)		
Pakistan	At least 480,000		232,700 IDPs registered with UN agencies in North West Frontier Province (December 2008), and an estimated 200,000 in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (September 2008).	50,000–60,000 in Balochistan (The Economist, April 2008)	UN figure for NWFP does not reflect the entire population of IDPs living outside camps in NWFP; many IDPs in FATA were not accessible to UN agencies.
Philippines	At least 308,000	308,000 (National Disaster Coordinating Council, December 2008)			Only includes people displaced as a result of the August 2008 upsurge in fighting between the MILF and government forces in Mindanao. It does not include people displaced in previous years and who have not been able to fund durable solutions, nor people displaced by clashes between government forces and communist NPA rebels in Mindanao and elsewhere.
Sri Lanka	485,000			485,400 (figure provided by humanitarian agencies operational in Sri Lanka)	This figure is as of October 2008 and includes 277,300 people newly displaced or remaining in displacement during and after 2006. The rest of the IDP population (208,100 people) was displaced prior to 2002.
Timor-Leste	30,000	30,000 (Ministry of Social Services, December 2008)			In the absence of any registration or profiling exercise, the number of remaining IDPs at the end of 2008 was unknown. What is available is that 16,000 households registered to take part in the return programme and 11,700 of them had received the recovery package by the end of 2008. This leaves 4,300 households or approximately 30,000 people still waiting.



Afghanistan

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	At least 235,000
Percentage of total population	At least 0.8%
Start of current displacement situation	2002
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	1,200,000 (2002)
New displacement in 2008	Over 42,000
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	International armed conflict, generalised violence
Human development index	–

Over 235,000 people remained displaced in Afghanistan in 2008. The number of IDPs was as high as 1.2 million in 2002 when the Taliban government fell, and since then most people have returned spontaneously to areas of origin. However during 2008 new internal displacement continued, due to both continuing conflict and the secondary displacement of refugees returning from Pakistan and Iran.

IDPs in 2008 were spread across the country, either gathered in camps, or dispersed in squatter settlements or in cramped conditions with relatives in the fast-growing cities. An estimated 185,000 people displaced prior to and just after the fall of the Taliban were living in camp-like settlements in the south, west and south-east.

It has been impossible to accurately determine the number of people displaced by the conflict between international coalition forces and armed opposition groups since 2006, as there is little access to conflict zones. Since 2006, the conflict has spread and intensified and insurgent groups have sometimes deployed in villages to shield themselves from counter-attack; “rapid-response” air strikes have sometimes destroyed property or forced civilians to flee their homes.

An unknown number of people have also been displaced due to conflict between different tribal or ethnic groups or within a single tribe, over disputed resources or over disagreements which have spread across communities. At least 33,000 people were in 2008 living in secondary displacement after returning from Pakistan and Iran, as they were unable to return to insecure and impoverished areas of origin.

The protection concerns of IDPs should be seen against a context of widespread poverty and insecurity; nonetheless many face particular threats without the support links that other communities have developed and increasingly outside the reach of humanitarian agencies.

The physical security of IDPs and others caught in the continuing combat is at risk, and people may face multiple cycles of displacement. Attacks by all the combatants in violation of international humanitarian law have repeatedly resulted in the killing and injury of civilians and the destruction of their property, and forced people to become displaced and prevented their return. In addition, people displaced by the conflict have reported being targeted by insurgents as collaborators. Many IDPs have struggled to access food,

clean water, essential medicines and basic shelter against the unforgiving climate.

Livelihood opportunities remain out of reach for many of the returnees in secondary displacement in remote areas where they have no transport or family connections; there may be better opportunities in cities where they could integrate to some extent. Those who have returned since 2006 in particular have had low levels of education, skills and assets. Meanwhile, land and property disputes arising from the illegal occupation of houses or land, or their reallocation to other families, have continued to prevent the return of refugees and IDPs.

The prospects of improved situations for IDPs in Afghanistan are still distant, as the conflict must abate before humanitarian and development agencies can help to tackle the problems facing all Afghans. Conditions for those living in protracted or secondary displacement are unlikely to change unless major economic and resources issues are addressed. The government adopted an IDP strategy in 2003 but the effective management of returnee and IDP affairs remained a challenge. Nonetheless, their prospects improved in 2008, as the government adopted a policy to allow protracted IDPs to integrate locally, and a national task force co-chaired by the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation commissioned a profiling and analysis of the displacement situation and needs of IDPs.

The UN in 2008 implemented the cluster coordination system. UNHCR helped the national IDP task force carry out the profiling exercise and develop durable solutions for the protracted caseload. Following the profiling the government may develop a new and comprehensive IDP policy, but its success depends on institutional capacity and the resourcing to support all IDPs including those dispersed in cities or elsewhere; so far the government and its UN partners have avoided setting up new camps so as not to encourage people to leave their homes in search of aid.

All UN and many humanitarian agencies aiding IDPs have worked under UNAMA, a primarily political mission. In 2008, OCHA announced a decision to take up the central coordination role. But despite progress in coordinating the response, access to IDPs has remained very difficult, not only because the government does not control the entire territory, but also because humanitarian workers have been targeted by insurgents.

Bangladesh

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	60,000–500,000
Percentage of total population	Up to 0.3%
Start of current displacement situation	1997
New displacement in 2008	A few hundred
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, human rights violations
Human development index	147



In 1976, armed conflict broke out in Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) as the government rejected indigenous Jumma tribal people's demands for greater recognition and constitutional safeguards. As the conflict escalated, the government began relocating poor and landless Bengalis from the plains to the CHT, including over 400,000 between 1979 and 1983. Forced evictions, atrocities related to the conflict, confiscation of land for military camps, and clashes with the new settlers displaced tens of thousands of tribal people within the country and another 65,000 into neighbouring India.

A peace accord in 1997 enabled the refugees to be repatriated but thousands of IDPs and returned refugees remain displaced due to unresolved issues relating to land and property restitution. Their number is still unknown, and virtually all parties contested the finding of a government task force that 500,000 people were displaced as of 2000; Amnesty International reported in the same year that 60,000 people were internally displaced.

Members of the Hindu minority were also displaced after the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and its coalition partners including two Islamic parties came to power in the 2001 elections; and since then a new wave of threats and violence against the Islamic Ahmadiyya sect may have caused displacement. However there is no current information on these situations.

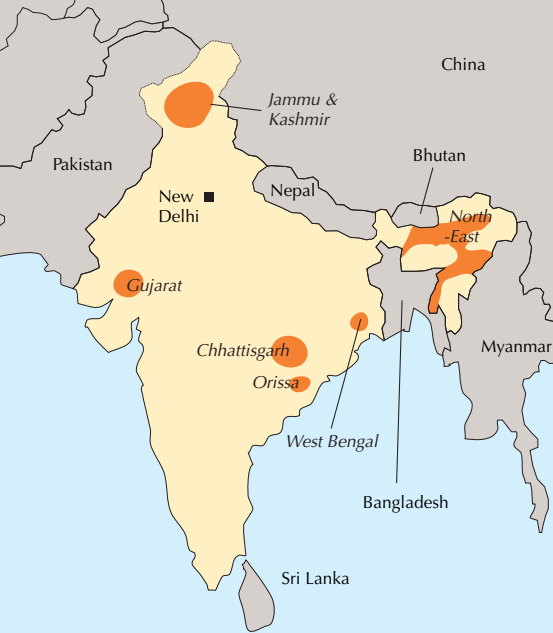
In the CHT, the 1997 peace accord committed the government to close temporary military camps, but as of 2004 only 31 of an estimated 520 had been closed down and land-grabbing continued to force indigenous people to flee their homes. After the army's declaration of emergency rule in January 2007, settlers seized an estimated 4,500 acres of land from Jumma individuals and communities in 16 villages in Kagrachari district. It was reported that army personnel were directly involved in all these cases, inciting settlers and creating a climate of fear among Jumma villagers. By 2006, more than 40 former Jumma villages were occupied by settlers. In April 2008, settlers and soldiers burnt down seven villages after the army began a new settlement programme in the Sajek area.

During the years of the armed conflict, the Jumma were gathered by the army into cluster villages or went into hiding in forest areas. The forests, where many IDPs continue to live, are reserve forests, and the army has threatened to burn down IDPs' houses if they fail to return to their areas of origin.

Meanwhile, the army has reportedly made plans to move more Bengali settlers into the forest reserves. The IDPs in forest areas are believed to have endured a very high level of food insecurity, and little access to any health care; following eviction threats many have moved into more remote locations. They have no secure livelihoods because agriculture, use of forest products, and even the collection of firewood is illegal. The IDPs have established schools for their children in the reserve forests, but these are also deemed illegal.

IDPs have rejected a government rehabilitation package as it does not make guarantees for property restitution, and the 1997 accord has remained stalled due to disagreement over whether Bengali settlers should be considered as IDPs. Settlers have continued to move to tribal land despite the end of the armed conflict, and the government has continued to discourage the involvement of international agencies and donor states. UNDP has targeted IDPs and other vulnerable groups in its attempts to encourage development in the Hill Tracts; however the political and humanitarian situations are unlikely to change without a more extensive international presence.

The new civilian government of Bangladesh, which swept to power in December 2008, has committed itself to honouring the 1997 peace accord with the Jumma tribal people. It remains to be seen if this commitment results in the end of new displacements and durable solutions for those displaced during the years of the armed conflict.



India

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	At least 500,000
Start of current displacement situation	1947 (North-East states); 1990 (Jammu and Kashmir); 2002 (Gujarat); 2005 (Chhattisgarh); 2007 (West Bengal); 2008 (Orissa)
New displacement in 2008	Over 220,000 reported in Assam and Orissa, otherwise undetermined
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal and international armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	132

Situations of displacement were ongoing in 2008 in a number of India's regions, with each situation having different causes and outcomes for those affected. There are no comprehensive sources of figures across the country; based on the number of IDPs in gathered settings and those believed to have returned but not to have found durable solutions, there are at least 500,000 conflict-induced IDPs in India. In addition an unknown number have fled to urban areas or to other states where they are no longer traceable.

This figure includes people displaced since 1990 by separatist violence targeting the Hindu minority in Jammu and Kashmir and by shelling between Indian and Pakistani forces along Kashmir's Line of Control; those displaced in states of the North-East by conflicts ongoing since 1947 between state and ethnic or secessionist groups and inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic violence; victims of the conflict between Naxalite insurgents and government security forces and armed vigilantes in Chhattisgarh state, and of communal violence in Gujarat and Orissa states between the majority Hindu populations and Muslim and Christian minorities; and people displaced in West Bengal by violence related to a proposed development project.

India's IDPs share urgent protection concerns, particularly relating to access to basic necessities of life such as food, clean water, shelter and health care. Physical security remains a concern for some of the newly displaced groups, while access to education, property, livelihoods and work are major concerns among those in protracted situations.

The various groups also face unique challenges. Tribal IDPs in camps in Chhattisgarh face the risk of attacks by both government forces and Naxalite insurgents. Muslim IDPs in Gujarat continue to endure very poor living conditions and they are increasingly at risk of losing their original homes and land, which have been taken over by Hindu extremist groups. Christian IDPs in Orissa risk being forced to convert to Hinduism if they return to their homes. Displaced women in Assam and Manipur have increasingly been forced into prostitution in order to support their families in the absence of husbands who have left in search of work.

Conflict-induced IDPs enjoy no recognition under India's national laws. The responsibility to protect them is generally left to state authorities who are often unaware of their rights or reluctant to offer support, particularly in cases where they

played a role in causing the displacement. Where their status is not recognised IDPs can struggle to assert their civil and political rights; for example, after living in displacement for more than 15 years, displaced Kashmiri Pandit families risk losing their cultural identity and their status is unrecognised by the government, which refers to them as "migrants".

Prospects for durable solutions for the various displaced groups have been limited by barriers to their return home. In the absence of a national IDP policy, local integration or resettlement in a third area have not been supported, with governments of states generally unwilling to have IDPs resettle there permanently. For example, officials in Andhra Pradesh have forced IDPs to return to Chhattisgarh state, and the Tripura state government continues to promote the return of Bru IDPs from Mizoram, although the Mizoram state government is opposed.

As of 2008 there were no ministries mandated with IDP protection, but the advocacy of some national agencies and human rights bodies on conflict-induced displacement had some impact during the year. In Tripura, a visit by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights led to an investigation into why 7,000 Bru children in camps had not been included in the issuing of ration cards. The Supreme Court of India ordered the National Human Rights Commission to investigate the vigilante force that had displaced people in Chhattisgarh state, and urged the Orissa government to step down if it remains unable to protect Christians fleeing their homes.

Nonetheless a national legislative framework is needed to enable the recognition and protection of conflict-induced IDPs in India, and a national agency must be created to oversee the response and ensure that it is consistent across the country.

The international response has been limited, with only a few agencies such as Médecins Sans Frontières and the ICRC providing protection and assistance to some IDPs; there is no overall international agency coordinating the response. To enable a fuller response, the government would have to allow more international NGOs to work with IDPs, and explore ways of engaging UN agencies mandated with IDP protection.

Indonesia



Quick facts

Number of IDPs	70,000–120,000
Percentage of total population	Up to 0.1%
Start of current displacement situation	1998 (Central Sulawesi and West Kalimantan); 1999 (Aceh, Maluku, West Timor); 2001 (Papua, Central Kalimantan)
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	1,300,000 (2002)
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflicts, generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	109

The number of IDPs in Indonesia continued to decline in 2008 as people displaced since the late 1990s in different provinces became integrated in their place of displacement or returned to their areas of origin. The principal concerns for remaining IDPs continued to revolve around accessing the basic necessities of life and rebuilding sustainable livelihoods. Resolution of property disputes, access to farming land and compensation for property lost were also recurring issues. Efforts were needed to relocate those in camps to decent settlements where they could acquire land to work and property titles, or else grant them the land the camps are situated on and significantly improve the living conditions there.

The largest remaining IDP population was in Maluku Province, where in 2008 an estimated 50,000 people were still in relocation sites waiting to receive a government assistance package, with a further 4,000 or so in North Maluku still in need of assistance. Fighting between Christian and Muslim communities displaced nearly one million in both provinces between 1999 and 2002. In both provinces, areas previously religiously mixed have remained segregated.

In Central Sulawesi, displacement was also caused by violence between Christian and Muslim communities between 1998 and 2002. In 2008 around 5,000 people were still displaced on borrowed land or in resettlement camps in Poso Regency, because assistance funds had never reached them due to corruption or because continuing tensions were preventing their return to areas of origin where they had been in a minority. Elsewhere in the province thousands of people, many of them displaced, were still waiting for housing assistance.

In other provinces such as West Timor, West and Central Kalimantan, thousands of people displaced by communal violence had still not returned, either because they were unwilling to face hostile neighbours or because they had nothing to return to. Many were living in camps or relocation sites without access to basic services, where they were struggling to recover in the absence of sufficient support.

Conflicts between insurgent and government forces have also caused displacement. In Aceh Province, large-scale displacement followed the intensification in 1999 of conflict between the rebels of the Free Aceh Movement and the security forces.

After the 2005 peace agreement, IDPs started returning home, and by 2008 only a few thousand people were still displaced, dispersed across rural districts of Central Aceh and in need of targeted assistance. Nonetheless, a decade of war and displacement had left many people in Aceh vulnerable. Trauma was widespread, and destruction and looting of property had pushed a large proportion of the population, and in particular IDPs, into extreme poverty.

In Papua, displacement has been ongoing since 2001 due to the security forces' campaigns against insurgents of the Free Papua Movement (OPM), which have often been accompanied by human rights violations. No displacement was reported in 2008, although military operations against OPM rebels are known to have continued.

A national IDP policy, which was adopted in 2001 and ran until 2004, laid out the framework for assistance. The government has provided comprehensive humanitarian assistance but has often struggled to ensure durable solution for the displaced or the returnees. It has distributed "empowerment" packages, built houses, provided building materials to IDPs and set up relocation centres, but delivery of funds has been beset by unreliable data on the displaced, poor coordination and corruption in almost all provinces.

During 2008 only a limited number of international agencies continued to provide direct support to IDPs or returnees in need of assistance. Absence of attention and lack of funding has forced many to close down operations over the past years. The UN no longer assists conflict-induced IDPs as a separate vulnerable group, preferring to address their needs within wider reintegration and development programmes targeting entire communities. A number of international NGOs have maintained programmes in Maluku, Central Sulawesi, Central Kalimantan and West Timor, while local NGOs and church groups have supported IDPs across the country and in particular in Papua, where the government has not opened conflict-affected areas to neutral observers or humanitarian agencies.



Myanmar

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	At least 451,000
Percentage of total population	At least 0.9%
Start of current displacement situation	1960s
New displacement in 2008	At least 66,000
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, human rights violations
Human development index	135

In October 2008, there were an estimated 451,000 people internally displaced by conflict in rural areas of eastern Myanmar. There were also unknown but significant numbers of IDPs in other parts of the country including in urban areas.

The displacement in eastern Myanmar has primarily been caused by government forces, and to a lesser extent by the insurgent ethnic armed groups fighting them. Since 1996, over 3,000 villages have been destroyed, forcibly relocated or otherwise emptied, leading to the forced migration of their occupants. However the displacement has been ongoing since the conflict began five decades ago, and became systematic from the mid-1960s with the introduction of the “Four Cuts” policy that targeted civilians and caused their displacement with the objective of separating ethnic armies from their civilian support bases. In areas where ceasefire agreements between ethnic leaders and the government have brought conflicts to an end, displacement has often continued due to human rights violations by government forces.

IDPs in eastern Myanmar were in 2008 either gathered in government-run relocation sites, dispersed in hiding areas in the jungle, or in ceasefire areas administered by groups that have agreements with the government. The IDPs in relocation sites may have been supporting themselves through daily labour, while a little aid from community-based groups and religious organisations may have reached them, but those in hiding were largely without formal support or livelihoods. In 2008 the estimated number of IDPs in ceasefire areas fell, but the number in hiding areas and relocation sites increased as over 140 villages were destroyed or relocated.

In comparison with Myanmar’s non-displaced population, IDPs especially in hiding and in relocation sites face greater physical insecurity due to their forcible displacement and relocation; less access to basic necessities; and a higher risk of exploitation. However, virtually all of the IDPs in eastern Myanmar are from ethnic minorities and so share certain risks with non-displaced members of minorities.

Government troops in many cases burn villages and farms of IDPs, so they have nothing to return to, and soldiers may also attack IDPs in hiding sites. The government prevents all humanitarian agencies from specifically targeting people displaced by conflict, and in the absence of formal aid programmes, some IDPs and particularly displaced women have had

to forage for food and water in areas with large numbers of government troops, putting them at risk of further violence. Displaced children have been at high risk of forced labour and recruitment.

IDPs in hiding in eastern Myanmar have experienced severe food shortages, as their farms and crops have been burned by the army. Some IDPs in relocation sites in Myanmar also face chronic malnutrition due to limited access to land; in cases where IDPs are able to grow crops, the army may be imposing taxes which leave many with no means of securing even their minimum subsistence needs. Water and sanitation facilities in relocation sites may be inadequate and residents are prone to a number of diseases. Mortality rates of displaced children in conflict areas are three times Myanmar’s average, at levels comparable to those among displaced children in Somalia.

IDP children in hiding areas have few learning resources, and open-air classes have often been disrupted by fighting. A large percentage of children in areas of conflict have to leave school after primary level, and in areas under government control they have been prevented from studying their own languages, having instead to study in Burmese.

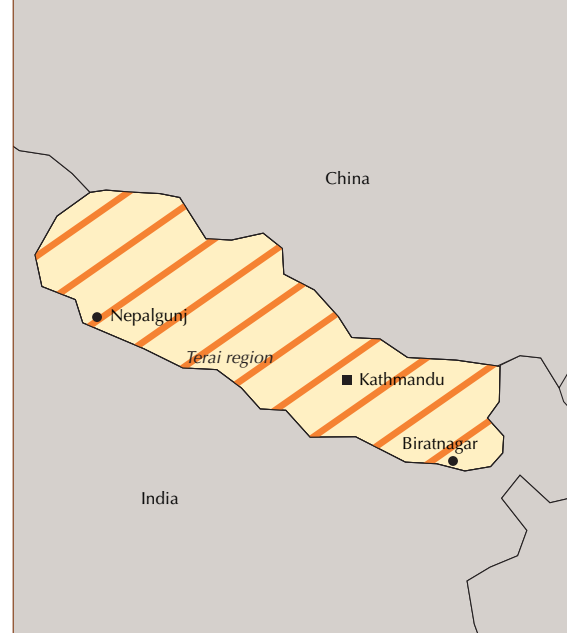
The prospects are best for those IDPs in ceasefire areas (there were around 224,000 in 2008) where integration may be feasible to a certain extent. It is, however, unlikely that they will achieve equal enjoyment of their human rights. For the people in hiding in jungles, safe return will not be possible until the threat of army attacks and destruction of villages recedes. At some relocation sites, restrictions on IDPs may decrease and they may be then considered to have locally integrated to a certain extent.

For lasting change, the armed conflict and human rights violations would have to give way to genuine reconciliation between the majority and minority ethnic populations; the government would also have to recognise the existence of conflict-induced displacement in the country and give access to agencies seeking to assist IDPs.

Nepal

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	50,000–70,000
Percentage of total population	0.2%
Start of current displacement situation	1996
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	200,000 (2005)
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, human rights violations, generalised violence
Human development index	145



At the end of 2008 between 50,000 and 70,000 IDPs remained dispersed across Nepal, mainly in the cities, even though the armed conflict and localised inter-ethnic violence which had caused their displacement had ended.

In 1996, Maoist rebels launched a “people’s war” to overthrow the monarchy and establish a socialist republic. Maoists in the mid-western region attacked the police, teachers and government officials, landowners, and political opponents, and forced people associated with the monarchy to flee towards district headquarters. From 2001 the conflict escalated and a state of emergency was declared; there was a breakdown in education, commerce and public services in many areas and food security declined. By then, other poorer groups had fled from the fighting and from extortion and forced recruitment by the Maoists. People started fleeing to district centres, to large cities like Kathmandu, Biratnagar and Nepalgunj, and across the border to India. The conflict ended with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of November 2006. Two years later, in April 2008, Nepal peacefully elected a Constituent Assembly which formed a Maoist-dominated government tasked with completing the transition to a Federal Democratic Republic.

In 2008, people displaced by the conflict continued to return, albeit at a slower pace than during the previous year. Many of those who had not returned home remained unable to do so because of lack of assistance and unresolved land and property issues there, while some who had returned decided to leave again. While the Maoists agreed to allow all displaced people to go back to their homes, they only enabled the restitution of land and property in some areas, where they did not consider that returnees had committed “serious crimes”.

Up to 70,000 people were also displaced by floods during 2008 and an estimated 50,000 of them remained displaced at the end of the year with pressing humanitarian needs.

IDPs faced a range of protection concerns. Those who had returned struggled to secure a livelihood and to access food, healthcare and education in areas affected by a decade of war, while those in towns and cities faced obstacles in finding proper accommodation and, where they had lost documentation, accessing education, social services and voting rights. IDPs from farming communities often lacked the skills to make a

living in urban areas, and most who had found work were in low-paid labour-intensive jobs.

Displaced children often faced particularly difficult conditions in cities. Although some managed to attend school there, others could not enroll because they did not have the proper documentation or because they had to contribute to the family income. Working children were frequently exposed to trafficking or economic and sexual exploitation.

Displaced women, in particular those at the head of households, have faced more difficulties in reclaiming their land and property or getting compensation. With little resources they have been at risk of trafficking and prostitution.

The Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MOPR) has provided assistance to IDPs returning home, but little has been done for those hoping to integrate locally. MOPR has developed a national policy on IDPs but this is still to be fully applied.

Prior to the formalisation of the cluster approach in September 2008, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee country team coordinated assistance to IDPs, with OHCHR, UNHCR and OCHA leading the response. The cluster approach was activated in response to the displacement due to floods, with OHCHR as the agency responsible for IDP protection. The attention is focused on those displaced by the floods and the needs of conflict-induced IDPs are now seldom discussed in the protection cluster. The Norwegian Refugee Council has assisted IDPs in Nepal since 2006, and together with OCHA and OHCHR has tried during 2008 to keep the conflict-induced IDPs on the humanitarian agenda.

For most remaining IDPs there will be no durable solution until their registration is completed and lost documentation replaced, assistance provided for their return and reintegration, land and property problems resolved, and vocational training and income-generating projects made available to support their reintegration. More efforts are also needed to monitor returns and assess their sustainability. The IDP policy adopted in 2007 needs to be properly implemented. Implementing directives, indispensable to ensure the proper dissemination of the IDP policy at the local level and guide its implementation, have been ready since the end of 2007 but the government has so far failed to adopt them.



Pakistan

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	At least 480,000
Percentage of total population	0.3%
Start of current displacement situation	2002 (FATA); 2005 (Balochistan); 2007 (NWFP)
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	Over 200,000 in Balochistan (2006); 900,000 in NWFP (2007)
New displacement in 2008	Over 310,000
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal and internationalised armed conflict, human rights violations
Human development index	139

More than 400,000 people remained displaced at the end of 2008 by ongoing conflicts in three regions of Pakistan. New displacements had continued through the year, with hundreds of thousands of people forced to escape the fighting, though in some cases only for short periods.

In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) the operations of the government's armed forces in search of Taleban and Al-Qaeda members have met since 2002 with violent resistance; the UN in September 2008 estimated that 200,000 IDPs in FATA were beyond the reach of UN agencies.

Fighting between the government and militant groups in FATA in summer 2008 led to approximately 20 per cent of the total population (an estimated 850,000 people) to flee from Bajaur Agency to the North West Frontier Province (NWFP). A number of people displaced within Bajaur returned to their homes following the announcement of a ceasefire at the end of August 2008, but thousands remained displaced. In NWFP, armed conflict between government troops and pro-Taleban militants has also led to displacement since 2007. In NWFP's Swat district an estimated 50 per cent of the total 1.8 million population remained severely affected by the conflict and a large number of individuals were displaced within the district.

By late 2008, according to UN estimates, over 232,000 persons displaced by the conflicts in FATA and NWFP had been registered in nine districts of NWFP, including over 50,000 people living in 12 camps established in the safer districts of NWFP, and over 178,000 individuals living outside the camps. The actual IDP figures were estimated to be higher due to registration of displaced people outside camps having taken place in only 70 per cent of the affected districts. The displaced families outside camps were relying on the hospitality of friends, families and tribal networks while those in camps were receiving assistance from international and national aid agencies.

Many displaced families in NWFP were separated, as some members (mostly women and children) had fled to safe areas, while others (mainly men) had stayed behind to safeguard homes and livestock. This created additional risks for the many women and children displaced, with concerns of increased sexual violence and exploitation reported. The capacity of cities to absorb these people has been increasingly

exhausted, leading to ever greater competition for scarce resources and livelihood opportunities. In this context displaced girls, women, boys and people with disabilities have had limited access to support.

In Balochistan, displacement has been caused since 2005 by the government's military response to a long-running, low-level insurgency by tribal militants seeking to wrest political power and control of the region's natural resources from the Punjabi-dominated authorities. Between 50,000 and 60,000 people were estimated to be displaced as of April 2008. They were living without clean drinking water or health care, and displaced children were believed to be facing severe acute malnutrition; dozens of children had died due to malnutrition and diseases such as typhoid and hepatitis, while IDP women had died in childbirth.

Displaced and non-displaced civilians faced immediate risks to their physical security when they were caught in the crossfire between the army and insurgent groups. These problems were compounded in the immediate aftermath of their displacement by the lack of access of aid agencies to many areas. The government of Pakistan has prevented aid from reaching those displaced by the conflict in Balochistan, while attacks by insurgent groups on humanitarian workers in many areas have made it very difficult for them to access IDPs.

For IDPs in Pakistan to achieve durable solutions to their situation, the armed conflicts in NWFP and FATA would have to come to an end, and a political settlement prevail in Balochistan. In the meantime, although human rights groups have publicised the actions of armed forces that have led to the displacement of civilians, the government's response to their plight has been limited. There are no national policies or dedicated government offices in place, although ministries with health or children portfolios have responded to displacement in some areas.

In 2008, the government did allow UN and international agencies to become involved in responding to the needs of those displaced in FATA and NWFP; however further improvement would depend on a policy enabling nationwide access. The UN activated the cluster approach in response, but most international agencies have limited access to FATA and NWFP due to the ongoing insurgency, or in Balochistan due to government restrictions.

The Philippines

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	At least 308,000
Percentage of total population	At least 0.4%
Start of current displacement situation	1970s
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	1,000,000 (2000)
New displacement in 2008	600,000
Returns in 2008	250,000
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, human rights violations
Human development index	90



Conflict and displacement have continued for many years in the Philippines. The most recent large-scale emergency broke out in August 2008, when intense fighting in the southern region of Mindanao led to the displacement of an estimated 600,000 people.

Before the last upsurge in fighting, it was estimated that conflict had displaced more than two million people since 2000. Most displacements have taken place in the southern region of Mindanao where the government has fought secessionist Moro (Muslim) rebel groups for the past 40 years. Although hopes of a formal peace agreement were raised in July 2008 as the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) reached a consensus on the issue of autonomous Moro territory, strong opposition to the deal by Christian groups and growing Moro frustration led to intense fighting in August in North Cotabato Province, which spread to several other provinces.

By the end of 2008 only low-level fighting persisted, but it continued to cause displacement and more than 300,000 people remained unable or unwilling to return to their homes.

The common agent of displacement nationwide has been the army, operating across the country against communist New People's Army (NPA) rebels, and in Basilan and Sulu provinces against the Abu Sayyaf group and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), as well as against the MILF throughout Mindanao and particularly in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Development projects backed by military support and disproportionately affecting indigenous groups have also caused displacement. Two groups have been particularly vulnerable to displacement: Moro people living in conflict-affected areas of Mindanao, and indigenous groups whose territory is rich in natural resources. Counter-insurgency operations against the NPA have often resulted in human rights violations against civilians suspected of supporting the insurgents and caused regular displacement although on a smaller scale.

While most displacement has been short-term and localised, with people returning to their homes as soon as fighting has subsided, some groups have remained displaced for years where insecurity has continued.

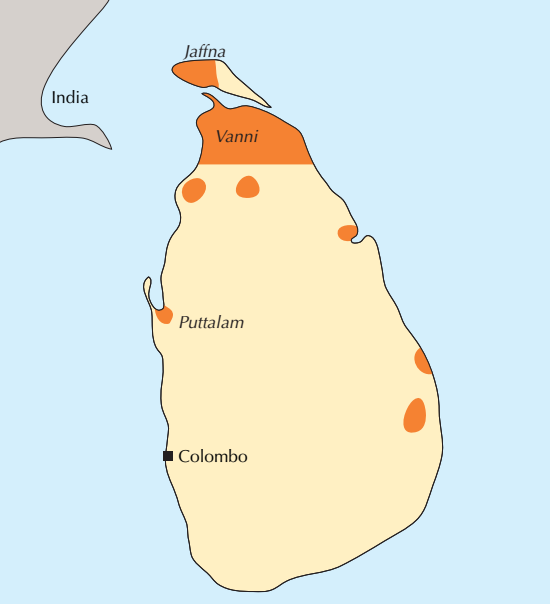
IDPs have faced many threats to their physical security and integrity, while facing barriers to their enjoyment of

the basic necessities of life, education, property, livelihoods and other rights. With no access to their lands, they have been forced to engage in irregular, low-paid jobs to survive. Displaced children, many of whom have had their education interrupted by their displacement, have been vulnerable to trafficking, recruitment into armed groups, malnutrition and health problems due to their prolonged stay in overcrowded emergency centres. Many of those who managed to return still have acute assistance and rehabilitation needs.

The government's response to displacement has been mixed, with frequent discrepancies between policies and their implementation. The quality of assistance has varied according to the centre into which IDPs have been evacuated, due to the inconsistent implementation of guidelines and standards. In October 2008, the government created an IDP Taskforce composed of the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), the Department of Health and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). The DSWD has been the main agency delivering assistance to IDPs, either directly or through other national or local government agencies, NGOs and other civil society groups.

Despite genuine government efforts to assist the displaced and improve its response, more remains to be done. The NDCC has responded to the recent IDP situation in Mindanao broadly as it would for displacement caused by a natural disaster, without taking into account the specific protection problems and the risks of protracted displacement there. Coordination and response mechanisms could be further decentralised and the government could be more open about the severity of emergencies, allowing international agencies to better fund assistance programmes.

In past years UNDP led the UN response to internal displacement in the Philippines, with UNICEF focusing on the protection needs of vulnerable groups including IDPs. In October 2008, however, coordination between agencies responding to the Mindanao emergency was minimal, and so the UN informally extended the cluster approach to the conflict there, a year after activating it in response to natural disaster. By the end of the year, however, no agency had been formally designated to lead the protection cluster.



Sri Lanka

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	485,000
Percentage of total population	2.5%
Start of current displacement situation	1983
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	800,000 (2001)
New displacement in 2008	230,000
Returns in 2008	126,000
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, human rights violations
Human development index	104

Hundreds of thousands of people remained displaced in Sri Lanka during 2008. In the north and east, their displacement was caused by intense fighting between government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which began in 2006 after four years of a ceasefire situation described as “no war and no peace”. In 2008, the government formally ended the ceasefire and since then has pursued a military solution. Most of those displaced from 2006 onwards have been from the Tamil and Muslim minority groups. There is also a significant population remaining displaced from the period before 2002.

In the west of the island, Muslim IDPs in Puttalam remained in displacement after being forced out of the north and north-west by the LTTE in 1990. Few attempts had been made to find durable solutions for them, and in the meantime they faced poverty and difficult living conditions.

In 2008, the sphere of combat shifted to the north and several thousands of people became newly displaced in the Vanni region which was then under the control of the LTTE. The LTTE was forcing them to remain. Their vulnerability in the face of a mounting offensive increased in September, when the government ordered all humanitarian agencies except the ICRC and Caritas to leave the Vanni.

From September, IDPs in the Vanni were desperately short of food. Convoys up to December were only able to provide 40 per cent of the minimum requirement of the affected population. Tens of thousands of people were living without adequate shelter, health facilities in the Vanni were stretched to the limit and IDPs were facing acute shortages of essential medicines. Sanitation facilities remained very poor, leading to concerns over possible outbreaks of waterborne disease.

People who had managed to flee to government-controlled areas still faced great risks to their life and liberty. As of October 2008, the government continued to hold over 800 people who had fled the LTTE areas in enclosed camps, suspecting some of them to be LTTE collaborators.

IDPs in all parts of Sri Lanka were facing major challenges in recovering the property they had left, as more than 80 per cent of the territory is owned by the state, and private ownership can only be established of land which has been occupied continuously for ten years. The government has also designated areas as High Security Zones, leading many IDPs to lose their farms and fishing areas, and so their livelihoods.

An end to the conflict could lead to new displacements ending and returns being possible. However, durable solutions for returnees depend not only on the security situation improving but also better livelihoods opportunities emerging. Even after the armed conflict ends essential reconstruction would need to precede return or local integration. This would probably depend on investment by the international community. The long-term IDPs may have a better chance of durable local integration than return.

The effectiveness of the government’s response has been limited by organisational difficulties. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights is the nominated focal point, but the overlapping mandates and responsibilities of ministries and agencies have led to delays, poor coordination and duplication of activities.

Legislators were drafting a national IDP law at the end of 2008, but greater political will was still needed to uphold the rights of IDPs. The IDP Protection Unit of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka had spoken out to promote IDPs’ rights, for example on forced returns, but the prevailing political environment had limited the impact of this advocacy.

Over the past years, UN agencies have taken the lead in providing protection and assistance, and while they have been successful in maintaining their role in areas outside of the northern conflict zone, they have not been able to promote the access of all other national and international protection agencies. National members of staff of national and international organisations have also faced intimidation. The coordination between agencies has generally been effective, but the response will continue to fall short as long as the government limits access to IDPs and returnees in various parts of the country.

Timor-Leste

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	30,000
Percentage of total population	2.5%
Start of current displacement situation	2006
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	150,000 (2006)
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	80,000
Causes of displacement	Generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	150



An estimated 150,000 people in Timor-Leste were displaced in 2006 as their homes and property were seized or destroyed during violence between rival groups within the army and police and among the wider population. They sought refuge in the capital Dili, in government buildings, schools or churches and subsequently in makeshift camps, or with families and friends in rural districts.

The causes of the crisis included political rivalries dating back to the independence struggle up to 1999, divisions between “easterners” and “westerners”, but also chronic poverty and a large and disempowered youth population. Land disputes from before and immediately after the 1999 independence vote also continued to rankle.

The government launched a new recovery plan in 2008, distributing compensation to people agreeing to leave the camps while progressively ending food distribution and closing camps. By the end of the year, 11,700 households out of the 16,000 who registered to take part in the return programme had received the compensation, and 45 of the existing 56 camps had been closed. The government planned for all IDPs to return home by February 2009.

With the focus on getting IDPs to agree to leave the camps, less attention has been paid to the conditions in return areas, where access to clean water and sanitation, food, basic services and economic opportunities is insufficient to support the long-term needs of the displaced and non-displaced alike.

Some returnees have faced hostility from former neighbours and resentment due the recovery packages they have received, while little reconstruction has taken place and many IDPs who returned to their homes in 2008 had to pitch a tent on their property as their homes were uninhabitable. Land and property issues have been settled on a case-by-case basis, with squatters often agreeing to leave in exchange for some of the IDPs’ compensation money, but more serious cases involving conflicting ownership claims have not been resolved. Problems are more acute for female-headed IDP households as women traditionally do not inherit land and property in Timor-Leste. Many displaced children have had no access to education, because schools have been unable or unwilling to admit them, because of the cost or because they have had to work to supplement family income.

Since the beginning of 2008 the National Recovery Strategy (NRS) has focused on resolving the displacement crisis and in particular the five “pillars” of shelter and housing, social protection, security and stability, socio-economic development, and confidence building and reconciliation. However, the \$15 million budget for 2008 proved far from sufficient to cover the cost of even the housing component, and reliance on international donors to fill the gap has left the strategy exposed.

The Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS) is responsible for IDP assistance and coordination while the Office of the Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice is responsible for monitoring and protecting the rights of the displaced. Like other ministries involved in the NRS, their capacity for co-operation, coordination and planning leaves room for improvement. An “IDP cell” has focused on monitoring IDP rights but its capacity and coverage have also remained limited.

Numerous international agencies are in Timor-Leste, as well as an Australian-led military force. Most issues related to IDP protection are discussed and coordinated through the Humanitarian Coordination Committee and the Protection Working Group led by OHCHR and UNICEF. IOM, UNDP and a number of international NGOs have taken significant roles in responding to internal displacement.

Coordination informally follows the cluster arrangement; there are sectoral working groups with one agency formally responsible. Coordination with the government has followed the NRS pillars, but as of the end of 2008 coordination meetings had only taken place in three of five pillars. The formal implementation of the UN’s cluster approach in early 2009 may lead to a more coordinated and effective response.

A number of outstanding issues must be addressed for durable solutions to become possible. There is a need to address the shortage of housing stock, create new economic opportunities in areas of return for both the returnees and the receiving community, and improve living conditions there. Also, without addressing the causes of the unrest and the displacement, ending widespread impunity for aggressors and setting up a framework to regulate property ownership, the potential for new disputes will remain.



A woman and her nephew in the single room which they share in Moscow, the Russian Federation, after being displaced from the Republic of Chechnya
(Photo: Nadine Walicki, IDMC, March 2008).

Internal displacement in Europe and Central Asia

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Internal displacement in Europe and Central Asia

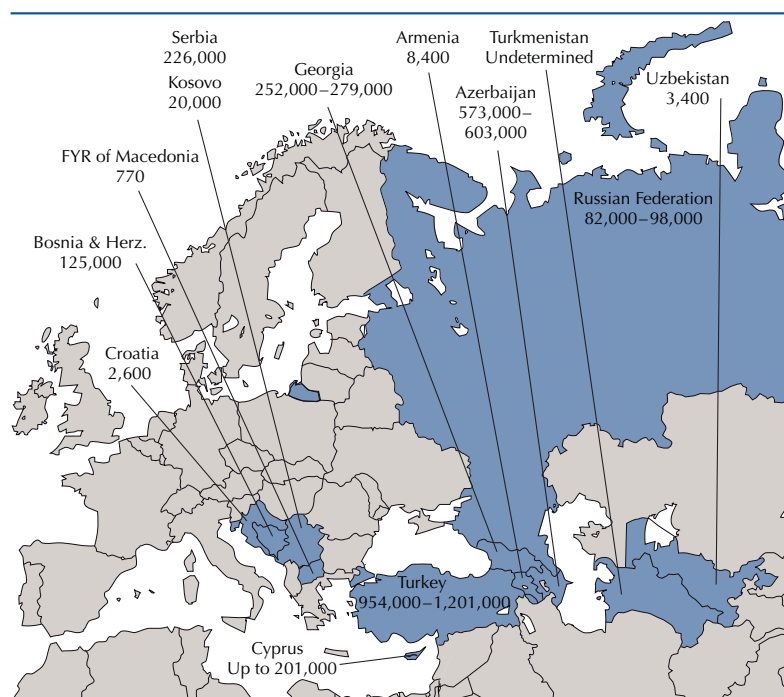
Around 2.5 million people are internally displaced in Europe and Central Asia. Most fled their homes more than 15 years ago as a result of violence and armed conflict, and are living in situations of protracted displacement. Turkey, with one million IDPs, has the largest displaced population in the region, while Georgia was the only country in the region that experienced new displacement in 2008. Some 128,000 people fled to other parts of Georgia when conflict broke out between Georgia and the Russian Federation in August 2008; about 68,000 had returned before the end of the year. The situation remained more or less static in the other countries of the region, which include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Kosovo, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Internal displacement in Europe has been protracted by the lack of political resolutions to most of the conflicts, and inadequate support to durable solutions in the face of declining attention and donor interest. The various country situations share several characteristics. Most IDPs now live in towns and cities: many initially fled to the relative safety of towns, while others subsequently moved to urban areas in search of jobs, services and better living conditions. As the IDPs who were able to do so have returned to areas of origin or integrated in another area, those still displaced are often the most vulnerable: they are generally living without support, assets or livelihoods in inadequate shelters which were only intended for temporary occupation. IDPs with specific needs include people who are traumatised, disabled and chronically ill, female heads of household, children, the elderly and minorities such as Roma, Chechens and Kurds.

Internal displacement in Europe is also characterised by the continued impunity of original agents of displacement. As a result of corruption, political obstacles, ineffective investigations and biased trials, most perpetrators of human rights abuses and crimes committed during the armed conflicts remain at large, and many IDPs are still seeking justice and information on the fate and whereabouts of disappeared relatives.

Certain governments do not exercise effective control over their entire territory. The existence of breakaway regions has led to parallel and non-cooperative legal systems, limiting IDPs' access to their rights. Lack of progress in peace negotiations and the absence of reconciliation mechanisms have prevented durable solutions.

Most governments in the region have overwhelmingly prioritised the return of IDPs to their place of origin over other durable solutions, even when return has been blocked by the lack of peace agreements. Despite these efforts, only some 25 per cent of IDPs have gone home and the percentage may be even lower since some returnees were forced to move again after returning, by the lack of jobs, inadequate housing and insufficient reintegration assistance there. The remaining IDPs who do not want



to or cannot return mostly receive little or no support to assist their local integration or settlement elsewhere in the country, so they have not been able to make a free and informed choice about their settlement preference. In order to bring displacement to an end in Europe and Central Asia, governments must exhibit a new political will to overcome the remaining obstacles that perpetuate internal displacement, they must support local integration and settlement in another area of the country in addition to return, and monitor the process by which people arrive at these solutions, to ensure their sustainability.

Many IDPs in the region still face issues related to their displacement. At the end of 2008, 390,000 IDPs were still living in temporary shelter and collective centres in desperate conditions, often without security of tenure. Many had not secured a remedy for lost property where their homes have been destroyed or occupied, as they never had property titles, property claims were awaiting a peace agreement, or restitution or compensation programmes had been compromised by political resistance, corruption, inadequate resources and an excessive burden of proof on claimants.

Displaced Roma people continue to struggle to access services and benefits offered to registered IDPs, as they have often been unable to register while living in informal settlements without identification documents. In several countries, displaced pensioners receive only a minimum pension as their work documents have not been recognised or have been lost during conflict. Poverty has caused some internally displaced students to drop out of school, as has the further internal

migration of their families. Some internally displaced children are still being educated in damaged or inadequate buildings, displaced children need more support to integrate into general schools in Georgia, and separate schooling remains an issue in Bosnia and Herzegovina for returnee children. This situation affects the capacity of these children to integrate in the community and compromises reconciliation between groups.

In contrast to Europe, IDPs in Central Asia have been displaced by the government or the army, not by conflict, and they continue to be blocked from returning to areas of origin. Limited access and the lack of current and reliable information on IDPs in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan make it difficult for international organisations to identify and address their outstanding needs.

Country	Number of IDPs (rounded)	Government figures	UN figures	Other figures	Comments
Armenia	8,400			8,400 (NRC, 2005)	No more recent figure available.
Azerbaijan	573,000–603,000	572,531 (April 2008)	603,251 (UNHCR, December 2008)		Government figure includes those displaced to areas under its control, and includes around 200,000 children since born to male IDPs.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	125,000	124,600 (September 2008)			UN agencies use government figures.
Croatia	2,600	2,579 (September 2008)			UN agencies use government figures.
Cyprus	Up to 201,000	200,457 (Republic of Cyprus, 2008)	210,000 (UNFICYP, May 2003)	0 ("Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus", October 2007)	The figure reported by the Republic of Cyprus includes those displaced to areas under its control since 1974, and includes around 54,000 children born since to male IDPs. The "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" considers that displacement ended with the 1975 Vienna III agreement.
The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	770	772 (September 2008)			
Georgia	252,000–279,000	247,000 displaced before 2008 (February 2007), 32,000 displaced by August 2008 crisis still displaced at the end of the year (December 2008)	220,000 displaced before 2008 (UNHCR, 2007)		According to the UN, close to 128,000 people were internally displaced during the 2008 crisis. The government estimated that 15,000 had resettled in government-built settlements by the end of the year.
Russian Federation	82,000–98,000	82,200 (Federal Government, February 2006)	58,000 in the north Caucasus (UNHCR, December 2008); 40,000 outside the north Caucasus (UN, 2004)		Government figure includes forced migrants registered in Ingushetia and Chechnya. There is no recent figure for IDPs outside the north Caucasus.
Serbia	226,000	205,861 (September 2008)		20,000 (UNHCR/Praxis, March 2007)	UNHCR/Praxis figure is an estimate of unregistered Roma IDPs in Serbia.
Kosovo	20,000		20,000 (UNHCR, September 2008)		
Turkey	954,000–1,201,000	953,680 1,201,200 (Hacettepe University, December 2006)		Over 1,000,000 (NGOs, August 2005)	Hacettepe University survey commissioned by the government.
Turkmenistan	Undetermined				No estimates available.
Uzbekistan	3,400			3,400 (IOM, May 2005)	No more recent figures available.

Azerbaijan

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	573,000–603,000 (including children of male IDPs)
Percentage of total population	6.7–7.1%
Start of displacement situation	1988
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	0
Causes of displacement	International and internal armed conflict, generalised violence
Human development index	97



The situation of most of Azerbaijan's IDPs has been at a standstill as a result of continued political deadlock over the future of Nagorno Karabakh. Azerbaijan claims the territory as its own, while Armenia supports self-determination of the region. Meanwhile, the 650,000 Azerbaijanis originally displaced from Nagorno Karabakh and surrounding districts since 1988 are prevented from claiming their properties and returning to their homes. The Azerbaijani government has nevertheless been pushing for the return of IDPs as a priority over local integration and resettlement. Some IDPs have rebuilt their lives in displacement, but many remain dependent on direct government assistance and have yet to find a durable solution to their plight.

IDPs still struggle to access adequate housing, livelihoods and services such as health care and education. Many IDPs continue to live in accommodation that fails to provide warmth, ventilation or privacy, and puts them at a higher risk of falling ill. Medical services are unaffordable and inadequate, as is the psychiatric and social support of which many are reportedly in need. Many IDPs have left their families and moved from areas of displacement and resettlement to cities in search of jobs, but have struggled to register their new residence and have therefore been unable to access formal employment or government assistance, entitlements and services. The quality of education is also a problem, and some displaced students have dropped out of school because of poverty, movement of families and early marriage.

About half of all IDPs still live in difficult conditions in improvised shelters and collective centres. These are often the most vulnerable IDPs since those able to do so have moved into better housing and improved their lives. Elderly displaced people reportedly have additional and more serious health problems than elderly people who had not been displaced, because of difficulties adapting to new environments, lower family income and less care from their children. According to a 2007 UNHCR assessment of IDPs, children and adolescents needed more privacy, while disabled people, single mothers and orphans had little hope they would achieve living conditions that met their specific needs. Feelings of insecurity and isolation due to war and uncertainty about the future stood in the way of the self-reliance of these vulnerable IDPs.

Despite dim prospects for durable solutions for most IDPs, the government's response to the displacement situation has been positive and considerable, especially in the last few years. In addition to providing regular direct assistance, it has closed the worst settlements and is resettling some IDPs in new homes until return becomes possible. While resettled IDPs have noted an improvement in their housing conditions, the villages are located in isolated and economically depressed areas with infertile land, sometimes close to the line of contact where there are still exchanges of fire between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces. An improved national response would entail efforts to ensure the participation of IDPs in decisions that affect them, and acknowledgement of the right of IDPs to freely choose between returning and settling elsewhere. It would also entail improved implementation of programmes to combat poverty and unemployment.

In recent years, humanitarian assistance has largely focused on micro-credit programmes, skills training, food distribution, housing and infrastructure construction and repair. Many humanitarian organisations have gradually reduced their activities for IDPs following decreasing donor support. However, in 2008 the World Bank committed an additional \$15 million to assist 150,000 IDPs with infrastructure reconstruction and shelter repair, and UNHCR and the Danish Refugee Council continued to be the main international organisations assisting IDPs. National NGOs continue to provide legal assistance, skills training and micro-credit loans, as well as inform IDPs of their rights and advocate towards the government for improved protection. An improved humanitarian response would only follow increased donor interest, which itself depends on greater prospects for durable solutions.



Bosnia and Herzegovina

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	125,000
Percentage of total population	3.2%
Start of current displacement situation	1992
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	1,000,000 (1993)
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	1,500
Causes of displacement	International and internal armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	75

In the early 1990s generalised violence and armed conflict between Yugoslav, Croatian and Bosnian armed forces and militias, accompanied by massive human rights abuses and violations, led to the displacement of over a million people and the creation of ethnically homogeneous areas within the newly independent Bosnia and Herzegovina. By 2008, almost 600,000 people had returned to their places of origin, and the government reported that 124,600 people remained as IDPs.

Thus protection issues in Bosnia actually affect a larger number of returnees than IDPs. The vast majority of people moved to areas where they would be among the ethnic majority and therefore not subject to discrimination. However the discrimination returnees face as members of a local ethnic minority in return areas affects their livelihood opportunities and access to services. In addition, the fragmentation of the social welfare system in Bosnia results in lower pensions and other social benefits in certain areas, increasing the vulnerability of elderly people, while the lack of cooperation between the health insurance schemes in Bosnia's two political entities – the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Sprska – makes it harder for pensioners and returnees in general to access health care.

Those still displaced are in many cases among the most elderly or vulnerable, who require specific assistance to access adequate housing, livelihoods, psychiatric and social care and treatment for chronic diseases. These people are over-represented among the 8,000 people who continue to endure very difficult conditions in collective centres with no prospects of improving their situation.

During 2008 the situation changed little and only a few hundred people returned, reflecting the continuing dependency of remaining IDPs and the decrease in reconstruction funding available over the past few years. However, increased funding efforts from the government in 2008 might lead to a slight improvement in 2009. At this stage local integration is the most likely solution for the most vulnerable IDPs. However almost all expressed their intention to return when re-registering as IDPs, since this intention is a pre-condition to claim assistance for the reconstruction of their pre-war home.

Under Annex VII of the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement, support to durable solutions has focused almost exclusively on the return of displaced people to their places of origin to the exclusion of other durable solutions, as any support to local integration was perceived as cementing the effect of the war and the “ethnic cleansing” which motivated the displacement.

In 2003, the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees took over from the international community the responsibility to implement Annex VII, and elaborated a National Strategy for Implementation of Annex VII which still focused mainly on return. In 2008 however, the Ministry revised this strategy, and from 2009, though the emphasis remains on return, it recognises the need to compensate people for lost property (instead of a sole focus on restitution) and to assist the most vulnerable who cannot or do not want to return, thereby providing de facto support to local integration.

The Ministry increased financial support to returns in 2008 and improved the scope of the assistance provided by adding income-generating activities and rehabilitation of infrastructure to reconstruction aid. These more comprehensive programmes combined with greater support to local integration are likely to lead to a more effective response.

Despite the impressive international humanitarian commitment which followed the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, only a few organisations remain in support of IDPs, mainly OSCE, UNHCR and UNDP. The EU has also played a major role in influencing government policy in favour of IDPs through the accession process. The European Commission's progress reports on Bosnia also have a continuing role in promoting policy initiatives of benefit to IDPs, such as the harmonisation of social welfare benefits across the country. The Council of Europe Development Bank has provided significant loans to UNHCR and Bosnian authorities to facilitate the return and reintegration of IDPs and refugees still accommodated in collective centres.

Georgia

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	252,000–279,000
Percentage of total population	5.7%–6.3%
Start of current displacement situation	1992, 2008 (South Ossetia); 1994 (Abkhazia)
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	380,000 (old and new caseload), 2008
New displacement in 2008	128,000
Returns in 2008	96,000
Causes of displacement	International and internal armed conflict, human rights violations, generalised violence
Human development index	93



The majority of IDPs in Georgia have been displaced since the early 1990s. Following the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991, Abkhazia and South Ossetia demanded their independence from Georgia. The fighting that followed caused the displacement of some 300,000 people, the majority from Abkhazia, of whom between 220,000 and 247,000 were still displaced in 2008. Since the conflict, the two regions have claimed their independence and until 2008 a shaky ceasefire was in place.

In August 2008, conflict broke out between Georgia and the Russian Federation over the fate of South Ossetia. Hundreds of people were killed and at least 158,000 ethnic Georgians and South Ossetians fled their homes. 128,000 of the people displaced were ethnic Georgians from South Ossetia, but also from Abkhazia and Georgia proper. In addition, 30,000 ethnic Ossetians found refuge temporarily in the Russian Federation. An internationally-brokered ceasefire came a week later, and Russia recognised the independence of both regions following the crisis, complicating further the return process.

Some 32,000 Georgians had not been able to return as of the end of 2008, due to the destruction of their villages close to South Ossetia, or because they were not allowed to return to their homes by South Ossetian de facto authorities. Close to 15,000 were accommodated in government-built settlements.

Georgia's longer-term IDPs were in 2008 dispersed across the country, with around 70 per cent living in cities, primarily in collective centres and private accommodation in Zugdidi, Tbilisi and Kutaisi.

These IDPs are still facing barriers to the enjoyment of economic and social rights. They are not able to regain their properties in conflict areas as the Georgian government has no effective control of Abkhazia or South Ossetia. IDPs have struggled to find work, and many inhabitants of collective centres remain extremely poor.

Elderly IDPs and female-headed households face particular difficulties; they are less likely to have an income or support for maintaining their homes in collective centres, and often live in unhealthy dwellings. Children in collective centres still live in inadequate cramped conditions, and are often seen as outsiders by other children and their families.

Since 1996, a comprehensive law on IDPs has offered some support including the use of public utilities free of charge, and modest monthly financial allowances. However it was not effective in lifting most IDPs out of poverty. In 2007, the government adopted a national strategy on IDPs, developed by the Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation (MRA) with the assistance of the international community. Following the August 2008 crisis, the government has indicated its plan to modify the strategy to reflect new developments.

However, the Georgian government's prompt response in support of the new IDPs should be recognised, especially compared to its response in the 1990s during previous waves of displacement. It registered new IDPs following the August crisis, and the MRA is in charge of managing the new collective centres. Other ministries have also been involved, particularly the Ministry of the Interior which is building the new IDP settlements.

UN agencies, national and international NGOs have provided assistance to IDPs in collective centres for many years, including shelter repair, employment projects, legal and social assistance, and education. Over the past years, most of them merged activities targeting IDPs into wider programmes, but in the wake of the 2008 crisis, they mobilised quickly to bring urgently-needed assistance to those newly displaced. Under the new cluster approach, protection improved at the operational level for new IDPs.

Following the August 2008 crisis, the return of IDPs to their homes in Abkhazia and South Ossetia seems more distant than ever. Local integration and resettlement are thus the most likely durable solutions for them, and indeed the government has already started to change its policy in this respect, stating that it would support the provision of permanent accommodation for all IDPs by 2011.

A donor conference in Brussels in November 2008 raised \$4.7 billion, part of which is planned for the improvement of housing conditions of the old and new caseloads and their medical costs. As of the end of 2008 however, programmes had only benefited the new IDPs, causing tensions between them and many of those displaced since the early 1990s.



Russian Federation

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	82,000–98,000
Percentage of total population	0.1%
Start of current displacement situation	1992 (North Ossetia); 1994 (Chechnya)
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	North Ossetia: 64,000 (1992); Chechnya first war: 500,000 (1996); Chechnya second war: 350,000 (2000)
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	1,500 to Chechnya; 700 to North Ossetia
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflicts
Human development index	67

Up to 98,000 people remained displaced in 2008 due to the inter-ethnic and separatist conflicts which have affected two republics in the north Caucasus since the early 1990s.

In Chechnya, an estimated 850,000 people were displaced by successive conflicts which broke out in 1996 and 2000. They fled within Chechnya, to other republics in the north Caucasus and to western areas of the Russian Federation. Conflict in North Ossetia in 1992 displaced an estimated 64,000 people, mostly into neighbouring Ingushetia.

Return to Chechnya continues to be hindered by the lack of jobs and housing, and continued skirmishes in the absence of a political resolution. The Government of Chechnya de-registered the remaining IDPs in the republic in 2007 and IDPs subsequently reported being put under pressure to leave collective centres there. Despite government offers of alternative accommodation, many remain without adequate housing. Although some stayed in collective centres, most live in private housing and mainly with relatives and friends.

While some 700 IDPs returned to North Ossetia from Ingushetia in 2008, displacement has continued for other IDPs from North Ossetia, for some because return has been blocked as their home areas have been declared part of water conservation zones, and also because there has been no reconciliation between ethnic Ingush and Ossetians over the contested Prigorodny district in North Ossetia.

The Law on Forced Migrants has facilitated IDPs' access to basic rights, including government benefits and services, and the Federal Migration Service (FMS) made transport, housing and food assistance available to IDPs during the first years of displacement. Though some IDPs still enjoy housing assistance, most report that the FMS has been of little use to them.

The principal concerns facing remaining IDPs throughout the Russian Federation include achieving an adequate standard of living, particularly of housing, and accessing documents, services, livelihoods and pensions. Compensation is offered for lost housing, but payment has been interrupted several times and the amount has increasingly become insufficient to enable IDPs to buy property and so most live in rented accommodation. The government acknowledged this and included

some IDPs in a federal housing programme, though it has so far proven unreliable.

Access to documentation such as residence registration, forced migrant status, pension documents and internal passports is essential to IDPs and their absence presents problems: for example IDPs who have lost documents of their working history do not receive the pension to which they are entitled. As a result, some 40,000 displaced elderly are living on a minimum pension and sometimes working odd jobs to make ends meet. Ethnic Chechens have also faced discrimination which has made it harder for them to get jobs, find accommodation and move freely outside Chechnya.

There are few NGOs with an explicit IDP focus, but some with wider human rights mandates have given important legal and medical assistance to IDPs, and provided an important advocacy voice in criticising the government's response. UN agencies and international NGOs have also had an important role in identifying and addressing protection risks faced by IDPs not covered by government programmes.

IDPs' situations will not be resolved until there is long-term security in Chechnya and the wider north Caucasus, ethnic Chechens are treated equally throughout the Russian Federation, their access to adequate housing, jobs, documentation and public services is more consistently realised, and the rule of law has a stronger hold, with perpetrators of human rights violations in the north Caucasus facing judicial process. A government approach based more on individual human rights would benefit from greater consultation with IDPs and the organisations working with them.

Turkey

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	954,000–1,201,000
Percentage of total population	1.3%–1.6%
Start of current displacement situation	1984
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, human rights violations
Human development index	84



Around a million people became displaced from towns and villages in south-eastern Turkey during the 1980s and 1990s as a result of the insurgent actions of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the counter-insurgency policies of the Turkish government. Over 60 per cent were forced from their homes between 1991 and 1996. The conflict has abated since 1999, but low-level violence between the PKK and security forces, which may have led to further displacement, continued in 2007 and 2008.

In 2005, 75 per cent of IDPs were found in urban centres, both within affected provinces and elsewhere in Turkey. Most were in 2008 living on the edges of Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir and Adana, and in cities in the south-east such as Batman, Diyarbakir, Hakkari and Van. IDPs had settled among the urban poor, sharing with other migrants the problems of acute social and economic marginalisation and limited access to housing, schools and health facilities.

It is not clear whether IDPs, who are mainly of Kurdish origin, face specific forms of discrimination, but they do lack access to government programmes which target poor segments of the population and do not take into account the specific needs related to their displacement. Problems which IDPs have particularly identified include prevalent psychological and emotional trauma, low levels of education, and high unemployment among adults and particularly among displaced women. Displaced children have also had limited access to schooling, and child labour is reported as a problem in urban centres with significant displaced populations.

Most IDPs have not returned to their areas of origin, due to security concerns involving the continuing presence of mines and local militias belonging to the government's "village guard" system, and due to the lack of economic opportunities, social services and basic infrastructure (including clean water, electricity, telephone lines, schools and roads) in rural south-eastern Turkey. Others have returned only temporarily, usually in the summer months, commuting between cities and their villages of origin.

The government's response has evolved steadily. In 1994, it launched the "Return to Village and Rehabilitation Project" to facilitate the return and rehabilitation of IDPs. It passed a

special compensation law in 2004, and in 2005 sponsored a comprehensive national survey on migration and displacement. The Van Action Plan, launched in 2006, provided a concrete model for addressing IDPs' and returnees' needs at the provincial level.

The government has made important progress in the past four years towards improving the overall national policy, and identifying and facilitating return to places of origin for Turkey's displaced. However, return programmes have been criticised for the lack of support which they offer to returnees, and in the past for lacking transparency, consistency, consultation and funding. NGOs have called for a government review of the national return programme in consultation with civil society, and commitment to reconciliation and reparation initiatives to address past human rights violations against IDPs.

The government in 2008 had still to formulate a national IDP plan of action, as it had aimed to do based upon the experience of the Van Action Plan. Some NGOs reported that the implementation of the Van Action Plan had progressed slowly for lack of resources. However, in May 2008, the government relaunched the Grand Anatolian Project Plan, an ambitious programme to provide irrigation and basic infrastructure in the south-east, two years after the European Commission underlined the need for a comprehensive plan to address socio-economic problems there.

Progress for IDPs in Turkey has been influenced by regional and international institutions such as the European Union, European Court of Human Rights and the Council of Europe. The UN's involvement has centred on the office of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of IDPs. If IDPs are to find sustainable solutions, the international community should continue to emphasise the need to address the current situation facing IDPs in urban areas the pervasive obstacles to their return, and encourage wider efforts to seek reconciliation on the Kurdish issue.



Serbia and Kosovo

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Serbia (excluding Kosovo): 226,000; Kosovo: 20,000
Percentage of total population	2.5% (of combined population)
Start of current displacement situation	1999
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	228,000 (2004) in Serbia
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	533 in Kosovo, including 323 from Serbia
Causes of displacement	International and internal armed conflict, generalised violence
Human development index	65 (Serbia)

In 2008 Kosovo declared independence from Serbia. The UN General Assembly subsequently voted to refer the independence declaration to the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion. At the end of the year, 53 countries had recognised Kosovo.

In 1999, bombardments by NATO forces and attacks by Kosovo Albanians, in response to attacks and arbitrary executions perpetrated by Kosovo Serb paramilitary groups and the Yugoslav army, forced Kosovo Serbs and Roma people to flee into Serbia proper or within Kosovo. In 2008, there were still around 225,000 IDPs in Serbia, including an estimated 20,000 displaced Roma. An additional 20,000 were displaced in Kosovo, mainly in majority-Serb enclaves.

Kosovo's declaration of independence in February 2008 created a new situation of uncertainty for displaced Serbs in Serbia proper and within Kosovo. Despite the non-recognition of independence by Serbia, the situation in Kosovo remained calm, with no major incidents directed at minority communities and no further displacement.

While new displacement was avoided, the rate of return decreased significantly in 2008 from an already low level, as most IDPs waited to evaluate the approach of Kosovo authorities towards Kosovo Serbs and other non-Albanian communities.

Prospects for durable solutions are limited. The political, security and economic situation is not conducive to return. Many IDPs also face difficulties in repossessing their property or obtaining legal documentation. Those who already returned to Kosovo struggle to find livelihood opportunities, notably because of widespread discrimination against Serbs and Roma. The Serbian government's position on local integration has evolved, and it has implemented projects supporting the development of social housing for IDPs in recent years, notably in favour of the 5,000 or so people still accommodated in collective centres.

Local integration opportunities for Kosovo Serb IDPs are scarce since they live in complete isolation from Kosovo institutions. Most of them reside in enclaves relying on a parallel system of education, policing, and health care supported by Serbia. Security concerns have prevented them from returning to their repossessed property. Because of their limited freedom

of movement and the discrimination they have faced, IDPs' access to land and employment has been very limited.

The most vulnerable IDPs are Roma people in both Serbia and Kosovo, who have specific protection needs because of their social marginalisation and lack of civil documentation, which prevents them from registering as IDPs and limits their access to housing assistance and other social benefits. As a result many were enduring extreme poverty and poor health in informal settlements without electricity, water or connection to the sewage system.

The lack of agreement over Kosovo's independence has complicated both national and international responses. The Serbian government has decided to stop its cooperation with the Kosovo Property Agency, the body responsible for processing restitution claims, which will limit further IDPs' hopes of durable solutions. Soon after independence, Serbia took control of Northern Kosovo, leading to a de facto partition of Kosovo. International organisations willing to operate in Northern Kosovo therefore need authorisation from Serbia.

In Kosovo, independence seriously limited UNMIK's role and capacity to operate. EULEX (the EU mission focusing on rule of law) has replaced UNMIK on the rule of law, while OSCE is set to increase its human rights monitoring activities. In addition, UNHCR and UNDP focus respectively on protection and return activities.

The Kosovo authorities have given positive signals by initiating in 2008 a \$7.6m project to facilitate return and reintegration of IDPs in cooperation with the European Commission and the UNDP office in Kosovo. But the success of such projects requires that the Kosovo authorities engage strongly and consistently with Kosovo Serbs and other minority communities to prevent further displacement and increase their confidence in the institutions of the new state.

Any improvement in the situation of Serbia's and Kosovo's IDPs requires the establishment of constructive dialogue between the two authorities, without necessarily implying political recognition. For instance, mutual acceptance of documents such as diplomas, driving licences or birth and death certificates would facilitate IDPs' access to pension and property rights and improve their daily lives.

Croatia

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	2,600
Percentage of total population	0.1 %
Start of current displacement situation	1991
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	191,000 (1995)
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	250
Causes of displacement	Internationalised armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations.
Human development index	45

Between 1991 and 1995, 220,000 ethnic Croats and subsequently up to 300,000 ethnic Serbs were displaced by armed conflict in Croatia. Since then almost all the Croat IDPs have returned to their homes, while most of the Serbs displaced have resettled in Serbia or in the majority-Serb Danube region of Croatia. In March 2008, 2,600 people remained displaced in Croatia, over half of them ethnic Serbs in Danube region, and their numbers continued to fall slowly as a result of property restitution or reconstruction.

Since the end of the conflict, only one third of Croatian Serb IDPs and refugees have been able to return and it is estimated



that only 50 per cent of returns have proved sustainable. The main obstacles to their return have been impunity for war crimes, lack of livelihood opportunities, non-restitution of former housing occupancy rights and difficulties accessing full pension entitlements. Progress has been made in terms of minority rights, since the arrival of a more moderate government in 2000, and under EU pressure. This includes the adoption of legislation on minority rights, restitution of private property and reconstruction of destroyed properties, and a review of cases involving Serbs arrested or convicted for war crimes. In 2008, Croatia adopted a procedure which should assist Serb IDPs and refugees in obtaining their full pension rights.

The main outstanding issue preventing durable solutions for Croatian Serb IDPs is the lack of remedy for former holders of occupancy rights. The arbitrary cancellation of these rights during and after the war affected mainly Croatian Serbs. Contrary to the practice in other Balkan countries, Croatia refused to allow restitution of flats held under occupancy rights, and former holders of such rights are only entitled to limited and delayed benefits from a housing care scheme.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	770
Start of current displacement situation	2001
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	74,000 (2001)
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	0
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict
Human development index	68

Tensions in Macedonia between ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians culminated in violent conflict in 2001 which displaced over 171,000 people, 74,000 of them within the country. Since then, over 99 per cent have returned and only around 770 people remained displaced. Most of those still displaced in 2008 were ethnic Macedonians or Serbs who did not feel safe to return to the Albanian-dominated Lipkovo-Aracinovo area. Among them, over 400 were accommodated privately while more than 300 still lived in very poor conditions in collective centres. The support from authorities was not sufficient for the most vulnerable among them, such as elderly and sick people and single-headed households, to obtain accommodation elsewhere.



The Orhid peace agreement of 2001 addressed the main claim from ethnic Albanians for equal participation in political, social, economic, cultural life. It provided greater protection of the rights of minority groups and set out the framework for the return of the displaced population. The government has largely supported the right of IDPs to return and implemented the reforms required by the framework agreement, but discrimination has continued between the ethnic Macedonian majority and the Albanian minority (who make up 25 per cent of the population) in areas such as education, employment and political participation.

During the 2008 parliamentary elections, electoral irregularities and incidents of violence in Albanian-dominated areas reinforced the reluctance of IDPs to return. Some have struggled to access compensation for property damaged during the conflict, though several IDPs have submitted claims before local courts or to the European Court of Human Rights.

Most organisations, including the EU and the OSCE, have phased out their assistance and monitoring of IDPs to focus on improvement of inter-ethnic relations.



A 2004 survey found over 8,000 people still internally displaced in Armenia, over a

decade after ethnic violence and conflict with Azerbaijan had forced them to leave border areas in the early 1990s. The conflict displaced over 70,000 people within Armenia, but the plight of the larger number of refugees from Azerbaijan and of the hundreds of thousands of people displaced by a massive 1988 earthquake and other natural disasters overshadowed that of conflict-induced IDPs.

Conflict-induced IDPs have remained dispersed in rural areas and in towns and cities, mainly in the capital Yerevan and in Syunik, Tavush and Gegharkunik provinces. Rural and urban IDPs have shared problems of inadequate shelter, and only a small percentage of those originally displaced have been able to buy a home. In urban areas IDPs' lack of suitable skills has led them to work in the shadow economy; displaced households and particularly those headed by a woman have often been unable to afford to send children to school.

Many people returned to their homes following the 1994 ceasefire agreement, but have had limited access to adequate education or medical services due to damaged buildings and the lack of staff. The continuing insecurity and destruction of

Armenia

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	8,400
Percentage of total population	0.3%
Start of current displacement situation	1988
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	International and internal armed conflict, generalised violence
Human development index	83

infrastructure have discouraged the return of the remaining IDPs, as have the lack of jobs and continuing presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance. Meanwhile, nearly 20,000 homes damaged or destroyed during the conflict are in need of rehabilitation.

The Department of Migration and Refugees is mandated to ensure the protection of conflict-induced IDPs; however, without a solution to the conflict, the political will to provide them targeted assistance or further funding to rehabilitate border areas, and with no international agencies providing protection or assistance, the difficulties facing this relatively small group are likely to endure.



While Turkish Cypriots were displaced in the 1950s and 1960s into ethnic enclaves, both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots were displaced in 1974 when groups backed

by Greece's military government ousted the Cypriot leader, and Turkey sent troops to the island in response. Greek Cypriots fled south while Turkish Cypriots sought refuge in the north. They have been living separately ever since, divided by the "green line" patrolled by the UN Peacekeeping Force.

Talks to find a diplomatic solution failed and in 1975 the Turkish Cypriots announced the establishment of their own state, later to become the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" (TRNC), which only Turkey has since recognised. With an estimated 25,000 to 43,000 troops from Turkey stationed in the north, the Government of the Republic of Cyprus considers this occupied territory, and the two sides have yet to reach a political solution.

While the TRNC authorities consider that displacement ended with the population movements achieved within the framework of the 1975 Third Vienna Agreement, the Government of the Republic of Cyprus maintains displacement persists as IDPs continue to be deprived of their right to property and return.

Cyprus

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Up to 201,000 (including children of male IDPs)
Percentage of total population	Up to 23%
Start of current displacement situation	1974
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	210,000 (1975) (entire island)
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	0
Causes of displacement	International armed conflict, human rights violations, generalised violence
Human development index	28

Despite continuing assistance from the Government of the Republic of Cyprus to most IDPs in areas under its control, there is still no mutually agreed mechanism for deciding property claims, and people's choice of residence is limited. The resolution of their outstanding problems depends on continued political will on both sides to reach a compromise and resolve the conflict. Involvement of the displaced people in the peace progress would improve the chances that an eventual agreement would hold.

Turkmenistan

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Undetermined
Start of current displacement situation	2002
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	Undetermined
New displacement in 2008	Undetermined
Returns in 2008	0
Causes of displacement	Human rights violations
Human development index	109

The situation of IDPs in Turkmenistan can only be reported with minimal confidence due to government control of IDPs, the lack of access of humanitarian organisations and the extremely limited freedom of information in the country. The government does not release statistics on the number resettled and does not allow humanitarian organisations to conduct surveys. Information on the extent of internal displacement is also limited by total state control on media, curtailed freedom of speech and the near absence of civil society. As a result, the numbers of IDPs are unknown and the little information that exists is published by civil society outside of Turkmenistan.

The former President Saparmurat Niyazov used forced resettlement as a means of oppressing people viewed as disloyal to his regime and to force ethnic minorities to integrate into Turk-

men life. People were also forcibly resettled to make way for urban development projects and to develop land elsewhere. These relocations were achieved through presidential decrees issued in November 2002 and January 2003, and in 2008 displacement continued as part of the redevelopment of the capital Ashgabat.

While it is not known if IDPs in rural resettlement villages have adequate housing, food, water and sanitation, it is clear that many have not received compensation for property confiscated by the government and are worse off than their non-displaced neighbours. In some cases this is because they have not had formal documentation since Turkmen independence from the USSR. IDPs' letters to government on these issues have gone unanswered.

The current government has not acknowledged any responsibility for the situation of IDPs, supported solutions such as local integration or offered compensation for lost property in line with international standards. International humanitarian organisations face limited access and bureaucratic obstacles which limit their ability to confront the government on its treatment of IDPs and other vulnerable groups.

Uzbekistan

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	3,400
Start of current displacement situation	2000
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	0
Causes of displacement	Human rights violations
Human development index	119

The situation of people internally displaced in Uzbekistan cannot be reported with any confidence. Because of the government's strict control over its population and the activities of humanitarian organisations in the country, and the lack of public acknowledgement of the internal displacement situation, most information is anecdotal.

Uzbekistan's IDPs were forcibly and, in some cases, violently relocated by the army in 2000 and 2001 on the basis of insecurity in their place of origin, following government-reported incidences of armed incursions of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) from Tajikistan. While IDPs admit that people travelled through their villages and that they sold them food, they insist there were no IMU incursions.

The mainly ethnic Tajik population of nine villages in mountainous regions of Sukhandaria Province was moved over 200

kilometres to resettlement sites in the desert of Kashkadarya Province. Problems such as limited access to water, not being able to bring their tools and animals with them and the lack of knowledge to cultivate the new land have stopped them developing livelihoods. Their harvest is usually poor and as a result they are in debt to neighbouring villagers from whom they must buy food. They have no hope of compensation although the government denies their right to return to their villages of origin.

IDPs need official approval to leave their current residence and resettle in a third location. They receive no government help to integrate locally, and in general the state accepts no responsibility for addressing their needs. There are no specific government bodies, laws or policies to uphold their rights.

The international community has provided very limited assistance to assist Uzbekistan's IDPs with integration. With limited access and information, international agencies have not recently challenged the government on its treatment of IDPs.





A Bedouin woman by the remains of her home in Abdallah al-Atrash in the Negev region of southern Israel, where she and her family lived for close to 20 years; however the Israeli government did not recognise the settlement and it was demolished by the police in 2008 (Photo: Jessie Boylan, December 2008).

Internal displacement in the Middle East

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Internal displacement in the Middle East

IDMC monitors six displacement situations in the Middle East: Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), Syria and Yemen. In the region there were around 3.9 million IDPs at the end of 2008, the highest number since IDMC started to monitor internal displacement in 1998; however the majority of this population had by 2008 been displaced for many years. Most of them had acute humanitarian and protection concerns, in particular the 470,000 or so displaced during 2008, principally by armed conflict in Iraq and Yemen.

Human rights violations, generalised violence, internal and international armed conflicts along political, religious and ethnic lines, as well as competition for land and other natural resources, are among the causes of internal displacement in the region.

Despite a security and humanitarian situation in Iraq that appeared to be stabilising, the numbers of displaced inside Iraq continued to increase to a total of 2,840,000 in 2008. Iraq remained one of the most unsafe countries in the world, despite a decrease in the number of recorded violent incidents.

The armed conflict in northern Yemen caused the displacement of over 100,000 people in 2008. The situation remained one of the year's neglected crises despite the increase in the number of people displaced and the corresponding humanitarian needs. In OPT, the government of Israel continued to implement its policy of house demolitions in the West Bank, while in Tripoli, Lebanon, factional violence led to the temporary displacement of several thousand Lebanese.

Internally displaced people in the Middle East have experienced violations of a number of their rights laid out in international humanitarian law and human rights law, related to their physical security, freedom of movement, family unity, and access to basic services, housing land and property and legal recognition.

In Iraq, OPT and in Yemen, freedom of movement remained arbitrarily restricted: in the West Bank alone over 600 checkpoints, road blocks and other impediments restricted the freedom of movement of Palestinians displaced and non-displaced alike. In Iraq, conflict and security measures including checkpoints, curfews, permission requirements, and security barriers continued to restrict movement throughout the country.

IDPs' access to basic assistance during displacement (including food, water and adequate shelter, medical services and sanitation) varied across the region. In Iraq, Yemen, much of the West Bank and all of Gaza, restrictions on movement and ongoing insecurity limited the access of IDPs to essential supplies. Elsewhere, displaced communities were simply neglected: Bedouin communities in villages in southern Israel which the government refused to recognise had only irregular access to clean water.

In Iraq, displaced children were still at risk of recruitment and labour exploitation, while in Yemen, children were



reportedly recruited by various factions to the conflict. Trauma associated to displacement and conflict was reported among children in OPT, Yemen, Iraq, and Lebanon. In the region the prevalence of gender discrimination continued to restrict the access of displaced women to basic rights and put their children at risk of future displacement: for example, Palestinian women in Jerusalem cannot pass their residency status on to their children.

Throughout the region minority groups faced a greater risk of being displaced on the basis of their cultural, religious and ethnic identity: although violence declined in Iraq in 2008, sectarian and ethnic tensions fuelled by internal border disputes continued to cause displacement. In October 2008, some 2,000 Christian families fled Mosul following sectarian violence and intimidation. In the Negev region of southern Israel, Bedouin communities remained at risk of displacement as the government maintained its policy of destroying villages it deemed illegal. These communities faced widespread protection concerns.

IDPs' attempts to find durable solutions have come up against longstanding barriers including insecurity, disputed sovereignty and occupation of their home areas, lack of compensation for lost or destroyed property and difficulties

in asserting property ownership. In Iraq and Yemen there were some return movements, but the number of people newly displaced outnumbered the returns in both countries. Under six per cent of the IDP population returned in Iraq, despite heralded improvement in security. An undetermined number of people were able to return home in Lebanon despite the slow pace of reconstruction, the prevalence of remnants of war and the lack of livelihoods in return areas, but there were no recorded returns in Israel, OPT or Syria, due to continuing occupation or the policies of the government of Israel.

In general, there was little information about IDPs achieving other durable solutions, such as integration in the place of displacement or resettlement elsewhere. For many across the region, they still depended on political processes to establish security, stability and reconciliation.

The national and international response to internal displacement in the Middle East remained uneven in 2008. While coordination mechanisms were largely in place in the conflict-affected countries in the region, factors undermining an effective response included a lack of political will and resources to assist and protect IDPs, and also the challenge of clearly distinguishing humanitarian and political agendas. International humanitarian agencies in Iraq, OPT, and Yemen continued to face obstacles and limits to access due to administrative res-

trictions and attacks on staff. In Israel and OPT, the situation of IDPs was worsened by the government of Israel's failure to recognise their status.

Many years of insecurity and violence have left Iraqi society marked by sectarianism, under-development and humanitarian crisis. Although national and international organisations have made significant efforts to respond to humanitarian needs throughout Iraq, and often delivered assistance to IDPs at considerable risk to staff, international efforts have failed to meet the immense need.

The scale of the Iraqi crisis was recognised in Security Council Resolution 1770 of 2007. In February 2008, the launch of a Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) underlined the UN's recognition of the need for a comprehensive response. The CAP was designed to enable the UN to extend its operations through local partners, and it also represented an attempt to address the needs of all Iraqis based on their vulnerability. In 2008, the government also took steps to address the needs of returnees and IDPs, while advocating for the return of IDPs and refugees and calling for UN agencies and NGOs to assume a more proactive role.

Country	Number of IDPs (rounded)	Government figures	UN figures	Other figures	Comments
Iraq	2,840,000		2,840,000 (UN, July 2008)	2,170,000 (Iraqi Red Crescent Organisation, June 2008)	Over 1 million displaced over 20 years up to 2003 (invasion of Iraq), and an estimated 190,000 from 2003 to February 2006 (al-Askari Mosque bombing). From February 2006, 1,630,000 Iraqis were displaced, mainly as a result of sectarian violence.
Israel	200,000			150,000 (Cohen, July 2001); 420,000 (BADIL, May 2006)	BADIL figure includes displaced Bedouin, with their numbers estimated on the basis of an average annual growth rate of 4.2 per cent in 1950–2001, and 3 per cent since.
Lebanon	90,000–390,000	40,000 since July 2006 (February, 2008); 16,750 civil war (July 2006); 33,000 Nahr al Bared (September 2007)	70,000 since July 2006 (UNHCR, February 2008) in addition to 28,000 displaced from Nahr al Bared (UNRWA, September 2008)	50,000–300,000 prior to July 2006 (USCRI, 2005); 600,000 prior to July 2006 (USDOS, 2006)	Different populations displaced by the 2007 siege of Nahr El Bared camp for Palestinian refugees, the July–August 2006 Israel–Hezbollah conflict, and the 1975–1990 civil war and Israeli invasions. In September 2008, an estimated 700 families had returned to Nahr al Bared out of 32,000 persons displaced. In mid 2008, an estimated 660 families were temporarily displaced by factional fighting in Tripoli.
Occupied Palestinian Territory	116,000		24,547 (OCHA, October 2004)	115,000 (BADIL, October 2007), 612 (B'tselem, January 2008)	Lower OCHA estimate only includes IDPs evicted by house demolitions in Gaza between September 2000 and October 2004; the higher figure is cumulative since 1967. B'tselem figure indicates the number of displaced reported in 2008 only as a result of house demolitions.
Syria	433,000	433,000 (November 2007)			Includes children of people originally displaced from Golan.
Yemen	20,000–23,000	22,000 (September 2008)	20,000 (UNHCR, November 2008) 130,000 (UN OCHA, July 2008)	100,000 (ICRC, May 2008)	An estimated 100,000–130,000 people were displaced or affected at peak of conflict. Following July 2008 ceasefire, the government reported that 90,000 had returned. Limited access has made it difficult to verify figures, and recent estimates are based on the number of returnees in areas accessed.

Iraq

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	2,840,000
Percentage of total population	9.6%
Start of displacement situation	1986 (former government); 2003 (invasion); 2006 (sectarian violence)
New displacement in 2008	360,000
Returns in 2008	167,000
Causes of displacement	International and internal armed conflict, generalised violence, human right violations
Human development index	126 (2000)



Over 2.8 million people were internally displaced in Iraq by June 2008. These IDPs were distributed throughout the country with over 1.1 million in central provinces and over 800,000 in both the northern and southern regions. Most were dispersed in rented accommodation in towns and cities where they were relying on the support of host communities as well as national and international humanitarian agencies and non-governmental bodies, including some with political affiliation.

This IDP population – equivalent to one in ten Iraqis – was displaced in three phases. Around 1.6 million had since February 2006 fled sectarian and generalised violence including military operations by multinational, Iraqi and also Turkish and Iranian forces in northern Iraq. Approximately 190,000 were displaced by military operations and generalised violence from 2003 to 2005, and an estimated 1.2 million by the policies of the former government of Saddam Hussein, including the “arabisation” of Kurdish areas, destruction of marshlands in southern Iraq, and repression of political opposition.

In 2008, despite a relative improvement in security, the country remained volatile. The rate of new displacement declined, but people continued to flee due to military operations as in Sadr City in Baghdad, in Basra and Mosul, and near the border with Turkey, and sectarian violence such as that targeting the Christian community in Mosul. Returns were reported, principally to Baghdad, but the rate of return remained low, at around six per cent of total displacement by late 2008.

IDPs continue to face a wide range of protection concerns. Though the vulnerability of IDPs is likely to be greater, these concerns are often shared by non-displaced groups, including communities remaining in unsafe areas. Iraq’s many minority groups have faced particular threats, including Christian Assyrians, Faeeli Kurds, Yazidis, Palestinian refugees and also Sunni and Shia where they are in the minority. Children and women have faced recruitment by armed groups, sexual and gender-based violence, and labour exploitation.

Despite the decline in violence, the UN and the humanitarian community have continued to report human rights abuses and violations against civilians by militias, criminal gangs, and security and military forces; perpetrators of human rights abuses continue to enjoy impunity.

The standard of living of most Iraqis has declined despite attempts at reconstruction and rehabilitation. For the majority of IDPs, shelter, food and employment remain urgent priorities. Access to adequate shelter and basic services remain high priorities for all Iraqis, but unemployment particularly affects IDPs, who have left behind their sources of income and moved to areas where their skills might not be marketable.

The freedom of movement of displaced communities has remained restricted. Alongside dilapidated infrastructure, security measures in 2008 including checkpoints, curfews, permission requirements for IDP registration, and security fences or walls continue to restrict movement throughout the country.

The prospects of durable solutions are limited for most IDPs. The insecurity and new sectarian make-up of areas of origin, the lack of basic services and humanitarian access, and the destruction or secondary occupation of private and public properties, are all serious obstacles to their return.

Though plagued by limited capacity and partisan politics, the Iraqi government took steps in 2008 to respond to forced displacement. In July, the Ministry of Migration and Displacement launched a National Policy on Displacement outlining the basic rights of displaced and returnee populations and the obligations of the Iraqi government and the humanitarian community to provide services and durable solutions. The government also enacted laws in September to address returns and property issues facing returnees in Baghdad, but these proved controversial with critics cautioning against premature and unsustainable returns.

Humanitarian space has been shaped by the activities of multi-national forces and non-state armed groups. The access of UN agencies, IOM and international NGOs has continued to be limited. Though coordination mechanisms have been revised, critics have noted continuing duplication and parallel coordination mechanisms, and the relationship between the UN and international forces have undermined the international humanitarian response.



Occupied Palestinian Territory

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	116,000
Percentage of total population	3%
Start of current displacement situation	1967
New displacement in 2008	612
Returns in 2008	–
Causes of displacement	International armed conflict (occupation), human rights violations
Human development index	106

Since 1967, internal displacement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) has directly and indirectly followed policies and actions of the government of Israel, including house demolitions and the expropriation of land for settlement expansion, construction of the Separation Wall, revocation of residency rights, and military incursions and clearing operations. People have also been displaced where the regime of closures and limitations on freedom of movement have made the situation of residents of OPT's enclaves untenable.

Since the 1993 Oslo Accords most displacement has been reported in the West Bank's "Area C" (under Israeli control and administration) and East Jerusalem, as a consequence of the Separation Wall, the settlement programme and settler violence, revocation of residency rights in East Jerusalem and the military appropriation of land. In 2008, house demolitions continued in the West Bank (though a moratorium on demolitions was observed for several months in Area C). In Gaza the majority of displacement resulted from military incursions along "buffer zones" and border areas such as Rafah. In February 2008, an incursion into Gaza temporarily displaced several hundred people. At the very end of the year, the Israeli government launched a military operation in Gaza, which subsequently led to a large wave of displacement.

IDPs are thought to be dispersed among host communities in various areas. In the West Bank, many people have been forced to relocate away from Israeli settlements and related infrastructure; military zones and security strips; and areas affected by the Wall and its associated regime of restrictions in movement and access to land and other resources. People temporarily displaced due to incursions have sought shelter with relatives, or in public buildings or schools until the violence ends or longer-term accommodation becomes possible.

Palestinians, displaced or not, face a deepening protection crisis. Intermittent cycles of violence, pervasive restrictions on their movement, and discriminatory policies and regulations have increased the vulnerability of the community as a whole, while the humanitarian situation has worsened in Gaza as result of its near-total isolation since June 2007, following the takeover by Hamas. However, those displaced or at risk of displacement face specific protection concerns. Displace-

ment has entailed loss of family unity, social welfare and livelihoods, and has also had wide-ranging physical and psychological impacts including trauma and anxiety for children. Communities in areas under threat of expulsion or eviction have faced heightened protection risks, including harassment and intimidation. They include between 50,000 and 90,000 at risk of displacement due to the construction of the Wall, several thousand families in Area C and East Jerusalem affected by demolition orders, and the Jafeleen Bedouin community, whose traditional land rights are not recognised by Israel.

Internal displacement is generally not recognised by the government of Israel. The Israeli state remains the primary perpetrator of forced displacement and does not provide assistance or protection to IDPs. The Palestinian national authorities, despite attempts to address displacement, have been impaired by the ongoing policies of occupation, their limited jurisdiction under the Oslo accords, political turmoil and poor governance.

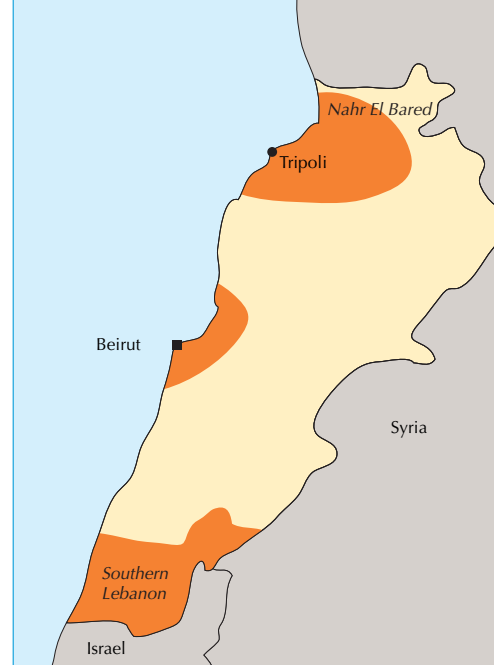
Though several UN agencies respond to concerns of victims of displacement within their respective mandates, there is no international agency in OPT with an explicit IDP protection mandate. Palestinian, Israeli and international NGOs have researched and publicised the impact of house demolitions and the Wall on Palestinian populations, and helped grassroots communities to prevent or seek to reverse processes of displacement, on occasion providing legal and other assistance to victims of eviction orders or demolitions.

For the vast majority of internally displaced people in OPT, durable solutions remain tied to the reversal of policies of occupation, and an eventual final resolution to the conflict. NGOs and experts have warned that the failure of the international community to address the underlying sources of forced displacement is increasingly rendering any notion of a two-state solution defunct. Prioritisation of the rights of those affected is ever more pressing, in light of the demographic changes that displacement entails and the continuing consequences that these changes will have for contested areas.

Lebanon

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	90,000–390,000
Percentage of total population	2%–9%
Start of current displacement situation	1975 (civil war); 2006 (Israel-Lebanon war); 2007 (Nahr el Bared); 2008 (intra-Lebanese conflict)
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	1,000,000 (2006)
New displacement in 2008	3,600
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	International and internal armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	78



The number of IDPs in Lebanon in 2008 was uncertain; in addition to the recorded figures, hundreds of thousands of people were still waiting for compensation for property lost, the full reconstruction of their destroyed homes and the rehabilitation of areas still affected by explosive remnants of war, and reconciliation between the warring parties.

Of the hundreds of thousands displaced by civil war and Israeli invasions up to 2000, the government reported 16,750 still displaced in 2006, while according to government and UN estimates, between 40,000 and 70,000 people were still displaced in February 2008 by the 2006 war between Israeli forces and Hezbollah. Around 24,000 Palestinian refugees were in May 2008 still displaced in northern Lebanon by the 2007 siege and destruction of Nahr el Bared refugee camp and the accompanying fighting between the Lebanese army and militants of Fatah al Islam. Finally, around 660 families, or an estimated 3,600 individuals, were temporarily displaced in mid-2008 by fighting between Lebanese factions in the city of Tripoli, but a peace plan signed by all the parties enabled their return during the year.

IDPs and returnees are thus spread across various areas of the country, but particularly in cities including Beirut. During the civil war many rural communities were displaced into cities, while in the 2006 war, over 80 per cent of people living south of the Litani river moved north, with only those unable to leave (such as elderly people) remaining. The majority of those displaced have sought assistance and shelter from their respective communities, while also receiving some support from national and international agencies.

The protection of IDPs in Lebanon should be considered in a context of continuing insecurity and an economy devastated by repeated conflicts. Surveys have highlighted protection problems faced by different displaced populations, though the findings are likely to be valid for other groups. Psychological trauma has been prevalent among the population at large. People affected by short-term displacement have identified inadequate sanitation and malnutrition as problems.

The impact of war continues in areas of displacement and return. South Lebanon, the southern suburbs of Beirut, and the Bekaa valley bore the brunt of the 2006 conflict and have

historically been among the most deprived areas of Lebanon. Two years after the 2006 conflict ended, there were still delays in compensating people whose houses had been totally destroyed, and delays in their reconstruction. Cluster sub-munitions have contaminated vast areas of farmland in the south. Five children were killed and 78 injured by explosive remnants of war between August 2006 and July 2008.

The siege of Nahr el Bared has had severe consequences for Palestinians and Lebanese living in and around the camp; the destruction of their homes and livelihoods and their ongoing displacement has left them in makeshift shelters. The immediate concern of displaced Palestinians remains the reconstruction of Nahr el Bared, which may be completed in mid-2011 subject to adequate funding.

The perpetrators of displacement and associated human rights abuses have so far enjoyed relative impunity. There have been no criminal prosecutions for acts committed during the 1975–1990 civil war, which included killings, enforced disappearances and arbitrary detentions by various militias and Syrian and Israeli government forces. Similarly, those displaced by more recent events have limited hope of seeing the perpetrators prosecuted.

The Lebanese government has established several coordination structures for northern and southern areas and districts of Beirut to help the recovery and reconstruction efforts of IDPs and returnees. Hezbollah and other organisations have provided significant assistance, social services and reconstruction support. The country's political and economic crisis in 2008 has diverted attention from the plight of those forcibly displaced, and limited the effectiveness of the government's response. Nevertheless reconstruction must go on if the return process is to be sustainable, while those still displaced deserve the continuing protection of the international community.



Yemen

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	20,000–23,000
Percentage of total population	0.1%
Start of current displacement situation	2004
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	130,000 (2008)
New displacement in 2008	70,000 to 110,000
Returns in 2008	55,000 to 90,000
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	138

Clashes between government forces and Shi'ite followers of the late Sheikh Badr Eddin al-Houth led to displacement in north Yemen at regular intervals from 2004 with a peak in 2008. Fighting flared up in November 2005 following the breakdown of President Ali Abdullah Saleh's amnesty towards members of al-Houth's militia, and in February 2006 several thousand people were displaced in armed clashes and air raids. An escalation in the fighting in 2007 led to further displacement in the northern governorate of Saada, until the July 2008 declaration of a ceasefire. However insecurity has since continued, with clashes reported, restrictions in access remaining, and unexploded ordnance and landmines still present.

In October 2008 severe flooding in eastern Yemen also displaced 10,000 people, and the government declared Hadramout and Al-Mahara governorates disaster areas and accommodated affected people in schools and public buildings.

OCHA estimated that 130,000 people were displaced or affected by the conflict in July 2008. The government reported in September that up to 90,000 had returned since the end of the conflict, but these return figures have not been verified and some reports suggest many people have returned to situations of displacement due to the high level of damage to their home areas.

According to the OCHA report, 60,000 people had found refuge in Saada town by July, of whom 15,000 to 20,000 were receiving limited assistance from national and international aid agencies in seven camps, and around 40,000 were sheltering with hosts. As many as 70,000 were also believed to be displaced in remote rural areas, where limits in access enforced by the government were preventing the delivery of assistance. The government progressively allowed aid agencies into some towns, though this access was still insufficient to reach many people affected.

There was great concern not only for IDPs but also for people forced to remain in the areas of hostilities. Civilians were prevented by both government and opposition checkpoints from travelling to Saada town to seek food and medical assistance. There is little information on particularly vulnerable displaced groups such as women, children or elderly people, but reports have noted a prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence and recruitment of children into tribal and Houthi forces.

Many people were still displaced at the end of the year. Though almost 8,000 families were said to have returned to their places of origin or resettled elsewhere in Saada by November 2008, over 3,000 families were recorded as displaced in areas accessible to UN and humanitarian agencies. Areas of Saada remained inaccessible due to insecurity or movement restrictions imposed by all parties to the conflict.

IDPs assessed in camps in Saada and elsewhere were enduring dire conditions and were particularly in need of food, medication, access to education, non-food items, improvements in access to water, sanitation and shelter. Many were unable to return to their homes due to fear of insecurity and reprisals, destruction of their homes, and lack of livelihoods and basic services there.

The government and NGOs have undertaken assessment missions to determine the damage to property and infrastructure in order to begin the process of reconstruction. In August, the Ministry of Local Administration reported that 6,000 houses had been damaged in Saada, as well as a large number of farms, schools, health facilities and mosques. The government has since established the Saada Compensation Committee for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation to help IDPs return and rebuild their lives.

The Yemeni Red Crescent Society and several other local and international organisations, including WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF, ICRC, Islamic Relief, and MSF, have provided assistance to displaced and non-displaced people affected by the conflict. While assistance and protection will continue to be inadequate until the access to affected civilians is better, the international community has a substantial role to play in funding and delivering humanitarian and development assistance to help the Saada region overcome the extensive devastation of the conflict.

Israel

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	200,000 (including children of IDPs)
Percentage of total population	2.9%
Start of current displacement situation	1948
New displacement in 2008	–
Returns in 2008	–
Causes of displacement	International armed conflict, human rights violations
Human development index	23

There were two principal groups of long-term IDPs within Israel in 2008: Arab villagers displaced during and after the conflict which accompanied the creation of Israel in 1948, and their descendants dispersed across the country; and Bedouin communities concentrated in the southern Negev region, who had been displaced in several waves. In addition, residents of towns near the borders with Lebanon and Gaza have in recent years experienced shorter-term displacement due to rocket attacks during periods of conflict with Hezbollah and Hamas.

The main concern of those displaced since 1948 has been to assert their right to the property they lost when they were displaced. Their situation effectively depends on the resolution

Syria

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	433,000 (including children of IDPs)
Percentage of total population	2.1%
Start of current displacement situation	1967
New displacement in 2008	–
Returns in 2008	–
Causes of displacement	International armed conflict (occupation), human rights violations
Human development index	105

In the 1967 war, Israel occupied Syria's western Golan Heights. Between 70,000 (according to Israeli estimates) and 153,000 people (according to the Syrian government) were forced to leave or fled into unoccupied Syria during the war. Following the end of the conflict, Syrians were not allowed to return by the Israeli government, and hundreds of villages were destroyed and razed to the ground. IDPs and their descendants numbered as many as 433,000 by 2007.

The Syrian government has made some efforts to help those displaced from areas bordering the occupied Golan Heights, including by rebuilding the town of Quneitra and neighbouring villages bordering the occupied area, but progress has been slow.

of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; in 2003 the Israeli Supreme Court accepted the government's argument that the current security situation and the persistent assertion by Palestinian refugees of their right of return could not justify allowing the claims of the internally displaced petitioners. Meanwhile, the majority of the land from which they were displaced has been nationalised.

The displaced Bedouin in the Negev, and indeed all the Bedouin communities there, face numerous protection concerns, including very limited access to livelihoods, education and other services. The government's programme to demolish villages it views as illegal means some communities have been recently displaced and others remain at risk of displacement.

The government has not mandated any office to address internal displacement; nor has it enacted or implemented any law or policy to protect IDPs. A number of NGOs including BADIL and ADALAH have advocated for the rights of IDPs, while the Regional Council of Unrecognized Arab Bedouin Villages in the Negev has helped to persuade relevant ministries to halt planned demolitions of villages.



The living conditions of displaced Syrians are not well documented; though most displaced families appear to have integrated, many have expressed a desire to return to Golan. Some reports suggested that IDPs have been given priority for public service jobs and university places. A pressing human rights issue is the separation from their families remaining in the Golan, caused by entry and exit restrictions imposed by the Israeli government.

Grassroots organisations on both sides of the border have called for the situation of the displaced people to be resolved. Observers remark that neither the return of the displaced population nor compensation for property lost can be envisaged without a peace agreement between Israel and Syria.

The international response to the situation has largely been political rather than humanitarian. Apart from ICRC, there are no international humanitarian or development organisations addressing the needs of affected people either in Golan or elsewhere in Syria.



Internally displaced people protest on a bus during a march against violence in Bogota, Colombia (Photo: Reuters/John Vizcaino, courtesy www.alertnet.org, March 2008).

Internal displacement in the Americas

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Internal displacement in the Americas

By the end of 2008 there were 4.5 million IDPs in the region; this is the highest figure since IDMC started to monitor internal displacement in the Americas, and is due to the rise in displacement in Colombia.

Latin America's brutal internal armed conflicts all had similar causes, including deep structural inequalities, unequal access to land and absolute control of political space by small elites. Although inequalities have prevailed, most of those conflicts have ended during the last decade. The major exception is Colombia, which in 2008 remained the only country with a protracted, large-scale internal armed conflict that continued to cause high rates of internal displacement. Thus, the situations of internally displaced people were very different in Colombia and elsewhere in the region.

In Mexico, Guatemala, and Peru, the end of violence left thousands of people internally displaced, most of them from indigenous communities or marginalised rural groups. While peace brought the best possible opportunity for the end of displacement, it also threatened to lead to neglect of displaced populations, as national and international attention moved to more pressing situations of violence, and as governments tended to assimilate IDPs with economic migrants and the so-called "historic poor". Attaining durable solutions giving IDPs an equal chance to enjoy the entire range of rights has since proven difficult, as increasingly invisible displaced populations settled in new locations, or blended into the impoverished populations of fast-growing slums around cities. Their prospects were further limited by the unwillingness of governments to continue addressing IDPs as a group with specific protection needs.

Following the conflicts in Peru and Guatemala, truth commissions in the two countries underlined the rights to truth and to reparations for violations including internal displacement; however, to date, IDPs have not been able to enjoy these rights because of lack of political will, capacity and funding to implement the commissions' recommendations. In Peru, IDPs, like many other victims of violence, were in 2008 still awaiting reparations for the human rights violations and abuses they suffered in the conflict. At the end of the year, no IDPs in Peru had received reparations, as a statute on internal displacement had excluded the reparations component, and provisions for IDPs were instead included in a more general statute for all victims of the armed conflict. Meanwhile Guatemala's 2003 reparations programme has yet to be implemented. Also, there was a tendency to frame reparations both for IDPs and victims of other human rights abuses as development or anti-poverty measures rather than fundamental rights supported by international law.

In contrast, in Colombia, the internal armed conflict continued and contributed to the highest rate of internal displacement in decades, which meant the country had the second-



largest IDP population in the world, after that of Sudan. Despite increased efforts in the response to the displacement crisis, IDPs continued to face widespread protection problems as they arrived in towns and cities. In 2008, the Constitutional Court of Colombia, declared again – four years after its landmark 2004 decision – that the government's response to the IDP crisis continued to create "an unconstitutional state of affairs". New displacements were caused by increased clashes between the government forces and the leading rebel group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC); clashes between the FARC and a smaller rebel group, the National Liberation Army (ELN); violence perpetrated by new armed groups which emerged after the highly publicised, government-promoted demobilisation of paramilitaries ended in 2006; and aerial fumigations to eradicate coca crops. Meanwhile, the Colombian conflict began to spill over to neighbouring countries, not least because of the thousands of individuals and families seeking refugee status in Ecuador, Venezuela, and Panama, but also because the visible presence of irregular armed groups across the borders began to cause internal displacement in those countries.

Country	Number of IDPs (rounded)	Government figures	UN figures	Other figures	Comments
Colombia	2,650,000–4,360,000	2,649,139 (August 2008)		4,361,355 (Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento or CODHES, June 2008)	CODHES figure is cumulative since 1985, while government figure is cumulative only since 1999 and does not include intra-urban displacement and displacement due to crop fumigations; also, since IDPs have up to a year to register after being displaced, there is a lag of up to a year with the government figure.
Guatemala	Undetermined		242,000 (UN-FPA, May 1997)		Unclear if people displaced in armed conflict to 1994 are still IDPs.
Mexico	5,500-21,000			10,000 (ICRC, June 2003); 12,000 (Center for Human Rights Fray Bartolomé de la Casas, June 2003); other sources cite 60,000 (quoted by OHCHR, 2003)	
Peru	150,000	150,000 (Ministry of Women and Social Development, May 2007)			



Peru

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	150,000
Percentage of total population	0.5%
Start of current displacement situation	1980
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	Undetermined
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, human rights violations
Human development index	79

Armed conflict from 1980 to 2000 between government forces and the revolutionary groups Sendero Luminoso and Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru caused the displacement of up to one million people at the height of the conflict in the 1990s. In 2007, the Ministry of Women and Social Development (MIMDES) estimated that 150,000 IDPs had not yet returned or resettled, and were still in urban centres including Ayacucho, Lima, Junín, Ica, and Huánuco.

Eight years after the end of the conflict, there is no data evaluating the situation of this group either independently or in comparison with non-IDPs. However, there are indications that IDPs continue to face obstacles in the enjoyment of their rights, including lack of livelihood opportunities, access to education and health care. Furthermore, IDPs' right to remedy and reparation, enshrined in the national law on reparations, has still not been realised because of

lack of government coordination and a current focus on collective reparations.

A 2004 law for IDPs had both symbolic and practical impact. It kept attention on IDPs' concerns, mandated the creation of an IDP registry, assigned responsibilities among authorities, and adopted guidelines for preventing future displacement and protecting future victims. The IDP division of MIMDES has since improved the lot of some IDPs, by starting the registration process, and by implementing some livelihoods programmes.

More funds are needed, for reparations, and also for wider livelihoods interventions and development of basic services. Further returns and resettlements are not expected, as incentives such as land would have to be offered to IDPs currently living in urban areas. However, after so many years, it is unlikely that they would want to return to their previous way of life.

Colombia

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	2,650,000–4,360,000
Percentage of total population	5.7%–9.3%
Start of current displacement situation	1990s
New displacement in 2008	270,000 to June 2008
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict, human rights violations
Human development index	75



40 years of multi-party conflict between the army and illegal armed groups including insurgent groups, notably the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have led over four million Colombians to be internally displaced, according to the Consultancy on Human Rights and Displacement (CODHES). All the parties to the conflict have consistently targeted civilians for strategic ends. While paramilitary self-defence groups were formally demobilized until 2006, they have emerged under new names and continue to commit crimes and cause forced displacement, which increased markedly during 2008. The last year has seen an increase in the regional ramifications of the conflict.

People have been displaced from rural areas to towns and cities across the country, and have increasingly been forced to flee violence within those urban areas. Most of them are dispersed among poor urban populations, and after some initial support, do their best to cope with little assistance from the government or international agencies.

Colombia's displaced face a range of protection concerns, due not only to the ongoing conflict and the appropriation of their property, but also to the lack of access to emergency support after displacement and limited livelihoods opportunities. Their physical security and integrity is threatened due to targeted attacks by all the illegal armed groups, army operations against those groups, and fumigations to eradicate coca crops. IDPs have consistently more difficulties in enjoying economic social and cultural rights than the rest of the population: displaced children have lower access to education; IDP families live in inadequate housing; they experience hurdles in accessing public healthcare; and they have difficulty earning enough to afford even basic necessities.

A large proportion of IDPs have added vulnerability. 46 per cent of displaced households are led by a woman after the man has been killed or disappeared. Overall, displaced families have an average of 5.2 children, compared to four for non-displaced families, and so heads of household have more difficulty providing for family members. 36 per cent of the displaced population are under 18 years of age, and many risk forced recruitment by armed groups. Young women and girls face exceedingly high rates of sexual abuse and exploitation. 18 per cent of displaced families include someone with some form of disability, which makes it more difficult for them to rebuild their lives in a new location.

Almost all the country's indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups have been affected by forced displacement, as their lands are coveted by the armed groups. They are particularly at a disadvantage when arriving in urban centres, because of language barriers, lack of familiarity with the environment, and discrimination.

Prospects for the return of most IDPs to their original homes remain low because of the ongoing conflict. Local integration and resettlement in other municipalities are the most likely and more frequent forms of durable solutions.

Even though Colombia has a remarkably advanced body of norms for IDP protection, these are not applied on the ground. Acknowledging this, the Constitutional Court declared in 2004 that the Government's response to the displacement crisis amounted to a generalised "unconstitutional state of affairs". The subsequent involvement of the Court and its use of indicators of enjoyment of rights to evaluate outcomes has led to gradual improvement in the response – but in 2008 the Court found that the unconstitutional state of affairs persisted. The government would improve its response by streamlining plans at the local level and adopting differential measures to support vulnerable people such as displaced children, women, minorities, and the disabled. The Attorney General's Office has also publicised failings in the response by government bodies, while the Ombudsman's Office has protected IDP rights and heard individual complaints.

Colombian civil society includes many very active human rights NGOs, which also work to protect IDPs. Colombian NGOs have recently worked well in coordination by, for example, drafting a single submission for the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review of Colombia.

UNHCR with its well-established presence on the ground has coordinated the collaborative response to displacement in Colombia. The cluster approach has been implemented to coordinate this response, and results of evaluations were pending at the end of 2008. ICRC has routinely provided food aid after mass displacement, while international NGOs have provided protection and other support.

Mexico

Up to 40,000 people were displaced in the Mexican state of Chiapas during an uprising by the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) in 1994, and its subsequent confrontations with government forces. OHCHR cited a range between 3,000 and as many as 60,000 IDPs in 2003, and around 5,500 were reportedly still displaced in 2007.

In 1995, the army launched a counter-attack which caused further displacement of supporters of the Zapatista movement, and paved the way for the return of displaced supporters of the government. This aggravated social divisions within the indigenous communities which have yet to be resolved. A 1996 agreement recognising indigenous rights and culture, and in particular the right to land, has never been implemented, and tensions have continued between, on one side, the Zapatista movement and supporting indigenous communities, and on the other, the government and other affiliated communities. In 2006, state authorities reportedly started to evict people from land they occupied from large-scale landowners in 1994.

Meanwhile most IDPs have resettled across rural Chiapas, though small IDP sites remain. It has been reported that they continue to receive support from the Zapatista movement, which has established “auton-



Quick facts

Number of IDPs	5,500–21,000
Percentage of total population	0.01%– 0.02%
Start of current displacement situation	1994
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	40,000–60,000 (1995)
New displacement in 2008	Undetermined
Returns in 2008	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict
Human development index	51

omous” municipalities in areas under their control with health and education facilities which also provide services to the IDPs. The most pressing concerns of IDPs are based on their general poverty due to limited access to land and insecurity of tenure over that land. The solution to their displacement thus lies in the original concern of the Zapatista movement: secure ownership of land to make agricultural communities sustainable.

The Government created a multi-sectoral commission to respond to the IDP situation, but no significant impact has been reported and there were no IDP-specific laws in 2008. There is no international response to the situation in the absence of an obvious humanitarian crisis, and so it has been left to human rights NGOs to advocate for the IDPs.

Guatemala

Between 500,000 and 1.5 million people were displaced by internal armed conflict in Guatemala in the early 1980s. The conflict between government forces and insurgent factions grouped under the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) ended in 1996, but not before the armed forces had carried out brutal “scorched-earth” campaigns to crush the insurgents, which involved extensive human rights violations against civilians.

The end of conflict left large numbers of IDPs dispersed across the country, many of them in the shanty towns of the capital Guatemala City, where they worked in the informal sectors as street sellers, domestic workers or in factories, or on the southern coast, where some worked as seasonal labourers on large land holdings. These IDPs joined the ranks of the poorest citizens of what is one of the poorest countries in the Americas, and their access to the basic necessities of life and enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights has remained difficult. This is still the case for both IDPs and other vulnerable groups who were also affected by the conflict, such as people without work, disabled people, or people with specific health care needs.

Twelve years after the end of the conflict, some suggest that there are no merits to keep on considering IDPs separately. However, outstanding problems such as the number of

Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Undetermined
Start of current displacement situation	1980
Peak number of IDPs (and year)	500,000–1,500,000 (1983)
New displacement in 2008	0
Returns in 2008	0
Causes of displacement	Internal armed conflict
Human development index	121

forcibly displaced people still unable to regain their land or fully reintegrate elsewhere means it is still necessary to consider them as a separate group with specific protection needs related to their former displacement. IDP organisations claim their members are still suffering from loss of land and work. Government land programmes are not moving forward and access to land remains necessary for IDPs to return to home areas. The situation is not likely to improve without greater government capacity and willingness to manage land programmes including the credit system for land purchases.

In 2008 there were no institutions specifically addressing the needs of IDPs in Guatemala. The land reforms which the government had attempted had not brought any positive results, and IDPs were still waiting for effective reparations.

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