

**GRID**  
**2016**

GLOBAL REPORT ON  
**INTERNAL  
DISPLACEMENT**



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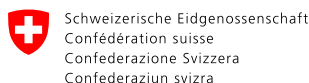
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Cover photo: An older woman walks through the rubble of her neighbourhood in Kathmandu, Nepal. Two major earthquakes in April and May 2015 killed 8,700 people, damaged or destroyed more than 712,000 houses and displaced more than 2.6 million people. Photo © [www.gavingough.com](http://www.gavingough.com)

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GLOBAL REPORT ON  
**INTERNAL  
DISPLACEMENT**

MAY 2016

# New displacements associated with

- Conflict and violence (Total: 8.6 million)
- Disasters (Total: 19.2 million)



# conflict and disasters in 2015



NOTE: For both types of displacement, the number is shown only when it exceeds 20,000. The size of the pie charts is fixed for estimates of 5,000 or less. In a few cases, the same person may be displaced more than once.



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# FOREWORD

Much focus has been placed on the hundreds of thousands of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants who have put their lives at risk to reach European shores. Their bravery and despair has drawn much attention to the phenomenon of displacement. In reality though, they represent only the tip of an iceberg. Of those the Syrian conflict has uprooted, around 6.6 million people have been displaced internally. Away from the media glare and out of reach of humanitarian agencies, many struggle to survive in subhuman conditions.

There are now twice as many internally displaced people (IDPs) as refugees worldwide. In some ways, the distinction between internal and cross-border flight is unhelpful in a globalised world. Large crises such as Syria should lead to a new and more holistic thinking about displacement.

A similar shift is needed in analysing the causes and consequences of displacement. We tend to think in terms of single, isolated triggers, but the reality is far more complex. Displacement in Sudan ostensibly caused by conflict has been traced back to root causes such as drought and environmental degradation, and a food crisis that became a famine because of government neglect and changing regional demographics. In Haiti, the establishment of overcrowded informal settlements and authorities' inability to enforce building and safety standards formed the backdrop to the mass displacement caused by the 2010 earthquake.

Such complexity has profound implications when it comes to preventing, responding to and resolving displacement. Failure to conduct a thorough assessment means responses will be fragmented at best and ineffective at worst.

A comprehensive approach must address political factors, and improve resilience to a range of risks so people do not have to flee in the first place. This is development and governance work. When displacement becomes inevitable, humanitarians attend to more immediate needs, but they must work with the development sector if sustainable solutions are to be achieved. There is a clear trend

of displacement becoming more protracted and more of a development challenge.

To take some of these considerations into account, we are presenting our estimates of internal displacement in 2015 in a radically new way, with figures on people displaced by conflict, by violence and by disasters in a single report.

The Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID) aims to provide a more holistic picture of the phenomenon, regardless of cause. In time for the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, it also aims to highlight displacement as a multi-dimensional challenge that must involve humanitarian, sustainable development, peace-building, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation work.

It also discusses types of displacement that receive too little attention, such as that associated with generalised criminal violence, gradually-evolving crises such as drought, and development projects.

This year's GRID is an important body of evidence, but it is not the complete picture. We can only be as good as our data, so it also constitutes an appeal for those who collect it to redouble their efforts to provide comprehensive and up-to-date information on all displaced populations.

Behind our data lie millions of blighted human lives. IDPs often lose everything when they flee, and the trauma and upheaval of displacement leave many with deep psychological and physical scars. Our ultimate aim remains the same, to improve understanding of their plight and ensure that efforts to protect, assist, consult and empower the displaced are better resourced and targeted.



Jan Egeland,  
Secretary General of the  
Norwegian Refugee Council



# SUMMARY

For the first time, IDMC is publishing its estimates and analysis of people internally displaced by conflict, generalised violence and disasters in a single report. This new publication, the Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID), presents our knowledge of the phenomenon more faithfully and constitutes a significant step in our efforts to paint as complete a picture as possible. Future iterations will go further still.

Part 1 of the report covers displacement that is already “on the GRID”. During 2015, there were 27.8 million new displacements associated with conflict, violence and disasters in 127 countries. This is roughly equivalent to every man, woman and child in New York City, London, Paris and Cairo grabbing what they could carry and fleeing their homes in search of safety.

Internal displacement associated with conflict and violence has been on an upward trend since 2003. There were 8.6 million new cases during 2015, or an average of 24,000 a day. Some 4.8 million people were newly displaced in the Middle East alone, significantly more than in the rest of the world combined. Yemen, Syria and Iraq accounted for over half of the total. Elsewhere, Ukraine, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Afghanistan, Colombia, Central African Republic and South Sudan had the highest numbers.

In terms of total headcount, there were 40.8 million IDPs worldwide as a result of conflict and violence at the end of 2015 – an increase of 2.8 million on 2014, and the highest figure ever recorded. It is also twice the number of refugees in the world. Just ten countries accounted for over two-thirds of the total, or around 30 million people. Colombia, DRC, Iraq, Sudan and South Sudan have featured in the list of the ten largest internally displaced populations every year since 2003. There were no total global figures for people still displaced by disasters, but a sample of cases in 2015 identified hundreds of thousands living in some form of protracted displacement.

Disasters displaced around 19.2 million people across 113 countries in 2015, more than twice the number who fled conflict and violence. Over the past eight years, a total of 203.4 million, or an average of 25.4 million displacements have been recorded every year. As in previous years, south and east Asia dominated in terms of absolute figures, but no region of the world was unaffected. India, China and Nepal had the highest numbers, with 3.7 million, 3.6 million and 2.6 million respectively. The vast majority of displacement took place in developing countries, and the populations of small island countries were hit hard relative to their size. The devastation cyclone Pam wrought on Vanuatu is a case in point.

Part 2 of the report takes our readers “inside the GRID” and IDMC’s generic displacement model. In this part we outline our efforts to improve the coverage and transparency of the global evidence base on internal displacement. By providing the breakdown of the age of our figures for the first time in this report, we are appealing to the governments concerned and to our partners in the field to contribute to this ongoing effort.

Part 3 of the report explores displacement which until now has been “off the GRID”. Global figures do not capture other contexts in which people flee their homes, and this year we look at three often overlooked drivers – criminal violence, drought and development projects. We discuss IDMC’s initial efforts to estimate the number of people they displace, and some of the issues inherent in doing so.

As the global monitor of internal displacement, we intend to expand our provision of knowledge with the aim of advancing global commitments to reduce the risks and impacts of displacement and find lasting solutions for the millions of IDPs worldwide. Our ability to do so will depend on the breadth and strength of our partnerships, and on states’ continued commitment to support these efforts.



Thousands of displaced people seek shelter outside the UNAMID base in Um Baru, North Darfur. Photo: UNAMID/Hamid Abdulsalam, January 2015.



# PART 1

## ON THE GRID

### Internal displacement in 2015

There were 27.8 million new displacements in 127 countries during 2015, roughly the equivalent of the populations of New York City, London, Paris and Cairo combined. Of the total, 8.6 million were associated with conflict and violence in 28 countries, and 19.2 million with disasters in 113 countries.

2015 was, tragically, another record year for internal displacement associated with conflict and violence. The increases recorded during the year were driven primarily by the waves of violence that continued to spread across the Middle East following the 2010 uprisings known as the Arab spring. New displacements were recorded in all regions of the world, but by far the worst-affected country was Yemen, where 2.2 million people – or eight per cent of the population – fled their homes and sought refuge within the country's borders.

There were 19.2 million new displacements associated with disasters brought on by rapid-onset natural hazards in 2015, more than twice as many as for conflict and violence. The vast majority of this displacement was caused by extreme weather events such as storms and flooding, but the April and May earthquakes in Nepal, which forced 2.6 million to flee their homes, were a stark reminder of the potential of geophysical hazards to precipitate mass displacements.

As in previous years, south and east Asia and the Pacific regions were worst-affected by displacement associated with disasters, and the vulnerable, coastal populations of small island developing states (SIDSs) were disproportionately affected again. Low and middle income countries were hardest hit across the world as a whole.

Part 1 of this year's report presents estimates for new displacements associated with conflict and violence during 2015, and those associated with disasters over the same period.

It also reports on the "total headcount", or the overall number of people internally displaced as a result of conflict and violence as of the end of the year, including those who fled in previous years. Unfortunately such cumulative data is not available for people displaced by disasters, so it is not possible to report a total headcount in the same way.

Figure 1.1 Total number of people internally displaced by conflict and disasters

	New displacements Jan – Dec 2015	Total number of IDPs at end 2015
CONFLICT	8.6 million	40.8 million
DISASTERS	19.2 million	?

#### NOTE TO OUR READERS

In this section, we refer to "incidents" and "cases" of displacement rather than "people displaced", because some people will have been displaced more than once. When we use the term "people displaced" explicitly, it should be taken to mean single incidents or cases affecting one person.



# KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

| There were **27.8 million new displacements in 127 countries** during 2015, more than the total populations of New York City, London, Paris and Cairo combined.

| **Weather-related hazards triggered 14.7 million displacements** in 2015. Despite the onset of an El Niño episode, this was lower than the annual average of 21.5 million since 2008.

## New displacement: conflict

| There were **8.6 million new displacements associated with conflict and violence** in 28 countries in 2015.

| 4.5 million displacements were brought on by large-scale geophysical hazards. This was higher than the annual average, driven up by the Nepal earthquake disaster.

| This type of displacement is on the rise, with an average of 5.2 million incidents a year since 2003. This equates to 14,000 people forced to flee every day.

## Total headcount

| **Displacement in the Middle East and north Africa has snowballed** since the Arab spring uprisings in 2010 and the rise of the Islamic State (also known as ISIL or ISIS). There were nearly 4.8 million new displacements in 2015, significantly more than in all other regions of the world combined. **Yemen, Syria and Iraq accounted for over half of the global total.**

| There were **40.8 million people internally displaced worldwide** as a result of conflict and violence as of the end of 2015. This represents an increase of 2.8 million from our 2014 estimate and the highest figure ever recorded. It is **twice the number of refugees in the world.**

| Outside the Middle East, the countries with the highest numbers of people fleeing were Ukraine, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Afghanistan, Colombia, Central African Republic (CAR) and South Sudan.

| As of December 2015, three-quarters of the world's internally displaced people (IDPs), or 30 million people, were located in ten countries. Five of them – **Colombia, DRC, Iraq, Sudan and South Sudan** – have featured in the list of the ten largest displaced populations every year since 2003.

## New displacement: disasters

| There were **19.2 million new displacements associated with disasters** in 113 countries, more than twice as many as for conflict and violence. Over the past eight years, 203.4 million displacements have been recorded, an average of 25.4 million each year.

| Of the other five countries, displacement in Nigeria, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen is largely the result of conflicts that erupted or escalated within the last five years. There is a risk these conflicts will become intractable, leaving the people they have displaced, who make up more than **30 per cent of the overall global estimate, to face a future of protracted and possibly multiple displacement.**

| South and east Asian regions, countries and events again dominated in terms of the highest absolute figures, but no region of the world was unaffected. **India, China and Nepal accounted for the highest numbers**, with 3.7 million, 3.6 million and 2.6 million respectively.

| At nearly 12 million, the number of people displaced by conflict in sub-Saharan Africa has flat-lined over the last decade, underlining the chronic nature of displacement in the region.

| Most displacement associated with disasters in 2015 took place in developing countries.

| There are no figures for the total number of people displaced by disasters as of the end of 2015. However, among a sample of 34 ongoing cases documented in 2015, there were **hundreds of thousands of people identified as living in protracted displacement for periods ranging between one and 26 years.**

# NEW DISPLACEMENT

## People who fled conflict and violence in 2015

There were 8.6 million new displacements associated with conflict and violence in 28 countries during 2015 (see global map, cover page fold-out).

### Displacement associated with conflict on the rise

The average number of people displaced each year by conflict and violence has risen over the last 13 years (see figure 1.2). Our figures show an average of 5.2 million displacements a year since 2003, which equates to 14,000 people forced to flee their homes every day.

Calculated over the last five years, the average rises to 7.6 million a year, or more than 20,000 people a day. This increase correlates with findings that conflict and violence intensified worldwide between 2008 and 2015.<sup>1</sup>

### The Middle East: Home to half of all new IDPs

Displacement in the Middle East and north Africa has snowballed since the wave of social uprisings known as the Arab spring in late 2010 and the rise of the Islamic State (also known as ISIL or ISIS). The region accounted for the highest numbers of people fleeing violence in 2015 by a wide margin. There were nearly 4.8 million new displacements during the year, significantly more than in all of the other regions of the world combined (see figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3: New displacements associated with conflict and violence by World Bank-defined region in 2015

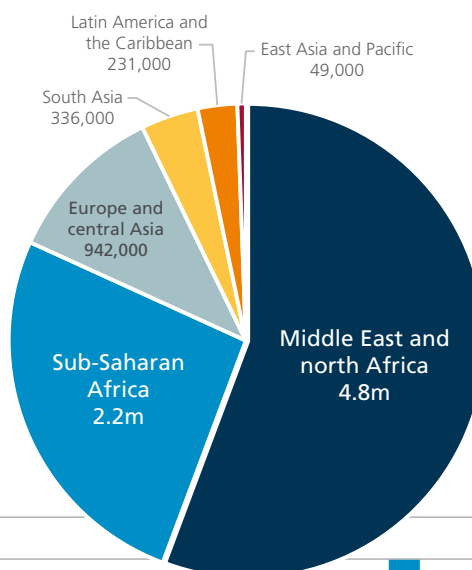


Figure 1.2: New displacements associated with conflict and violence, 2003 to 2015

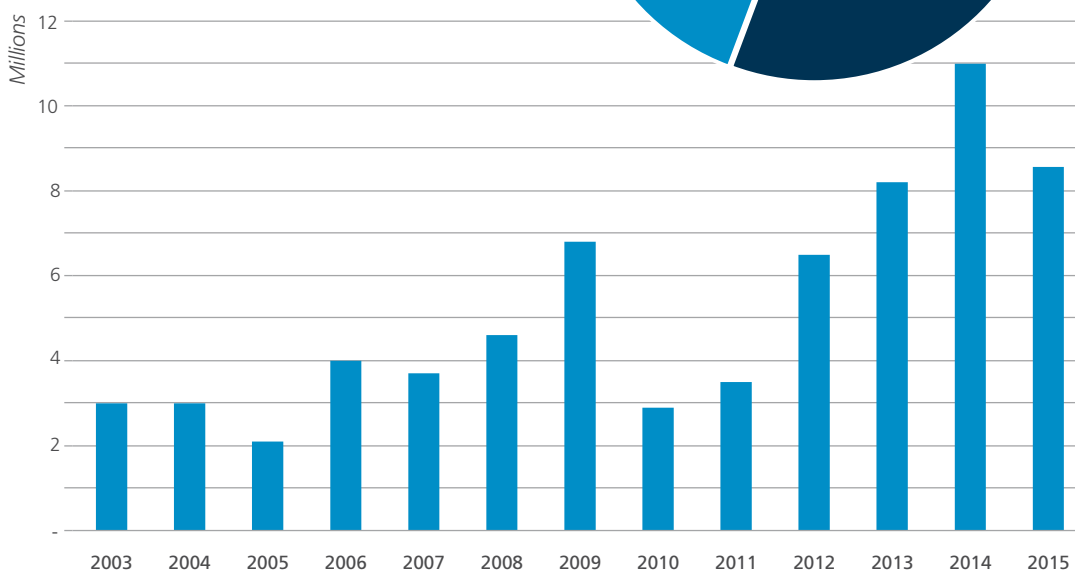
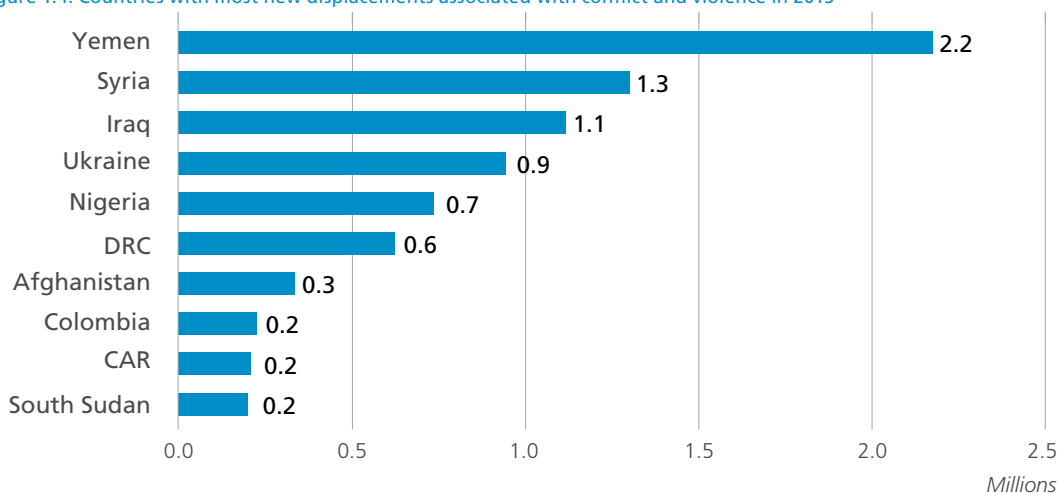


Figure 1.4: Countries with most new displacements associated with conflict and violence in 2015



Yemen, Syria and Iraq accounted for the bulk of new displacement in the region, and more than half of the global total. They were also the top three countries worldwide in terms of the number of new displacements in 2015 (see figure 1.4).

Yemen had the highest number, largely the result of Saudi-led airstrikes and an economic blockade imposed on the civilian population (see Yemen spotlight). Nearly 2.2 million men, women and children were forced to flee their homes during the year, a 20-fold increase on the 2014 estimate of new displacements. It was the worst year to date for displacement in the country, and the needs of those affected and the rest of the civilian population are acute.

In Syria, there were 1.3 million incidents of new displacement during 2015. The figure is an increase of 18 per cent from the 2014 estimate, and the humanitarian situation in the country deteriorated significantly during the year. The civil war is now in its sixth year, with four of the five permanent UN Security Council members actively engaged in the hostilities, and it has caused one of the largest displacement crises since World War Two.

Neighbouring countries have increasingly restricted the flow of people trying to leave Syria or have closed their borders altogether, leaving hundreds of thousands of families trapped in the country and living as IDPs (see Syria spotlight).

More than 1.1 million people were displaced in 2015 by Iraq's most recent wave of violence, which began in early 2014 with the rise of the Islamic State (also known as ISIL or ISIS) and other non-state armed groups, and has included intense counter-insurgency operations in cities

such as Ramadi. Three governorates – Anbar, Baghdad and Dohuk – host nearly half of the country's IDPs.<sup>2</sup> As the crisis deepens, the likelihood of IDPs being able to return to their homes has diminished and they are increasingly unable to meet their own needs. Many have become reliant on dwindling public and others' resources, a point of growing tension between IDPs and their host communities.<sup>3</sup>

### Displacement associated with conflict in the rest of the world

Outside the Middle East and north Africa, the countries with highest numbers of people fleeing the effects of conflict and violence in 2015 were Ukraine, Afghanistan, Colombia and a number of sub-Saharan African nations.

Now in its second year, the conflict that broke out in eastern Ukraine continued to cause significant loss of life, suffering and mass displacement. Insecurity continued in a number of areas along the contact line between government forces and pro-Russian separatist groups, despite the signing of the Minsk II agreements in February 2015.

A renewed ceasefire in September to enable the start of the school year has largely held. There has been a marked reduction in clashes and shelling, bringing partial relief to people who had been living with the threat of violence for many months.<sup>19</sup> These positive political and security developments have done little, however, to convince people that they are safe in their homes. There were more than 942,000 incidents of new displacement during the year, up nearly 50 per cent on our 2014 estimate.



# YEMEN

## An overlooked crisis with no end in sight

The political and security situation in Yemen deteriorated dramatically in 2015, and the ensuing humanitarian crisis shows few, if any, signs of abating. Violence displaced eight per cent of the country's population, or 2.2 million people, during the year – more than in any other country in the world – and people fled their homes in all but one of its 22 governorates.<sup>4</sup> Humanitarian and protection needs among IDPs and the rest of the civilian population are acute, and neither the national nor international response have gone far enough in addressing them.

The only unaffected governorate, Socotra, was hit by two freak tropical cyclones that traversed the Gulf of Yemen in November. Between them, cyclones Megh and Chapala forced 56,000 people to flee their homes across three governorates, and by the end of the month around 23,000 people remained displaced.<sup>5</sup>

By the end of the year, people were living in displacement in every region of Yemen, an unprecedented situation in the country's history.

Humanitarian needs were already acute before the conflict escalated in March 2015. Yemen is one of the poorest countries in the Arab world. It has few natural resources, weak governance and social services, high youth unemployment and almost 50 per cent of its population of 26.8 million lived below the poverty line in 2014.<sup>6</sup> Half of the population, of whom 70 per cent live in rural areas, had no access to safe drinking water and three-quarters no access to safe sanitation.<sup>7</sup> Gender inequality is widespread. Yemen has ranked last in the World Economic Forum's annual global gender gap report in each of the ten years it has been published.<sup>8</sup>

The escalation of violence made human suffering and the country's displacement crisis significantly worse during the year. As of the end of 2014, there were around 334,000 people displaced.<sup>9</sup> By the end of 2015, the figure had increased more than seven-fold to more than 2.5 million. The upsurge in violence has largely been attributed to the Saudi-led military intervention in the conflict. The sharp deterioration in living condi-

tions, however, is predominantly the result of sea, land and air blockades of commercial and humanitarian imports.<sup>10</sup>

Taizz, Amran and Hajjah governorates had the highest number of IDPs, between them accounting for 900,000.<sup>11</sup> Many more people may have wanted to flee, but found a range of physical, economic and social obstacles prevented them from doing so.

Flagrant disregard for international humanitarian and human rights law, and indiscriminate warfare that has targeted civilians and civilian infrastructure, were the main triggers of displacement. The destruction of infrastructure including hospitals, schools, markets, shops and water supplies has left 82 per cent of Yemen's population in need of humanitarian assistance, including 14.4 million people who suffer from food insecurity.<sup>12</sup> Calls for an independent international human rights monitoring and reporting mechanism have gone unheeded.<sup>13</sup>

The majority of IDPs live in overcrowded rented accommodation, schools and other public spaces, or tents and other forms of makeshift shelter.<sup>14</sup> They face a wide range of protection needs and vulnerabilities including lack of shelter options, lack of safety and security, harassment, lack of livelihood options, gender-based violence, loss of documentation, food insecurity and limited access to healthcare, education, water and sanitation.

Displacement has also forced many families to separate, and there are large numbers of unaccompanied minors.<sup>15</sup> IDPs have few livelihood options, and most are dependent on charity or humanitarian assistance for survival.<sup>16</sup>

Cyclones Megh and Chapala brought the equivalent of five years' of rainfall to Hadramaut, Socotra and Shabwa governorates in just two days, leading to flash floods and widespread devastation.<sup>17</sup> More than half of those who fled their homes returned within a month, and the majority of the 22,970 people still displaced were living with host families or in rental accommodation.<sup>18</sup>



Internally displaced children play in front of a school in Sana'a hosting some 200 IDPs, mostly from Saada governorate. Photo: Charlotte Cans/OCHA, June 2015

The warring parties have enforced import and movement restrictions, which have led to scarce commodities, fuel shortages and price hikes, and left the country with little or no capacity to rebuild or repair damaged homes and infrastructure. The damage the cyclones inflicted is relatively small compared with destruction the conflict has caused, but people in Yemen are highly vulnerable to such shocks, which compounds the risks they already face.

The international media and political discourse have widely overlooked the human narrative and widespread suffering in Yemen, and there has been little political resolve to stop the violence and improve humanitarian access. As a result, and because of competing crises in the region such as Syria, the response is seriously underfunded. Even if a stalled peace process bears fruit in 2016, economic and political recovery will take many years.

Given that there are no prospects for return or other durable solutions in sight, there is high risk that displacement will become protracted and IDPs' resilience to future shocks, including environmental hazards, will be further compromised.

In Nigeria, Boko Haram continued to launch attacks and commit atrocities throughout 2015. In the six years since the onset of its insurgency, the group and military operations against it have forced more than a million people to flee their homes and fuelled an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in the north-east of the country and the wider Lake Chad region.

Displacement trends show that as the military pushed Boko Haram back during the year, people previously trapped by the militants moved to urban centres in search of humanitarian assistance.<sup>20</sup> Inter-communal clashes fuelled by ethno-religious feuds, criminality, cattle rustling, land disputes and tensions between pastoralists and farmers also continued to flare across the Middle Belt region, but were largely overlooked. There were 737,000 incidents of new displacement in the country during the year.

Ongoing conflict and extreme violence also plagued the DRC, where there was an average of more than 50,000 cases of new displacement every month in 2015. The quarterly average has declined since 2013, but population movements could rise significantly again in 2016 if the political and security situation were to deteriorate.<sup>21</sup>

In Afghanistan, the withdrawal of most of the international troops present in the country coincided with a rise in displacement, with more than 335,000 new incidents reported. This was driven by an increase in violence by non-state armed groups and counter-insurgency operations by national and the remaining international security forces. Such operations have increasingly involved the use of mortars, rockets and grenades in populated areas.<sup>22</sup> Significant new displacement in Kunduz province and continuing instability in Helmand and central areas of the country have aggravated a displacement crisis that has been ongoing since 2001.<sup>23</sup>

Colombia's long-running armed conflict, and violence perpetrated by groups the government identifies as criminal gangs, triggered more than 224,000 cases of new displacement in 2015.<sup>24</sup> Most of the violence takes place in rural areas, but IDPs tend to flee to the country's large and medium-sized cities, where they take refuge in slums and shanty towns. Here, they and the rest of the urban poor face sporadic bomb attacks, threats, killings, forced recruitment, gender-based violence, abductions and other forms of harassment and intimidation. These cause further displacement, but the number of people affected is difficult if not impossible to gauge.<sup>25</sup>

Improved security in some areas of CAR during the first half of the year allowed many IDPs to return to their homes. The situation remained volatile, however, with violence in September and October sparking nearly 210,000 new displacements and forcing some people to seek shelter in sites that were in the process of closing.<sup>26</sup> Many IDPs were trapped in enclaves, some controlled by warlords, where they were beyond the reach of state authorities, humanitarians and French and UN peacekeepers.<sup>27</sup>

Despite the signing of a peace agreement in South Sudan in August 2015, civilians in all ten of the country's states continued to suffer violence, which caused the displacement of more than 199,000 people during the year. Fighting erupted in new areas in the second half of the year, including Western and Central Equatoria. Inter-communal violence, some sparked by cattle rustling, caused further displacement.<sup>28</sup>

# NEW DISPLACEMENT

## People who fled disasters in 2015

There were 19.2 million new displacements associated with disasters in 113 countries across all regions of the world in 2015, brought on by events such as floods, storms, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, wildfires, landslides and extreme temperatures (see global map, cover page fold-out).

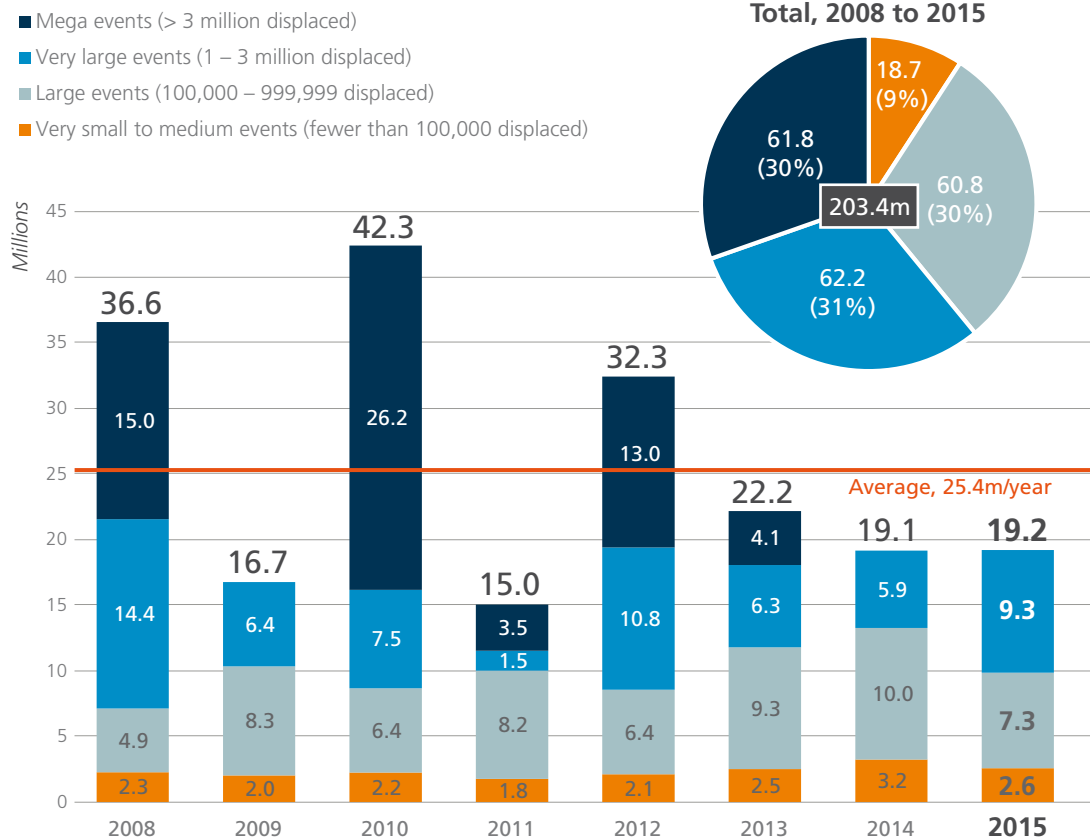
### Disasters caused twice as many new displacements as conflict

Disasters triggered by natural hazards caused twice as many new displacements in 2015 as conflict and violence. Over the past eight years, there have been 203.4 million displacements by disasters, a figure comparable to the entire

population of Brazil. The 2015 figure is lower than the average recorded since 2008 of 25.4 million displacements per year, but similar to the reported global totals for the previous year (see figure 1.5).<sup>29</sup>

The scale and frequency of large-scale disasters account for much of the variance in the total figures from year to year. Such events are less predictable because they are brought on by the most extreme hazards. As in 2014 and 2009, there were no mega-events (defined here as more than three million displacements) in 2015.

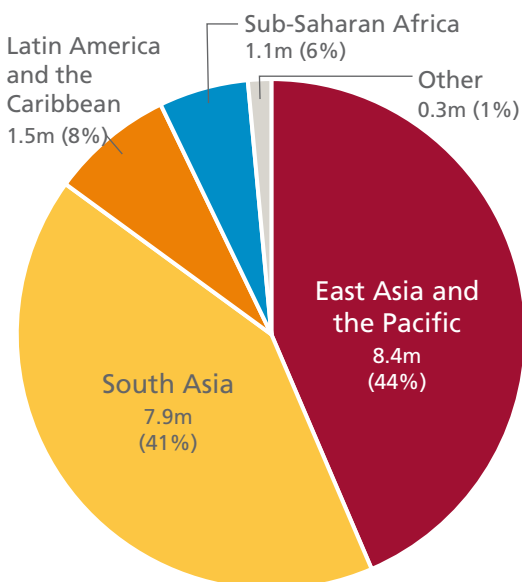
Figure 1.5: New displacements associated with disasters by scale of events, 2008 to 2015



## South and east Asia dominate the figures again

As in previous years, south and east Asian regions, countries and events dominated in terms of the highest absolute figures in 2015 (see figure 1.6).

Figure 1.6: New displacements associated with disasters by World Bank-defined region, 2015



India, China and Nepal accounted for the highest numbers of people displaced, with totals of 3.7 million, 3.6 million and 2.6 million respectively (see figure 1.7).

In India, the impact of two major flood and storm events were responsible for 81 per cent of the displacement, forcing three million people to flee their homes. Heavy rains and flash floods associated with a weak tropical cyclone that tracked across the Bay of Bengal in November displaced 1.8 million in the states of Tamil Nadu and southern Andhra Pradesh. Monsoon flooding associated with cyclone Komen, which struck neighbouring Bangladesh in late July, displaced 1.2 million, mostly in the northern and central states of West Bengal, Odisha, Manipur, Rajasthan and Gujarat.

Three large-scale typhoons and a flood disaster together triggered 75 per cent of the displacement in China. Three typhoons, Chan-Hom, Soudelor and Dujan, struck four eastern provinces between July and September, destroying homes, causing landslides and flooding and, between them, displacing more than 2.2 million people. Earlier in the year, heavy rains and flooding in nine southern and eastern provinces forced another 518,000 people to flee their homes in May.

The earthquakes in Nepal in April and May, the thousands of aftershocks that followed and the landslides they triggered left 712,000 homes and much infrastructure damaged or destroyed. The disaster took a heavy toll on the developing nation, affecting almost a third of the population and killing 8,700 people. Many of the 2.6 million who were displaced have been unable to return to their homes, and recovery and reconstruction will take many years to complete (see Nepal spotlight).

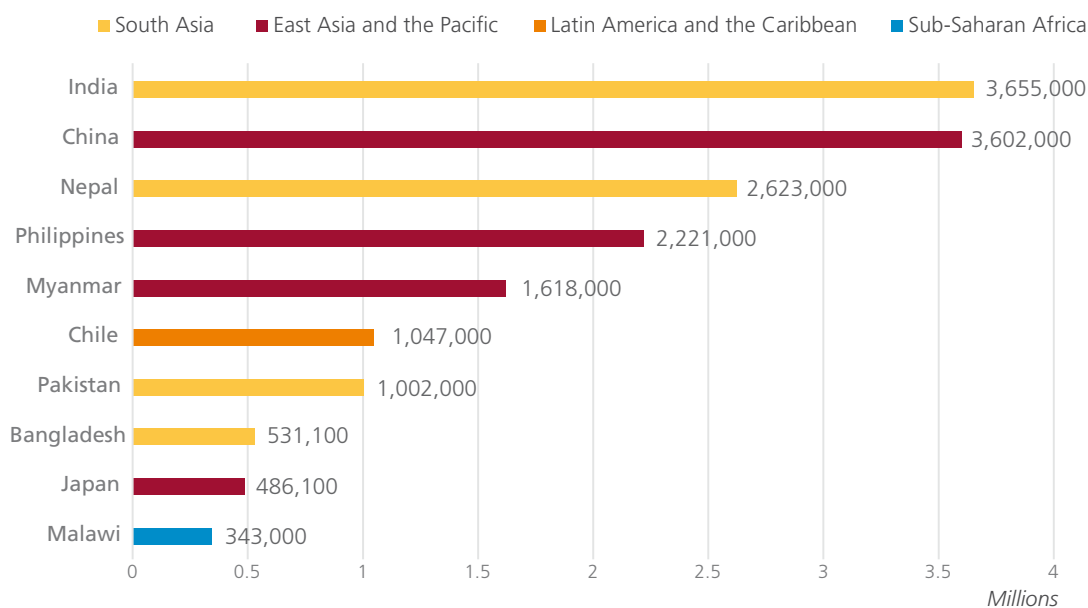
Unlike China and India, the number of people displaced in Nepal was also high relative to its population size (see figure 1.8). It recorded the third highest level of new displacement worldwide in both relative and absolute terms.

As in previous years, multiple typhoons struck the Philippines in 2015, with three of the strongest storms displacing two million people. Typhoon Koppu (local name Lando) was the most severe. It made landfall on Luzon, the country's largest and most populous island, in October, killing 54 people, displacing around 938,000 and causing severe crop damage. Typhoon Melor (local name Nona) forced 743,000 people to flee their homes in the central regions of Bicol Peninsula and Romblan Islands in December, and typhoon Goni (local name Ineng) displaced more than 318,000 in the north of the country in August.

Floods, landslides and the impacts of cyclone Komen displaced more than 1.6 million people in Myanmar in July and August, resulting in the fifth highest figure worldwide in absolute terms and the sixth highest in relative terms (see figure 1.8). Twelve of the country's 14 states and regions suffered widespread destruction. The government declared the worst-affected states of Chin and Rakhine, and the Magway and Sagaing regions, as disaster zones.

In Pakistan, two disasters accounted for almost all of the displacement that took place during the year. A 7.5 magnitude earthquake struck the Hindu Kush mountains in October. Its epicentre was in a remote area of northern Afghanistan, but north-west Pakistan suffered the worst of its impacts. Nearly 666,000 people were displaced in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province and Bajaur in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. Snow and rainfall over mountainous terrain left many of those affected isolated and acutely vulnerable. In August, flooding in northern and central KP, Punjab, Gilgit Baltistan, Chitral and Kashmir displaced 330,000 people.

Figure 1.7: Countries with most new disaster displacements in 2015 (absolute number)



Cyclone Komen was the largest trigger of displacement in Bangladesh. It struck the south-east of the country at the end of July, displacing 331,000 people.

Asia bore the brunt of new displacements, but no region of the world was unaffected. Latin America and the Caribbean accounted for eight per cent of the global figure, with 1.5 million new displacements, and sub-Saharan Africa six per cent with just over a million. Chile and Malawi were the only countries from these regions among the ten with the highest number of people displaced in 2015 (see figure 1.7).

In Chile, an 8.3 magnitude earthquake struck the Coquimbo region in September. This earthquake and the subsequent tsunami warning led the authorities to evacuate a million people. Chile is one of only two high-income countries among the ten with the highest levels of new displacement in 2015. The other is Japan, where 486,000 people were displaced by a range of hazards, primarily typhoons Goni, Etau and Nangka, which struck in close succession between mid-July and early September (see figure 1.7).

In southern Africa, seasonal floods in Malawi in January displaced the majority of the 343,000 people who fled their homes in 2015 – the world’s tenth-largest displacement in absolute terms – and caused widespread damage to agriculture.



# NEPAL

## Obstacles to protection and recovery

## SPOT LIGHT

Two major earthquakes in April and May 2015 and thousands of associated aftershocks took a devastating toll on the already fragile nation of Nepal. They affected almost a third of the country's population of 28.2 million, killed 8,700 people, damaged or destroyed more than 712,000 houses and displaced more than 2.6 million people.<sup>30</sup> They hit both urban and rural areas hard, and triggered landslides and avalanches in high mountain areas, razing entire villages and leaving hundreds of thousands of people with acute shelter, livelihood, protection, food, water and education needs.

Most of those displaced stayed at least initially in makeshift or temporary shelters near their damaged or destroyed homes.<sup>31</sup> Those who took shelter in open spaces or public buildings began to return to their homes within a week of the first earthquake. Displacement patterns changed, however, after the second earthquake. Many people who feared their homes were structurally unsound went back to open areas such as fields. Many others fled the worst-affected rural areas toward displacement sites in the densely populated urban areas of the Kathmandu valley.<sup>32</sup>

Among the IDPs who sought shelter in collective urban sites were many poor people, including Dalits and female-headed households, whose homes had been badly damaged or destroyed, and whose access to jobs and basic services had also been disrupted. The vast majority did not own the property they lived in, and the earthquakes severely reduced the amount of rental accommodation available and inflated rents.

Around June, IDPs in just under half the sites assessed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said they had not received adequate assistance, and women and children in around half the sites felt unsafe.<sup>33</sup> Sixty-eight per cent of the IDPs surveyed said damage to their homes was the main obstacle to their return. Other issues included personal security, family separation, damage to infrastructure such as roads and a lack of food.<sup>34</sup>

In the absence of medium-term plans to settle IDPs, some lived in fear of eviction from their shelters, particularly in Kathmandu.<sup>35</sup> The monsoon and winter seasons that followed brought further

hardship. Around 200,000 households were still living in temporary shelters as of November at an altitude of over 1,500 metres.<sup>36</sup>

Since Nepal's last major earthquake in 1934, only the last decade has seen significant investment in disaster preparedness and coordination. Much of the focus, however, has been on preparing communities in the Kathmandu valley, to the neglect of less populated but highly vulnerable towns and villages in higher mountain areas.<sup>37</sup>

Over the last four years the UK government, one of Nepal's major bilateral donors, has invested more than \$30 million in earthquake resilience programming.<sup>38</sup> Despite such initiatives, the 2015 earthquakes caused large-scale destruction. The delivery of humanitarian assistance was slow and vulnerable groups were not well protected.

The country's national disaster response framework, which the Ministry of Home Affairs adopted in 2013, established coordination mechanisms that were implemented in the aftermath of the earthquakes.<sup>39</sup>

Their impact was largely determined by the poor quality of buildings unable to withstand the seismic activity, and their exposed location on steep mountain slopes.<sup>40</sup> The government approved a national building code in 2003, but when the earthquakes struck only 26 of 191 municipalities had begun implementing it.<sup>41</sup> Poverty, rapid urbanisation and weak institutional oversight have led to hasty and low-cost construction.<sup>42</sup> Enforcement has also been undermined by corruption, judicial delays and a lack of building inspectors.<sup>43</sup>

Political instability and weak institutions have also hampered the humanitarian response.<sup>44</sup> National and local government capacity had been significantly weakened by civil war and more than 12 years without local elections.<sup>45</sup> After the end of the war in 2006, Nepal struggled to adopt a federal constitution and key legislation on disaster risk management was overdue.<sup>46</sup> After the earthquake, the stalled process of finalising the constitution was expedited and it was adopted on 20 September 2015.<sup>47</sup>



Earthquake survivor sifts through the rubble of her home in Baluwa, Gorkha district. Photo: IOM, May 2015

Its content, however, sparked protests and a trade blockade on the border with India that lasted from September 2015 until February 2016.<sup>48</sup> The blockade prevented fuel and other essential supplies from entering Nepal, raised commodity prices and created a rampant black market.<sup>49</sup> Fuel shortages complicated the delivery of much-needed shelter, food and medical supplies.<sup>50</sup> Delivery was further impeded by lengthy administrative procedures and new customs duties introduced just five weeks after the earthquake.<sup>51</sup>

Feedback from affected communities on the fairness of aid distribution and reporting by international agencies pointed to discrimination associated with a failure to recognise people's specific needs and protection concerns according to social caste, ethnicity, gender, disability and age.<sup>52</sup>

Human rights advocates also raised concerns about nepotism and political favouritism, and the exclusion of certain people or groups from needs assessments.<sup>53</sup> The failure to respect the humanitarian principle of needs-based assistance made the risk of impoverishment for vulnerable groups worse.<sup>54</sup>

Resolving IDPs' ongoing needs in Nepal will require long-term financial and technical engagement by both federal and local governments and the international community. In December 2015, a new authority responsible for leading the reconstruction of more than 500,000 homes,

public buildings and infrastructure began its work with \$4.1 billion in aid donations.<sup>55</sup>

The government's reconstruction policy promises financial compensation to every homeowner whose house was damaged beyond repair. Vulnerable IDPs, however, including squatters, undocumented citizens and owners without formal title deeds risk exclusion from the policy, along with people whose homes were partially damaged and those who lived in rented accommodation. Despite progress in Nepal's social legislation in recent years, women, undocumented residents and refugees are also still denied equal inheritance and property rights.<sup>56</sup>

Rebuilding the country according to building and safety standards is of vital importance if the risk of future disasters and displacement is to be reduced. The value of retrofitting existing buildings to make them resilient to earthquakes is well proven.<sup>57</sup> Reconstruction following such a major disaster can be expected to take many years, and is likely to be delayed because of a shortage of technical and skilled labour, complex land issues and continuing political instability.<sup>58</sup>

Careful land use planning, strengthened tenure and protection for vulnerable groups, along with support for broader strategies to reduce poverty and increase community resilience will also be vital if progress is to be made and sustainable solutions for IDPs achieved.

## Small countries, big impacts

Considering new disaster-induced displacement relative to population size highlights its significant impact on Pacific small island developing states (SIDSs) including Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Micronesia and Kiribati (see figure 1.8). SIDSs face disproportionately high disaster risk because their mostly low-lying, coastal populations tend to be exposed to a range of hazards, particularly cyclones, floods, landslides, earthquakes and tsunamis. The devastation wrought on Vanuatu by tropical cyclone Pam, a category five storm, in March 2015 provides a clear case in point.

The disaster forced around a quarter of Vanuatu's population to flee their homes and left around 166,000 people on 22 islands in need of emergency assistance, including nearly 65,000 IDPs who required emergency shelter. Fifteen thousand homes were reported as damaged or destroyed, with almost the entire country severely affected. Pam also had impacts on other SIDSs in the region, including a damaging storm surge in Tuvalu that prompted a state of emergency after 55 per cent of its population of around 10,000 people were displaced, the highest relative figure worldwide (see figure 1.8).

As El Niño conditions strengthened towards the end of the year, intensified drought put further stress on countries still recovering from the impacts of cyclones and typhoons, bringing food insecurity to Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and the Northern Mariana Islands.

## Developing countries hardest hit

As expected based on patterns in previous years, the vast majority of displacement associated with disasters in 2015 took place in developing countries, defined by the World Bank as low and lower-middle income countries. High income countries, accounting for 1.8 million new displacements, were less affected than low income countries, which accounted for 3.6 million (see figure 1.9).

Low and lower-middle income countries have relatively little capacity to meet the protection and assistance needs of IDPs, or to invest in disaster risk reduction measures that would either prevent displacement or mitigate the impacts of future shocks and disasters.

Figure 1.9: New displacements associated with disasters by World Bank-defined income group, 2015

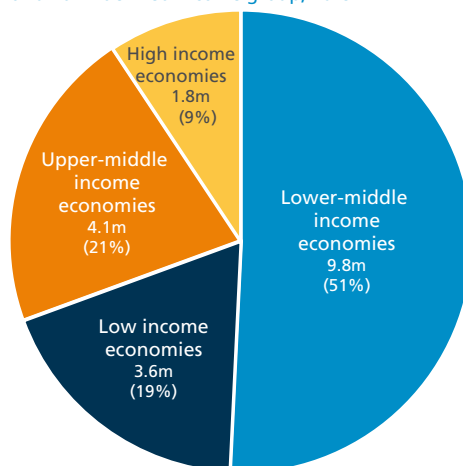


Figure 1.8: Countries with most new displacements associated with disasters in 2015 (relative to population)

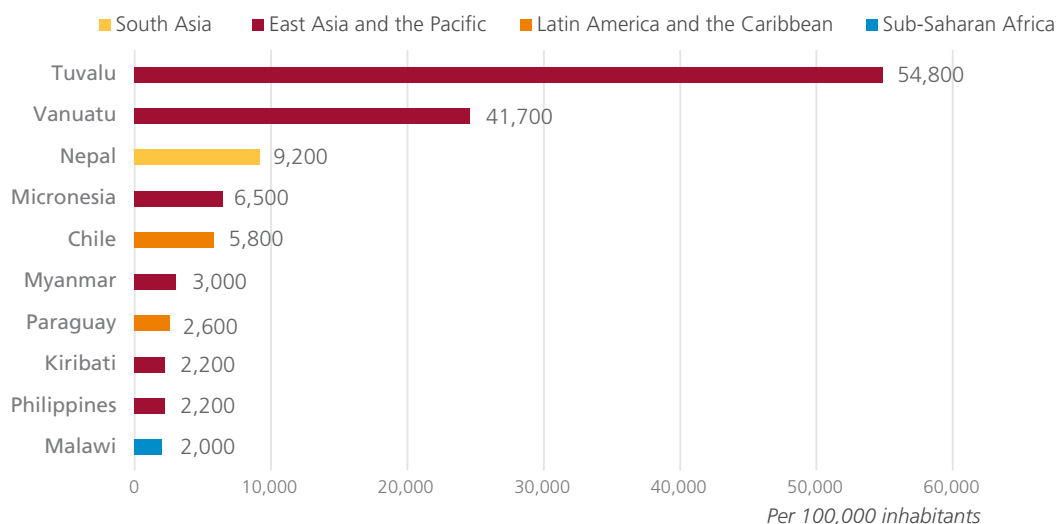
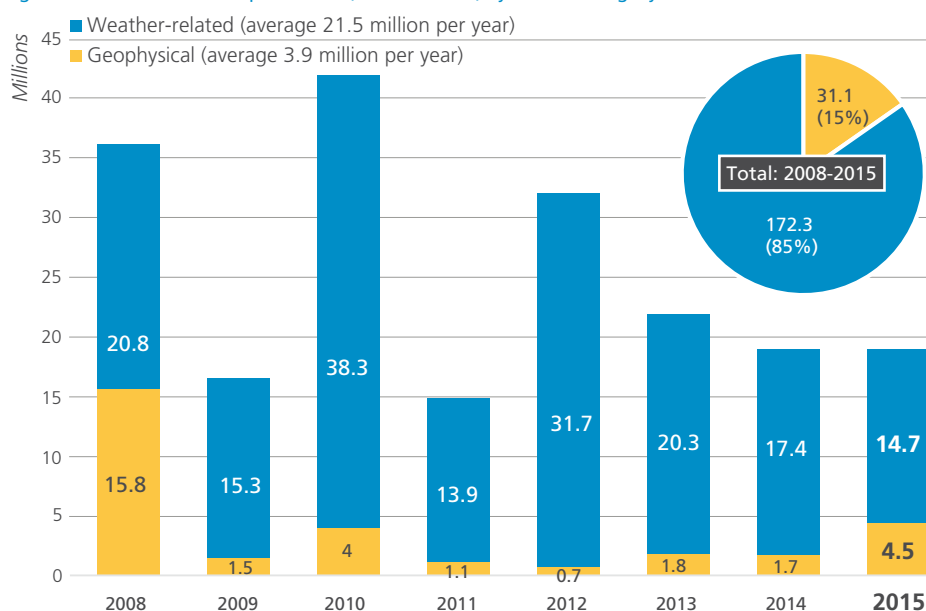


Figure 1.10: Annual new displacements, 2008 to 2015, by hazard category



## Exposure to weather extremes

Disasters triggered by weather-related hazards tend to displace far more people than those brought on by geophysical hazards. They accounted for almost three times as much displacement in 2015, forcing 14.7 million people to flee their homes compared with 4.5 million for geophysical disasters (see figure 1.10).

The same pattern was also seen in the size of displacements in 2015. Disasters triggered by weather-related hazards caused seven of the ten largest events, both in absolute terms and relative to the populations of the countries in question. The main exception was Nepal, where the April and May earthquakes together caused the largest displacement of the year associated with a disaster (see figure 1.11).

Within the category of weather-related hazards, floods and storms led to the vast majority of displacements. Disasters brought on by floods forced 8.3 million people to flee their homes, and storms 6.3 million. Around 87,000 people were displaced by wildfires (see figure 1.12).

There were no mega-scale weather-related events, defined here as those which cause more than three million displacements, but flooding in the southern Indian states of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh caused 1.8 million displacements. Cyclone Komen and monsoon floods triggered disasters in both Myanmar and India, causing 1.6 million and 1.2 million displacements

respectively, the majority of the latter in West Bengal, Odisha and Manipur states (see figure 1.11). Eight of the ten largest displacements of the year in relative terms were also caused by weather-related disasters, with cyclone Pam's impacts on Tuvalu and Vanuatu topping the list.

Displacement associated with weather hazards was lower in 2015 than the annual average level of 21.5 million people for the period since 2008, despite the onset of the natural global weather phenomenon known as El Niño (see spotlight).

During the short rainy season in equatorial east Africa from October to December, local weather systems and sea surface temperature patterns in the Indian Ocean also played an important role in 2015. Most of Kenya received higher than average rains, which caused localised flooding and mud and landslides. More than 240,000 people were affected, infrastructure was damaged, livestock lost and cholera spread across at least 21 counties. Around 103,500 people were displaced, according to the Kenya Red Cross Society.

That said, the scale of displacement was significantly lower than expected and the rains benefitted arid and semi-arid parts of the country, helping crop development, livestock productivity, the replenishment of water sources and the recovery of rangeland in pastoral areas.

Some of the strongest El Niño effects are on rainfall deficit and agricultural drought, whose indirect impact on displacement is not captured in our global statistics (see part 3 of this report).

Figure 1.11: The ten largest displacement events of 2015, absolute and relative to population size

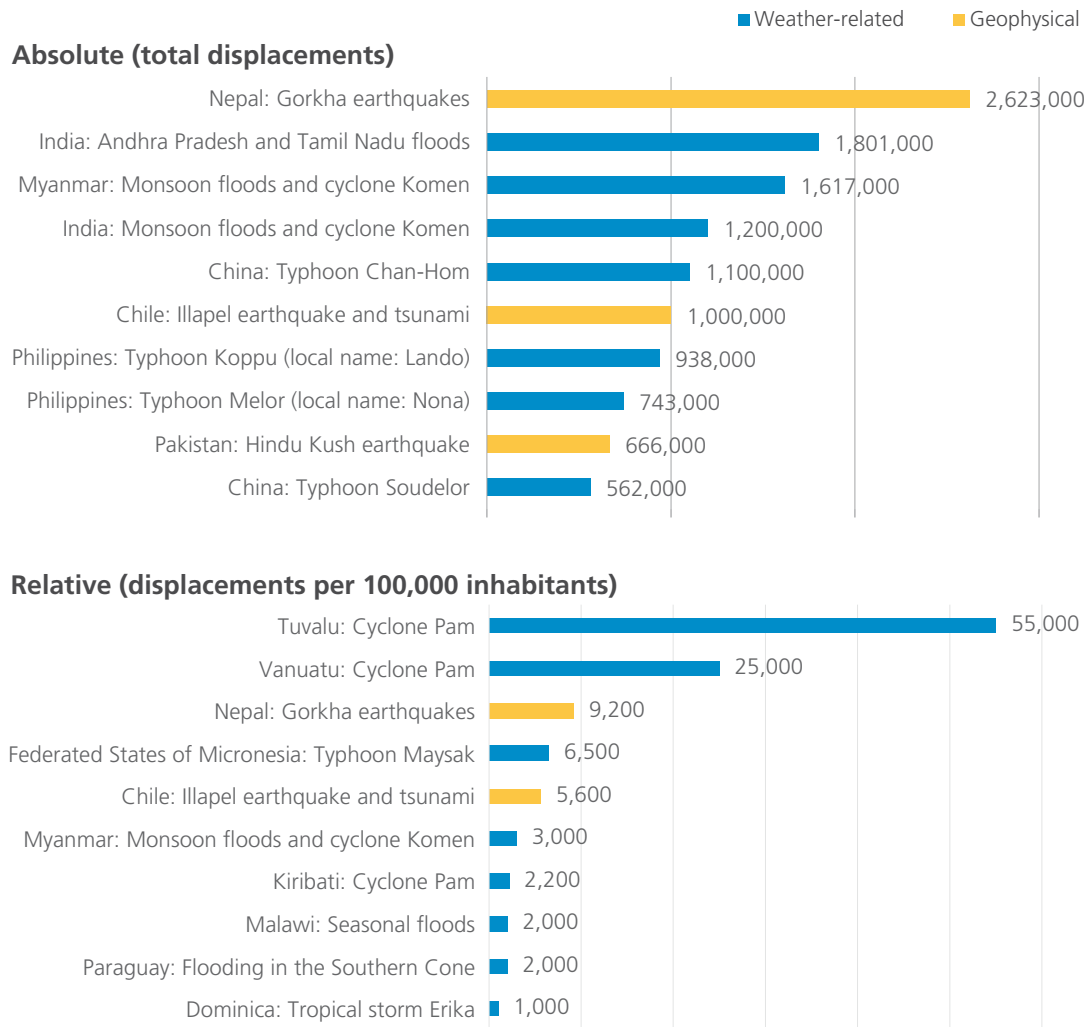
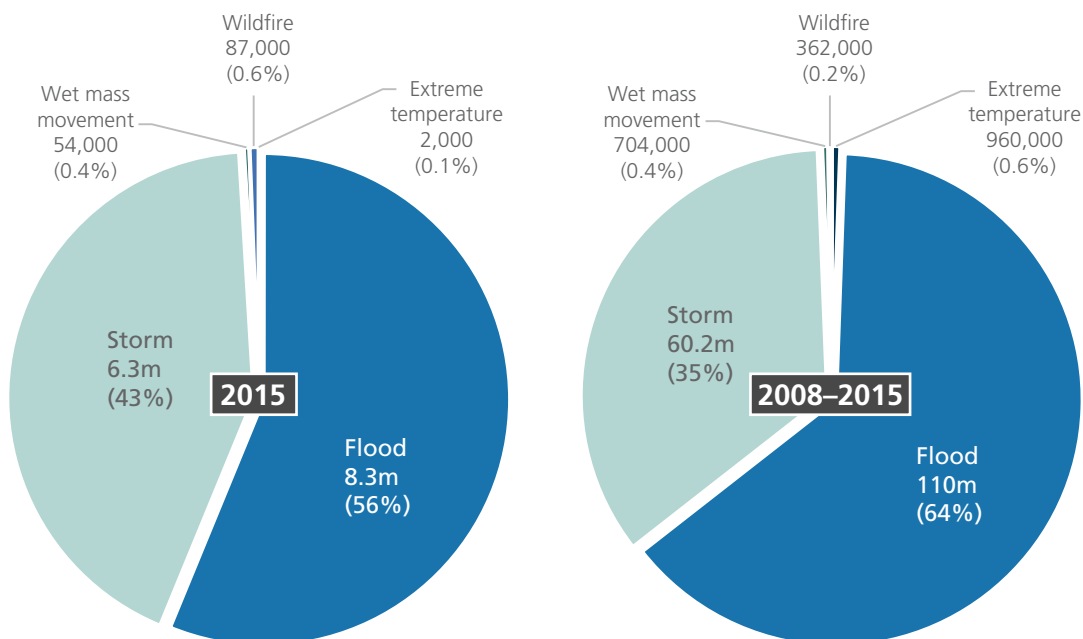


Figure 1.12: New displacements by type of weather hazard, 2015 and 2008 to 2015



# EL NIÑO

Aggravated risk associated with extreme weather

From March 2015 to the first half of 2016, a new phase of the naturally occurring climatic cycle known as the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) contributed to the highest average global temperatures on record, about 1°C above those of the pre-industrial era, and disrupted weather patterns worldwide.<sup>59</sup>

El Niño's effects depend on the season and vary from one cycle to the next, but evidence from past events suggests that the most likely impacts tend to be lower than average rainfall over Indonesia and northern South America, and the opposite in south-eastern South America, the southern US and eastern equatorial Africa.<sup>60</sup>

A strong El Niño also tends to increase the number of cyclones in the Pacific and reduce

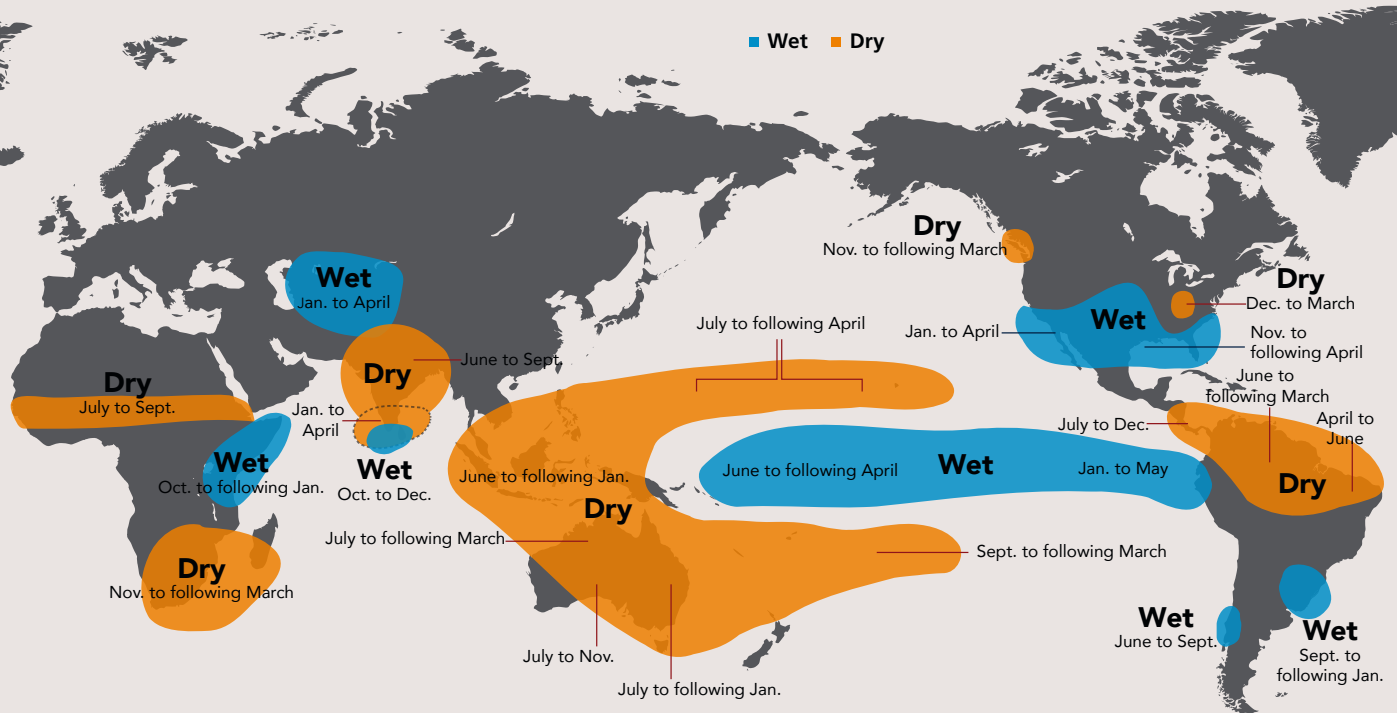
the number of hurricanes in the Atlantic. Both were true in 2015, with an unprecedented 21 category four and five storms in the north Pacific, breaking the previous record of 17 set in 1997.<sup>61</sup>

El Niño episodes are associated with above average sea surface temperatures in the central and east-central equatorial Pacific, while the opposite phase of the cycle, known as La Niña, is associated with cooler than average waters. El Niño episodes typically occur every two to seven years. They last for anything from nine months to two years, reaching their maximum strength between October and January and then continuing for some months before decaying.

The latest El Niño peaked in November and December 2015, but its impacts on agriculture

## El Niño and Rainfall

El Niño conditions in the tropical Pacific are known to shift rainfall patterns in many different parts of the world. Although they vary somewhat from one El Niño to the next, the strongest shifts remain fairly consistent in the regions and seasons shown on the map below.



Original map: International Research Institute for Climate and Society, Earth Institute, Columbia University

Sources:

1. Ropelewski, C. F., and M. S. Halpert, 1987: Global and regional scale precipitation patterns associated with the El Niño Southern Oscillation. *Mon. Wea. Rev.*, 115, 1606-1626;
2. Mason and Goddard, 2001. Probabilistic precipitation anomalies associated with ENSO. *Bull. Am. Meteorol. Soc.* 82, 619-638





and deteriorating food and livelihood security will continue to be felt throughout 2016 and longer in some parts of the world. As of February 2016, the phenomenon was expected to transition to a neutral ENSO state during the second quarter of the year.<sup>62</sup> Evidence then points to a possible La Niña setting in later in the year, though at the time of writing it was too early for experts to be certain.

Climate patterns, however, are more complex than El Niño and La Niña alone can account for. Other local or regional tropical weather systems also affect rainfall patterns. The Indian Ocean dipole and the Tropical Atlantic sea surface temperature, for example, may affect the climate on adjacent land masses, and winter conditions in the northern hemisphere are influenced by the so-called Arctic and North Atlantic oscillations.<sup>63</sup>

Across decades, changes in the global climate brought on by human activity also play a part.

Some studies suggest that El Niño episodes are becoming more intense as a result of changes in the global climate,<sup>64</sup> but there is no scientific consensus on the extent to which this may be the case. It is simply not known how past and

future interactions between El Niño, La Niña and long-term climate change will play out.<sup>65</sup> Meanwhile, as the World Meteorological Organization's secretary general has put it: "El Niño is turning up the heat even further."<sup>66</sup>

For the people most exposed and vulnerable to rainfall extremes and higher temperatures associated with the phenomenon, its effects have been devastating and have led to displacement in many parts of the world.

People dependent on agriculture in the Philippines who were initially displaced by conflict in 2015 also faced effects from El Niño and later flooding, leading to crop production losses estimated at more than 24,000 metric tonnes. Photo: © M, Navales/FAO, July 2015

## Large-scale geophysical hazards: few in number, many displaced

The average number of people displaced during disasters triggered by geophysical hazards was 3.9 million a year between 2008 and 2015 (see figure 1.10). The 2015 total of 4.5 million was higher than average, driven up by the Nepal earthquakes, which alone caused the displacement of around 2.6 million people. The scale of displacement they caused was also very high relative to the size of the country's population, of which 9.2 per cent were displaced (see figure 1.11 and Nepal spotlight).

Earthquakes have caused 97 per cent of the displacement associated with geophysical hazards since 2008, and for 2015 the figure was 99 per cent. Volcanic activity and eruptions caused around 32,000 displacements in 2015, and dry mass movements and landslides a residual number.

The ten largest displacements associated disasters in 2015 also include earthquakes in Chile and Pakistan (see figure 1.11). A magnitude 7.5 earthquake struck the Hindu Kush mountains in October. Its epicentre was in a remote area of northern Afghanistan, but north-west Pakistan suffered the worst of its impacts, including the displacement of nearly 666,000 people. Khyber





Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province, where human development is low compared with the rest of the country, was hardest hit, particularly the districts of Chitral, Dir Lower, Dir Upper, Swat, Shangla, Malakand and Buner.

Chile appears on the list for the second year in a row. The 8.3 magnitude Illapel earthquake and five-metre tsunami it triggered affected the Coquimbo region of the country in September 2015. Most people were evacuated in good time, but several coastal cities and ports suffered extensive damage.

The country's disaster preparedness framework, adopted after a catastrophic earthquake in 2010,

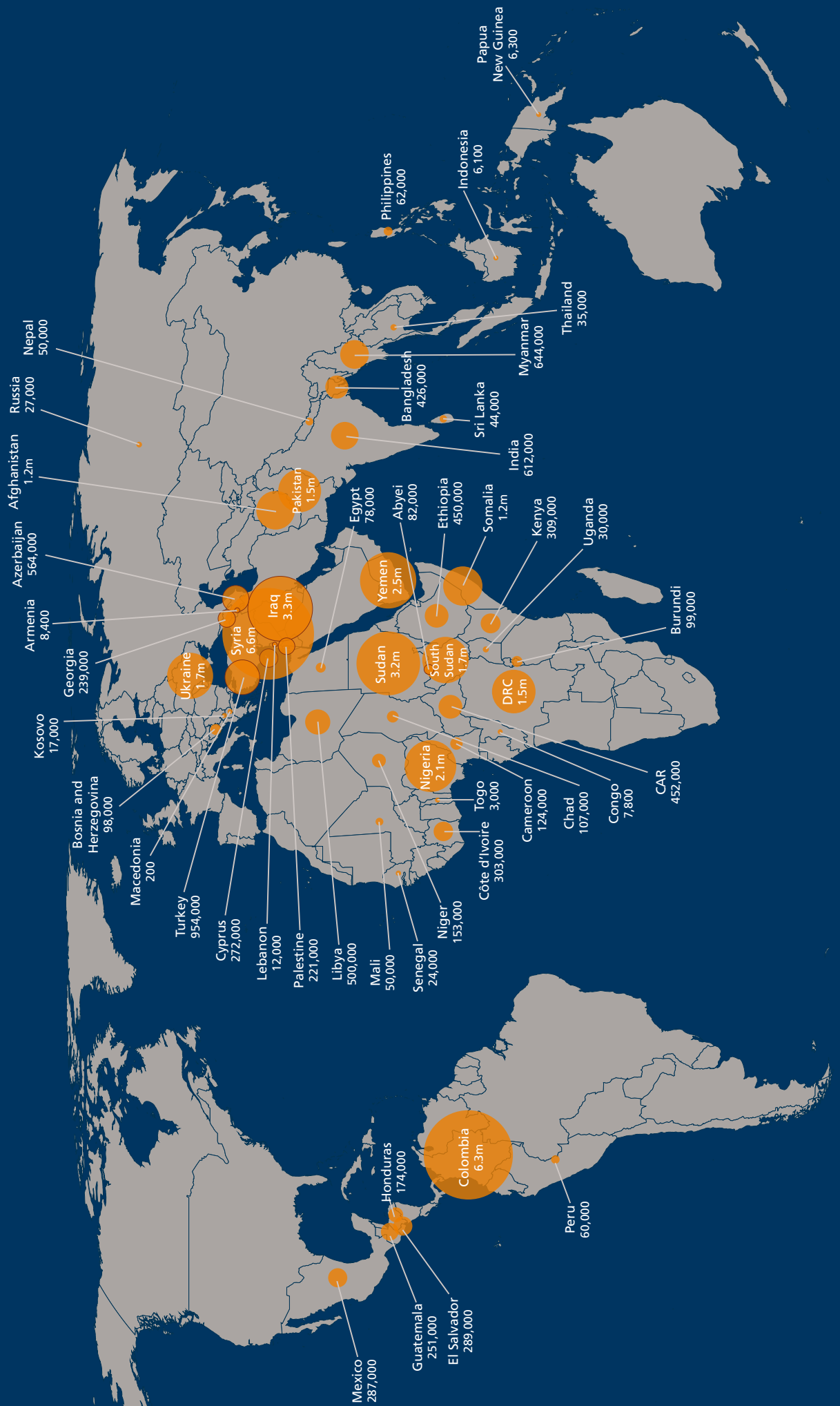
meant that early warning systems were effective and response planning was good. Around a million people were evacuated pre-emptively, saving many lives. The enforcement of better construction standards and codes also meant that recently constructed buildings were better able to withstand the seismic activity. Traditionally built adobe homes, however, tend to be very vulnerable and further efforts to strengthen the resilience of poor rural communities would help to reduce the disproportionate affects of such events on them.

An internally displaced man waits for a winter shelter pack in the Malakand District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province as part of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society's emergency response to the 2015 earthquake. Photo: Sajid Qayyum/ IFRC, April 2015



# People internally displaced as a result of conflict and violence

as of 31 December 2015 (Total: 40.8 million)



# TOTAL HEADCOUNT

## People living in displacement as of end 2015

There were 40.8 million people internally displaced worldwide as a result of conflict and violence as of the end of 2015 (see map, opposite page). This represents an increase of 2.8 million on 2014 estimates and the highest figure ever reported since IDMC began monitoring internal displacement in 1998. It is also twice the number of refugees in the world.

of the ten largest internally displaced populations every year since 2003.<sup>67</sup> Their persistent inclusion points to a depressing reality of intractable conflict in which many people may have been forced to flee more than once. These five countries alone accounted for almost 40 per cent of the world's IDPs, or nearly 16 million people, as of December 2015.

### Protracted crises swell unprecedented numbers

The total number of IDPs has doubled over the past 15 years. From below 20 million in the 1990s it rose to 27.5 million by 2010, the result of new and protracted displacement caused by long-running internal conflicts (see figure 1.13). Five years later, it has reached more than 40 million, in large part the result of conflict and violence in the Middle East following the Arab spring uprisings that began in late 2010.

Of the total, around three quarters, or 30 million people, were located in just ten countries (see figure 1.14). Half of them – Colombia, DRC, Iraq, Sudan and South Sudan – have featured in the list

Figure 1.14: Number of people internally displaced by conflict and violence as of the end of 2015 (millions)

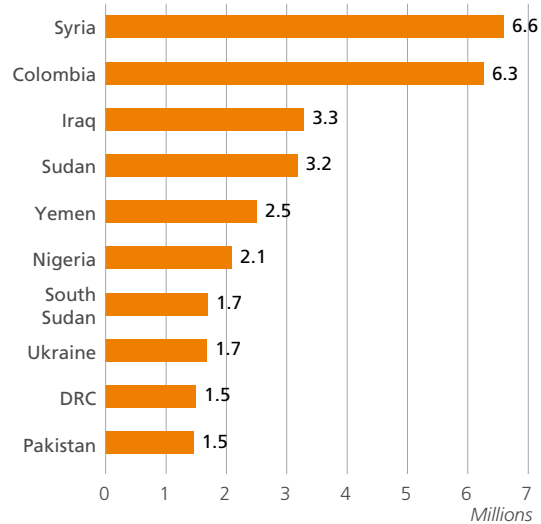
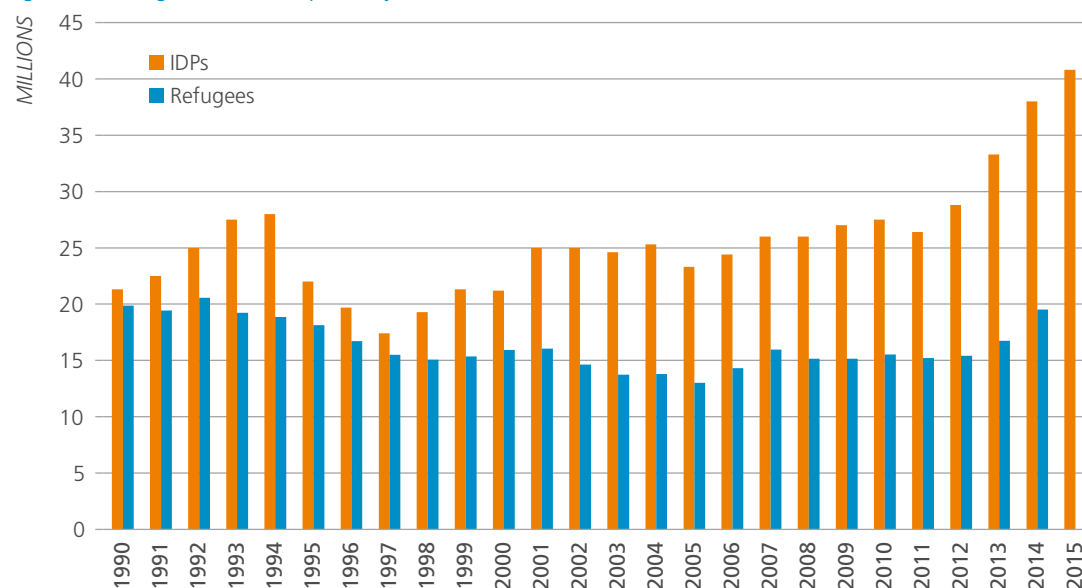


Figure 1.13: Refugees and IDPs displaced by conflict and violence, 1990 to 2015



Sources: UNHCR, UNRWA for refugee figures; IDMC and USCR for internal displacement figures  
 Note: Refugee data for 2015 was not available at the time of writing



## DRC

## Multiple and chronic displacement

Conflict in DRC is intractable, and the internal displacement crisis it has caused is multifaceted. Despite apparent similarities among the waves of displacement, their causes, dynamics and perpetrators vary from one situation to the next. Our estimates show that over the past 15 years, there have consistently been more than a million IDPs in the country, and in peak years such as 2003 more than three million.

The implication is that DRC is faced with a range of both protracted and new displacement situations, sometimes in the same places, which in

turn means IDPs have varying needs and challenges. Both national and international responses need to take this complexity into account if all IDPs are to achieve durable solutions.

There were an estimated 1.5 million IDPs in the country as of December 2015, the ninth highest figure worldwide. Most have fled violence and human rights abuses committed by armed groups and the military, but inter-communal tensions and disputes over land and the control of natural resources have also caused displacement, as have natural hazards. Conflict and violence are concentrated in eastern DRC, as are the country's IDPs. More than half live in the provinces of North and South Kivu, and the remainder in Orientale, Katanga, Maniema and Equateur.

Multiple and chronic displacements are commonplace, particularly in the Kivus but also in other provinces. Many IDPs in North Kivu have been displaced two, three or even more times in the last 18 months alone, and surveys suggest that a significant majority in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri have been displaced more than once since 1993.<sup>68</sup>

Each time people flee, they lose almost everything and are forced to start rebuilding their lives from scratch. They lose their homes, material assets and often their jobs and livelihoods. Their children's education is interrupted, and they become separated from their communities and support networks. Their sense of cultural identity may suffer, and the trauma and upheaval of fleeing conflict and violence leave many with psychological and physical scars.

Whether it is the first or the fifth time that a person is displaced in DRC, they face a long struggle to try to recover their assets, access basic services and re-establish their social and psychological wellbeing. The longer and more often they are displaced, the more difficult these challenges become, and the more their ability to cope is eroded.

Displaced women living with host families take part in a focus group discussion in Swima, South Kivu. Photo: IDMC, March 2015



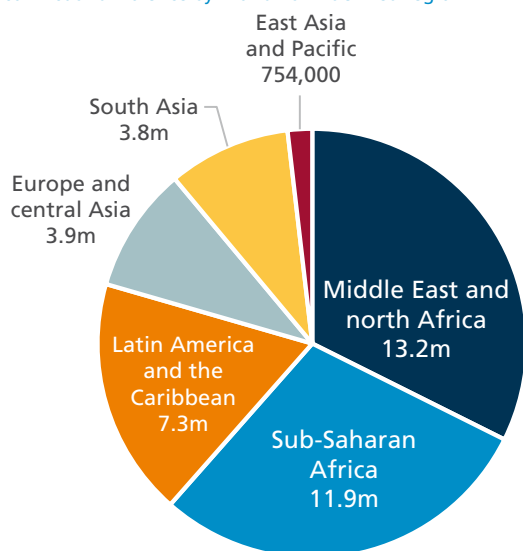


Of the other five countries on the list, displacement in Nigeria, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen is largely the result of armed conflicts that erupted or escalated within the last five years. Pakistan is the exception. If history is any indication, there is a risk these relatively new conflicts will also become intractable, and that the people they have forced to flee, who make up roughly a third of the overall global estimate, face a future of protracted and possibly multiple displacement.

## Sub-Saharan Africa: Chronic displacement keeps figures stubbornly high

A regional analysis provides a different perspective on the same point (see figure 1.15). As of the end of 2015, the Middle East and north Africa accounted for around a third of the world's IDPs, or 13.2 million people, largely the result of the surge in new displacements over the last few years in Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

Figure 1.15: Number of people internally displaced by conflict and violence by World Bank-defined region



Meanwhile, at close to 12 million, the number of IDPs in sub-Saharan Africa has more or less flat-lined over the last decade, underlining the chronic nature of displacement in the region. Failure to address the causes of protracted displacement is one of the main factors behind the ever-increasing number of IDPs worldwide, and the stubbornly high figures for Africa. Finding the right solutions requires a better understanding of the phenomenon, from clarifying concepts to recognising its complexity and diversity (see DRC spotlight).

## Invisible IDPs: protracted displacement following disasters

The estimates for displacement associated with disasters presented in this report are aggregated incidents of new displacements over the course of 2015. There is very little information on people still displaced in December 2015 following disasters during the year or in previous years, which means it is not possible to give cumulative figures for the total number of people displaced by disasters as of the end of the year, as there are for IDPs displaced by conflict and violence.

Data that monitors IDPs' situations over time, whatever the causes of their displacement, tends to become more scarce the longer they are displaced. In the aftermath of disasters, the assumption that displacement is generally temporary makes such information scarcer still. The assumption is made based on observations of displacement over short distances and the fact that a significant proportion of those who flee return quickly to their homes. It is also influenced by the fact that people displaced by disasters tend to flee to diverse locations and undertake complex movements that make them difficult to identify and track.

These factors increase the risk that some of the most vulnerable IDPs will be left behind in long-term recovery, disaster risk reduction and development processes.<sup>69</sup> Among a sample of 34 ongoing cases of displacement following disasters documented in 2015, there were hundreds of thousands of people identified as living in protracted displacement for periods ranging between one and 26 years.<sup>70</sup> This points to the likelihood of hundreds of thousands more yet to be recorded.

People displaced for long periods of time are particularly difficult to identify and access for a variety of practical and political reasons. They may also be relatively fewer in number compared with the overall or peak number of IDPs, but such "residual caseloads" following major disasters, and people displaced by recurring local or smaller disasters, are some of the most vulnerable.

The capacity of governments, civil society and affected communities to achieve solutions varies widely. The cases of Japan and Haiti highlight some of the human impacts of protracted displacement, its disproportionate effect on some of the most vulnerable people and common challenges in resolving it (see Japan/Haiti spotlight).

## For richer or poorer PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT IN JAPAN AND HAITI

Most of the protracted displacement associated with disasters is in low and lower-middle income developing countries, but there have also been significant cases in some of the world's richest and poorest countries which reveal some striking similarities and differences.

### Japan's Fukushima IDPs

In March 2011, a devastating magnitude 9.0 earthquake and tsunami struck Japan's Tohoku region, triggering the meltdown of three reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant and major radiation leaks. The disaster displaced around 470,000 people.

Five years later, tens of thousands of people whose homes and villages were destroyed across three prefectures have yet to re-establish their lives in new or former homes and communities. Plans to rebuild destroyed homes and relocate displaced communities to higher ground or other areas have been reduced by 30 per cent over the past three years and in some cases abandoned, the result mainly of soaring construction costs and the time local authorities have taken to overcome land issues and prepare plots on new sites.

Those able to afford it, most often younger families, have rebuilt their lives elsewhere, but others have been unable to afford reconstruction and have moved into rental accommodation provided by the government.<sup>71</sup>

In Fukushima prefecture, 99,000 of the 160,000-plus people evacuated from contaminated areas around the crippled nuclear plant are still living in displacement.<sup>72</sup> They face a difficult decision in whether to return home or not to areas where government evacuation orders have been lifted, but where radiation risk remains a concern, particularly for younger generations. Those affected also worry about the lack of basic infrastructure such as schools and hospitals in their former home areas, and about becoming isolated given that few of their family members, former neighbours and friends plan to return.<sup>73</sup>

A lack of trust in official information and poor consultation with affected communities have also delayed solutions for IDPs unable or unwilling to return, and social tensions with host communities have left social and psychological scars. A 2015 survey of evacuees revealed that many were suffering from anxiety, loneliness and depression.<sup>74</sup> In Fukushima, the number of people who have killed themselves or succumbed to health problems related to the disaster exceeds the death toll from its direct impacts.

Temporary housing complexes such as this one are still a common sight one in Iwate prefecture. Photo: IFRC, March 2016 <https://flic.kr/p/E9K941> (edited contrast and brightness)





## Haiti's earthquake IDPs

In January 2010, a magnitude 7.0 earthquake struck Haiti, killing more than 160,000 people and displacing nearly 1.5 million. Six years later, there were still nearly 62,600 people living in deteriorating conditions in 36 displacement camps in and around Port-au-Prince. IDPs in 16 of these camps are highly vulnerable to the impact of future natural hazard events.<sup>75</sup>

Living conditions in the camps were always poor, but have become worse still as basic services are wound down. There is ever less humanitarian funding available and fewer organisations providing assistance.

People living in the camps are exposed to criminal gang violence, abuse, exploitation and forced eviction that displaces them again. Women and girls have been particularly susceptible to increasing insecurity and health hazards. IDPs' lack of civil documentation also continues to hamper their access to basic services, their children's enrolment for school exams, and their right to own land, vote and open bank accounts.<sup>76</sup>

Obstacles to urban integration and other solutions for camp residents include the poor conditions in the neighbourhoods where they lived before the earthquake and high unemployment levels. Unemployment among IDPs is estimated at 83 per cent, more than double the rate for the urban work force.<sup>77</sup> Some, meantime, are gradually turning their temporary shelters into more permanent, unplanned informal settlements.

Ultimately, real solutions for Haiti's remaining IDPs and as many as 3.5 million others living in urban poverty with similar vulnerabilities will depend on reducing socio-economic deprivation, insecurity and disaster risk. Improving national capacity to plan and manage land issues to complement the implementation of the 2013 National Housing and Habitat Policy would enable access to safe, affordable housing and tenure security for Haiti's poorest people, including IDPs.<sup>78</sup> Political instability and declining development assistance, however, have wide-reaching implications for the responses required, without which the risk of another major disaster is high. As the head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the country has said: "Haiti cannot afford to become a forgotten crisis."<sup>79</sup>

One of the victims of the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti, waiting to be relocated. Photo: © Frédéric Loward, April 2015



Forty-five displaced families live in a former school in the al-Waer neighbourhood of Homs, Syria. Photo: Emmanuel BARGUES/OCHA, December 2015



# PART 2

## INSIDE THE GRID

### Caveats for the estimates

Behind all of the figures in this report are people whose lives have been disrupted, in many cases severely, by traumatic events. Given the propensity of displacement to become protracted, the upheaval and its consequences can be long-lasting if not permanent. Becoming displaced not only means losing one's home and other material assets. Many IDPs also lose their jobs, livelihoods, social support networks and documentation that they are likely to need to start rebuilding their lives elsewhere. Their children's education is often interrupted, families are broken up, their health suffers, and the trauma and upheaval of flight leave many with psychological and physical scars.

With this human toll in mind, we take our responsibility to monitor internal displacement seriously and strive to report on it in a comprehensive and accurate way. That said, displacement is a complex, fluid and politically sensitive phenomenon and as such it is difficult to measure. Our estimates are our best attempt to do so – to count vulnerable people who are on the move and who have no official status, with the ultimate aim of their being provided with the protection and assistance they need.

Monitoring and reporting on IDPs is very different from doing so for refugees. IDPs are seldom registered and they are often difficult to identify. Some may not even want to put their head above the parapet by being counted. Some governments too resist efforts to monitor and report on displacement. A 2015 UN General Assembly resolution encourages states to “ensure the provision of reliable data on internal displacement”, including by collaborating with IDMC, but

most countries have yet to designate a specific government agency to systematically collect and share comprehensive data.<sup>80</sup>

As a result, we and our partners are left with an imperfect set of tools that are inconsistently used. We compile our figures based on the best, most credible data we are able to obtain, but they are ultimately only estimates. We round our figures to help emphasise that fact, and the numbers we publish are deliberately conservative.

Reporting accurately means treading a tightrope between under- and over-estimating the scale of displacement, with significant human implications for those affected. Under-estimates mean IDPs go unseen and unaccounted for when it comes to providing assistance. Over-estimates risk misdirecting scarce resources away from those most in need.

In this part we outline our efforts to improve the coverage and transparency of the global evidence base on internal displacement. By providing the breakdown of the age of our figures for the first time in this report, we are appealing to the governments concerned and to our partners in the field to contribute to this ongoing effort.



# KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

| **Our ability to obtain data on the number of IDPs and the processes responsible for increases or decreases in the size of the IDP population is limited.**

| The Guiding Principles and several UN General Assembly Resolutions have recognised that **sovereign states bear the primary responsibility for collecting and sharing data on internal displacement.** This should, of course, include regular updates on the number of people who have become newly displaced or achieved durable solutions, as well as data disaggregated by sex and age. At present, **displacement data in several countries is already outdated,** and it is at risk of becoming outdated in others, including countries with large IDP populations such as Afghanistan. In order to avoid this, more resources and capacities are needed at country level to collect displacement data and keep it up to date.

| We have difficulty in obtaining data on the processes that lead to the end of displacement and the number of IDPs who have fled across international borders. There is also little information available about the number of children born to IDPs and the number of people who die in displacement.

| **Our estimates for the number of people internally displaced by conflict and violence are deliberately conservative.** When we receive information that IDPs have returned, integrated locally or settled elsewhere, we subtract them from our totals regardless of whether they are known to have achieved a durable solution. We do this because reporting on the end of displacement and the processes that lead to it are open to different interpretations.

| To generate global estimates, we have historically attempted to account for new displacements associated with disasters without indicating the length of people's displacement. This means **our figures are the sum of all displacements triggered by a particular disaster or event,** and do not account for any outflows such as returns or onward movements.

| **We were able to obtain updated information in 2015 for nearly 31.7 million of the 40.8 million people** who we estimated were living in displacement as of the end of the year as a result of conflict and violence.

| The age of the most recent data for the remaining 9.1 million IDPs varies widely and in some cases is significantly out of date. The data on nearly a million IDPs in Turkey dates back at least to 2006, and some for Guatemala goes back as far as 1997.

| **The issue of outdated or decaying data is of particular concern with Colombia,** a country that has been among the five countries with highest number of people displaced by conflict every year since we began monitoring internal displacement in 1998.

| **Outdated or decaying data is a problem in 12 of the 53 conflict- or violence-affected countries in this report,** accounting for approximately 20 per cent of IDPs worldwide. The countries concerned are Armenia, Bangladesh, Congo, Cyprus, Guatemala, Macedonia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Togo, Turkey and Uganda.

| The lack of updated data, particularly on displacement that has become protracted, is one of the main gaps we face in both conflict and disaster contexts. We have also found that **people displaced by intractable conflicts around the world tend to fall off the radar.** We have been unable to obtain return figures for a number of countries, including Bangladesh, Burundi, Guatemala and Turkey.

| As a global monitor we want to call attention to such situations, and their inclusion also constitutes an **explicit plea for updated data and information.**

# IDMC'S DATA MODEL

## Capturing the human toll of displacement

To paint a comprehensive global picture of internal displacement associated with both conflict and disasters, we obtain data from our sources and relate it to the generic displacement model below (see figure 2.1). Obtaining data on each of the relevant processes or “flows”, which determine displacement patterns, is a crucial part of accurate reporting. Not doing so would mean we lose sight of what is happening to tens of millions of people around the world every year.

### Conservative estimates for displacement associated with conflict

For displacement caused by conflict and violence, we try to obtain data on the number of IDPs and the processes responsible for increases or decreases. Our ability to do this, however, is only

partial (see Syria spotlight). For each of the situations we reported on last year, we were able to estimate the number of IDPs as of 31 December 2015 – this “stock” of people is represented by the orange box in figure 2.1 – and the incidents of new displacement, based on direct reporting from the field or by inference from increases in the size of displaced populations.

We have much more difficulty in obtaining data on the processes that lead to the end of displacement and the number of IDPs who have fled across international borders. These flows are represented by the dark blue arrows in figure 2.1. There is also little information available about the number of children born to IDPs and the number of people who die in displacement. Explicitly disaggregated information was only available for relatively few of the 52 countries and one region (Abyei) for which we provide estimates for 2015 (see table 2.1).

Figure 2.1: IDMC's displacement data model

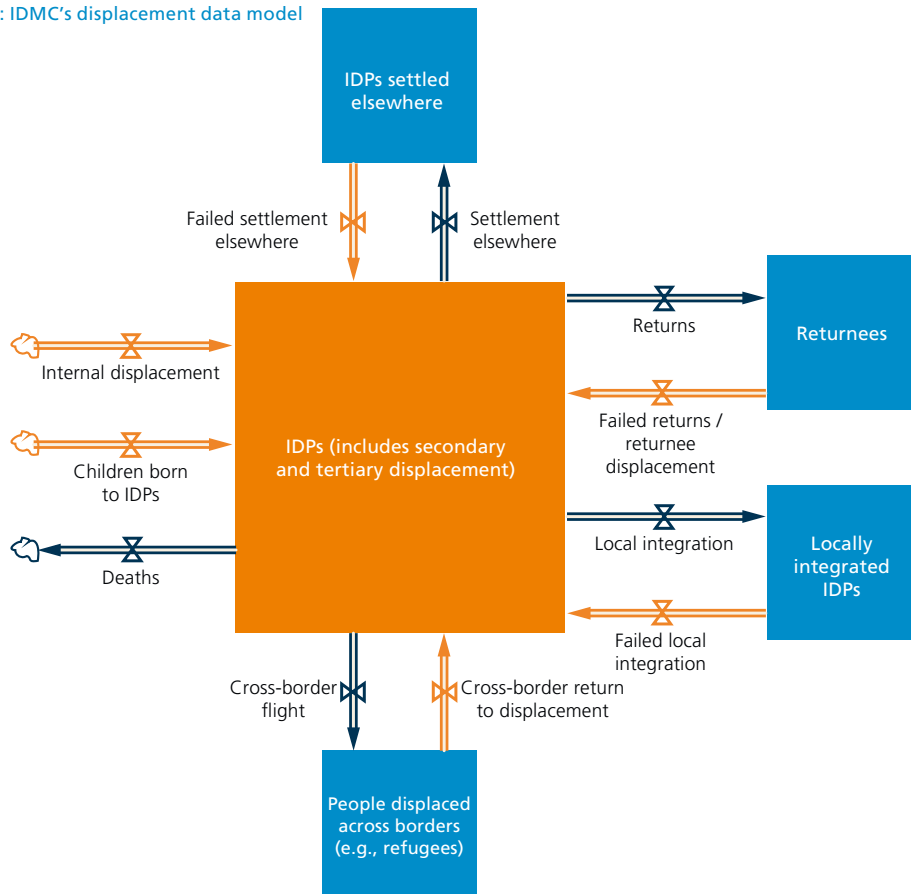


Table 2.1: Summary of data on 2015 flows that influence the total number of displacements associated with conflict or violence

Conflict- or violence- related flows	Number of countries or territories for which data was obtained out of 52 countries and one region
New incidents of displacement	28
Returns	20
Local integration	1
Settlement elsewhere	2
Cross-border flight	0
Children born to IDPs	2
Deaths in displacement	1

Not every flow is relevant to every situation we report on. The absence of data on new displacement may simply mean that no new displacement has taken place. Births and deaths may have been included in some of the data we obtained, but not in a way that allowed us to disaggregate it from other flows. That said, a cursory glance at table 2.1 reveals significant data gaps. This is particularly true for information on the processes that lead to the end of displacement, though their impact on the overall number of IDPs may be relatively small compared with the ever-increasing number of people newly displaced by conflict and violence.

Our estimates are deliberately conservative. When we receive information that IDPs have returned, integrated locally or settled elsewhere, we subtract them from our totals regardless of whether they are known to have achieved a durable solution. We do this because reporting on the end of displacement and the processes that lead to it are open to different interpretations.

This has sometimes led in the past to the application of different criteria for subtracting people from the displaced population. A profiling exercise might find that a percentage of those displaced have returned but still not achieved a durable solution. Continuing to count these people as IDPs creates a different – and higher – benchmark for assessing returns compared with another situation in which an authority simply reports that IDPs have “returned” or are “no longer displaced”.

## Data gaps for displacement associated with disasters

We use a different methodology to monitor displacement associated with disasters, one of the implications of which is that our coverage of the data model is more limited. Our figures are the sum of all of the people newly displaced by a particular disaster – all of the people in the orange box in figure 2.1 – without accounting for any of the outflows from that stock.

This means we are unable to report on the duration of displacement at the global level, or provide a cumulative figure for the number of people displaced as of 31 December 2015. We have, however, gathered evidence from dozens of case studies that shows there are hundreds of thousands of people still living in displacement following disasters in previous years and decades.

Our estimates do not reflect where people shelter or live while they are displaced, or where and when they eventually settle again. The figures may include people who fled disasters to other countries, but we found no such cases in the process of our 2015 data collection.

We are currently expanding our data collection in an effort to capture all of the outflows in our model for displacement associated with disasters. This includes IDPs who return to their home areas, integrate locally, settle elsewhere in the country or continue their flight across an international border. Doing so will enable us to paint a more comprehensive picture of situations as they evolve and enable comparisons between them.

# SYRIA

## Trapped in the country, and out of the picture

By any measure, the humanitarian situation in Syria worsened significantly in 2015. The country's civil war is now in its sixth year, with four of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council actively engaged in the hostilities, and it has caused one of the worst displacement crises since World War Two.<sup>81, 82</sup> As of December, intense fighting and violence had forced more than 10.9 million people, or over half of the country's pre-war population, to flee their homes. Put another way, an average of 50 families have been displaced every hour of every day since 2011.<sup>83</sup> Of the total, at least 6.6 million people have been internally displaced.<sup>84</sup>

The bulk of international attention has focused on the millions of people who have risked their lives and those of their children to seek safety elsewhere in the region or in Europe, with diminishing hope of finding safety, acceptance and opportunity. Having initially admitted large numbers of refugees, however, neighbouring countries have increasingly restricted the flow of people out of Syria, or sealed their borders altogether.<sup>85</sup>

As a result, hundreds of thousands of people are trapped inside the country, abandoned in camps or staying with host communities near border points with no legal escape route and often living in subhuman conditions.<sup>86</sup>

The main causes of casualties and displacement in Syria are well known. They include indiscriminate attacks in populated areas, the deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure such as schools and healthcare facilities, and sieges during which people are deliberately deprived of aid and basic services such as food, water and medical care.<sup>87</sup> Such acts were relentless in 2015, and as of October, at least 1.3 million people had been newly displaced, many for the second or third time.<sup>88</sup>

Despite a broad awareness of these drivers, there is relatively little understanding of their specific consequences: who the IDPs are, where they flee to and in what number, and what their needs are. This incomplete picture and the failure to conduct an accurate assessment of the situation

mean that the humanitarian response, which is already overwhelmed, is unlikely to be using the resources available efficiently.

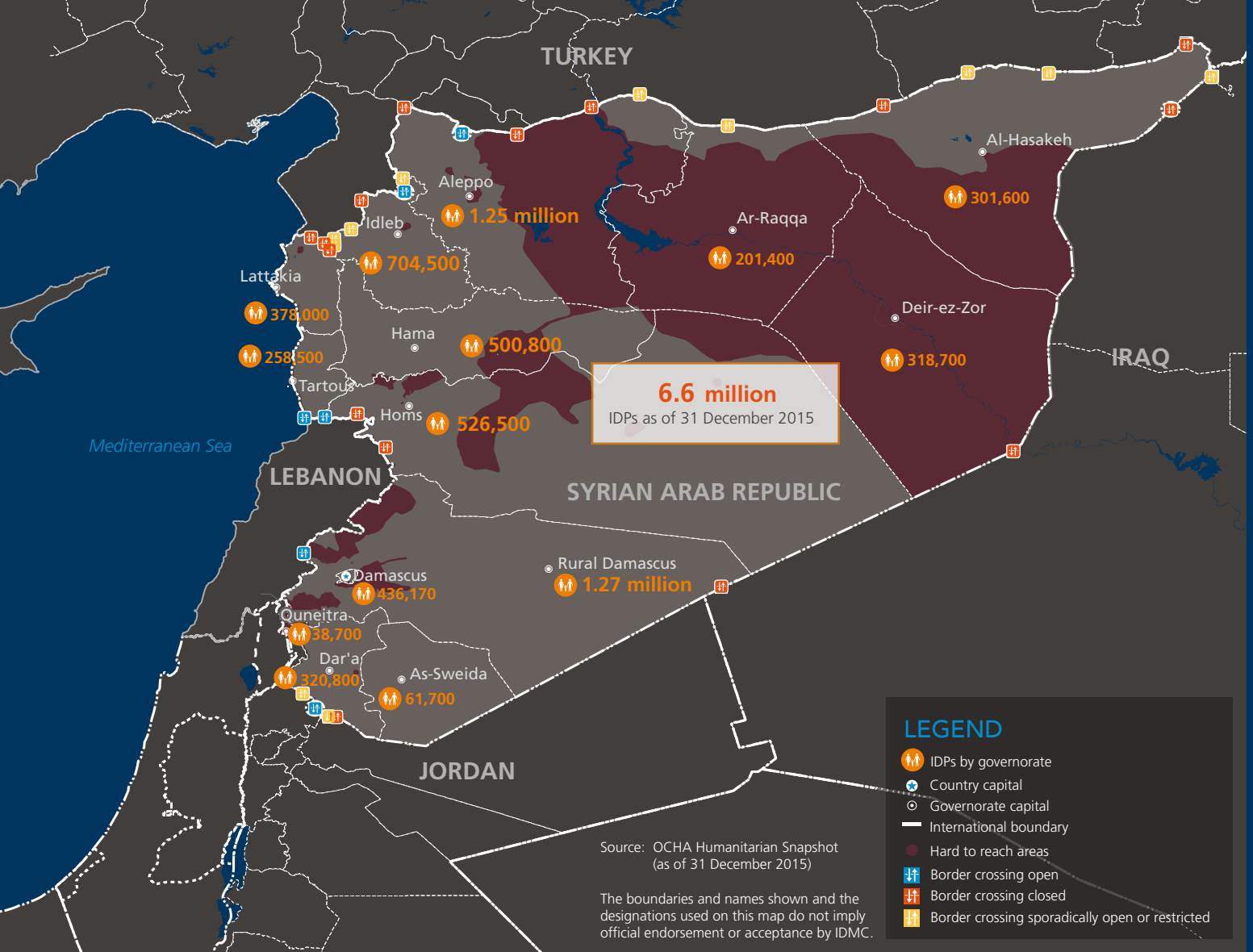
The limitations of current data collection efforts worldwide, as outlined in our confidence assessment tool (see methodological annex), can be broadly grouped into three categories in Syria – security and access restrictions, the political environment and methodological challenges.

More than 4.5 million people were living in areas of the country that the UN considered to be either difficult or near impossible to reach in 2015, including besieged cities, and humanitarians had less access than in 2014.<sup>89, 90</sup> The number of people living in areas OCHA classified as besieged more than doubled from 2014 to almost 500,000 people in early 2016, of whom less than one per cent received food aid.<sup>91</sup>

Monitoring internal displacement was further hampered by the intensity of the conflict and the volatility of its frontlines. The presence of the Islamic State (also known as ISIL and ISIS) made the north-eastern governorates of Ar-Raqqa and Deir Ez-Zor particularly difficult to access, and the lack of data collection in such areas is likely to have led to significant under-reporting.

The unpredictable complexity of Syria's political environment also impedes the collection of reliable data. OCHA's displacement estimates, for example, which are only aggregated at the country level once a year, are based on information gathered from various government entities, UN agencies and the Syrian Red Crescent Society. In areas under opposition control, it has also had to rely on NGOs active there and local authorities. As such, data collection and reporting are subject to the influence of parties to the conflict, including some that have played a central role in causing displacement in the first place.<sup>92</sup>

Methodological challenges meantime may result in under-reporting or double counting, and a distorted understanding of the needs of people fleeing within and beyond Syria. The estimated 6.6 million IDPs in the country as of the end of 2015 is fewer than the 7.6 million at the end



of 2014,<sup>93</sup> but the figure relative to the population as a whole has most likely increased, given the number of people who have fled abroad. The current reporting systems for refugees and asylum seekers also make it very difficult to know how many were formerly IDPs. As such, when figures for IDPs and refugees are combined, many people are counted twice.

The fact that many, if not most IDPs have been forced to flee more than once presents another methodological challenge. Multiple displacements are difficult to track in any context, and particularly so in Syria. On the one hand, such people may not be counted at all because they live in host communities where they are largely invisible, but on the other multiple displacement may mean that people are counted more than once – each time they are displaced.

Agencies that estimate the number of IDPs in different parts of the country use different methodologies, and those trapped in besieged cities will have been displaced relatively short distances given their inability to leave the area. Efforts to

count these IDPs effectively are hampered both by the methodological challenge of identifying them among the besieged population as a whole, and by the lack of access to areas under siege.

Compared with the attention given to Syrian refugees, the country's IDPs have been neglected, with significant implications for humanitarian funding and assistance, not to mention the lives of those affected.<sup>94</sup> The pace of displacement remains relentless, and people are likely to continue to uproot their families at a similar rate unless the fighting is brought to an end.<sup>95</sup> Despite needs increasing throughout 2015, it was harder than ever to get aid to the most desperate.<sup>96</sup>

Data gathering is a vital part of saving lives. Timely and reliable information on the trajectories of families fleeing violence within Syria and the tipping point to cross the country's border contribute to a better understanding of their situation. This in turn improves the quality of advocacy and programming on their behalf, and ultimately the likelihood that efforts to protect and assist them will be better resourced and targeted.



# Working with DECAYING DATA

The lack of updated data, particularly on displacement that has become protracted, is one of the main gaps we face. We have tried to address it as consistently and transparently as possible by presenting stratified bar graphs of the number of IDPs based on the age of the data for each situation. We have chosen to continue reporting on situations for which we have not received any new information, but we call attention to the fact that the data may be out of date.

We were able to obtain updated information in 2015 for nearly 31.7 million of the 40.8 million people who were living in displacement as of the end of the year as a result of conflict and violence (see figure 2.2). For an annual report targeting global policy processes, this information can be considered up to date. The age of the most

recent data for the remaining 9.1 million IDPs varies widely and in some cases is significantly out of date. The data on nearly a million IDPs in Turkey dates back at least to 2006, and some for Guatemala goes back as far as 1996.

Despite these and other sources being out of date, we continued accounting for the IDPs concerned for two reasons. As a global monitor we want to call attention to such situations, and their inclusion also constitutes an explicit plea for updated data and information. We hope that by presenting our data in this way, our readers will be able to draw their own conclusions about the displacement situations covered, and decide how much emphasis to put on evidence that may be years out of date.

Figure 2.2: People internally displaced as a result of conflict and violence as of 31 December 2015, by year of latest data update

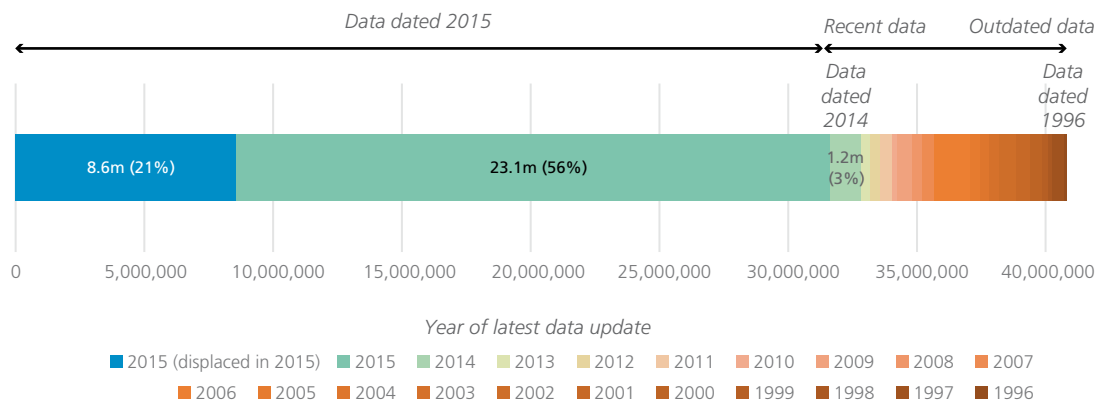
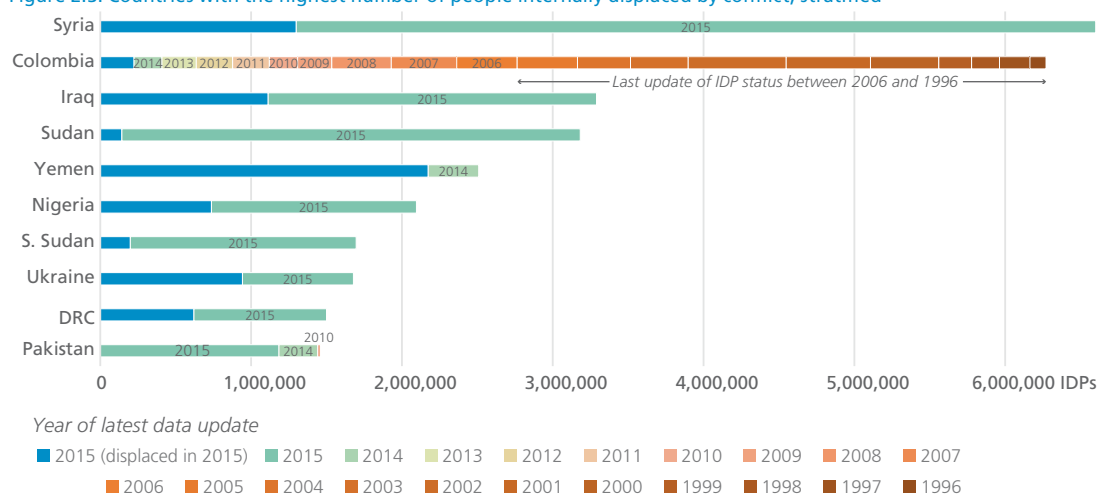


Figure 2.3: Countries with the highest number of people internally displaced by conflict, stratified



A more nuanced illustration of the ten countries with most people internally displaced by conflict (see figure 2.3) points to the fact that some of the stock data is relatively old and possibly decaying. This was the case for 12 of the 52 countries and one region (Abyei) in this report, accounting for less than 20 per cent of IDPs worldwide. The countries concerned were Armenia, Bangladesh, Congo, Cyprus, Guatemala, Macedonia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Togo, Turkey and Uganda.

Eighty-one per cent of the data used to compile our country estimates has been updated within the past two years, but in some cases part or all of the latest available information is more than two years old. This is the case for Colombia (see box) and the 15 other countries shown in figure 2.4. The upshot is that the estimates we generated for some countries are more reliable than for others.

We have also found that people displaced by protracted conflicts around the world tend to fall off the radar. Colombia is clearly not the only country to have outdated or decaying data for its stock of IDPs. We have been unable to obtain return figures for a number of countries, including Bangladesh, Burundi, Guatemala, Thailand and Turkey.

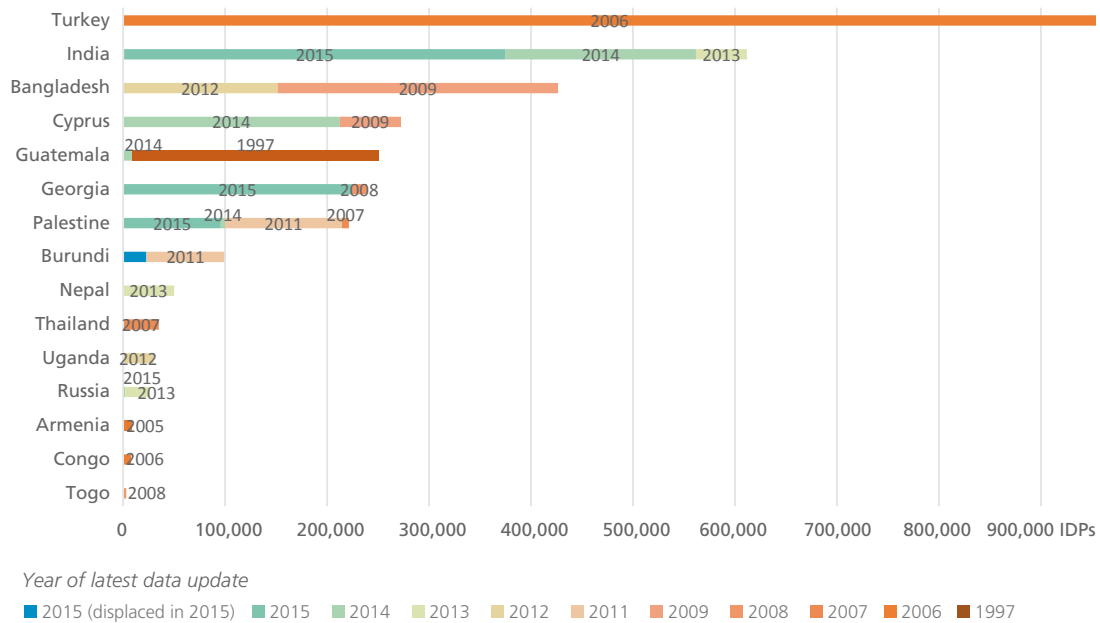
The figures for these countries highlight the need for improved and updated data on displacement. As clearly stated in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and reaffirmed in successive United Nations General Assembly Resolutions, sovereign states are primarily responsible for maintaining up-to-date statistical information on their displaced populations.

Each year, IDMC reaches out to UN Member States inviting them to share their displacement data, and each year only a handful reply. This year, only five governments responded with their data – Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Ireland and Mexico. Governments in several other countries – Afghanistan, CAR, Colombia, Cyprus, the DRC, Honduras, Macedonia, Mali, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Russia Sri Lanka, Togo and Ukraine – designated national authorities to collect and publish this data or to collaborate with others to do so.

Particularly in protracted crises, displacement data often becomes outdated when government authorities and international actors lose the capacity needed to collect it. This can be due to attention and resources being allocated to more visible or pressing crises. When UNHCR shared its 2015 IDP data for Afghanistan, it notified us that IDP profiling and data collection had ceased, partly due to lack of funding.

The solution to this is more frequent collection of displacement data that accounts for the number of IDPs as well as the flows leading into and out of displacement. By providing the breakdown of the age of our figures for the first time in this report, we are appealing to the governments concerned and to our partners in the field to contribute to this ongoing effort. Donor governments should ensure that designated authorities have the resources and capacity to collect displacement data and keep it up to date. Data-gathering agencies should, in turn, give warning several months prior to halting their data collection to give time to address this impending gap.

Figure 2.4: Countries with fewer than a million IDPs displaced by conflict, for which some data or all is older than 2014



## Decaying displacement data in **COLOMBIA**

The issue of decaying data is of particular concern with Colombia (see figure 2.3), a country that has been among the five countries with the highest number of people internally displaced by conflict every year since we began monitoring internal displacement in 1998.

To its credit, the government has maintained a sophisticated and detailed account of the country's displaced population. The data in the latest iteration of its registry for IDPs, part of the national victims' registry administered by the country's victims unit, is disaggregated by age, gender, provenance and resettlement location, and paints a highly detailed picture.

The registry, however, is primarily intended as a tool to facilitate the government's provision of victims' reparations, in accordance with law 1448 of 2011. As such, it does not take into account people who are no longer displaced, whether because they have achieved a durable solution, or because they have died. This means that the number of IDPs in the country never decreases.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that many people displaced by Colombia's conflict, now in its sixth decade, have resettled in the country's cities, but it is impossible to gauge with any certainty how many of the 6.3 million or so people who fled their homes between 1996 and 2015 still live in displacement. The estimate for 2015 is likely to be significantly inflated and should be interpreted with caution.



A local resident, who was evicted from Vila Autódromo in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, addresses the hundreds of residents and police gathered in February 2006 for the demolition of the neighbourhood association's building. Decrying the government's actions, she says: "I am embarrassed by this country," and "my house fell, but I will never stop struggling." Photo: Megan Healy/CatComm/Rio on Watch, February 2016.



# PART 3

## OFF THE GRID

### The world's overlooked IDPs

IDMC has to date monitored displacement associated with conflict, generalised violence and disasters brought on by rapid-onset natural hazards. As such, alarming though the scale and trends set out in part one of this report are, the global snapshot is far from complete. In addition to the data limitations explained above, the global figures do not capture many other contexts in which people are forced to flee their homes.

In recent years, we have been building up evidence on displacement associated with criminal violence, development projects and slow-onset crises related to drought and environmental change. In this part we explain why people displaced in such contexts should be recognised as IDPs, and we explore some of the challenges inherent in making their protection and assistance needs more visible. We also discuss some of the consequences of failing to do so – for those displaced, the governments responsible for them and others working in the humanitarian and development fields.

This constitutes a step toward a more comprehensive picture of internal displacement, with the aim of ensuring that all IDPs in need of protection and assistance, and those vulnerable to displacement, are not excluded from efforts to prevent and respond to the phenomenon.

Displacement associated with criminal violence, drought and development projects has not been systematically quantified and monitored, in part because of constraints on our resources, but also because of limited access to data, conceptual ambiguities about what constitutes displacement in some contexts, and methodological issues related to the various drivers of slow-onset disasters and

chronic crises. Such drivers are also likely to have contributed to some of the conflict and violence that has forced people to flee their homes, and the general upward trend in global displacement.

The notion of an IDP is based on two core components: that their movement is forced, to distinguish them from economic and other voluntary migrants; and that they remain within internationally recognised state borders, to distinguish them from refugees and other people who move across them.

Differentiating forced from voluntary movement is not always straightforward, and displacement associated with slow-onset, frequently recurrent, and cyclical crises are just some of the situations in which it can be particularly difficult. As we highlight below, migration and displacement are better understood as sitting on a predominantly voluntary to predominantly forced continuum.

Raising awareness and understanding of people displaced in these contexts among policy-makers, practitioners, donors and the international community is important for three reasons.

First, it helps guide data collection as the basis of evidence for both policy and operational decision-making at all levels. Second, a broader picture means limited resources can be better prioritised and allocated, including for further data collection and research to address knowledge gaps. Third, insights into displacement as a multi-dimensional and cross-cutting issue help policy-makers identify links between agendas and objectives in areas including humanitarian action, sustainable development, peace-building, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.



# KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

| **Global displacement figures do not capture many other contexts in which people are forced to flee their homes.** More comprehensive monitoring of displacement is needed to ensure that all IDPs, and people vulnerable to displacement, are included in efforts to respond to their needs and address longer-term development objectives.

## Displaced by criminal violence

| Criminal violence associated with drug trafficking and gang activity had displaced at least **a million people in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico** as of December 2015.

| Studies have established a **direct link between criminal violence and migration**, but such displacement in the region tends to remain unquantified and unaddressed for reasons ranging from political to methodological.

| Conceptual and information gaps result in a lack of protection that means **people fleeing criminal violence fall through the cracks**, leaving them with little choice other than to embark on dangerous migrations, risking trafficking and murder, to neighbouring countries or the US.

## Displaced by drought-related disasters

| Drought is not a direct “cause” of displacement in and of itself, but has impacts on food and livelihood insecurity, including increasing potential for conflict over scarce resources.

| Displacement might be identified as a **tipping point where abnormal movement patterns indicate the breakdown of normal coping strategies** under severely stressed conditions.

| Recognising people as internally displaced as opposed to voluntary migrants helps to identify them as people in need of particular attention from governments, humanitarians and development organisations, and who should be prioritised for protection and assistance.

## Displaced by development projects

| Rather than being priority beneficiaries, **people displaced by development projects usually end up worse off**, undermining development gains. They suffer a range of human rights violations, and solutions are as elusive as for displacement associated with conflict and disasters.

| **The most frequently cited global estimate for people displaced by development projects is 15 million people a year since the mid-2000s.**

| Accumulated figures for people displaced by development projects appear only to be available for China, where the total is 80 million between 1950 and 2015, and in India, where the total is 65 million between 1947 and 2010.

| **Indigenous people and the urban poor are particularly affected** by displacement associated with development projects because they tend to live on land that is valuable in terms of natural resources or as real estate.

| The planning that goes into development projects provides an opportunity to mitigate displacement and prepare for durable solutions from the outset. If projects are undertaken with political commitment, adequate skills, sufficient financial and institutional resources, a participatory approach and respect for human rights, the **displacement they cause can result in beneficial and sustainable development.**

# Displaced by CRIMINAL VIOLENCE

People flee criminal violence in a number of forms, from gang violence and drug traffickers' turf wars in Mexico and central America to clan feuds in the Philippines and armed banditry in CAR, but their migration is not systematically monitored worldwide.<sup>97</sup> This "unseen" flight has widespread repercussions for individuals and societies, and raises the question of where the phenomenon should fall within the displacement framework.

Data shows that there is far less information on people who flee criminal violence than on those displaced by conflict, and an even weaker response to their plight. There are probably many more people affected globally than the current data reflects.

## Mexico and Central America: a million displaced by organised crime

Organised criminal violence associated with drug trafficking and gang activity has reached epidemic proportions in Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras in recent years.<sup>98</sup> As a result, there were at least a million IDPs in the region as of the end of 2015, up from 848,000 at the end of 2014, many of them driven from cities suffering the highest homicide rates in the world and levels of violence comparable with a war zone.<sup>99, 100</sup>

The generalised nature of the violence is well-established. Numerous articles and reports describe the phenomenon, including the scale and diversity of criminalised zones, corridors and micro-territories.<sup>101</sup> The perilous trafficking areas for migrants in Mexican states such as Oaxaca and Tabasco, extortion rackets in marginalised areas of El Salvador, criminal turf wars in urban Honduras and drug cartel feuds on Guatemala's borders are some of the worst sources of large-scale criminal violence.<sup>102</sup>

The intense nature of this generalised criminal violence has driven population movements in a variety of ways. Some people move in response to direct coercion and physical threats, others

because of a general erosion of their day-to-day quality of life and livelihood opportunities.<sup>103</sup> Many flee after refusing to sell their land to drug traffickers and receiving death threats as a result, or to keep their children safe from gang recruitment and violence.<sup>104</sup> Some move in anticipation of violence in the neighbourhoods where they live or work, some as a result of its impacts. Others only flee when friends or family members have been attacked or killed.<sup>105</sup>

Several studies have shown a direct empirical link between criminal violence and migration in the region. A 2012 survey across 12 Mexican states established a clear association between violence – defined for the purpose of the survey as homicides, threats, extortion and a general atmosphere of violence – and a net migration rate. It established that, once the effect of socio-economic conditions normally associated with internal migration in Mexico was controlled for, the proportion of people moving from the most violent municipalities was 4.5 times higher than in those with similar conditions but lower levels of violence.<sup>106</sup> This study provided one of the first evidence-based indications that significant population losses in some areas of the country were directly linked to violence perpetrated by organised crime groups.

## Unseen and in displacement limbo

Despite this evidence, displacement associated with generalised criminal violence in the region tends to remain hidden and unquantified. People flee unseen and their subsequent protection and assistance needs go unaddressed for a number of reasons.

In some countries, there is a general lack of recognition that criminal violence causes displacement. Mexican authorities acknowledge the phenomenon at a regional level, but not within their own borders, and Guatemala is similarly reluctant.<sup>107</sup>

Honduras is currently the only Central American country to officially recognise the phenomenon, and in 2013 it set up a cross-institutional commis-



After entering Mexico illegally near Ciudad Hidalgo on their way to the US border, many Central and South American migrants continue their journey on the freight train known as *La Bestia*, the Beast. The train begins its journey in the town of Arriaga in Chiapas State, where migrants climb on top of the wagons, exposing themselves to the elements and extortion by criminal gangs lying in wait along their route.  
Photo: IOM/Keith Dannemiller, April 2014

sion to develop policies to prevent and respond to it.<sup>108</sup> El Salvador has also been more responsive, as evidenced by its decision to welcome permanent delegations from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and various NGOs. Both countries, however, continue to pursue state policies that prioritise strong security measures over redress for victims.<sup>109</sup>

The nature and scale of the displacement involved is also a factor. That triggered by conflict and disasters tends to result in large-scale, relatively visible population movements, but people fleeing criminal violence often do so in small numbers and keep a deliberately low profile. In Honduras, individuals and families tend to leave their communities discreetly to avoid alerting the dangerous groups from whom they are fleeing.<sup>110</sup> Many are also reluctant to report the violence they have suffered for fear their persecutors may track them down and exact retribution.

Such cases are seldom reported in the media or elsewhere.<sup>111</sup> Without official records it is difficult to provide evidence of the true scope of the problem, but interviews and what little data is available suggest that displacement is a widespread and in some cases a daily occurrence.<sup>112</sup>

Humanitarians' focus on forced or coerced movement also often fails to capture the complex circumstances in which people flee generalised criminal violence. An attack or atrocity may lead directly to displacement, but economic costs – when sales drop because customers are afraid to go out in the street, or when criminals demand a cut of profits – and lack of hope for the future may also influence people's decision to leave.<sup>113</sup>

Such movements are not as explicitly forced as those triggered directly by an attack, but people who move in search of income and who would not have done so were it not for the impact of insecurity and violence on their livelihoods warrant protection as IDPs. This is on the grounds that they were or felt obliged to flee, rather than exercising a free choice to move solely to improve their economic circumstances.<sup>114</sup>

## Piecemeal data

Vague concepts and the perception of displacement as politically inconvenient in some countries combine to mean that quantitative evidence of people fleeing criminal violence in the region is generally insufficient and inaccurate. The plight of many has likely not been documented, and the scale of the phenomenon and the protection needs of those affected underestimated.<sup>115</sup>

The figures that do exist point to an alarming situation. Research to quantify the scale of displacement in Mexico indicates that around two per cent of the country's population, or 1.7 million people, were forced to migrate between 2006 and 2011 because of the threat or risk of violence – an average of 330,000 people a year.<sup>116</sup>

The fragmented quantitative data available for El Salvador is equally telling. A relatively robust national survey in 2012 revealed that 2.1 per cent of the country's population, or around 130,000 people, changed their place of residence in that year alone as a result of threats. Almost a third of those affected had been displaced more than once.<sup>117</sup> There were more than 289,000 IDPs in El Salvador, a country described as the world's most deadly outside a war zone, as of the end of 2015.<sup>118</sup>

# HONDURAS

## Unearthing a hidden displacement crisis

SPOT  
LIGHT

Long notorious for some of the highest homicide rates in the world,<sup>119</sup> Honduras has recently experienced enough of an increase in displacement caused by criminal violence to bring the issue into the political limelight. To begin tackling its impacts, the government created the Inter-Agency Commission for the Protection of Persons Displaced by Violence (CIPPDV) in late 2013, and tasked it with driving “the creation of policies and the adoption of measures to prevent forced displacement caused by violence, as well as to care for, protect and find solutions for displaced people and their families”.<sup>120</sup>

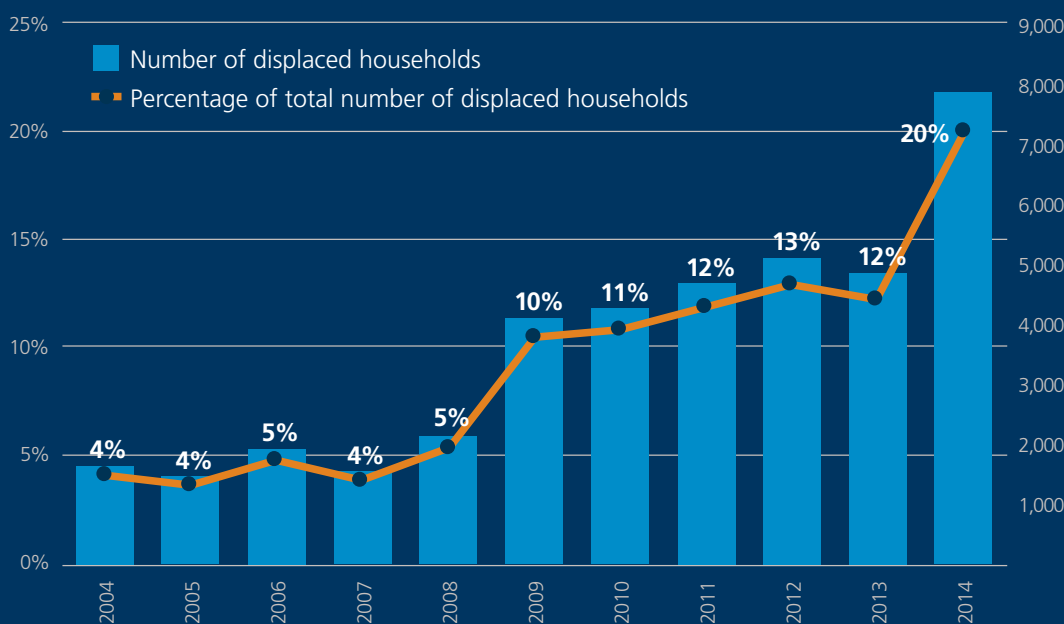
As a first step, the commission launched a research project in 2014 to reveal the country’s invisible displacement crisis and determine its scope and scale. An inter-agency team was created to carry out a study, led by CIPPDV and supported by the National Statistics Institute, the Jesuit Reflection, Investigation and Communication Team, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS).<sup>121</sup>

The aim was to collect information on people who had changed their place of residence within

Honduras between 2004 and 2014 for “specific reasons relating to violence and general crime”. For the purposes of the survey, the specific reasons were “forced recruitment, extortion, murder, threats, injury, sexual violence, insecurity in the community [conflict, shootings], kidnapping, forced disappearance, torture, discrimination, arbitrary detention and dispossession of land and dwellings”. People who reported having changed their place of residence because of robbery or assault were not classified as displaced.<sup>122</sup>

A total of 2,138 households were surveyed across 20 municipalities identified as having the highest concentrations of displaced people.<sup>123</sup> Based on an extrapolation of the findings it is estimated that they are home to around 174,000 IDPs, including children born in displacement.<sup>124</sup> Of those surveyed, 67.9 per cent said their decision to move was influenced only by violence and insecurity, and without consideration of other factors that usually determine migration, such as employment or living conditions.<sup>125</sup>

A deeper examination confirms a correlation



Source: Survey and Enumeration of Households Affected by Internal Displacement in 20 Municipalities in Honduras (Nov-Dec 2014)





Two girls play in the neighbourhood of Comunidad Bordos Llanos de Sula, San Pedro Sula, just a few blocks away from a murder scene where police found buried bodies. Photo: Oscar Leiva Marinero/ Catholic Relief Services, July 2014

between the intensity of criminal violence and population movement. As depicted in the graph, displacement levels remained relatively stable between 2004 and 2008, but rose noticeably between 2009 and 2013.<sup>126</sup> This trend coincides to some extent with the rise in homicide rates, an indication of the degree of violence to which people were exposed.<sup>127</sup>

The dynamic is contradicted somewhat by a spike in displacement in 2014, when homicide rates fell.<sup>128</sup> This anomaly may in part be explained by respondents' tendency to report more recent events to a greater extent than those that happened long ago.<sup>129</sup> Alternatively, the surge in the number of IDPs may reflect a broader reality of people fleeing a general deterioration of their security and daily lives.

Be that as it may, the progressive increase in the number of people displaced accentuates the Honduran authorities' need to create a clear and shared conceptual framework within which to understand why and at what point people flee areas plagued by criminal violence. The need is reiterated in one of the study's main recommendations, "to establish a definition of who may be considered a victim of forced displacement, in accordance with the Guiding Principles

on Internal Displacement, with the aim of identifying the range of people who may receive the State's attention".<sup>130</sup>

The UN special rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs stressed the point further during his official visit to Honduras in November 2015.<sup>131</sup> He welcomed the government's recognition of internal displacement, and highlighted the need for concerted action to tackle its causes and protect IDPs' rights. He urged the government "to strengthen its efforts to stop an internal displacement epidemic" caused by organised and gang-related crime and violence.

Findings from interviews conducted across the Northern Triangle countries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras indicate that internal displacement has become so prevalent that it could be considered a “household phenomenon”.<sup>132</sup> A 2012 survey asked respondents in the three countries whether they had ever felt the need to change neighbourhood for fear of violence, to which 13.5 per cent answered “yes”.

The figure does not reflect the incidents of actual displacement, but it does give a general sense of the insecurity people perceive. It translates to around four million people, roughly the entire population of Puerto Rico, living with a need or desire to move their families because of the threat they feel from criminal violence.

## Falling through the cracks: data gaps and their consequences

The conceptual and information gaps on displacement in the region described above reflect a reality in which people fleeing the effects of criminal violence fall through the cracks. National responses to date have focused almost entirely on combatting criminal behaviour through the justice and security sectors, leaving families who flee the violence with little recourse.<sup>133</sup>

Scant and anecdotal information reveals significant vulnerability across the region. The aforementioned 2012 study in Mexico confirmed that IDPs faced three major problems compared with the local resident population: less access to the labour market, education and adequate housing.<sup>134</sup> A more recent profiling of IDPs in Honduras also confirmed that displaced households were in more precarious positions than their counterparts in the general population in terms of access to housing and social services.<sup>135</sup>

This lack of protection leaves people with little choice other than to embark on dangerous migrations, risking trafficking and murder, to neighbouring countries or onwards to the US.<sup>136</sup> There was a major spike in unaccompanied minors entering the US through its southern borders in 2014, the majority fleeing poor and violent towns in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. There was also a resurgence in the number of children and their families arriving in the US in search of safety in the second half of 2015, reflecting the ongoing danger in these countries.<sup>137</sup>

The media reported regularly on their plight during the first half of the year, and the US president, Barack Obama, spoke of an urgent humanitarian situation.<sup>138</sup> Some analysts went further, describing the surge as “only the tip of the iceberg of a deeper new humanitarian crisis in the region”.<sup>139</sup>

This stresses the urgency of engaging in a more holistic and evidence-based humanitarian approach to migration through Mexico and Central America and displacement across the region. This should be based on reliable data and clear concepts, using new and broad interpretations of the Guiding Principles and other legal frameworks of what constitutes internal displacement associated with criminal violence.





This woman used to have 200 goats and sheep and ten camels, which were her means of income. Most of the livestock died as a result of pasture and water shortages. She now lives in the Hariso displacement centre in the Siti region of Ethiopia, with only one camel and ten goats and sheep. She says: "We live by water, our cattle live by water. Without water we are no more."

Photo: Abiy Getahun/Oxfam, December 2015

## Displaced by DROUGHT-RELATED DISASTERS

The dynamics and impacts of displacement associated with slow-onset disasters, including those where drought plays a part, are relatively poorly understood and reported on. The estimation methodology used to generate the global figures for displacement related to disasters triggered by rapid-onset hazards is not well suited to assess that associated with drought and its complex, multi-causal and often delayed impacts.

Were estimates to include drought-related crises, the number of people displaced by the impacts of weather hazards would be even higher. This knowledge gap creates an important blind spot in the recognition of displacement associated with slow-onset disasters, and in the development of policy and operational responses to address the needs of some of the world's most vulnerable populations and solutions to their plight.

### Complex causality under drought conditions

The scale of displacement associated with drought, as for other types of hazards, is largely determined by the underlying vulnerability of people to shocks and stresses that compel them to leave their homes and livelihoods. As such, drought's role has to be understood in combination with other social, demographic, political and economic drivers of displacement and disaster risk.<sup>140</sup>

The combined and complex impacts of these factors take time to manifest themselves, meaning people may be displaced months after the onset of drought.<sup>141</sup>

Hazard events such as floods and earthquakes create direct physical threats and immediate impacts that trigger displacement. Drought contributes more indirectly to displacement risk, largely through the erosion of food and livelihood security among vulnerable populations to the point where fleeing their homes becomes a survival strategy, often of last resort.

# DEFINING DROUGHT

The nature of drought makes estimating its severity and impacts challenging. It is a relative rather than absolute condition that occurs in both high and low rainfall areas, and its characteristics vary significantly from one region to another. Its point of onset and end are difficult to determine, and its effects accumulate slowly over long periods of time. They also tend to be more diffuse and spread over a wider geographical area than those of other hazard types.

Common definitions of drought, as described below, put the emphasis on its climatic causes – meteorological drought – which are directly related to precipitation levels. Like other “natural” hazards, however, it has both natural and social dimensions, and its impacts on individuals, households and communities can only be understood in relation to demographic, socio-economic and political factors that increase the exposure and vulnerability of people.

Other definitions, including agricultural and hydrological drought, highlight the interaction of natural conditions with human and social factors such as the management of water supplies and changes in land use and land cover.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, some parts of the world have experienced more intense and longer droughts since the 1950s.<sup>142</sup> These are likely to intensify in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in some seasons and areas, with the potential for adverse impacts on many sectors.<sup>143</sup>

## Meteorological drought

A precipitation deficit over a pre-determined period of time that varies by location according to user needs or applications. It is commonly measured according to a threshold of lower than normal or expected levels of rainfall.



## Hydrological drought

Below-average water levels in lakes, reservoirs, rivers, streams and groundwater affect non-agricultural activities such as tourism, urban water consumption, hydro-electric power production and ecosystem conservation. As with agricultural drought there is no direct relationship with precipitation levels and there may be a considerable time lag before effects are observed in the hydrologic system.<sup>144</sup>



## Agricultural drought

Insufficient soil moisture to support crops, forage growth and pasture. The infiltration of precipitation into the soil is often not direct, and depends on slope, soil type and other factors. It can take several weeks or months before shortfalls begin to produce soil moisture deficiencies and lead to stress on crops, pastures and rangeland.



## Environmental drought

A combination of the above





The most significant factors that drive displacement are those that leave exposed and vulnerable communities unable to manage severe or recurrent drought impacts. Drought is a particular concern for communities whose food and livelihoods depend on rain-fed agriculture, pasture and rangeland, and whose basic survival is put under increasing stress when conditions overwhelm their normal coping strategies.

Around 84 per cent of the damage and losses drought causes worldwide are to agriculture, particularly livestock and crop production. Other sectors including health, nutrition and water and sanitation are also affected.<sup>145</sup> Agricultural drought reduces crop yields and livestock headcount. It may lead to a fall in wages and employment among farmers and labourers, while inflating food prices as commodities become scarce in local markets.

These pressures reduce households' purchasing capacity and access to food, deplete their savings and may force the sale of vital productive assets. Over time, they reduce the quantity and quality of their food consumption, and food insecurity and malnutrition increase, particularly among the most vulnerable households.<sup>146</sup>

Our research in parts of northern Kenya, southern Ethiopia and southern Somalia highlights a range of human factors that combine with drought to contribute to the displacement of pastoralists – not from a sedentary home but from their traditional and primary source of livelihood.<sup>147</sup>

Driving factors include the amount of grazing land available, pastoralists' ability to access it, herd size and composition, livestock marketing strategies, remittance flows, market prices and the scale and type of humanitarian interventions.<sup>148</sup> Other underlying factors include high fertility rates and the growth in pastoralist populations, which increase exposure levels.

## Linkages to other hazards

Drought also contributes to the likelihood of other types of environmental hazards occurring. In combination with high temperatures, it can increase the risk of wildfires and the displacement of people whose homes are exposed to them. Drought periods that precede heavy rainfall may also increase the risk of flooding because desiccated land is less absorbent.

Recurrent drought may also contribute to longer-term processes of environmental degradation such as increased soil erosion, the deterioration of rangeland, deforestation and biodiversity loss. As seen among pastoralist communities in the Horn of Africa, this in turn may ultimately force them to seek alternative livelihoods and places to live.<sup>149</sup>

In many countries, drought and other natural hazards also become intertwined with the impacts of conflict, driving insecurity that is both a cause and a consequence of displacement. In Somalia, prolonged drought between 2010 and 2012 on top of political instability, conflict and widespread poverty precipitated a complex emergency and famine that led to huge displacement both internally and across the country's borders.

The UN system applies the term famine only to the worst cases when certain mortality, malnutrition and hunger thresholds are exceeded.<sup>150</sup> May to October 2011 was such a period in Somalia, and more than 265,500 people were displaced during it. This "distress migration of whole families" was mostly from the agro-pastoral and pastoral livelihood areas of the country where drought was the predominant driver.<sup>151</sup>

## The voluntary to forced migration continuum

The distinction between displacement and voluntary migration is often unclear, particularly when population movements are associated with slow-onset disasters or gradual environmental change. In practice, displacement sits on a continuum ranging from predominantly forced to predominantly voluntary movements, where the former emphasises push factors to leave and the latter pull factors at the intended destination.<sup>152</sup>

Population movements associated with rainfall variability and environmental change take different forms across the displacement-migration continuum, and the patterns reflect the diverse coping strategies that households and communities employ. In slow-onset crises, population movements are more likely to be dispersed, with individuals and households leaving over extended periods of time rather than in large groups over short timeframes. This is another important factor that makes the displacement they cause more difficult to identify.



Displacement might be identified as a tipping point where abnormal movement patterns indicate the breakdown of normal coping strategies under severely stressed conditions. Following low rainfall and failed harvests in Niger in 2010, many poor households anticipated that normal migration strategies to meet seasonal food shortages would not be sufficient and moved their households to search for work in urban areas.<sup>153</sup>

Field research in Bangladesh, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Peru, Tanzania, Thailand and Vietnam conducted for the Where the Rain Falls project found that household members highly dependent on rain-fed agriculture and with few local options and resources to diversify their livelihoods were most directly affected by rainfall variability and drought, and were forced to migrate in search of food or work to support their families.<sup>154</sup>

Such people might be considered as being at the displacement end of the continuum. Less clearly displaced, but still trapped in vulnerable situations, are those with more labour migration options to cope with seasonal hunger, though still without being able to escape cycles of deprivation.<sup>155</sup>

Making distinctions between IDPs and migrants in slowly evolving crises may be both arbitrary and impractical in operational terms. That said, recognising people as internally displaced as opposed to voluntary migrants helps to identify them as people in need of particular attention from governments, humanitarians and development organisations, and who should be prioritised for protection and assistance.

Using the language of displacement can signal the severity of people's vulnerability and the urgency of their needs. In the case of repeated displacement, it may highlight populations in need of solutions to reduce chronic disaster risk. Identifying people as displaced can also alert authorities and humanitarians to the potential existence of equally or even more vulnerable people from the same disaster-hit areas who have been unable to leave and are in need of protection.<sup>156</sup>

In the context of slow-onset disasters and gradual environmental change, the evidence points to the usefulness of an integrated framework for analysis based on the voluntary-to-forced continuum of population movements, within which the identification of people as displaced from situations of severe distress or crisis remains important.

Wayuu children in Colombia's desert region of La Guajira spend most of their day looking for water in dried up, saline or otherwise contaminated wells. Most of what they draw up is brownish sludge unfit for human consumption. Photo: C. George/ECHO, December 2015, <https://flic.kr/p/FaA1hz>

## Improving data collection

The collection of reliable data on displacement and other population movements, and the needs of people in gradually deteriorating conditions, is vital to timely and well targeted operational and policy responses. A preliminary review of reporting on drought-related disasters in 2015 revealed, however, that little such information is being shared. One exception is discussed in the spotlight on Ethiopia.

Data on population movements and IDPs' needs has many uses. The identification of unusual or intensified migration patterns can serve as an indicator within early warning systems of the need for action that may pre-empt or at least mitigate a crisis. Displacement data is also useful in formulating social impact indicators within early warning and information systems, and in guiding the development of plans and policies on drought prevention and preparedness.

This is recognised in legal frameworks such as the Kampala Convention, which refers in article 4.2 to the establishment and implementation of early warning systems, disaster risk reduction strategies and disaster preparedness and management measures as ways of preventing and preparing for displacement.<sup>157</sup>

Governments also need such data to monitor and report on progress against disaster risk reduction and development objectives at the national and international level, including targets under the 2015 Sendai framework and the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>158</sup> Parallel processes to develop indicator frameworks for both policy agendas were underway at the time of writing, with specific indicators for measuring displacement associated with disasters on the table.<sup>159</sup>

Our experience shows the importance of monitoring displacement situations regularly over time, particularly IDPs' protection risks and evolving vulnerabilities during prolonged, recurrent or protracted displacement.<sup>160</sup> As seen in some east African countries and Yemen in 2015, unresolved displacement also makes food insecurity worse because planting and harvesting are disrupted while farmers are absent from their land.<sup>161</sup> This in turn increases the risk of further displacement. Improved monitoring and reporting of displacement associated with drought-related crises would also enable better understanding and preparation for its short and long-term impacts on food insecurity.

Good data is also important for understanding past and future displacement trends and their many underlying drivers, and as a basis for investing effectively in measures to avert disasters, mitigate their effects and support sustainable recovery. Our research in the Horn of Africa found that the ability to understand such trends was hampered by the paucity of historical and current data on drought impacts. Even where data is collected, as in Somalia and Ethiopia, the multidimensional nature of people's displacement is rarely captured, which also limits understanding of IDPs' needs and potential solutions.

## DROUGHT-RELATED DISASTERS IN 2015/2016

Drought risk was amplified in 2015/2016 by the effects of the El Niño weather phenomenon on rainfall patterns, which brought drier-than-normal conditions to many regions of the world (see El Niño spotlight). Its impacts were felt most strongly in eastern and southern Africa, south and south-east Asia, areas of the Pacific, Central America and the Caribbean and highland areas of South America.

Sub-Saharan Africa is particularly susceptible to drought-related disasters, which affect the food security, nutrition and health of vulnerable people. More than 60 per cent of the region's population lives in rural areas. The agriculture sector employs 60 per cent of the workforce and accounts for 25 per cent of GDP, rising to 50 per cent when the agribusiness sector is included.<sup>162</sup> It has experienced a high number of increasingly frequent droughts.

From May 2015 to early 2016, delayed onset and lack of rainfall in eastern Africa led to drought. There was a significant increase in the number of people affected by food insecurity and high malnutrition levels across Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and other areas where people were already suffering the cumulative impacts of recurrent poor growing seasons.<sup>163</sup>

As of December 2015, around 18.5 million people were estimated to be food insecure across the region, a 64 per cent increase on August estimates.<sup>164</sup> Displacement in this context, along with water shortages, poor sanitation and hygiene conditions and high malnutrition levels added to the risk of water and vector-borne diseases. The resurgence of Rift Valley fever in Kenya, Somalia and Tanzania was of particular concern (see Ethiopia spotlight).<sup>165</sup>

El Niño also made pre-existing drought and poor harvests worse in southern Africa, where many regions recorded the lowest rainfall in at least 35 years between October and December 2015.<sup>166</sup> Around 28 million people were food insecure by early 2016, according to the Southern African Development Community (SADC).<sup>167</sup> The effects of the severe 2015 drought will affect harvests significantly and have a devastating impact on food security over the year to come.

In south and south-east Asia, El Niño affected agriculture, water resources and food security, causing a weak monsoon season and associated drought in countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

Lack of rainfall also had a severe impact on agriculture and food security in the Pacific, particularly parts of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The Marshall Islands became the first country to declare a state of emergency in early February 2016 as a result of a severe shortage of fresh water on many atolls, caused by persistent drought.<sup>168</sup>

In parts of Central America, the Caribbean and highland areas of South America, insufficient and erratic rainfall from March 2015 led to drought conditions and deepening food insecurity. In Central America, El Niño contributed to another year of drought, one of the most severe in the region's history.

Countries in the northern part of Central America have faced chronic drought and dry spells and crop failures for three consecutive years, and communities in the region's "dry corridor" of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua are experiencing one of the worst droughts in decades, with an estimated 3.5 million people food insecure.



# ETHIOPIA

## Extreme conditions, extreme measures

Ethiopia suffered one of its worst meteorological droughts for 50 years in 2015, following the failure of two consecutive rainy seasons.<sup>169</sup> More than 80 per cent of the country's agricultural yield and the employment of 85 per cent of the workforce depend on adequate rainfall.<sup>170</sup> The drought contributed to the lowest soil moisture levels in at least 30 years, crop failure, below-average vegetation cover and severe water shortages in pastoral and arable farming areas.

Devastated livelihoods and high inflation have combined to increase food insecurity and malnutrition rates, particularly in central and eastern areas, forcing many people to leave their homes in search of food, water or work.

Recurrent and severe drought has also contributed to competition and clashes between communities under highly stressed conditions over access to scarce water and pasture.<sup>171</sup> Communal land tenure systems grant pastoralists equal rights to exploit resources, but in practice the use of grazing areas is regulated between and within tribes. When drought pushes a tribe to migrate into another's area, tensions between pastoralists or between pastoralists and settled farmers can arise.<sup>172</sup>

Drought and other climate-related hazards do not act alone in driving disaster and displacement risk. Their impacts are determined in large part by structural issues that drive vulnerability and exposure such as poverty, demographic trends, weak institutions and environmental degradation. Despite rapid economic growth, the reduction of extreme poverty, slowing population growth and improved social safety nets over the past decade, Ethiopia remains one of the poorest countries in the world.<sup>173</sup>

Its population is still set to double in less than 30 years, putting further pressure on livelihoods and natural resources through deforestation, overgrazing, soil erosion, desertification and poor farm management practices. Development is unevenly distributed, leaving vulnerable people and emerging regions disadvantaged and at higher risk of displacement.<sup>174</sup>

Climate trends across decades and extreme variability in rainfall from season to season play an important role in aggravating the drivers of disaster and displacement risk. Food insecurity is verging on chronic as farming areas that receive sufficient rain have shrunk over the past 20 years.<sup>175</sup> Most food is consumed by the families who produce it.<sup>176</sup>

The livelihoods of around seven million pastoralists have been jeopardised by the cumulative impacts of more frequent drought on livestock losses, rising cereal prices and lower returns when they sell or trade their animals.<sup>177</sup> Natural cycles such as El Niño will continue to contribute to extreme precipitation patterns, and most global climate models project an increase in the occurrence of both drought and floods in Ethiopia over the coming decades.<sup>178</sup>

### Displacement in 2015 and early 2016

Drought contributed to the internal displacement of more than 280,000 people between August 2015 and February 2016, according to IOM. The figure includes at least 147,996 people displaced by severe food insecurity in the drought-affected and predominantly pastoralist regions of Afar and Somali.

The government and its humanitarian partners have also noted displacement caused by communal conflict in these areas, related to the effects of drought on competition for pasture and water.<sup>179</sup> The overall figure also includes around 67,800 people displaced by communal conflict associated with the drought in Oromia and Somali over the same period.<sup>180</sup>

The figures do not, however, capture displacement associated with drought among all affected populations, such as those in the East and West Hararge districts, because data collection is limited to specific areas by the resources available.<sup>181</sup> Further tracking of household mobility strategies, such as men migrating without their

families in search of work, in some cases possibly crossing borders, would be of great benefit. It would help to inform immediate and long-term protection and assistance interventions to save lives, reduce morbidity, protect and restore pastoralist and arable livelihoods, and prepare for and reduce the impact of further shocks and displacement.<sup>182</sup>

As of mid-December 2015, around 72,700 people categorised as “drought displaced” were staying in makeshift shelters at 24 sites in the Siti area of northern Somali.<sup>183</sup> Most of the sites were spontaneous collective settlements or centres, generally organised along ethnic or family lines, and a third were scattered individual shelters. Most of the IDPs were from pastoralist communities in Siti who had remained in the area while moving between districts and villages, often with their remaining livestock.<sup>184</sup>

The main reason given at all sites for not being able to return home was lack of food, and most if not all IDPs also said they had lost livestock. Reasons not captured are likely to include lack of access to water points, grazing land, veterinary services, livestock markets, cash and credit.<sup>185</sup> IDPs at all sites bar one had been displaced for the first time, which further emphasises the severity of the situation in 2015.<sup>186</sup>

Eighty-five per cent of the IDPs had characteristics that added to their assistance and protection needs. The disaggregated data reveals that 72 per cent were under the age of 18, including around 16,000 infants under the age of four. It also showed nearly 200 people suffering from chronic disease or serious medical conditions, and nearly 300 with physical or mental disabilities. There were more than 3,200 people aged 60 or over, nearly 2,500 pregnant or breast-feeding women and nearly 1,000 households headed by one person, most often a woman.<sup>187</sup>

In the severely drought-affected regions of Afar, Somali and Oromia, as of the end of the year there were a variety of groups of IDPs displaced at different times and for various reasons. In the Kilibati area of Afar, more than 14,500 people fleeing “drought” joined 5,700 people displaced by the effects of a volcanic eruption in Eritrea, of whom 1,800 had been living in displacement since 2010.<sup>188</sup> In Siti, around 71,200 people “displaced by drought” joined more than 5,600 people displaced by communal conflict a month earlier, and another 7,600 displaced by communal conflict up to two and a half years earlier.<sup>189</sup>

The most acute effects of the 2015 drought continue to be felt, with the potential for hundreds of thousands more people to become displaced in 2016 if early and adequate humanitarian assistance is not mobilised.<sup>190</sup> Between 50 and 90 per cent of crops and livestock have been lost in some areas.<sup>191</sup>

The government and its humanitarian partners have also highlighted the vital importance of ensuring access to safe drinking water, without which the potential for large-scale displacements of whole communities would be high.<sup>192</sup> Other likely impacts of displacement on pastoralists and agro-pastoralists in remote areas include the disruption of their children’s education, psycho-social and mental health issues, and less access to health and nutrition services.<sup>193</sup>

The 2016 humanitarian funding appeal for \$1.4 billion, including food aid for 10.2 million people, was only 37 per cent met as of the end of January.<sup>194</sup> The government is prioritising vulnerable segments of the population including people displaced by the effects of drought and woman and child-headed households.<sup>195</sup> Better data collection and monitoring of displacement and the needs of people affected by drought would go a long way to ensuring that the government and its operational partners and donors have the information to make this a reality.

Both humanitarian and development organisations also need to make concerted efforts to facilitate longer-term recovery and development solutions. The coordinator of the UN’s response in Ethiopia has said the government’s leadership and integration of the humanitarian response into its national development systems provides a good basis for the long-term efforts needed to strengthen people’s resilience to future shocks.<sup>196</sup>

Without a sustained focus, however, on improving livelihood security for people already displaced and those who may become so, the risk of the current crisis becoming prolonged and repeated is likely to increase.

# Displaced by DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Displacement associated with development projects is not currently covered in global displacement data. That said, such projects have historically forced large numbers of people off their land “in the public interest” across the world, as states exercise their power to further development through compulsory acquisition based on the legal principle of eminent domain.

The movement of people whose land is acquired for a development project is forced, because they are not given the choice to remain in their home areas. Even if their rights are fully respected in the process of acquisition and resettlement, a person removed to make way for a development project qualifies as an IDP.<sup>197, 198</sup>

Dispossession and displacement associated with development projects is often a slow process that begins long before people physically move. Some leave when the project is announced in an attempt to mitigate their losses, while living conditions for those who remain deteriorate as investments and the provision of services in the area diminish.<sup>199</sup>

In some cases, people receive notice of less than a day, making it a brutally sudden process. This in addition to a lack of, or conflicting information, inadequate compensation, asymmetric resettlement negotiations and the dismantling of their communities that put those affected under significant psychological stress.<sup>200</sup>

People displaced by development projects suffer a range of human rights violations. The coerced and involuntary removal of people from their homes is a violation of the right to adequate housing. Those affected also lose access to land and natural resources, which leads to a breach of other human rights including access to food, livelihoods, education, water and healthcare. Their physical security is at risk if they resist displacement, or when force is used during the eviction process. Other impacts include increased morbidity, restricted mobility and the loss of social support networks.<sup>201</sup> Decades of study have shown that displacement associated with development projects leads to impoverishment and disempowerment.<sup>202</sup>

There is a widespread assumption that those displaced are immediately resettled. This, however, rarely happens and many are left to search for improvised options on their own. A 2011 study conducted across ten Indian states found that only 17 per cent of people displaced by development projects had been resettled.<sup>203</sup>

When resettlement is provided, those affected are rarely included in the design, planning and management of their move. Displacement tends to weaken their tenure security, because inadequate or non-existent compensation and income mean they are unable to buy or rent housing or land. They face going into debt to make up the difference or accepting sites unsuitable for relocation, which makes them vulnerable to further upheaval.<sup>204</sup> Indigenous people, women, children and elderly people are more exposed and endure the adverse effects of this type of displacement disproportionately.<sup>205</sup>

# DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS THAT DISPLACE PEOPLE

The table below shows the kind of development projects that displace people. Their aims tend to be economic gain, infrastructure renewal or conservation, and they may be led, financed and implemented by governments, the private sector, development finance institutions or a combination thereof.

The developer is responsible for ensuring human rights are respected throughout the project period, and the state must ultimately protect against abuses by the public and private sector, including businesses and their contractors.<sup>206</sup> Displacement should be followed by resettlement to a new location where those affected are helped to improve, or at least restore, their lives.

Some features of displacement are common across all sectors, but many characteristics are more particular. For example, mining and dams usually both displace large numbers of people, but the effects and economic options for IDPs' solutions are significantly different. Solutions to displacement must be tailored to the specifics of each sector.

Project type	Examples
Water supply	Irrigation dams, reservoirs
Transport	Roads, railways, canals, airports, ports
Energy	Hydropower dams, thermal power plants, exploitation of oil and gas
Mining	Metals, gemstones and non-renewable resources
Environmental protection	Nature parks, forest reserves, wildlife sanctuaries, embankment fortification
Urban renewal	Public transport, housing projects, parks, markets, new townships, city beautification, sewage systems
Infrastructure for social services	Hospitals, public health centres, schools, colleges
Commercial infrastructure	Special economic zones, info-technology parks
Mega-events	Olympic Games, World Cup, Eurovision Song Contest
Industrial construction	Steel, cement and aluminium factories
Agriculture and forestry	Biofuels, food production, logging, cattle raising
Climate mitigation	Reforestation, carbon sequestration



## Overlooked and unprotected

Over the past three decades there has been growing acknowledgement that people displaced by development projects suffer adverse consequences and require protection. In 1980 the World Bank adopted its first formal policy on projects that involve involuntary resettlement, and today every major multilateral development bank has established minimum guidelines to oversee displacement associated with their projects. Complaint mechanisms have also been instituted.

More than 80 private banks and financial institutions have adopted the Equator principles, a framework to manage social and environmental risks associated with development projects. Responsible business conduct is framed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)'s guidelines for multinational enterprises, the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s tripartite declaration of principles concerning multinational enterprises and social policy, and the UN Global Compact, a worldwide initiative that aims to help companies operate responsibly and support society.

The Great Lakes Pact and the Kampala Convention also provide for the protection of people displaced by public and private development projects.<sup>207</sup> Domestic laws and policies on internal displacement such as those in Peru, Kenya and Nepal have been adopted with provisions devoted to development projects, as have land acquisition laws in China, India and Mozambique that improve protection for the dispossessed.<sup>208</sup> Such legal frameworks, however, are often overridden by superseding legislation or executive powers, undermining the protections they offer, or they are simply ignored.

At the UN, the 1998 Guiding Principles, the 2007 Basic Principles on Development-Based Evictions and the 2011 Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights all aim to protect people displaced by development projects. The UN Development Programme has also advised the Indian government on resettlement practices.<sup>209</sup>

Despite these laws, policies and guidelines, the displaced have few options when it comes to holding developers to account for the negative impacts they experience. Some have taken their cases to court with the help of human rights advocates. One was brought in Kenya with data collected using the Habitat International Coali-

tion's housing and land rights network's eviction impact assessment tool.<sup>210</sup> Information on the number and outcomes of such cases, however, has not been collated. Remedies and assistance received is often due to the efforts of local civil society and the displaced themselves.

Those who resist displacement or call for better protection have been threatened, intimidated, verbally and physically assaulted, sexually harassed, arrested and even killed.<sup>211</sup> Neither the World Bank nor the International Finance Corporation have responded meaningfully to such abuses associated with projects they have financed.<sup>212</sup> Some 758 complaints have been filed against 11 development banks since 1994, and displacement was an issue in 35 per cent of them.<sup>213</sup> However, as finance institutions are largely immune from prosecution in national courts,<sup>214</sup> complaints procedures may still improve claimants' situations since they are otherwise rarely recognised or provided adequate remedy for the harm done.

International humanitarian organisations have considerable experience in responding to internal displacement, but they are not on the front lines assisting people forced to flee their homes by development projects. This may be due to lack of awareness, limited resources, restricted access and a wish to avoid jeopardising their relations with the authorities.<sup>215</sup> International development agencies and private companies are reluctant to monitor and assist IDPs after their projects are completed.

## Startling estimates despite incomplete data

Several types of data source exist on people displaced by development projects. The developer's and financier's documents contain resettlement figures, and in rare cases official gazette notifications and local land records may reveal the amount of private land acquired for a project. Rough estimates can be achieved by multiplying the area of acquired land with its average population density. Local media articles and people with community knowledge may also provide figures based on their own surveys, monitoring and memory. Satellite imagery, when available, can corroborate other data.

A global figure calculated by collating these sources would still, however, be an under-



estimate. Project documents of governments, corporations and multilateral finance institutions are not always readily made available, or do not report figures routinely or with consistent terminology. Those that are reported may be underestimates to increase the chances of the project being approved and funded. The actual number of people displaced is rarely reported once a project is completed.<sup>216</sup>

Those who use land with informal tenure or under customary law may be excluded, because resettlement figures in some cases only take in those with individual land titles, and gazette notifications and local land records do not reveal the land acquired from those without such deeds. People living beyond the development site but displaced by the indirect effects of a project, and those living in displacement years after its completion are also unlikely to be fully captured.<sup>217</sup>

A review of public World Bank documents for 969 projects citing possible resettlement between 2004 and 2013 is revealing. Only 43 per cent forecast a number of people to be affected.<sup>218</sup> Terms such as “physically displaced”, “economically displaced”, “resettled” and “affected people” are used interchangeably and may not indicate actual displacement. Some comple-

tion reports include the number of people the project displaced, but such figures are inconsistently quoted as households, families, people or cases, which does not allow credible estimates to be compiled.

The World Bank itself reported in 2012 that most completion reports did not provide substantive information about resettlement outcomes.<sup>219</sup> Such information for projects implemented by other multi-lateral financial institutions, private companies and governments is also not available. In the absence of data on the number of people a project displaced, where they went and their new situations, it is not possible to evaluate how project implementors have upheld their human rights obligations or the outstanding protection and assistance needs of the displaced.<sup>220</sup>

The most frequently cited global estimate for people displaced by development projects is 15 million people a year since the mid-2000s.<sup>221</sup> This number, provided by Michael Cernea, the lead author of the World Bank’s study of displacement associated with projects it supports and a global expert on displacement and resettlement caused by development, was born out of a previous estimate of 10 million people displaced annually by dams, urban and transport development projects

Residents of the Baprolla resettlement site in Delhi with staff members from the Housing and Land Rights Network. They are among 500 families living on the site following their eviction from slums in the Indian capital in 2015. The site is on the edge of the city, far from schools, health care facilities and job opportunities. Its isolation and poor lighting make it a dangerous place for women and girls after dark. In theory the residents have a ten-year lease, but it is unclear what their tenure status will be beyond that. Photo: IDMC, March 2016

published in 1996.<sup>222</sup> The estimate was increased to 15 million to account for mining and other sectors and the general proliferation of development projects worldwide. It is still, however, considered conservative.

Accumulated figures for people displaced by development projects appear only to be available for China and India. In China, the total is 80 million between 1950 and 2015,<sup>223</sup> and in India 65 million between 1947 and 2010.<sup>224</sup> These are considered under-estimates because, among other things the figure for India does not cover all states, and the figure for China omits the impact of extractive industries. Reports of the number of people displaced differ widely, documents are not always public and those that are published are not always reliable.<sup>225</sup>

The two countries are also the only ones for which protracted displacement figures are available, and only then for certain types of projects. Two decades after their resettlement, at least 46 per cent of the 10 million people resettled to make way for reservoirs in China were still living in “extreme poverty”,<sup>226</sup> while in India 75 per cent of those displaced by dams were still impoverished.<sup>227</sup>

In the absence of data for all development sectors, dam and reservoir construction appears to displace most people worldwide.<sup>228</sup> A report published in 2000 estimated that such projects had forced between 40 and 80 million people to flee their homes since 1950. Anecdotal evidence suggests fewer people are displaced by mining than by dam construction and urban renewal.<sup>229</sup>

## Displacement undermines development gains

Rather than being priority beneficiaries on account of their losses, the displaced usually pay the price for development projects and end up worse off. Displacement deepens inequality, decimates communities and undermines development gains by making the very poverty that such projects purportedly seek to alleviate worse. Impoverishing and disempowering people in the name of development also allows human rights abuses to continue unchallenged and demonstrates the failure of states to ensure the rights of IDPs.

In addition to the fact that those displaced get left behind, there is an inflated sense of progress, because indicators that track development such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the upcoming New Urban Agenda capture gains but not setbacks.

The high cost of poorly handled displacement and resettlement extends well beyond those directly affected. In Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nigeria, the Philippines and Sudan, resistance, tensions and conflict have erupted as a result of mismanagement, corruption and the unequal distribution of benefits.<sup>230</sup> There is also the risk of communal violence in resettlement areas between local communities and those newly displaced, and of human rights abuses as people attempt to claim their rights. This may lead to further displacement.

Large, carbon-intensive energy sector projects such as oil extraction, coal mining and biofuel plantations also generate greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming, increasing the risk of disasters and future displacement.

The planning that goes into development projects provides an opportunity to mitigate dispossession and displacement and prepare for durable solutions from the outset. Though few in number, examples of good practice do exist. Those displaced in Indonesia developed aquaculture and fisheries in new reservoirs, in Senegal they gained access to irrigated land and in Norway they received a percentage of revenue from electricity sales.

Projects should be undertaken with political commitment, adequate skills, sufficient financial and institutional resources, a participatory approach and respect for human rights. They should have in-built resettlement and rehabilitation programmes in line with international standards, as well as mechanisms for monitoring progress towards durable solutions. This would help to ensure that the displacement they cause results in beneficial and sustainable development for all.<sup>231</sup>



# BRAZIL

## Olympic Games preparations displace thousands in Rio de Janeiro

Sports mega-events such as the Olympic Games commonly displace people, both to make way for venues, accommodation, tourism-related infrastructure and transport, and also to improve the international image of the host city by eliminating unsightly slums from areas exposed to visitors and television audiences.<sup>232 233</sup>

In Rio de Janeiro, around 6,600 families were evicted or under threat of eviction in 2015 to make way for the 2016 Olympic Games.<sup>234</sup> The vast majority of those affected were living in *favelas* or informal settlements, and were relocated from their homes in central areas of the city to distant suburbs. Given that 60 per cent of the Rio 2016 Olympic Park area will be condominium developments sold on the open market after the Games,<sup>235</sup> return is not an option for those displaced.

The evictions process began in 2009 when the city won the bid for the Games and was intertwined with preparations for the 2014 World Cup. Residents under threat have been unable to access official information about the urbanisation projects or the process of their removal. Options offered by the city have not been publicised and residents were neither consulted on nor participated in discussions on possible alternatives to evictions. Together with two Rio universities, some residents of Vila Autódromo, one of the largest *favelas* to be demolished, presented an alternative to their eviction to the city authorities, but their proposal was rejected.<sup>236</sup>

Nor have many families received adequate notice of their eviction. There was a surge in “flash evictions” across various *favelas* in 2015, in which municipal guards arrived to demolish homes or businesses with no warning to residents and their belongings still inside.<sup>237</sup> Residents who remained feared leaving their homes and also saw the value of their property and due compensation decrease as the demolitions progressed. Some were also left without access to water and electricity.<sup>238</sup>

The amounts paid in compensation have varied between communities, and between households within the same communities, as a result of weak

and individualised procedures.<sup>239</sup> Some Vila Autódromo residents have received supposed market rate compensation<sup>240</sup> as a result of well-organised resistance,<sup>241</sup> while others within and outside the *favela* struggled to secure their promised payment.<sup>242</sup> In almost all cases, the compensation does not cover the cost of an adequate home and the accompanying new expenses, leaving those affected in debt.

Many people under threat of eviction have fought to ensure their rights are respected. Resistance has led to confrontations with officials, humiliation and mistreatment, physical injuries during municipal guard assaults and death threats.<sup>243</sup> People who resisted eviction longest came under most pressure, and some settlements had a constant municipal guard presence that residents deemed oppressive.<sup>244</sup> The pressure to get Rio ready for the Olympics did not allow time for institutions and procedures to be reformed. On the contrary, it has enabled abuses to occur.

As a result, communities have been forced to relocate to low-income housing projects on the poorer outskirts of the city, where there is little or no urban infrastructure.<sup>245</sup> The commute to the city centre from some relocation areas is more than two hours by public transport, demonstrating that rather than benefit from urban improvements, those displaced suffer their impacts. Despite legislation known as the *Lei Orgânica*, which prohibits moving urban dwellers more than seven kilometres from their original homes, many housing complexes are around 50 kilometres away.<sup>246</sup>

Surveys of the displaced in two relocation areas and anecdotal evidence shows a deterioration in their access to livelihoods. Distance is an obstacle to maintaining their current jobs, and there are no means of subsistence, few employment opportunities and little access to markets in the new areas.

Given that communities were not resettled as a whole, social networks were also broken up. Some women resettled alone, sometimes with children, because their partners did not want to





A girl watches as the Vila Autódromo neighborhood association building is demolished soon after dawn. Photo: Megan Healy / CatComm / RioOnWatch, February 2015

do so. With little or no support, their opportunities to work and socialise outside the home are limited, leading to isolation and mental health issues.<sup>247</sup> Schools and health centres have also been difficult to access in some cases, either because they are remote or because provision is tied to place of residence.<sup>248</sup>

Access to the resettled communities is difficult because some have been overtaken by organised criminal groups, which tax residents and put families at risk of violence.<sup>249</sup> Some have been forced out of their new homes as a result of intimidation and threats.<sup>250</sup> Removed from communal ties, and given that many moved from areas where such groups were less active, the displaced lack the networks and strategies to protect themselves.

The urban poor have suffered the most direct impacts of the evictions.<sup>251</sup> The majority took place in areas with great potential for increases in land value, and as such the process has made economic and social inequalities worse by reinforcing discrimination. Already living in a precarious situation, the displaced have been pushed further into deprivation. With no monitoring of, or response to their needs resulting from their displacement, further impoverishment and marginalisation is likely to result.

Evictions in Rio go beyond the Olympic Games. The city has a long history of removing low-income communities from desirable areas.<sup>252</sup> The city government has used its hosting of a series of high profile events over the past decade to justify the relocation of the urban poor from prime locations for middle and upper class housing.<sup>253</sup> The Olympics and others have contributed to property speculation and gentrification, a pattern seen in many cities that host mega-events.<sup>254</sup>

Recurring patterns of human rights abuses linked to such events can be prevented. They should be planned and staged with a more comprehensive and consistent approach to managing social risks and adverse human rights impacts.<sup>255</sup> Bidding documentation should set better terms for development strategies to avoid evictions, and where that is not possible, to minimise them and ensure they are carried out in line with international standards and respect for human dignity.

# CONCLUSION

This report's findings illustrate once again that the global phenomenon of internal displacement shows few if any signs of abating. The responses of national governments and the international community to date have all but failed to limit its scope, let alone reverse the upward trend.

Annual figures for new displacement associated with conflict and violence have been on an upward trend since 2003, and as of the end of 2015 there were more such IDPs than at any other point since IDMC began monitoring in 1998. If that were not enough, disasters displaced more than twice as many people as conflict during the year.

For many people, 2015 will not have been the first time they were forced to flee their homes. Others will have been displaced several times during the year. Evidence shows that displacement often persists for years, and sometimes decades. The longer it lasts, the more likely IDPs are to fall off the radar of data collectors, responders and the media.

These latest estimates paint only part of the global picture of displacement. They do not include all of the people displaced by violence perpetrated by gangs and criminal groups, nor do they capture those forced to flee their homes by projects undertaken in the name of development, or by disasters associated with slow processes of environmental change such as drought, sea level rise and desertification.

Progress has been made in conceptualising and defining some of these phenomena, which is a vital first step towards global data collection. Once we begin to monitor them more systematically, the numbers will rise and the picture will likely become more complex. It is also true to say that the figures that are published are almost inevitably under-estimates.

Findings in 2015 corroborate IDMC's previous analyses, which point to a correlation between displacement, political instability and income inequality. The drivers and triggers of displace-

ment, the factors that lead to it becoming protracted and obstacles to solutions are often political in nature.

As highlighted above in the spotlight on Nepal, there is an increased risk that displacement associated with the April and May 2015 earthquakes will become prolonged because political instability and weak governance mean that IDPs have not been properly protected and assisted.

In countries such as DRC, endemic violence, insecurity and poverty caused repeated displacements in 2015. People become more vulnerable each time they are displaced, setting the scene for further displacement in the future as the resilience of individuals, households and communities is eroded.

Our analysis of the main drivers of displacement associated with disasters shows that economic and political factors play a key role here too. People's exposure and vulnerability is driven by urban, demographic and economic growth, and developing countries bear the brunt of the phenomenon.

Inequality in these countries makes displacement a greater concern for the less well-off and those subject to socio-economic discrimination and marginalisation. Displacement can be a symptom of pre-existing patterns of social exclusion, affecting the poor just as much in low income countries as in their middle and high income counterparts.

Development projects undertaken by governments and private companies can be drivers of displacement that impoverish and marginalise people. As illustrated by the case of people forcibly evicted from their homes to make way for facilities for the Rio Olympics, the protection, restoration and improvement of the lives and livelihoods of those obliged to resettle tend to be inadequate. Through displacing communities, projects can undermine development goals.

Raising awareness of the nature and dynamics of internal displacement in all its forms is key to helping policy-makers and practitioners collect the right kind of data, and target limited resources to where they are most needed. It is particularly important to provide insights into displacement as a multi-dimensional and cross-cutting issue of direct relevance to other global challenges, from humanitarian action and peace-building to disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and sustainable development.

The World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul provides an important opportunity to transform policy and operational approaches to displacement and to recognise the phenomenon as the complex political and development challenge that it is. The pledge to leave no one behind in implementing the 2030 agenda for sustainable development places new obligations on states to ensure that people affected and displaced by conflict and disasters can benefit from, and contribute to sustainable long-term development.

Displacement is more visible than ever as an issue that requires more action, from the commitments under the 2015–2030 Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction to the decisions by parties to the UN framework convention on climate change and national adaptation plans. The risk of displacement created by the exposure and vulnerability of increasing numbers of people in rapidly growing and poorly planned urban areas cuts across these agendas, and is one of the central themes of a new framework that is expected to emerge from the UN conference on housing and sustainable urban development in October 2016.

These policy frameworks provide important entry points for addressing displacement in a more comprehensive and joined-up way. In order to be successful, however, they need to be informed by robust evidence and their implementation measured against accurate and realistic targets and benchmarks. For this to happen, a solid global baseline and frequently updated quantitative and qualitative data are needed to inform the processes every step of the way.

This includes building a better knowledge base on IDPs' movements, the conditions in which they live and the vulnerabilities they may have as a result of their displacement. We know that a large proportion of IDPs live outside of camps, and that they increasingly seek safety in towns and cities, but our knowledge of the needs of

IDPs in urban settings as compared with the rest of the urban poor is limited at best.

The same holds true for our understanding of the impacts of displacement on other vulnerable groups across the world, because much of the data currently available is not disaggregated by location, age, sex, ethnicity or religion.

There is also still only limited understanding of the causal relationships and feedback loops between displacement and its drivers, including political instability, income inequality, urban growth and climate change. Quantifying the economic cost of displacement across different countries and contexts would make a compelling case to governments and policy-makers for incorporating responses into their longer-term development plans.

Identifying the exact tipping points which compel IDPs to cross international borders in search of safety and refuge would also provide vital insights into what needs to be done to protect and assist people at their points of departure, transit and arrival.

As the global monitor of internal displacement, we intend to expand our provision of knowledge relevant to policy-making and operational planning in an effort to advance current and future global commitments to reduce the risk of displacement, and find lasting solutions for the millions of IDPs worldwide. Our ability to do so will depend on the breadth and strength of our partnerships, and on states' continued commitment to support these efforts.

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# METHODOLOGICAL ANNEX

## Introduction

The figures included in this report are the result of IDMC's most ambitious effort yet to present our figures as transparently as possible. We have also attempted to apply more methodological consistency to our data collection and analysis and to document this process for our readers. These improvements have helped bring our reporting on displacement associated with disasters and that associated with conflict and violence together in one report. They have also enabled us to make more rigorous comparisons between different displacement situations and get more out of our source data.

The evidence presented here represents a baseline, and indicates many areas in which we will need to improve our data gathering and analysis in order to paint a comprehensive picture of internal displacement. This section highlights some of the main challenges we face and illustrates the most significant caveats to which we call readers' attention.

Our data on displacement associated with disasters for 2015 covers 601 sudden-onset natural hazards in 113 countries. We are still in the process of developing and extending our approach to monitoring displacement associated with drought and other slow-onset phenomena, which means we do not yet have global figures for such disasters (see part 3).

Our data on displacement associated with conflict and violence covers 52 countries and one disputed territory. We have data on several other countries, but we chose not to include it in our global figures for methodological consistency.

One of the innovations in our methodology relates to our assessment of confidence in the primary data and what it means for the estimates concerned. The confidence assessments signal our commitment to transparency while providing a roadmap for future work to strengthen data collection, something we are committed to helping our partners achieve over the coming years.

This annex describes how we produce our displacement figures by explaining the source data, calculations, definitions and decision rules we use in our analysis. Our aim is to provide maximum transparency so that readers understand the process, can replicate our work independently and make use of our data in innovative ways. We will make our data publicly available on our website for others to use freely.

We are also using innovative ways for policy-makers, researchers, partners, the media and the public to interact with our data via an open portal, making it easier to produce customised reports and analysis.

Given the complexity of displacement, we are forced to rely on a variety of internal and external sources in compiling our estimates. We have reassessed some of the criteria we use to maximise the reliability and accuracy of source data, and this report presents our figures in a way that clearly indicates how recently it was updated.

We currently use two similar but distinct methodologies to produce displacement estimates related to conflict and violence, and disasters. This annex describes both approaches.

To monitor and report on displacement associated with conflict and violence, we collect data on the countries affected and present nationally aggregated figures for:

- | New incidents of displacement from 1 January to 31 December 2015
- | IDPs who returned, integrated locally or settled elsewhere between the same dates, and when available, for those who crossed an international border and those who were born or died in displacement
- | The total number of IDPs as of 31 December 2015

We use an event-based methodology to estimate the number of people displaced by disasters during the course of the year, and derive aggregated figures for new displacement for each of the countries affected.

We have monitored displacement associated with conflict and violence since 1998 and that associated with disasters since 2008. Over time, we have continuously sought to improve the ways we collect and analyse our data. Over the past eight years, we have successfully obtained data on ever larger numbers of new displacement events associated with disasters, accounting for more small to medium-sized events than in previous years (see table A.1). Reporting on these events helps paint a more comprehensive picture in terms of the number of people displaced globally. It also provides the empirical evidence base to understand them and how they differ from mega-events.

Table A.1 Categories of events by magnitude

Event size	Number of people displaced
Small to medium	Fewer than 100,000
Large	100,000 to 999,999
Very large	One to three million
Mega	More than three million

As a result of this year’s methodological improvements, including the standardised application of the rules and criteria used to analyse displacement associated with conflict, comparisons between countries are now more valid than before.

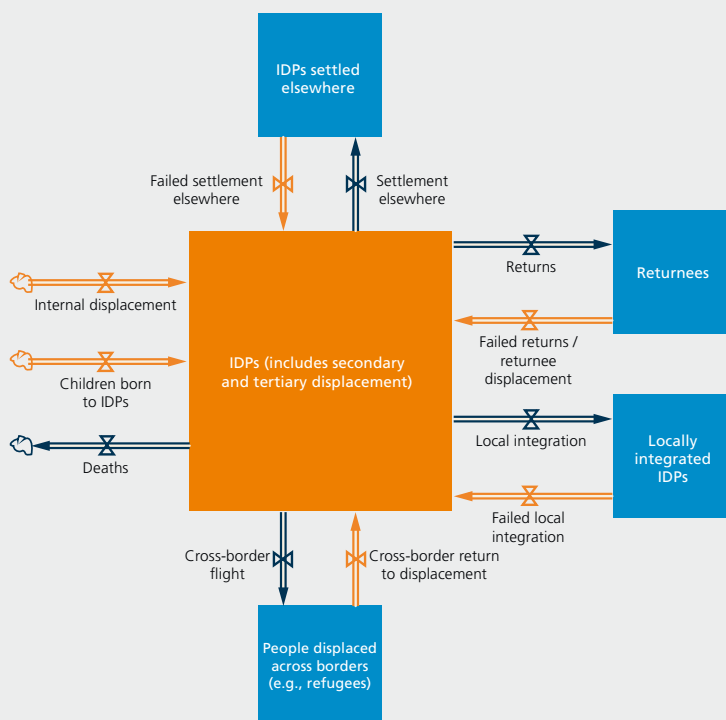
## Relating others’ data to IDMC’s data model

In order to obtain a comprehensive and accurate picture about the state of displacement at any given point in time, we have generated a unique data model (see figure A.1). One of the challenges we face in producing displacement figures is how to relate our partners’ primary and secondary data to it.

In order to account comprehensively for the number of people displaced in a given situation, we would have to populate each component of the model, updating the information as quickly as the situation evolved. We are currently working with partners such as IOM, OCHA and UNHCR to do just that, in an effort to better reflect the dynamics of displacement.

The purpose of our data model is to better capture all incidents of new displacement, or “flows”, during the year as information becomes available, the number of IDPs reported to have found durable solutions or to have crossed an international border, the number of children born in displacement and the number of IDPs who have died.

Figure A.1: IDMC’s displacement data model





The model is an ideal vehicle for compiling displacement estimates, but in reality we have found it difficult to populate systematically. We seldom receive comprehensive data from our partners for all of its components. This is often because the type of data specified is simply not collected or, when it is collected, it is not disaggregated. A primary data source may report the extent to which the number of IDPs has declined during the course of the year, but may not specify the reason for the decrease.

The remainder of this annex explains how we account for the main flows we report, and how they influence our estimates. It also explains how we have selected countries and events to include and why we have excluded some countries we have reported on in the past. It also outlines how we assess and express our confidence in the source data.

## Accounting for displacement associated with conflict and violence

We produce our figures for displacement associated with conflict and violence via country-level, or situational monitoring. That is, we learn of a displacement situation and begin collecting data on it over time.

We have historically published three main figures – the total number of people displaced as of the end of the year, the number of people newly displaced during the year and the number of people who returned during the year. Where possible, we have also reported on the number of IDPs who have settled elsewhere or integrated locally, those who have sought safety by continuing their flight across an international border and the number of births and deaths in displacement. We calculate our figures as follows:

### New displacement

We may calculate the new displacement inflow for a given year, represented by the orange “internal displacement” arrow in figure A.1, in a number of ways.

If our partners provide us with data on new displacement once a year, we simply report the annually aggregated figure. More often, however, they provide us with such data on a monthly or

quarterly basis, in which case we publish the sum of the estimates reported. For Afghanistan we received data from UNHCR and the government on newly profiled IDPs by the month of their displacement during 2015, which we aggregated to arrive at an annual estimate (see table A.2). The number of newly displaced people in December is an under-estimate because of the time lag between the displacement event and the IDPs’ being profiled.

Table A.2. Monthly data on new displacement in Afghanistan (Source: UNHCR and the Government of Afghanistan)

Month	New displacement reported
Jan 2015	30,697
Feb 2015	12,923
Mar 2015	8,335
Apr 2015	54,686
May 2015	11,504
Jun 2015	25,895
Jul 2015	57,014
Aug 2015	30,374
Sep 2015	30,564
Oct 2015	49,902
Nov 2015	19,693
Dec 2015	3,822
TOTAL	335,409

It should be noted that “new displacement” is something of a misnomer in that data may capture the same people being displaced more than once during the year. Given that we are unable to track individual IDPs, it is often not possible to determine the extent to which this is the case for the numbers reported.

The current lack of disaggregated data on IDPs who fail to achieve durable solutions, and on cross-border returns to displacement, also means that such inflows are taken as incidents of new displacement.

### Capturing the end of displacement

We calculate annual return flow estimates in a similar way to those for new displacement. For Afghanistan, the aggregated return flow for 2015 represents the sum of the reported monthly figures (see table A.3).

Table A.3. Monthly data on returns in Afghanistan (Source: UNHCR and the Government of Afghanistan)

Month	Reported returns
Jan 2015	None reported
Feb 2015	None reported
Mar 2015	None reported
Apr 2015	None reported
May 2015	None reported
Jun 2015	300
Jul 2015	30,329
Aug 2015	2,914
Sep 2015	None reported
Oct 2015	66,323
Nov 2015	19,386
Dec 2015	10,136
TOTAL	99,059

The same procedure applies to reporting data on local integration and settlement elsewhere, when it is available. It is important to note that accounting for returns, local integration and resettlement reduces the number of IDPs we report, but it does not necessarily mean that they have achieved durable solutions to their displacement. Data to assess the sustainability of these processes is not available at the global level, nor are there universally accepted indicators for measuring their progress.

### Cross-border flight of IDPs

When possible, we deduct the number of IDPs who flee across an international border. In order for us to be able to do this, those collecting information about refugees and asylum seekers need to register whether people had already been displaced prior to fleeing across the border. Failure to do so risks double-counting. The number of refugees and asylum seekers is currently subtracted from their country of origin's general population but not its displaced population.

The spotlight on Syria in part two of this report explains the widespread concern that this issue has led to inflated internal displacement figures that combine numbers on IDPs and refugees, particularly in highly dynamic and politically sensitive crises.

### Births and deaths in displacement

We only account for births and deaths in displacement when our partners provide data, and we managed to obtain it disaggregated by sex and age for 20 out of 53 countries in 2015. Given the shortage of disaggregated data and the fact that IDPs' fertility and mortality rates may not correspond with national figures, we do not try to extrapolate births and deaths in displacement from national demographic data.

Depending on the scale and duration of displacement, the lack of primary data on these flows can represent a potentially significant blind spot. In protracted crises such as Macedonia's, reported changes in the size of the displaced population may depend more on demographic trends than on returns, local integration and settlement elsewhere, given the lack of progress in these areas.

### Total number of IDPs

The inflows and outflows described above all influence the total number or "stock" of IDPs at a given moment in time – 31 December 2015 in the case of this report. We estimate the number of IDPs at the end of the year by triangulating data reported from one or more sources with a mathematically derived estimate based on the "flow" data available on new displacement, returns, local integration, settlement elsewhere, cross-border flight and births and deaths in displacement.

We arrive at the total number of IDPs as of 31 December 2015 by taking the total at the end of 2014 and adding or subtracting flow data as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total number of IDPs}_{\text{Dec 2015}} = & \\ & \text{Total number of IDPs}_{\text{Dec 2014}} \\ & + [\text{Births}_{2015} + \text{new displacement}_{2015}] \\ & - [\text{Returns}_{2015} + \text{settlement elsewhere}_{2015} + \\ & \text{local integration}_{2015} + \text{cross-border flight}_{2015} \\ & + \text{deaths}_{2015}] \end{aligned}$$

The equation is technically incomplete because it does not take into account the "counterflows" represented by failed returns, local integration and settlement elsewhere, or cross-border returns into displacement. Given, however, that data is not collected and these phenomena are accounted for as new rather than repeated displacement, the equation serves its purpose.

In reality, the lack of coverage of the components of our data model and the way outflow data is aggregated mean the actual equation for most countries is often simply:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total number of IDPs}_{\text{Dec 2015}} = & \\ & \text{Total number of IDPs}_{\text{Dec 2014}} \\ & + \text{New displacement}_{2015} \\ & - \text{Returns}_{2015} \end{aligned}$$

The mathematical formula for estimating the stock of IDPs is at best a modelled approximation. We compare this with the data we obtain from our sources, and when we do they do not always correspond. There are number of reasons for this:

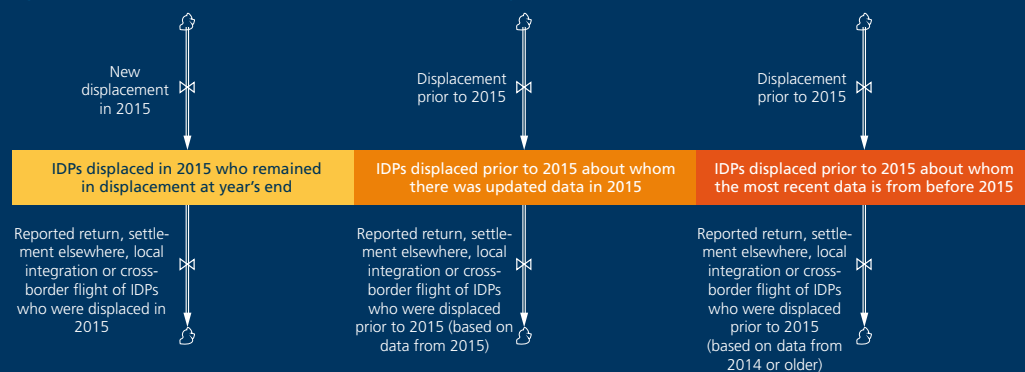
- | The initial value – the estimate for the end of the previous year – is incorrect and needs to be revised. In Afghanistan, delays in the profiling of IDPs meant that people displaced in 2014 were captured well into 2015, which meant we had to retroactively revise our December 2014 estimates.
- | New displacement includes repeated displacement. This is the case every year in DRC and in many other contexts.
- | Double-counting. In Myanmar, a small number of IDPs may have been counted more than once by two or more sources.
- | Partners change their data-collection methodology, as in DRC, or the scope of their geographical coverage, as in Nigeria.
- | We change our primary source because of the lack of available data or doubts about their credibility.
- | There is a lack of data on a flow that significantly affects the number of IDPs in a country. Data on the number of refugees and asylum seekers from Syria does not indicate whether they had previously been displaced internally.

## REFLECTING THE DATE OF SOURCES

When situations remain unchanged from one year to the next, or when flow data is not available, we base our end-of-year estimates on the data provided by our partners. In many countries, however, it has not been updated for several years. In countries with complex or multiple displacement crises, such as Chad, Iraq and Myanmar, data for one crisis may be regularly reported, while for others it may be outdated or missing. If there is no credible evidence that IDPs in such situations have returned, integrated locally or settled elsewhere, we have in the past included them in our global figures.

In the interests of transparency, this year's report stratifies the stock of IDPs based on when the primary data was collected (see figure A.2). The length of the bar as a whole represents the total number of IDPs for whom we were able to obtain data. The right-hand section represents data which is increasingly out of date.

Figure A.2. Different strata for stocks of IDPs, ordered by the date of the source data



## Accounting for displacement associated with disasters

Our estimates for displacement associated with disasters are generated by event rather than by country. We monitor and collect displacement information from our partners and international media outlets for all reported disasters. We apply no threshold when doing so, either in terms of the number of people involved or the distance they have travelled. Our database includes records of one up to 15 million IDPs.

We generate a single estimate for each event for the total number of people displaced. It is important to note that our figures do not necessarily capture the peak number of IDPs, but instead aim to provide the most comprehensive figure for those displaced with minimal double-counting.

In order to generate our estimates, we collect data from a number of reports on the same disaster, each specifying whether its figures refer to individuals or households, the reporting terms and sources used, the publisher, the title of the source document and the date of publication.

This dataset allows us to better interpret the context of the figure in each report. In determining our estimates, it is vital that the data selected represents the most comprehensive figure from the most reliable source available for that event.

When possible we triangulate the figures using competing reports. In most cases, however, our estimates are derived from a single report. In others, they are the aggregation of a number of reports that together cover the wide geographical area affected by a disaster.

### Reporting bias

We are aware that our methodology and data may be subject to different types of reporting bias, some of which are detailed below:

- | Unequal dissemination of data: Global reporting tends to emphasise large events in a small number of countries where international agencies, funding partners and media have a substantial presence, or where there is a strong national commitment and capacity to manage disaster risk and collect information.

- | Under-reporting of small-scale events: Small-scale displacements are far more common, but less reported on. Disasters that occur in isolated, insecure or marginalised areas also tend to be under-reported because access and communications are limited.

- | “Invisible” IDPs: There tends to be significantly more information available on IDPs who have taken refuge at official or collective sites than on those living with host communities and in other dispersed settings. Given that the vast majority usually fall into the second category, figures based on data from collective sites are likely to be substantial underestimates.

- | Real-time reporting is less reliable, but later assessments may underestimate: Reporting tends to be more frequent but less reliable in the most acute and highly dynamic phases of a disaster, when peak levels of displacement are likely to be reached. It becomes more accurate once there has been time to make more considered assessments.

- | Estimates based on later evaluations of severely damaged or destroyed housing will be more reliable, but they are also likely to understate the peak level of displacement, given that they will not include people whose homes did not suffer severe damage but who fled for other reasons.

Our estimates for many disasters are calculated by extrapolating from the number of severely damaged or destroyed homes or the number of families in evacuation centres. In both cases we multiply the housing and family data by the average number of people per household.



## ESTIMATING AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Primary sources often report the number of homes rendered uninhabitable or the number of families displaced, which we convert into a figure for IDPs by multiplying the numbers by the average household size (AHHS). There is, however, no universal dataset with updated and standardised AHHS data for all countries.

In its absence, some global disaster datasets have opted to apply an average across all countries or groups of countries. The Emergency Events Database (EM-DAT) uses an average family size of five for developing countries and three for industrialised countries.<sup>1</sup>

Our 2014 and 2015 Global Estimates reports relied mainly on two international datasets containing household size information, the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)'s population data for 2013, with source data from 2000 to 2011; and its population data for 1995, with source data from 1989 to 1993. We also used data retrieved directly from the websites of a few national statistics offices, but for the 121 countries where this was not possible we had to estimate the AHHS by adding a constant to the fertility rate.

Given the potentially significant effect of AHHS on our estimates, we have improved our methodology for the 2016 GRID in several ways. We searched for more datasets on household size, and found a number compiled by international organisations based on census data: seven UNSD population datasets published between 2009 and 2015; Eurostat data published in 2016; the OECD Family Database published in 2015; and the World Bank's 2012 world development indicators.

We also used two other datasets that rely mostly on national census data, Euromonitor's World Economic Factbook 2014 and an academic dataset based mostly on official data compiled by Official Statistics of Finland.<sup>2</sup> To these we added data from USAID's Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), which are available for 75 developing countries and, while not being full national censuses, are based on nationally representative samples – usually between 5,000 and 30,000 households. They are also designed to be comparable internationally.<sup>3</sup>

Merging these 13 datasets into a relational database allowed us to identify gaps and discrepancies, which we addressed by searching the websites of national statistics offices to glean official figures not yet disseminated, and by receiving data from partner organisations such as IOM and JIPS operating in the field. Where several sources were available, we analysed the differences between them, which turned out to be minor for most countries. We investigated larger discrepancies in a few developing countries with large AHHSs further. Table A.4 illustrates how we prioritised the various datasets.

This approach allowed us to increase the scope of our AHHS dataset from 215 to 251 countries and territories, without having to rely on estimates based on fertility rates.

To compensate for the differences in data collection dates, which were more than ten years ago for a few countries, we built a statistical model of the change in household size over time. We calibrated it using two datasets with multiple data points and good international and intertemporal comparability: the DHS dataset, keeping values that were measured at least 10 years apart, and another OECD dataset.<sup>4</sup>

The time elapsed between two measurements was found to have a significant influence on AHHS, which generally decreases over time. Demographic and economic indicators such as changes in the fertility rate, population or GDP per capita growth and regional indicators were found to be less significant.

Table A.4. Prioritisation of the various AHHS data sources (the most recent data was selected for each row)

Data source	Priority
National statistical office websites and recent field data from partner organisations	One
Census data from intergovernmental organisations and DHS data less than five years old	Two
World Economic Factbook 2014	Three
Census or survey data more than six years old and academic datasets such as that of Official Statistics of Finland	Four

Depending on the size of the displacement event, even a small change in the household size figure can make a huge difference to the final estimate. In 2015 we calculated estimates for Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) based on the number of families registered as displaced. We then received new information that led us to use an average household size of 6.2 rather than 5.2 people, which in turn produced an estimate for the number of IDPs nearly 200,000 higher than that we would have published last year based on the same source data (see table A.5).

Table A.5: The impact of household size on displacement estimates for KP province and FATA in Pakistan

Number of families registered as displaced	Former average household size (people per family)	Former IDMC estimate (rounded to nearest 1,000)	New average household size (people per family)	Updated IDMC estimate (rounded to nearest 1,000)	Variance between the two estimates
191,018	5.2	993,000	6.2	1,184,000	191,000

We also use average household size data widely in compiling our estimates for displacement associated with disasters. The most striking example of its impact on our estimates in 2015 involved the earthquakes in Nepal. Had we used the old 2014 average household size of 5.4, we would have arrived at an estimate of 3,294,000 IDPs. Based on new, more accurate data, our actual estimate is 2,623,000, a difference of 671,000.

We also revised some of the estimates we published for disasters in 2014 based on updated average household size information, in order to ensure that our trend analyses are as accurate as possible (see table A.6).

Table A.6: Revised estimates for displacement associated with disasters in 2014, based on new average household size data

Event	Former average household size (people per family)	Former IDMC estimate (rounded to nearest 1,000)	New average household size (people per family)	Updated IDMC estimate (rounded to nearest 1,000)	Variance between the two estimates
Ethiopia - Awash river flood	7.831	63,000	4.5	36,000	- 27,000
Niger - rainy season displacement	7.7512	63,000	5.8	47,000	- 16,000
South Sudan - severe floods in War-rup state	7.62	46,000	5.0	30,000	- 16,000

## IDMC's data collection, analytical process, definitions and decision rules

### Country identification

IDMC collects and presents data on IDPs for each country it monitors based on internationally recognised borders or, in the case of foreign occupation such as Palestine, on demarcation lines. The 2016 GRID dataset for displacement associated with conflict also includes the Abyei area, which is disputed between Sudan and South Sudan and whose final borders are to be determined in a referendum. We report on displacement in new states created by secession, such as Kosovo and Timor Leste, when they have broad international recognition.

People displaced within areas of an internationally recognised state under foreign occupation are considered IDPs, irrespective of their location with respect to the de facto borders or the territorial claims of the occupying power, providing the original international borders still have broad international recognition. Examples are eastern Ukraine, Crimea, South Ossetia and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

For the purpose of this report, countries are defined as independent nation states, including their overseas territories. Our dataset for displacement associated with disasters includes some countries, such as Taiwan, that do not have broad international recognition. The inclusion of such countries and other contested territories does not imply any political endorsement or otherwise on IDMC's part.

To make analysis of the dataset easier and more effective, we use UN country terminology and the three-digit ISO country code. For areas such as Abyei, which have no standard ISO code, we created one.

### Definition of an IDP

We use the definition of an IDP contained in the 1998 Guiding Principles. The criteria related to the "forced" nature of displacement "within internationally recognized borders" is clearly fundamental in determining whether the person is an IDP, but the Guiding Principles do not set other criteria by which to identify a person fleeing their "home or place of habitual residence".

As such, we interpret IDPs to include not only citizens of the country in which displacement takes place, but also non-nationals such as migrants and asylum seekers in Libya, and Palestinian refugees in Syria and Lebanon; refugees who have returned to their home country but have been unable to go back to their habitual place of residence, such as Afghan refugees returning from Pakistan; and stateless people such as the Rohingya who have been displaced by conflict or violence.

Forced displacement should not only be associated with the notion of a fixed place of residence, but also flight from traditional "living spaces" that support people's livelihoods, such as pastoralists' grazing areas. Given that the concept of habitual residence is intimately linked to the issue of livelihoods, people who have lost them as a result of their displacement – such as pastoralists in Somalia and elsewhere in eastern Africa – are considered IDPs. We consider a person to be displaced regardless of how far or for how long they flee.

In accordance with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Framework on Durable Solutions, displacement is deemed to end when IDPs have returned home, integrated locally in their place of refuge or settled elsewhere in the country in a sustainable way, and no longer have vulnerabilities linked to their displacement. We acknowledge this concept, but for the purpose of our monitoring and reporting, we do not count returnees as IDPs, and subtract the figure from our total estimates, whether they are known to have achieved a durable solution or not. This is because it is not possible in the vast majority of cases for us to properly gauge the extent to which IDPs have achieved a lasting end to their displacement or not.

On the other hand, we consider children born in displacement to be IDPs, and they are included in our estimates. This is particularly pertinent in countries such as Azerbaijan, where displacement has lasted for decades. As such, the number of IDPs in these countries may increase over the years as a result of demographic trends, despite the fact that the original trigger has long ceased to cause any new displacement.

For countries that have been divided into two internationally recognised states, such as Sudan and South Sudan, we do not consider people whose former place of habitual residence is in one of the new entities and refuge in the other as IDPs (see box below). For instance, we do

not consider a person who fled from what was formally southern Sudan to northern Sudan an IDP following the creation of South Sudan, but people displaced within either Sudan or South Sudan are considered IDPs.

## Data sources

Our ability to report on displacement and provide reliable estimates is contingent on the availability of sources, and their willingness to gather and share data. We draw on information produced or compiled from a wide range of source types. Governments might be expected to have the primary responsibility for counting IDPs, but many others are involved in data gathering, including international organisations, community-based organisations, specialised websites, thematic databases, local authorities, national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies and private sector institutions. Such sources play a significant role, particularly when governments lack the capacity or will to collect the data or when their estimates are unreliable.

Different sources gather different data for different purposes, with different methodologies and for different objectives. These include operational planning, which is influenced by considerations of timely funding. Divergent objectives often affect the way in which data gatherers estimate target populations or beneficiaries.

We are aware that various data sources may also have an interest in manipulating or tweaking the number of IDPs. They may choose to do so in order to call international attention to a crisis, maximise the amount of external assistance received, downplay the scale of a conflict or disaster if the government is held accountable, or because of political sensitivities such as to deflect international attention.

In order to mitigate this potential bias, whenever possible we triangulate the data by using several sources and prioritising those we have historically deemed to have been most objective.

Language bias also affects our ability to source displacement data comprehensively. We can only obtain and analyse information in the languages in which we speak and read. Our staff and network of partners speak most languages, but we inevitably fail to capture some information, particularly for parts of Asia.

## Disaggregated data

We systematically seek to obtain not only disaggregated quantitative data from our sources on a possible increases and decreases in figures, but also other kinds of information, such as data disaggregated by sex and age (SADD). Such information is vital in guiding an appropriate and effective response to IDPs' protection and assistance needs.

Little SADD is available for displacement associated with either conflict or disasters. The main reason is that specific information on IDPs' sex, age and disabilities is more easily captured in organised settings such as relief camps, while in many cases a significant majority of IDPs live in dispersed settings among host families and communities.

We also aim to gather and report disaggregated information by geographical area and time period in order to paint the most comprehensive and dynamic picture of displacement and provide a sound basis for more complex research and analysis.

Even when disaggregated data is available, however, it tends not to represent a statistically significant portion of the overall data collected. More is vital if we are to accurately inform the identification of, and response to the specific needs of different groups of IDPs.

## Normalising displacement data by country population size

To illustrate the magnitude of internal displacement at the country level, we normalise the data to account for population size using the UN Population Division's population estimates for each country. In doing so, a clear distinction has to be made between the notion of population and inhabitants. When displacement is acute, including refugees fleeing across international borders, the population in a country at a given time may be significantly lower than the official figure. Syria is the most graphic case in point, but the issue also affects other countries such as Libya and Somalia, for which there are no up-to-date and reliable national population figures. As such, the ratios of IDPs to population and inhabitants will differ, but both provide useful information for research and analysis.



Table A.7. Comparison of main monitoring attributes for displacement associated with conflict and disasters

Displacement monitoring attribute	Conflict and violence	Disasters
Event-based	No	Yes
Geography or situation-based	Yes	No
Global coverage	Yes	Yes
Quantitative threshold	No	No
Enables reporting of number, or stock of IDPs	Yes	No, lack of data
Covers incidents of new displacement	Yes	Yes
Includes other inflows and outflows that determine the number of IDPs	Yes, subject to availability of data	No, lack of data
Includes SADD	Yes, subject to availability of data	Yes, subject to availability of data
Figures disaggregated based on age of source data	Yes	No, not applicable
Application of average household size data	Yes	Yes

## Methodological challenges particular to displacement associated with conflict

We gather data from primary and secondary sources on the number of people displaced by international and non-international armed conflict and other situations of violence. We aim to include all people forcibly displaced in such contexts.

Our monitoring is based on the sourcing and analysis of other's primary and secondary data. Data sources tend to be numerous during humanitarian crises and visible emergencies, when they compile information to target assistance, as in Syria. During protracted and neglected crises, displacement data tends to be unavailable or out-of-date, as in Armenia, Cyprus, Georgia, Togo and Turkey.

Sources do not often use the same definition of an IDP as the Guiding Principles. Nor do they use the same methodologies, which creates a serious challenge when compiling our estimates. In several countries, including Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, DRC, Georgia, Pakistan and Ukraine, only IDPs who have been officially registered with the authorities are counted.

In some countries only one data source is available, while in others there may be several. For each country listed in the 2016 GRID dataset, we systematically looked for several sources. We always strive to identify new data sources, even for countries and situations where others already exist. This enables us to crosscheck, but it may also create confusion because sources rarely explain their methodologies.

When different sources are available, or when a new source provides information, we may still decide to base our estimate on only one source. That decision may vary from year to year depending on objective criteria, such as their geographical and temporal coverage, or their perceived reliability (see confidence assessment section below). Or we may aggregate different data from separate sources, which may help us extend the geographical coverage of our estimates. As such, our figures are more likely to take into account and reflect both qualitative and quantitative uncertainties.

In many countries affected by conflict and violence, no agencies or mechanisms collect data on the number and kind of people who have sought refuge in urban areas, those who are hosted by relatives or other families or those who have fled to remote areas. This leads to the number of IDPs being under-estimated.

On the other hand, some sources identify returnees as still being IDPs and include them in their figures, which in terms of our methodology constitutes an over-estimate and a particular computing challenge, given that we subtract returnees for reporting purposes. For example,

IDMC's previous estimate for Sri Lanka included IDPs who had returned, but who had not achieved a durable solution. This year, in keeping with the rule we apply to other countries, we subtracted these returnees, which reduced our estimate by nearly half.

## SELECTION OF COUNTRIES IN THE GRID DATASET ON DISPLACEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

The 2016 GRID dataset contains information on 52 countries and one disputed region, the Abyei area, where we have received or been able to obtain information on displacement. The inclusion of a country in the dataset is not contingent on a quantitative threshold for the number of IDPs. It depends only on the availability of credible data. The fact that a country is not included should not be taken as implying that no displacement has taken place, but rather that no information has been forthcoming, or that the displacement is not caused by conflict or violence.

Our 2016 GRID estimates include a number of changes from our 2015 Global Overview that result from the systematic and consistent application of decision rules to all situations of displacement. Unlike instances in which we have simply updated or revised a previous figure based on new evidence, they represent substantive departures from previous practice and concern whether to account for, and report on certain situations and caseloads at all.

Such decisions were based on issues related to a more consistent interpretation of information received from our sources, our analysis of the primary causes of displacement and geopolitical considerations that affect the definition of international borders that are essential to determine whether someone is an IDP, a refugee or stateless. These border issues cover foreign occupation, the creation of new states and unilateral secession.

As a result, in some cases we have made quantitative changes to previous estimates for the same stock of IDPs, while in others we chose not to include certain countries in the 2016 GRID.

### Interpretation of information received from sources

An in-depth reassessment of the sources available for all of the countries we included in our 2015 Global Overview and a close examination of the data led to the following countries being excluded from this year's report:

- | Eritrea
- | Laos
- | Liberia
- | Timor Leste

### Analysis of primary causes of displacement

A thorough review of our data and contextual analysis revealed that in some cases, the main causes of displacement were not linked to conflict but to other triggers such as forced eviction. We found that such triggers were the only cause of displacement in the following countries, so we removed them from our 2015 dataset for displacement associated with conflict and violence:

- | Turkmenistan
- | Uzbekistan
- | Zimbabwe

For other countries, where we found that the causes of displacement varied between different caseloads of IDPs, we subtracted those IDPs whom we ascertained had not been displaced by conflict. This led to a reduction in the total number of IDPs for the following countries:

- | Indonesia
- | Papua New Guinea
- | Liberia

## Geopolitical parameters

### a. Foreign occupation

We consider people displaced within areas of an internationally recognised state under foreign occupation as IDPs, irrespective of their location with respect to the de facto borders or the territorial claims of the occupying power, providing the original international borders still have broad international recognition.

As such, our 2015 estimate of the number of IDPs in Cyprus does not only include Greek Cypriots who moved to the southern part of the island at the time of Turkey's invasion in 1974, as was the case in the past. It also incorporates estimates for Turkish Cypriots who moved from southern to northern Cyprus at the time. This interpretation and accounting is consistent with the methodology we have used for other occupied areas, such as Crimea and other parts of eastern Ukraine.

### b. Creation of new states

For countries that have been divided into two internationally recognised states, such

as Sudan and South Sudan, we consider all people displaced within each of the new entities as IDPs, and we produce separate estimates for each one. People who fled within the previously undivided state and who crossed the border that delineates the new entities are no longer counted as IDPs.

As such, we no longer count people who fled from Timor Leste to West Timor when the former was established in 1999. Their number has been subtracted from our 2015 estimate for Indonesia.

### c. Unilateral secession

For regional entities such as Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which have unilaterally seceded outside an internationally supported process, we do not count IDPs within them separately from those in the state the entity has seceded from. In cases where a majority of UN member states have established diplomatic relations with a seceding entity, however, we do produce estimates for IDPs who have fled within it.

For the purpose of the GRID only, we no longer count people as IDPs if they have crossed what has become a de facto international border and find themselves in different entity from the one in which they were originally displaced. As such, our estimate for Kosovo refers only to people who have fled within the territory itself. Given the Serbian government reported all IDPs in the country as having come from Kosovo, Serbia is not included in the 2016 GRID.

These decisions not to continue counting people we previously considered IDPs in no way implies that they no longer have vulnerabilities related to their displacement.

## Geographical scope and coverage

Our methodology aims to capture the full geographical scope of displacement and strives to monitor and report on all situations across the entirety of each country we cover. In many, such as DRC, Syria and Yemen, however, data sources do not cover all of the regions where displacement took place. As a result, displacement figures only reflect geographical areas where humanitarian agencies have been operating, and the objectives of their response.

Humanitarian agencies often lack access to conflict zones because of insecurity, which can lead to significant information gaps. Our sources tend to monitor and report on displacement more easily in areas where IDPs are most visible, such as in camps. In most cases, however, agencies fail to record the geographical dynamics of IDPs' movements when registering them. In other cases, such as Myanmar and Syria, they collect data in regions that overlap, often using different methodologies.

Data gatherers are very likely to overlook IDPs living in more dispersed settings. These include people who move to urban areas where they blend in with local inhabitants; those who flee to remote areas, such as the bush in CAR or the forests of Côte d'Ivoire; and those who are hosted by other families or relatives, as in the Philippines. They end up unreported, and the scope and nature of such displacement cannot be quantified and assessed. Their number and fate remain unknown.

## Temporal scope and frequency of reporting

The 2016 GRID dataset reports separately on the total number of IDPs as of 31 December 2015, and the number of people newly displaced during the year. The former reflects the number of people still displaced at the end of the year, but does not capture repeated displacement or other movements of people who fled or returned home during it.

The figures reported are static, but IDPs' movements are not. For this reason, we aim to improve our methodology and increase not only its geographical, but also its temporal coverage. We plan to produce displacement figures more frequently in order to capture the fluidity and complexity of IDPs' movements.

To do so, we will soon begin piloting a hybrid monitoring methodology that combines event-based and country-based monitoring of displacement situations as they evolve over time. The idea is to identify displacement events in near-real time, manually verify those we deem to have led to people fleeing and then to engage partners in the field to collect time-series data. For the purpose of initiating a humanitarian alert, in some cases our partners in the field will also help us to identify events that have the potential to trigger displacement.

## Methodological challenges particular to displacement associated with disasters

The 2016 GRID presents our latest findings on new displacement associated with disasters in 2015, and compares it with our historical dataset for 2008 to 2015.

### Typological considerations

The 2016 GRID estimates are based on new displacement known to have taken place as a result of disasters for which natural hazards have been identified as the primary trigger. When available, we use the internationally acknowledged name of the hazard and categorise them initially into four main types: geophysical, meteorological, hydrological and climatological. These are then refined into types, sub-types and sub-sub-types (see table A.8).

To better understand the complexities of the phenomena, we plan to break down the different stages of a disaster by identifying its primary from its secondary, tertiary and subsequent triggers.

The 2015 dataset presents figures for displacement associated with sudden-onset hazards, but in future reports we intend to include that associated with slow-onset hazards such as drought. In 2014, we developed a model-based methodology, which we used to monitor the displacement of pastoralists in the Horn of Africa during the 2010 to 2011 drought, and we started to collect data on slow-onset hazards in 2015.



Table A.8. Typology of natural hazards\*

Hazard category	Type	Sub-type	Sub-sub-type
Geophysical	Earthquakes, mass movements, volcanic activity	Ground shaking, tsunamis, sudden subsidence, sinkholes, landslides, rockfalls, ashfalls, lahars, pyroclastic flows, lava flows, toxic gases, glacial lake outburst flows (GLOF), volcanic eruptions	
Meteorological	Storms, extreme temperatures	Extra-tropical storms, tropical storms including hurricanes and cyclones, convective storms, cold waves, heat-waves, severe winter conditions	Derechos, hailstorms, thunderstorms, rainstorms, tornados, winter storms, dust storms, storm surges, haze, gales
Hydrological	Flooding, landslides, wave action	Coastal floods, riverine floods, flash floods, ice jam floods, avalanches – snow, debris, mudflows, rockfalls – rogue waves, seiches	
Climatological	Drought, wildfires	Forest fires, land fires –bush, brush and pasture	Fire whirls

\* This typology is adapted from the classification system developed by the international disaster database (EM-DAT) maintained by the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) in Louvain, Belgium.

## Spatial and geographical coverage

Our estimates aim to provide a global picture of displacement associated with disasters, but we face a number of challenges in compiling them. Thanks to long-standing partnerships with organisations such as IOM, we have been able to overcome some, and reach out at the national and local level for information. Language barriers, however, are a major challenge, particularly for events that occur in south and south-east Asia. To address this, we constantly seek to improve our access to data by expanding our network of reliable collaborators, with particular focus on our partners in the field.

## Temporal coverage

Our dataset records incidents of displacement that began in 2015 and are supported by a reliable and comprehensive source. The main challenge we faced in collecting data for the year were overlapping events, such as cyclone Komen and Myanmar’s monsoon floods, which made it difficult to identify people displaced by each disaster because our sources provided a final aggregate figure for all events.

Protracted displacement in the aftermath of disasters is a highly challenging area. We produced a first scoping exercise in 2015, which aimed to shed light on the phenomenon by challenging the notion that people who flee a disaster are not likely to remain displaced for long. This false assumption is fostered by only occasional reporting of ongoing cases, often to mark the anniversary of a particular disaster. Our scoping exercise allowed us to re-examine the issue, and conclude that there are likely to be many more people living in protracted displacement than previously thought. We plan to monitor and analyse the phenomenon in-depth using our data model.

## Terminology

We use the term “displaced”, but it is rarely if ever adopted consistently and unequivocally by different countries or sources (see table A.9). People displaced by floods in 2015 were referred to as “homeless” in Madagascar and as “moved” in Iraq. Often, sources refer to people displaced by disasters as “directly affected”. It is true that IDPs are part of a wider population affected by a disaster, but not all those affected are IDPs. As such, additional analysis is required to make sense of the terms sources use, and to understand when and how they signal displacement.

Table A.9. Explanation of reporting terms

Term	Explanation
Displaced	Involuntary or forced movements, evacuation or relocation – when not specified – of individuals or groups of people from their habitual housing
Evacuated	Voluntary and forced evacuations, both preventive and in response to onset of hazard
Relocated	Voluntary and forced relocations, both preventive and in response to onset of hazard
Sheltered	People accommodated in shelters provided by national authorities or organisations such as NGOs, the UN and IFRC
Homeless	People rendered homeless and without adequate shelter
Uninhabitable housing	Limited to habitual place of residence, and includes houses, retirement homes, prisons, mental healthcare centres and dormitories
Other	Any term not mentioned above

Even within the UN and coordinated international humanitarian reporting mechanisms there is inconsistency in how different populations are described and counted, with some estimates based on “people affected” and others on “people in need” or “people targeted”.

Many terms and expressions are specific to internal displacement, and our database captures the most common ones, as shown in table A.9. They may refer to individuals, groups of people such as families or households, or housing. We use the number of houses destroyed as a proxy because it shows that at least one household has been left homeless. We calculate the number of individuals by applying the average household size available for each country (see box).

## Housing information

Housing information is vital in estimating displacement associated with disasters. In 2015, 35.5 per cent of the sources we used for our estimates reported figures for uninhabitable housing when describing displacement. In order to use housing data as a valid proxy, we only consider figures for homes that have been damaged to the extent they are no longer habitable.

Terms that indicate the extent of damage include “houses at risk (of collapse)”, “houses severely affected/damaged” and “houses destroyed”. We consider housing to be any place where people have established a habitual residence, including retirement homes, prisons, religious residences and schools when dormitories are present. We include hospitals if the information provided suggests that long-term patients have been displaced.

We also include shelters in refugee and displacement camps, for instance “collapsed tents” in Jordan’s Zaatari refugee camp are counted as uninhabitable housing. Such cases constitute multiple displacement, in which people may have fled conflict only to become displaced again when their camp is flooded.

## Evacuation data

We often use data on mandatory evacuations and people staying in official evacuation centres to estimate event-based displacement. On the one hand, the number of people counted in evacuation centres may underestimate the total number of evacuees, as others may take refuge elsewhere. On the other, the number of people ordered to evacuate may overstate the true number, given that some are likely not to heed the order. The potential for such discrepancies is much greater when authorities advise rather than order evacuation, and as a result we do not incorporate such figures into our estimates.

## Quality assurance and independent peer review

As in previous years, and in order to improve our methodology, we submitted this year’s estimates to a quality assurance process to verify the data. The verification stage is as important as the data collection itself, because it allows possible discrepancies to be identified, and the data to be refined before it is finalised. This year’s process was led in-house, and all of our entries have been double-checked.

For disaster events in 2015, all records with estimates of 500 IDPs or more have been fact-checked. In future we aim to extend the verification process to the entire set of annual entries. We have also submitted this methodological annex to external peer reviewers, and elements of our methodology were reviewed in previous years by a different set of independent experts.

We will embed the external peer review and internal quality assurance processes into our future work to ensure that the methods we use to produce our figures are robust and that we have presented them accurately.

## Qualitative assessment of confidence in estimates for people displaced by conflict

### Building upon lessons from existing assessments

There have been several attempts recently to design confidence assessment schemes to evaluate data on internal displacement, part of a broader movement in the field of humanitarian needs assessments.<sup>5</sup> The Task Force on Population Movement in Yemen (TFPM), for example, has developed a confidence rating based on disaggregation by sex and age, and the availability of data on districts of origin and displacement.<sup>6</sup>

IOM Iraq calculates a confidence rating in order to produce an estimate for each location in its displacement tracking matrix, based on the number of informants used, discrepancies between information from different sources, the accessibility of the location and the ability to independently validate the data received.<sup>7</sup> The Syria multi-sector needs assessment (MSNA) gives a confidence rating for the population estimates it provides, including the number of IDPs, using a six-point scale with up to seven criteria for each point.<sup>8</sup>

Such assessments may seem reassuring, but if poorly conceived or implemented they may provide a false sense of certainty or confidence. They may hide the arbitrariness of the underlying criteria and the way they are weighted and aggregated. They may also reflect the biases and challenges inherent in the various steps involved in constructing an index and collecting the data.

To limit evaluators' bias and improve objectivity and consistency, clear decision rules are needed that limit the number of dimensions taken into account. To improve the Syria MSNA's descriptive confidence scale and overcome its lack of proper aggregation, a technical note suggested the application of a points-based index with three criteria, effectively discarding four of the seven included in the original confidence scale.<sup>9</sup>

There are ways of overcoming the limitations of point-based scores, but their complexity may render them opaque, adding another layer of potential confusion. Using only four indicators with two to five possible values for each, IOM Iraq's assessment framework yields up to 126 unique possible combinations.<sup>10</sup>

### The challenge of applying nationally specific tools at the global level

It is difficult to extrapolate to the global level from confidence ratings designed for national circumstances. The three examples discussed above all refer to situations in which a single organisation or cluster designs the entire national data collection process.

At the global level, aggregation and cross-country comparison is made more difficult by the number of data sources and the fact that their motivations for collecting information ranges from rapid needs assessments to victim compensation without any a priori global coordination. Sources' methodologies also vary widely, from satellite imagery, registration, sampling, key informant interviews and censuses, to name but a few.

This diversity stands in stark contrast to the standardisation of data in the three national examples mentioned above. As such, the same set of criteria cannot easily be used to judge reliability, and the diversity in which the results are reported makes it more difficult to make comparisons between countries.

### IDMC's confidence assessment

We have made an initial attempt to design a comprehensive framework to assess the confidence we have in the estimates we publish. The methodology and results presented in this report are the first steps of a process we will continue to develop through several more iterations.<sup>11</sup>

Given that we are as yet unable to apply many of the criteria to our data on displacement associated with disasters, we have only assessed our data and 2015 estimates for that associated with conflict in 11 representative countries (see table A.10). In assessing our confidence in the data, we applied a common set of criteria based on:

- | The methodologies used to collect it
- | Whether it could be independently validated
- | The degree to which it is geographically comprehensive in terms of the extent of the conflict and associated displacement
- | Whether it is disaggregated by sex and age
- | The frequency with which it was collected
- | How extensively it covers the components of our data model

For this initial assessment, we have not attempted to weight or rank these factors, nor have we assigned quantitative point values for them or generated an overall score for each source and estimate. In order to do so rigorously, we will first need to empirically test the relative significance of each of the factors.

Some of the data gaps reported can be attributed to the way governments and organisations collect and disseminate data, but this is not always the case. We try to be as comprehensive as possible in our own data collection, but we may overlook some sources that may address the gaps we report. As such, our assessment reflects the level of detail of the data we were able to collect and process from various sources – not the level of detail of all the data that exists or was published by each provider.

The assessment is shown in the table below, and reveals several features of our source data and the estimates based on it:

- | In many cases we were unable to obtain thorough documentation of our providers' data collection methodologies or protocols.
- | We often rely on only one source that we are unable to verify independently.

| In no country or displacement situation did the data cover our model comprehensively. This means that information about some flows is missing, resulting in a distorted or incomplete picture.

| We were unable to receive data frequently enough to keep up with events as they unfolded on the ground, particularly for highly dynamic situations. Again, the likely result is a skewed picture of displacement that does not capture events which evolved or were resolved quickly.

The encouraging news is that in several of the 11 countries, the data we obtained was disaggregated both geographically and by IDPs' sex and age. We have more confidence in these datasets and our estimates based on them than on those we derived by multiplying the number of destroyed houses or families evacuated by average household size.



Table A.10: Initial IDMC confidence assessment

		Bosnia and Herzegovina	Colombia	Indonesia	Iraq
Data on displacement	Methodology of the source(s) used	Registration	Registration	Unknown	IOM DTM*
	Data could be triangulated nationally	No	No	No	No
	All relevant areas well covered	Yes	Yes	Unknown	No
	Disaggregation of data in subnational administrative entities	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Frequency of reporting	Yearly	Yearly	No update	Bi-monthly
	Disaggregation by sex	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Disaggregation by age	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Data on end of displacement and other processes	Returns	No	No	Partial	Partial
	Deaths	No	No	No	No
	Births	No	No	No	No
	Cross-border movements	No	No	No	No
	Local integration	No	No	No	No
	Settlement elsewhere	No	No	No	No

\* International Organization for Migration's displacement tracking matrix

For each country or territory, data on new displacements and the number of IDPs as of the end of 2015 have been assessed together. In many cases the same report is the source for both numbers.

The following notes expand upon and refine some of assessments in the table above.

#### Bosnia and Herzegovina

Source: Government – direct email contact with the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees  
The government gives information on “ceased displacement” without providing further details.

	Nigeria	Papua New Guinea	Sudan	Syria	Thailand	Ukraine	Yemen
	IOM DTM	Multiple (partly unknown)	IOM DTM	Lacks transparency	Unknown	Registration	Multiple
	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	No	No	No	No	No	Uncertain	No
	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	Quarterly	No update	Biannually	Yearly	No update	Almost weekly	Every two months
	Partial	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
	Partial	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	Partial	No	Partial	Partial	No	No	Partial
	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	No	No	No	Partial	No	No	No
	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

## Colombia

Source: Unit for Attention and Reparation of Victims (UARIV), government agency

Methodology: UARIV's registration system counts the number of people who have a claim as a victim of the country's conflict, not the current number of IDPs. Many people have been displaced more than once, leading to multiple registration and double counting. Our estimate aggregates data since 1985, with a peak period of displacement between 2000 and 2005. There is no information available on IDPs who might have found durable solutions to their displacement since 1985.

## Indonesia

Sources: Media reports; one source citing the Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), but we were unable to trace the original document.

Methodology: BAPPENAS's methodology is unknown. Geographic coverage: BAPPENAS's reach is uncertain. Media reports mention new displacements in only a few regions such as Aceh, Yahukimo and Karubaga. Geographic disaggregation: The BAPPENAS data we obtained was just one aggregated estimate.

## Iraq

Source: IOM

Geographic coverage: Access is limited in Anbar and Ninewa governorates, which Islamic State (also known as ISIL or ISIS) controls.

End of displacement: Data on returns covered only part of the year.

Other: There is no data on people displaced before 2014.

## Nigeria

Source: IOM in collaboration with the authorities

Geographic coverage: Access was not possible to 17 of the 27 local government areas (LGAs) in Borno state. In other states, it was only partial in some LGAs. Data disaggregated by sex and age: SADD published by IOM is available for each site, but only for aggregated figures for displacement associated with both conflict and disasters, which does not permit a differentiated analysis.

End of displacement: In Adamawa, data on returns is only available for the northern part of the state.

## Papua New Guinea

Sources: ICRC, media report

Methodology: Partly unknown. We compile data from sources using various methodologies.

Geographic coverage: Only places where ICRC and the media are present are covered. Ethnic clashes often take place in remote areas where access is hindered by insecurity and difficult terrain.

Geographic disaggregation: Data is gathered in a only limited number of locations.

## Sudan

Source: IOM

Only Darfur and Kordofan are covered, which excludes areas such as Khartoum and the east of the country where displacement associated with conflict is likely to have taken place.

End of displacement: Detailed information is available, including SADD, vulnerability and occupation, but again only for Darfur and Kordofan.

## Syria

Source: OCHA, which collates sources from various entities

Geographic coverage: A number of areas are hard to reach, particularly in the north-east of the country, and estimates are unreliable.

End of displacement: Data on returns and cross-border movements is scarce.

Other: Data collection takes place in a complex security environment, in which some stakeholders including armed groups have motives for providing biased information.

## Thailand

Source: An International Crisis Group (ICG) report that mentioned a few displacement cases

Methodology: We compiled data from sources cited in a single ICG report dated 2007, and which does not focus on IDPs. The report in turn uses various sources whose methodologies are unknown.

Geographic coverage: The report covers only parts of southern Thailand.

Geographic disaggregation: The data covers only a limited number of displacements in a few locations.

## Ukraine

Source: Ministry of Social Policy

Geographic coverage: The data has national coverage, but that for areas near the Russian border not under government control is possibly less reliable.

End of displacement: Data disaggregated by region is updated roughly once a week. The figures sometimes show a decrease, which implies that the displacement of IDPs between regions and/or durable solutions are somehow taken into account, but no further details are available.

## Yemen

Sources: UNHCR in the north of the country and IOM in the south coordinate a population movement task force, to which 22 organisations contribute data.

Methodologies: UNHCR uses population movement tracking, and IOM its displacement tracking matrix.

Geographic coverage: For around half of the country's 21 governorates, data could not be collected in some districts. The largest gaps were in the Al Hudaydah, Hadramaut, Lahj and Shabwah governorates.

End of displacement: IOM's December 2015 report only covers some returnees who had fled disasters. Its February 2016 report does not disaggregate data temporally between 2015 and 2016, so it could not be used.

## Notes on IDMC's confidence assessment criteria

SADD: The availability of SADD does not directly factor into the calculation of the number of IDPs, but it can be considered a proxy for detailed data collection practices. The Task Force on Population Movement in Yemen used SADD as a criteria in its fifth, sixth and seventh reports in a decision rule aimed at prioritising data.<sup>12</sup>

Geographically disaggregated data: Such data is not, per se, an absolute requirement for accurate national estimates of displacement. In many countries, however, some of the entities that collect data only have access to some regions. Geographical disaggregation allows for triangulation and gaps to be identified, while its absence can lead to possible double-counting. The Task Force on Population Movement in Yemen uses a similar rationale in its confidence rating to justify discarding data when location information is incomplete.

Multiple data sources: The availability of data from a number of independent sources does not guarantee higher quality or more accurate overall results. It can, however, prompt discussion of the various estimates available and the methodologies used to derive them. It also sometimes permits triangulation, which is useful in situations for which displacement estimates are highly sensitive or more susceptible to data collectors' biases.

Temporal dimensions: The frequency of updates is a relative criteria. Unfolding crises and rapidly changing situations such as those in Syria, Iraq and Yemen require more frequent updates than stable and often protracted situations such as in Armenia and Cyprus. Yearly updates may suffice for some situations, but for others, it can exclude some of the shorter-term displacements.

## Next steps

Our confidence assessment is a work in progress, and we welcome input from partners interested in contributing to its development. We plan to apply our criteria to all of the data we receive and analyse so that our estimates are as accurate as possible. In doing so, our data users will be made aware of the magnitude of uncertainty the data contains, and the underlying reasons for it.

## Notes

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5. ACAPS, How sure are you? Judging quality and usability of data collected during rapid needs assessments, August 2013, available at <http://goo.gl/jcYxMk>
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8. Humanitarian Liaison Group, Syria Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment, October 2014, available at <http://goo.gl/OuplUP>
9. Benini A, Shikh Aiyob M, Chataigner P et al, Confidence in needs assessment data: the use of confidence ratings in the Syria multi-sectoral needs assessment (MSNA), a note for ACAPS and MapAction, April 2015, available at <http://goo.gl/Vo7W01>
10. IOM Iraq, displacement tracking matrix downloads, available at <http://goo.gl/AHE54s>
11. Benini A, Shikh Aiyob M, Chataigner P et al, Confidence in needs assessment data: the use of confidence ratings in the Syria multi-sectoral needs assessment (MSNA), a note for ACAPS and MapAction, April 2015, p.14, available at <http://goo.gl/Vo7W01>
12. Yemen Task Force on Population Movement, 5th Report, 14 October 2015, p.3, available at <http://goo.gl/TyCjPm>; 6th report, 10 December 2015, pp.6-7, available at <http://goo.gl/EDcbTE>; 7th report, February 2016, p.17, available at <http://goo.gl/oUffdi>



# TABLES

Table 1: New displacement by country for disasters and conflict and total number of IDPs for conflict and violence

Country or region	Total number of IDPs as of 31 December 2015 (conflict)	New displacements in 2015 (conflict)	New displacements in 2015 (disasters)
Abyei Area	82,000		
Afghanistan	1,174,000	335,000	71,000
Albania			4,200
Algeria			19,000
Angola			5,600
Argentina			36,000
Armenia	8,400		
Australia			5,700
Azerbaijan	564,000		
Bahamas			2,800
Bangladesh	426,000		531,000
Belize			300
Bhutan			2,900
Bolivia			11,000
Bosnia and Herzegovina	98,000		300
Botswana			300
Brazil			59,000
Bulgaria			800
Burkina Faso			3,700
Burundi	99,000	23,000	3,100
Cabo Verde			200
Cambodia			8,900
Cameroon	124,000	71,000	11,000
Canada			13,000
Central African Republic	452,000	210,000	1,100
Chad	107,000	36,000	
Chile			1,047,000
China			3,602,000
Colombia	6,270,000	224,000	4,600
Congo (Republic of)	7,800		
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	1,500,000	621,000	106,000

Country or region	Total number of IDPs as of 31 December 2015 (conflict)	New displacements in 2015 (conflict)	New displacements in 2015 (disasters)
Costa Rica			1,100
Côte d'Ivoire	303,000	3,200	
Croatia			1,000
Cuba			2,000
Cyprus	272,000		
Dominica			700
Dominican Republic			28,000
Ecuador			1,900
Egypt	78,000	78,000	100
El Salvador	289,000	500	2,000
Ethiopia	450,000	56,000	104,000
France			100
Georgia	239,000		1,200
Ghana			9,300
Greece			300
Guatemala	251,000		2,900
Guinea			34,000
Haiti			1,500
Honduras	174,000		2,000
India	612,000	1,000	3,655,000
Indonesia	6,100	200	204,000
Iran, Islamic Republic of			5,400
Iraq	3,290,000	1,114,000	23,000
Ireland			1,600
Italy			1,300
Japan			486,000
Kazakhstan			19,000
Kenya	309,000		105,000
Kiribati			2,500
Korea, Democratic People's Republic of			6,000
Kosovo	17,000		
Kyrgyzstan			5,900
Lao, People's Democratic Republic of			12,000
Lebanon	12,000	3,000	100
Libya	500,000	100,000	

Country or region	Total number of IDPs as of 31 December 2015 (conflict)	New displacements in 2015 (conflict)	New displacements in 2015 (disasters)
Macedonia (the former Yugoslav republic of)	200		
Madagascar			87,000
Malawi			343,000
Malaysia			21,000
Mali	50,000		400
Mauritius			1,400
Mexico	287,000	6,000	91,000
Micronesia, Federated States of			6,800
Mongolia			800
Mozambique			61,000
Myanmar	644,000	16,000	1,618,000
Namibia			8
Nepal	50,000		2,623,000
New Zealand			400
Nicaragua			1,100
Niger	153,000	47,000	38,000
Nigeria	2,096,000	737,000	100,000
Norway			200
Pakistan	1,459,000		1,002,000
Palestine, State of	221,000	700	10,000
Panama			100
Papua New Guinea	6,300		
Paraguay			171,000
Peru	60,000		8,400
Philippines	62,000	33,000	2,221,000
Portugal			10
Romania			200
Russian Federation	27,000		6,600
Rwanda			2,000
Samoa			1,000
Senegal	24,000		
Solomon Islands			1,000
Somalia	1,223,000	90,000	59,000
South Africa			14
South Sudan	1,697,000	199,000	15,000

Country or region	Total number of IDPs as of 31 December 2015 (conflict)	New displacements in 2015 (conflict)	New displacements in 2015 (disasters)
Spain			4,100
Sri Lanka	44,000		66,000
Sudan	3,182,000	144,000	8,300
Sweden			100
Switzerland			400
Syria	6,600,000	1,300,000	
Taiwan			27,000
Tajikistan			11,000
Tanzania, Republic of			3,500
Thailand	35,000		200
Timor-Leste			300
Togo	3,000		5,000
Tunisia			100
Turkey	954,000		1,500
Tuvalu			5,400
Uganda	30,000		600
Ukraine	1,679,000	942,000	
United Kingdom			6,100
United States			63,000
Uruguay			24,000
Vanuatu			65,000
Venezuela			45,000
Vietnam			9,600
Yemen	2,509,000	2,175,000	83,000
Zambia			25
Zimbabwe			800



Table 2: Largest disaster-related displacement events of 2015

Country	Event name	Affected areas	Month disaster began	Figure source(s)	Displacements
Nepal	Gorkha earthquake and after-shocks	Main affected districts: Gorkha, Dhading, Nuwakot, Rasuwa, Makwanpur, Kathmandu Sindhupalchok, Lalitpur, Kavre, Dolakha, Ramechhap, Okhaldhunga	April	National Planning Commission - Government of Nepal	2,623,000
India	Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu floods	Tamil Nadu state (especially in Chennai, Cuddalore, Kancheepuram, Thiruvallur, Vilupuram districts) and southern Andhra Pradesh state (especially Nellore and Chittoor districts)	November	National/local authority	1,801,000
Myanmar	Monsoon floods/ Cyclone Komen	12 of the country's 14 states and regions (Ayeyarwady, Bago, Chin, Kachin, Kayin, Magway, Mandalay, Mon, Rakhine, Sagaing, Shan Yangon), especially Chin and Rakhine states, and Magway and Sagaing regions	July	National natural disaster management committee	1,617,000
India	Monsoon floods/ Cyclone Komen	West Bengal, Odisha, Manipur, Rajasthan, and Gujarat	July	Disaster management minister	1,200,000
China	Typhoon Chan-Hom	Zhejiang province	July	Sphere India - Inter-agency group	1,100,000
Chile	Illapel earthquake and tsunami	Provinces of Choapa and Coquimbo: Atacama, Coquimbo, Valparaíso, Metropolitana, Lib. Gral Bernardo O'Higgins, Maule, Biobío, Araucanía.	September	OCHA	1,000,000

Country	Event name	Affected areas	Month disaster began	Figure source(s)	Displacements
Philippines	Typhoon Koppu (local name Lando)	Regions I,II, III, IV-A, NCR and CAR	October	Government of the Philippines	938,000
Philippines	Typhoon Melor (local name Nona)	Samar-Sorsogon area, Region V and VIII	December	National disaster risk reduction and management command	743,000
Pakistan	Northern Afghanistan earthquake	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Federally Administered Tribal Areas, Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Kashmir, Punjab	October	National disaster management authority	666,000
China	Typhoon Soudelor	Provinces of Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangxi and Anhui	August	ECHO	562,000

Table 3: Conflict-related displacement in 2015

Country	New displacements in 2015 (conflict)	Total number of IDPs as of 31 December 2015 (conflict)	Year that the total number of IDPs was last updated	Primary source
Abyei area		82,000	2015	UN Security Council (UNSC)
Afghanistan	335,000	1,174,000	2016	UNHCR
Armenia		8,400	2015	NGO
Azerbaijan		564,000	2016	Government
Bangladesh		426,000	2012	Research and academia
Bosnia and Herzegovina		98,000	2016	Government
Burundi	23,000	99,000	2016	IOM
Cameroon	71,000	124,000	2015	IOM
CAR	210,000	452,000	2016	UNHCR and government
Chad	36,000	107,000	2015	OCHA
Colombia	224,000	6,270,000	2015	Government
Congo (Republic of)		7,800	2015	Government
Côte d'Ivoire	3,200	303,000	2015	UNSC
Cyprus		272,000	2015	Government
DR Congo	621,000	1,500,000	2016	OCHA and government
Egypt	78,000	78,000	2015	Research and academia
El Salvador	500	289,000	2015	Research and academia
Ethiopia	56,000	450,000	2015	IOM
Georgia		239,000	2016	Government
Guatemala		251,000	2014	United Nations Population Division
Honduras		174,000	2015	Government
India	1,000	612,000	2015	Media, government and NGOs
Indonesia	200	6,100	2015	Media, IDMC
Iraq	1,114,000	3,290,000	2016	IOM
Kenya		309,000	2015	OCHA
Kosovo		17,000	2015	UNHCR

Country	New displacements in 2015 (conflict)	Total number of IDPs as of 31 December 2015 (conflict)	Year that the total number of IDPs was last updated	Primary source
Lebanon	3,000	12,000	2016	UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
Libya	100,000	500,000	2016	National Red Crescent Society
Macedonia (the former Yugoslav republic of)		200	2016	UNHCR and government
Mali		50,000	2016	IOM and government
Mexico	6,000	287,000	2016	Research and academia
Myanmar	16,000	644,000	2016	OCHA and NGO
Nepal		50,000	2012	UNHCR
Niger	47,000	153,000	2015	OCHA
Nigeria	737,000	2,096,000	2016	IOM and government
Pakistan		1,459,000	2016	UNHCR
Palestine	700	221,000	2015	OCHA and NGO
Papua New Guinea		6,300	2015	ICRC and media
Peru		60,000	2015	Government
Philippines	33,000	62,000	2016	UNHCR
Russian Federation		27,000	2014	Government and NGO
Senegal		24,000	2015	OCHA
Somalia	90,000	1,223,000	2016	UNHCR and OCHA
South Sudan	199,000	1,697,000	2015	UNHCR
Sri Lanka		44,000	2015	Government
Sudan	144,000	3,182,000	2016	IOM
Syria	1,300,000	6,600,000	2015	OCHA
Thailand		35,000	2007	Research and academia
Togo		3,000	2014	Government
Turkey		954,000	2014	Research and academia
Uganda		30,000	2012	UNHCR
Ukraine	942,000	1,679,000	2016	Government
Yemen	2,175,000	2,509,000	2015	UNHCR and IOM



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