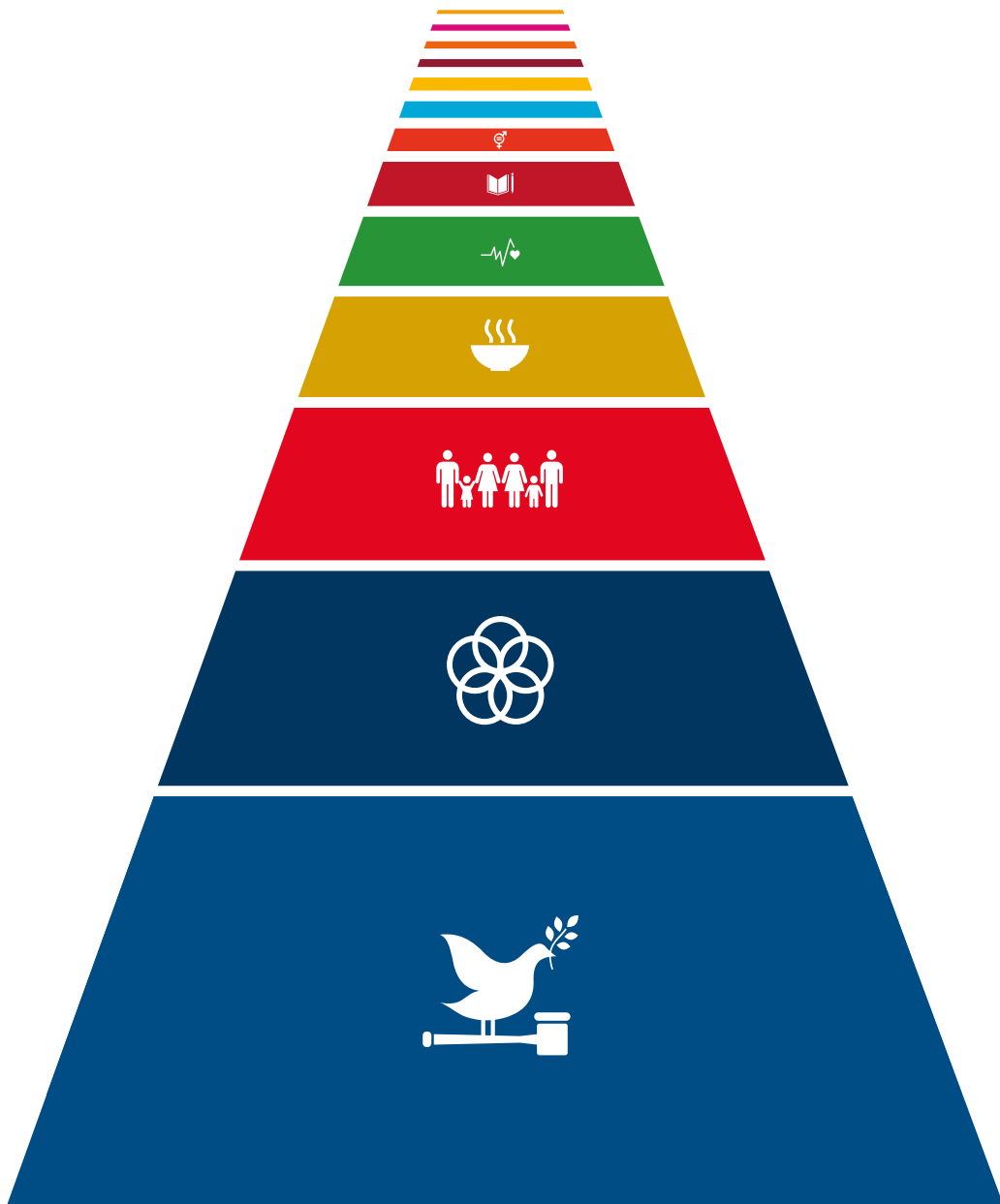


# The road to 2030: finding solutions to internal displacement

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## SUMMARY REPORT



The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) organised its second interdisciplinary conference on 1 October 2019, that once again brought together humanitarian and development practitioners, policymakers and donors to discuss new research on human mobility, economics and sustainable development.

With a focus on solutions, we explored lessons learnt and successful approaches from disaster risk management and humanitarian, development and peacebuilding action to better understand and address the risk and impacts of internal displacement.

More than 125 participants shared their knowledge and experience with the common objective of preventing and reducing the phenomenon worldwide. This report summarises the discussions.



## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

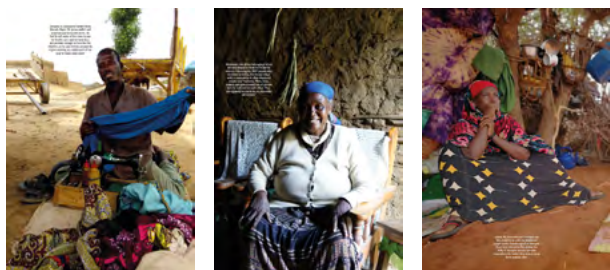
IDMC's director, Alexandra Bilak, opened the conference by reminding the audience that internal displacement is linked to every structural challenge the world faces, and that it affects and is affected by progress toward all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Its links with climate change, politics, health, education and economic development, for example, are clear.

We recorded 11 million new displacements in the first half of 2019. Flooding triggered 55,000 in Cambodia and armed clashes 33,000 in Libya in the last month alone. Thousands more were recorded in other countries we monitor on a daily basis.

Displacement associated with conflict is multifaceted. It occurs during protracted crises such as the Syrian civil war, in places where new conflicts have ignited as in West Africa or where criminal violence prevails, like in Central America. An ever-increasing number of people are also at risk of displacement associated with natural hazards and climate change impacts.

The conference, however, was not about horrifying scenarios and unimaginable figures. It discussed what is being done to address and prevent the phenomenon, and what else might be done to that end. A range of responses have been embraced worldwide, and solutions exist that deserve wider recognition and application.

In addition to the speakers' presentations, a series of portraits of internally displaced people (IDPs) were on display. These were individuals who our staff had met during their field visits this year and who had managed to overcome certain impacts of displacement. The conference focused on approaches that lead to durable solutions, and on ways to understand, document and share them better.



The chair of IDMC's advisory group, Peter de Clerq, highlighted the fact that durable solutions need to form part of a broad development and peacebuilding approach rather than being seen purely from a humanitarian and protection perspective. They need to be integrated and include host communities, and to move from an area-based to a fully-fledged development approach. All initiatives must also be rights-based.



There has been a collective failure to include IDPs in global debates and national humanitarian and development plans. Many live in protracted displacement, making their return home an ever more distant prospect as they become disconnected from their places of origin. Local and national ownership are key to achieving durable solutions. Displacement ends when IDPs are able to resume their lives as ordinary citizens who no longer need assistance. Displacement also has links with urbanisation, and the two issues should be considered together.

## KEYNOTE SPEECH

Ambassador Mouayed Saleh, Iraq's deputy foreign minister, discussed the challenges his country has faced and its achievements and successes in tackling internal displacement. After the occupation of a third of its territory and the displacement of six million people, Iraq remained unified, hosting and welcoming IDPs regardless of their culture or religion. No country can ever be prepared to face such large-scale displacement, but Iraq has strived to provide its displaced people with shelter and meet their basic needs.

Some IDPs are still unwilling or unable to return to their places of origin. Iraq's economic crisis, which has been aggravated by lower oil prices, has impeded efforts to deal with the situation, but the government's coordination with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and IDMC has facilitated IDPs' protection. It has also made them visible at the global level, which has been very helpful for the country.



# THE END OF DISPLACEMENT – NATIONAL SOLUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



David Peikrishvili, representing the government of Georgia, shared his country's experience in improving monitoring mechanisms for internal displacement. Georgia has one of the highest numbers of IDPs worldwide relative to its population size. Around 284,000 people are living in protracted displacement as a result of conflicts in 1993 and 2008, and 25,000 as a result of disasters.

The government's current approach is to encourage IDPs to integrate locally in their host areas, but it intends to establish the conditions for their safe and dignified return in the future. Most of those surveyed want to return but are unable to do so at the moment.

The country adopted a law on IDPs in 1996 that provides an optional and hereditary status of IDP, which confers a right to housing and social assistance. The Ministry of IDPs, Labour, Health and Social Affairs has worked in close collaboration with IDMC to develop an improved monitoring tool that addresses issues of data inconsistency, coordination between stakeholders at the national level and the need to harmonise monitoring and reporting processes.

With technical support from IDMC, the government has also created and will soon publish a national progress monitoring dashboard that includes indicators on national policies and capacities to address and prevent displacement, and the drivers and impacts of the phenomenon.



Oscar Rico from the Colombian government's Victims Unit talked about his country's experiences in assisting the return of Colombians who had sought protection abroad. The country's armed conflict has triggered millions of internal and cross-border displacements over the past 60 years. Most internal displacement has taken place from rural to urban areas as a result of human rights violations and violence.

A registry for victims of the conflict was created in 1985 and currently includes 8,895,978 people, which amounts to about 18 per cent of the national population. The registry is a key source of information on internal displacement. Only 25,000 people have been identified as displaced across borders, but this is likely to be an underestimate. Most fled to neighbouring countries such as Ecuador and Venezuela, but others moved as far away as Spain and the US.

The Victims Unit's provisions for assistance include the restitution of rights in areas such as identification, health and education. Its returnee programme for Colombians living abroad is based on three main steps: enrolment; implementation in the form of health, financial and psychosocial support; and follow-up by tracking people through administrative records. People can enrol online from abroad and state their needs and date of return so the unit can prepare for their arrival. The programme faces with six main challenges:



- | Difficulties in tracking returnees who do not register, which also impedes their assistance
- | Difficulties in organising reparations while people are still being victimised and some areas are not safe for return
- | Coordination, particularly between humanitarian and development stakeholders
- | Emotional recovery, a vital component not always considered as such
- | Sustainability issues such as how to monitor progress toward and ultimately achieve durable solutions
- | Generating the significant political will and commitment from partners required to renew the Victims Unit's mandate, which expires in 2021

The two presentations were followed by questions from the audience, the first of which was about the risks associated with using voluntary registration to monitor displacement. Such a process is the easiest way to record the number of IDPs, but it is not without drawbacks. On the one hand, some people may choose not to register for fear of reprisals, which may lead to underestimates. On the other, anyone is able to register and people are not asked for proof, which may lead to overestimates.

Another question concerned information on gender-based violence (GBV). Georgia does not keep this kind of information on IDPs, but some studies look at such trends among the displaced population. Colombia's registry identifies GBV as a crime, but the issue is sensitive in a country where this type of violence is used as a weapon of war.



# LOCAL SOLUTIONS – ENDING DISPLACEMENT IN CITIES

Vicente Anzellini, IDMC's coordinator of its Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID), introduced a discussion on urban displacement with key messages from GRID 2019. Being displaced in a city comes with specific challenges but also opportunities, some of which were presented by the panellists.



Faten Ghosn from Arizona University discussed lessons learnt from urban displacement in Lebanon since the end of the country's civil war in 1990. These included the fact that many IDPs had been displaced various times; that medium-sized cities have been the main areas of local integration; and that there is a significant difference between the internally displaced population in Beirut and the rest of the country.

Research also identified four types of return in Lebanon - partial return, holiday or weekend return, permanent return and no return - which are influenced primarily by economic and development activities, associated employment opportunities, the state of infrastructure and the availability of education and health services. These factors are often non-existent in rural areas. This shows the importance of multidimensional, government-led reconstruction plans that include rural areas.

Rebecca Enobong Roberts presented her work on internal displacement in Nigerian cities. She studies IDPs who move to cities such as Ibadan, Lagos, Port Harcourt and Yenagoa. Her preliminary findings show that they face homelessness, little access to goods and services, insecurity and tensions with local communities. Urban IDPs have not been the focus of much attention in Nigeria, and the government should recognise their plight as a priority.



The situation in informal settlements needs to be addressed through decentralised interventions that develop people's capacities and empower them to pursue livelihoods. Skills training and seed capital for women are important, as are humanitarian interventions to address children's needs and vulnerabilities. Improving the public's perception of IDPs is also important to facilitate their local integration.

Louise Thaller from IMPACT discussed her experiences of supporting local stakeholders in the Central African Republic (CAR) in identifying and responding to the needs of IDPs and vulnerable host communities. The AGORA project, a joint initiative between IMPACT and the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), focuses on advocacy, training and coordination for local organisations.

People living in protracted displacement in Bangui were at the heart of the research. Their situation is very fragile, and most assistance is humanitarian. Development initiatives are rare. Bangui is one of the few places where humanitarians are able to work with the government, but there are a number of challenges. These include a lack of operational vision and understanding on the part of humanitarian and development partners and the lack of coordination between them and the government.

The Bangui study shows that between 30 and 40 per cent of households have been displaced, and that between 70 and 80 per cent of them favour local integration over return. There is a widespread mistrust of local authorities, but at the same time high expectations

that they should respond to IDPs' needs before other stakeholders. There is also a lack of trust in security forces.



Economic opportunities are key to local integration. Consensual and achievable recovery planning is needed and should be owned by local stakeholders and communities. Solutions to displacement should be discussed in tandem with urban planning. The international system has a significant role to play in supporting local stakeholders' efforts to engage in community-based participatory planning, and in building institutions' technical capacities.

IDMC's researcher Schadi Semnani presented findings from her work on urban displacement in Yemen. Just under 37 per cent of the country's population is urban, making it the least urbanised country in the Middle East and North Africa. Just over 30 per cent of Yemen's IDPs live in urban areas, where almost 35 per cent of conflict events and nearly 32 per cent of casualties in the country's civil war are recorded.



There are four main patterns of displacement in Yemen: rural to rural, urban to urban, rural to urban and urban to rural. Half of the urban IDPs surveyed as part of IDMC's research had fled another urban area. Some urban IDPs of rural origins, such as teachers, have skills that are easily transferrable to life in urban areas, but many do not.

Sixty-six per cent of the IDPs surveyed favour return as a solution to their displacement and 32 per cent local integration. This is tied to the rural-urban dynamic and the notion of home. Urban IDPs from rural areas often want to go back to their land and livelihoods, while rural IDPs from urban areas people want to return to their former jobs and live in places that offer economic opportunity. Assistance in Yemen needs to evolve from emergency interventions to include longer-term and sustainable programming.

Questions from the audience led the panellists to highlight the need to broaden the range of stakeholders involved in finding durable solutions to urban displacement. There should be greater collaboration between local authorities and international donors, and between NGOs and national governments.





# INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO COLLECTING INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATING SOLUTIONS TO INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

The audience engaged directly with the speakers in this interactive session on innovative ways to collect information on internal displacement and communicate on solutions more effectively. Presentations included the Earth Literacy Program's Tangible Earth project, an interactive multimedia representation of our planet which, via a new collaboration with IDMC, displays global internal displacement updates.



Viviana Ramirez Loaiza of the University of East Anglia presented three case studies from Colombia on using art to improve community-based risk management and empower IDPs, and James Walsh of the University of North Carolina showcased his work on understanding the push and pull factors of displacement in the Iraqi city of Mosul. His surveys also reveal how IDPs obtain information to inform their decisions to return or integrate locally.

Valerie Svobodova from the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) used the example of Niger to discuss how local data collection and research can improve protection interventions, and IDMC's Ivana Hajžmanová presented a model for accounting for durable solutions and measuring progress toward them in national and global data-sets.





# THE FUTURE WE WANT – ACCOUNTING FOR AND SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Children are among those most affected by internal displacement, but very little information is available about their plight. At least 17 million are thought to be living as IDPs as a result of conflict and violence alone, and millions more as a result of disasters. Such figures are likely to be underestimates given the shortage of displacement data disaggregated by age.

Verena Knaus of the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) stressed the need for all stakeholders working on displacement to focus on children, who represent about half of all IDPs. Most take refuge in urban areas rather than in displacement camps, which makes them less visible and so harder to reach.



Providing access to quality education is a priority, because it helps to improve mental health and recovery. Schools and schooling can be costly, but every year of education pays back and can serve as a bridge to other services and rights. Education for displaced children should not be considered a luxury but an essential investment.

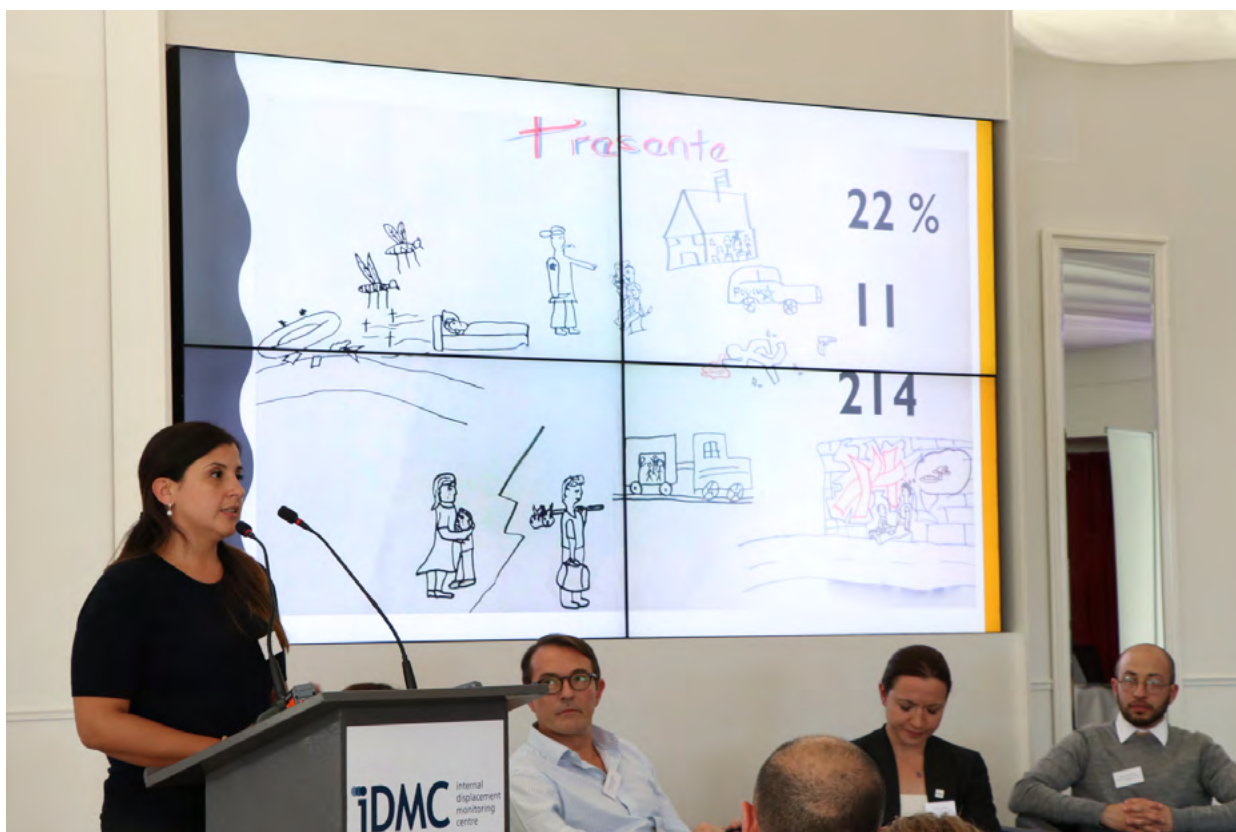
Laurent Grosbois presented a toolkit designed by Save the Children to help monitor progress toward durable solutions for those on the move, whether IDPs, refugees or economic migrants. Data is missing not only on the age and sex of displaced children, but also on their living conditions and the extent of their local integration. Durable solutions should be promoted jointly for IDPs and their host communities. They should include children’s own perspective on their needs and tackle discrimination.



Durable solutions programming should not only focus on protection and humanitarian needs. It also needs to look at the longer-term. The Durable Solutions for Children Toolkit is available as a report with case studies from Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and Syria. Save the Children calls for partners to help fill data gaps and use the tool in other countries.



Ilan Cerna-Turoff from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine presented a study on the impacts of displacement associated with the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. It used survey data from the Center for Disease Prevention and Control to analyse longer-term implications for violence against children. Gender aspects, different types of violence and perpetrators need to be better understood.



The study was unable to capture the increase in violence in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, but the methodology could still be used in other sudden-onset disaster settings to analyse hard-to-measure impacts at a low cost.

Elisa Gamero from World Vision in El Salvador closed the discussion by sharing her personal experience of internal displacement and her work supporting displaced children and young people. Children in El Salvador are highly affected by gang violence. World Vision is working with churches and faith-based organisations because they are a reliable and safe platform for civil society engagement. Children reach out to them for advice, protection and support.

World Vision has also collaborated with universities and other research organisations to understand the push and pull factors of families and children on the move. It has developed a predictive model that includes criteria which influence their decisions to move or to stay, information that can be used to inform measures to prevent displacement from happening in the first place.

The model can also be used in other countries, particularly in the Northern Triangle of Central America. More advocacy, information and analysis on forced displacement associated with criminal and gang violence is needed, because it has shown concrete results in pushing policy agendas.

Questions from the audience brought up the need to engage national governments and local authorities, including those in urban areas that host IDPs, to participate in the development of solutions to displacement. Save the Children's toolkit is being reworked to better integrate local authorities in discussions and interventions. Schooling programmes for displaced children require engagement with ministries beyond those responsible for education, because issues and solutions cut across their mandates.

# UNDERSTANDING DISPLACEMENT – SCALE, SEVERITY, RISK AND IMPACTS

This session presented ways in which measuring the scale, severity, risk and impacts of displacement can become part of the solution. Luisa Pallone from the South American Network for Environmental Migrations (RESAMA) discussed Brazil's national system for data collection on disasters and how to make people displaced by such events more visible.

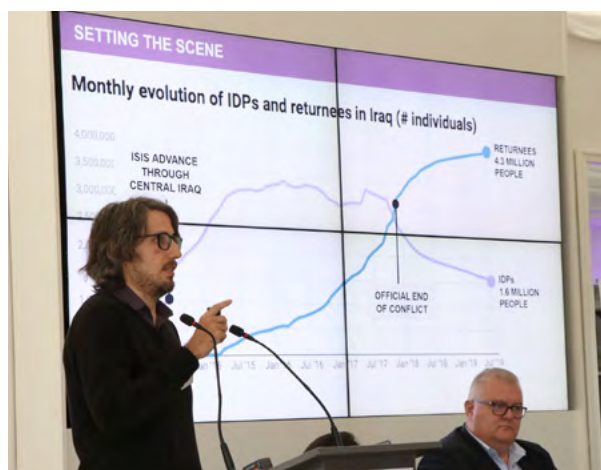


The publicly available online database is a significant step forward, but there is still room for improvement. This includes revising the terms to better reflect displacement impacts rather than infrastructure damage, harmonising the data collection process and consideration of the timespan of impacts of different hazards such as drought.

There is also a risk of double counting in the current database. This is the result of limited systematic monitoring of disaster events at the municipal level, and requires capacity building and more disaggregated data to eliminate. Nor do the terms currently used account for displacements. Instead they describe people “sheltered”, “evacuated”, “dislodged” or “affected”. These diverse terms and definitions should be standardised internationally to allow for a clearer and shared interpretation and analysis of disaster displacement.

Roger Guiu from Social Inquiry presented methods of monitoring physical and social conditions in places of origin and better understanding return patterns in Iraq. The organisation analysed IOM data to explore where IDPs chose not to return to, which in turn revealed the

conditions that determined such decisions. It concluded that areas with no returns had a more severe security score.



This severity index should be updated as much as possible so the data and findings can be compared over time, and a more contextual trends analysis behind the numbers carried out. The method should be dynamic to see how hotspots change over time. The index will also help to influence global frameworks on internal displacement and return intentions, as well as conversations about durable solutions and the SDGs, and stakeholders will be able to identify gaps in interventions.



Serge Stroobants from the Institute for Economics and Peace discussed the use of the Global Peace Index to understand displacement risk. A billion people live in areas that are at risk of climate change impacts, about half of whom also face low levels of peacefulness. Most



countries are at risk of both natural hazards and conflict or violence, and the institute analysed data and 250 indicators to determine that those that are more peaceful are also more resilient and have better environmental outcomes, performance on the SDGs and GDP growth.



Shankar Iyer from Facebook talked about the use of mobile-phone location data to improve understanding of disaster displacement. Facebook has created an online tool called GeoInsight, which is available to its not-for-profit partners. It is a secure tool for map sharing that has been used to assess the extent of displacement during and after events such as cyclone Fani in India and hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas, both in 2019. By using previous mobile information such as Facebook’s location history data, the tool can also be used to produce predictability models and analyse the different scales of displacement associated with a disaster event. This data can be used to paint a broad picture of the situation to inform relief efforts.

Hawa Adinanin Hasani from Humanitarian OpenStreetMap spoke about community mapping for flood resilience in Dar es Salaam. To be on a map is to be

acknowledged. It is important to ask what shapes peoples’ choices and why they live in a certain area. Detailed maps of flood-prone wards were created by conducting household surveys to develop a model of the city that can be used to predict flooding.



OpenStreetMap has also worked with ICRC to see how the data could be used for the latter’s relief efforts, and has conducted a waste management assessment of flood-prone areas of various Tanzanian cities. This gave waste management companies better data on the sector’s overall ecosystem, allowing them to make money.

One question from the online livestream of the session was about how Facebook safeguards its data from being used for the surveillance of displaced people by hostile governments or for commercial purposes. The data only covers disasters and is not produced in areas that suffer violence or conflict. Facebook’s agenda is to make the data more representative and inclusive.



# PREVENTION, MITIGATION AND SOLUTIONS – CONNECTING LOCAL AND NATIONAL EFFORTS

Panellists in the final session of the conference discussed local and national initiatives to prevent, reduce and end displacement. Nadia Siddiqui from Social Enquiry talked about the local integration of IDPs in Iraq, where return movements began to tail off in 2018. Beyond access to livelihoods, IDPs' perceptions and feelings should also be considered along with host communities' socio-ecological issues. Psychological aspects need to be measured to understand the processes of integration and belonging. Many Iraqi IDPs' places of refuge also experienced conflict.

Integration is a two-way street on which both IDPs and host communities need to adapt. Grievances and inequalities matter, and addressing them requires more than short-term interventions.



The study analysed the factors that influence IDPs' sense of belonging and host communities' acceptance of them, and found economic stability to be signifi-

Ambrose Mugisha from the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in Ethiopia reminded the audience that displacement is not only a rights issue that affects human dignity and environmental sustainability, but also a political issue. Pastoralists displaced by drought in Somali regional state lost all of their assets and income. UNDP is working to support the IDPs and their host communities through humanitarian assistance and longer-term initiatives to recover their livelihoods and build their resilience.





Programming for durable solutions should be government-led to ensure sustainability. Communities should also play a central role in the decision-making process and have ownership of the solutions. Unless the communities are supported in increasing their capabilities and resilience it will be difficult to address what is a complex situation.



Anne Davis from the UN Resident Coordinator's Office in Sudan presented a joint initiative with the Office of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs and the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS). Together they worked with communities on highly granular profiling exercises in urban and rural areas. The rural communities were consulted and provided with clear instructions on what they needed to address their situation. The international community was then able to see where the gaps were.

The analysis in urban areas was also successful and the authorities were initially very supportive, but they prevented the project team from going back to the communities to confirm the findings. This shows the importance of political buy-in. It is impossible to achieve durable solutions without government support, but IDPs and host communities must also be involved in their design.



Anicet Adjahossou from UNHCR discussed the situation in CAR, where 14 armed groups controlled 80 per cent of the territory until 2016, but the government has since led development plans for recovery and peace. Peacebuilding processes help to encourage the voluntary return of IDPs and refugees. Lessons were learnt from experiences in other countries, including Cameroon and Congo.

CAR validated a national strategy for durable solutions in 2019 in collaboration with the international commu-

nity. Peace agreements were signed that included the government's role in facilitating voluntary returns and reintegration. Tripartite agreements were also signed with UNHCR and neighbouring countries to facilitate the return of refugees, and more than 342,000 IDPs have returned to their places of origin in Bangui.



Tamar Bolkvadze from the Danish Refugee Council in Georgia spoke about the importance of stakeholders coordinating their work and including IDPs in decision making. Given the scale of displacement in Georgia, IDPs should be included in national and local action plans. Central government decisions about IDPs have to be implemented at the local level, which requires coordination between municipal and national authorities. The national government, however, does not always involve local authorities in the decision-making process.



Ezekiel Simperingham from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) stressed the importance of a global strategy to reinforce work on displacement associated with disasters and climate change. He also highlighted the need to create a connection between local communities and regional and national plans, particularly for relocations. IFRC recently started to deploy advisors on IDPs to countries such as Bangladesh dealing with national emergencies. They are working on a preparedness and response checklist designed to inform stronger domestic laws that include a focus on human mobility and displacement.



# THE ROAD TO 2030 – WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS?

Alexandra Bilak closed the conference with an overview of the key takeaways. Before we think of systemic solutions, we first need to think about immediate needs, particularly when it comes to disasters. Security is always a priority, especially for people on the move. Protection issues are also key and access to documentation should be ensured. Addressing IDPs' immediate needs should form the backbone of any durable solution.

Internal displacement is the result of many positive and negative feedback loops within a complex system. Solutions must cut across sectors and be designed with a solid understanding of the complexities involved. Local integration will only happen when all of IDPs' multidimensional needs have been addressed. This also underscores the role of local authorities. Solutions need to be as tailored and comprehensive as the problems they seek to address are diverse and complex.

IDPs need to be front and centre of all initiatives, as all of the panels clearly showed. They are our clients, and we must listen to them.

Normative frameworks are also important. Colombia did not reinvent the wheel but used mechanisms from the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. Other international frameworks also exist, including the SDGs. If normative frameworks are not implemented, however, they are useless.

The final point is about data. We need to acknowledge how important data and systems for managing it are in responding to IDPs' needs and supporting them in achieving lasting solutions to their displacement. They are needed to set goals, targets, indicators and objectives.

Today's conference has shown that we have a solid knowledge base that we can build on, but solutions will not happen without government leadership. We need to keep sharing evidence and lessons, and this is what IDMC is about. We compile knowledge and data and make it available. Efforts to address internal displacement over the next ten years should focus on reaching agreement with governments about how best to advance toward durable solutions together.





The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) is the world's authoritative source of data and analysis on internal displacement. Since our establishment in 1998, as part of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), we have offered a rigorous, independent and trusted service to the international community. Our work informs policy and operational decisions that improve the lives of the millions of people living in internal displacement, or at risk of becoming displaced in the future.

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