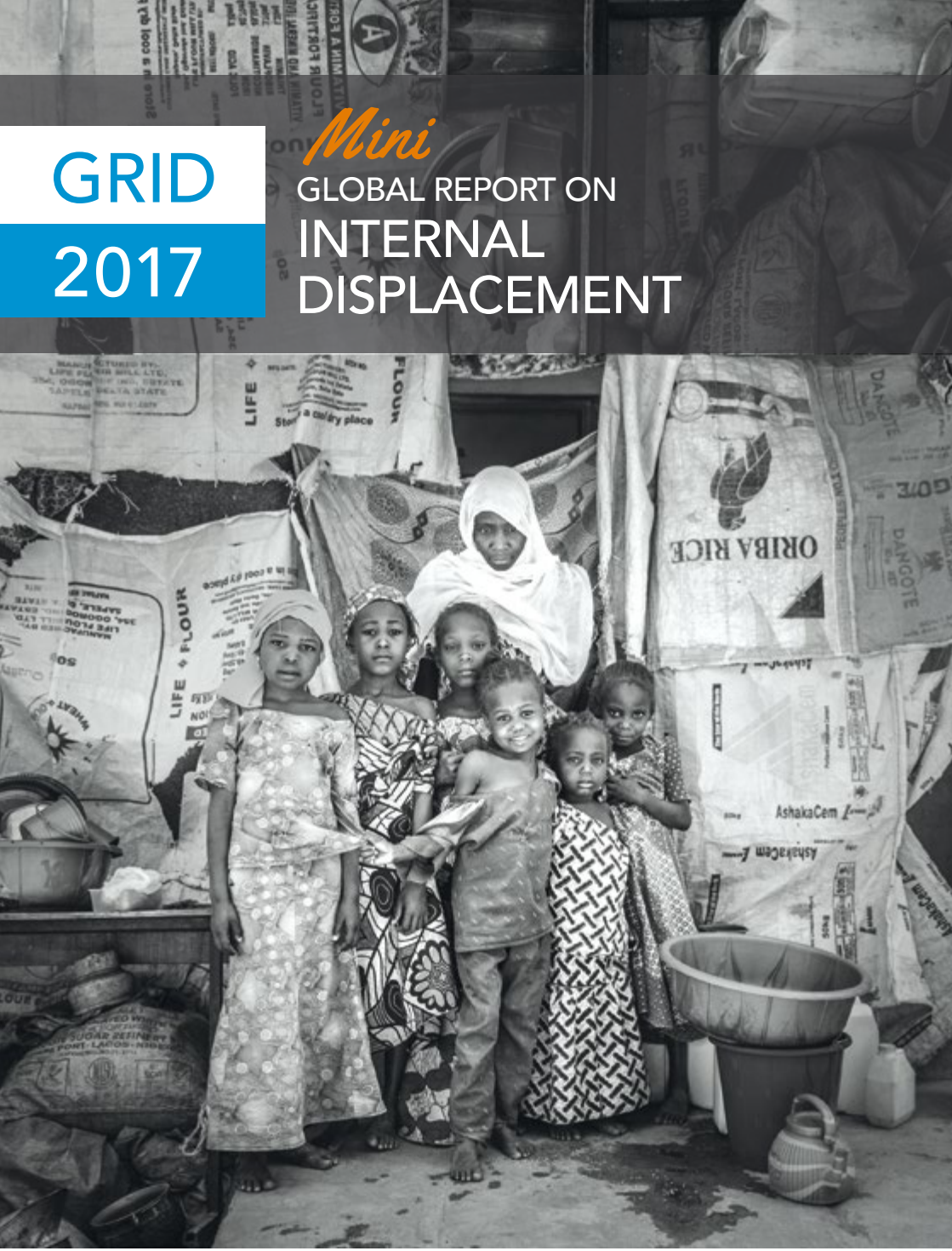
GRID 2017

Mini

GLOBAL REPORT ON

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT



iDMC internal displacement monitoring centre

NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL NRC

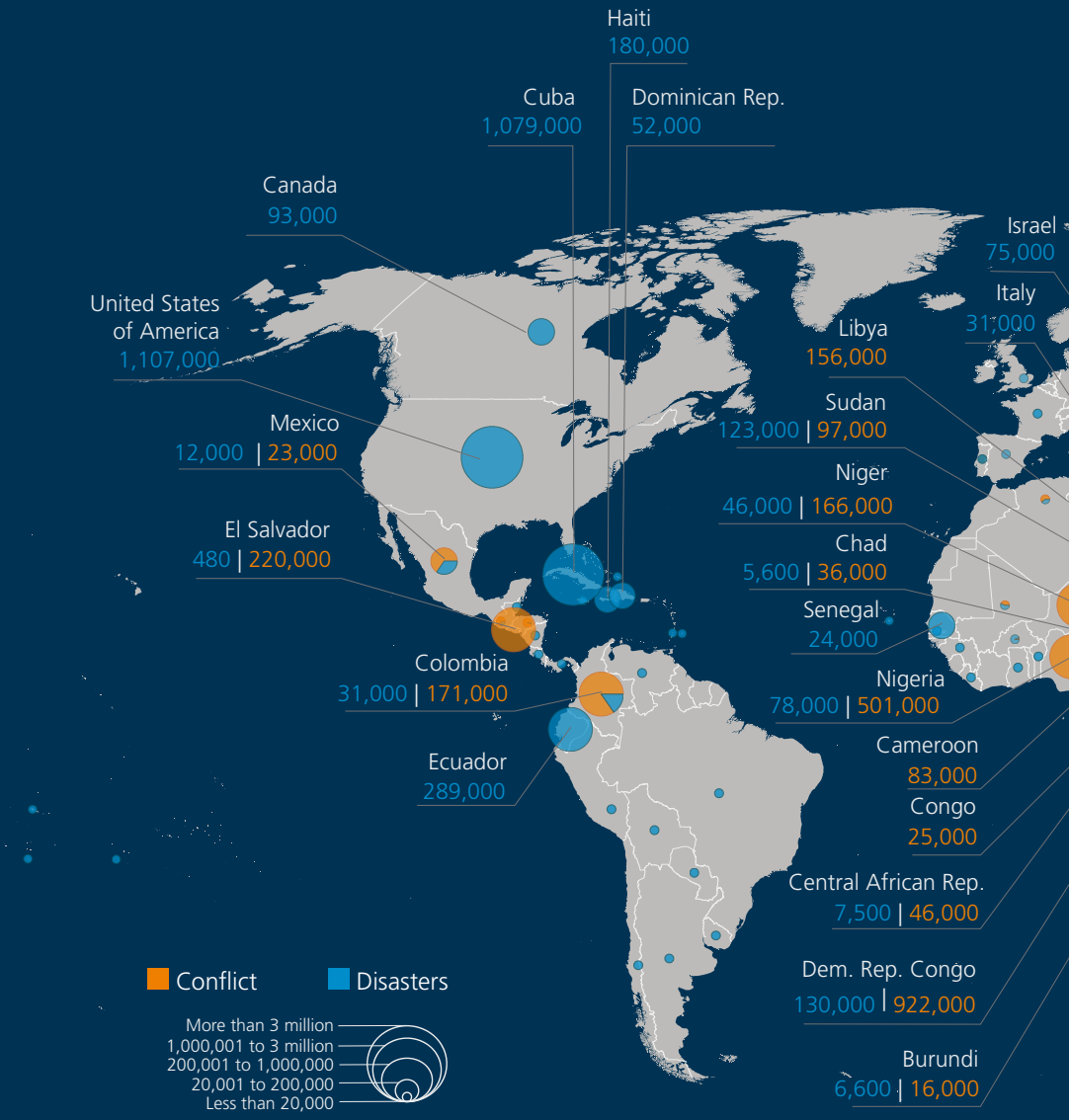
Mini

GLOBAL REPORT ON

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

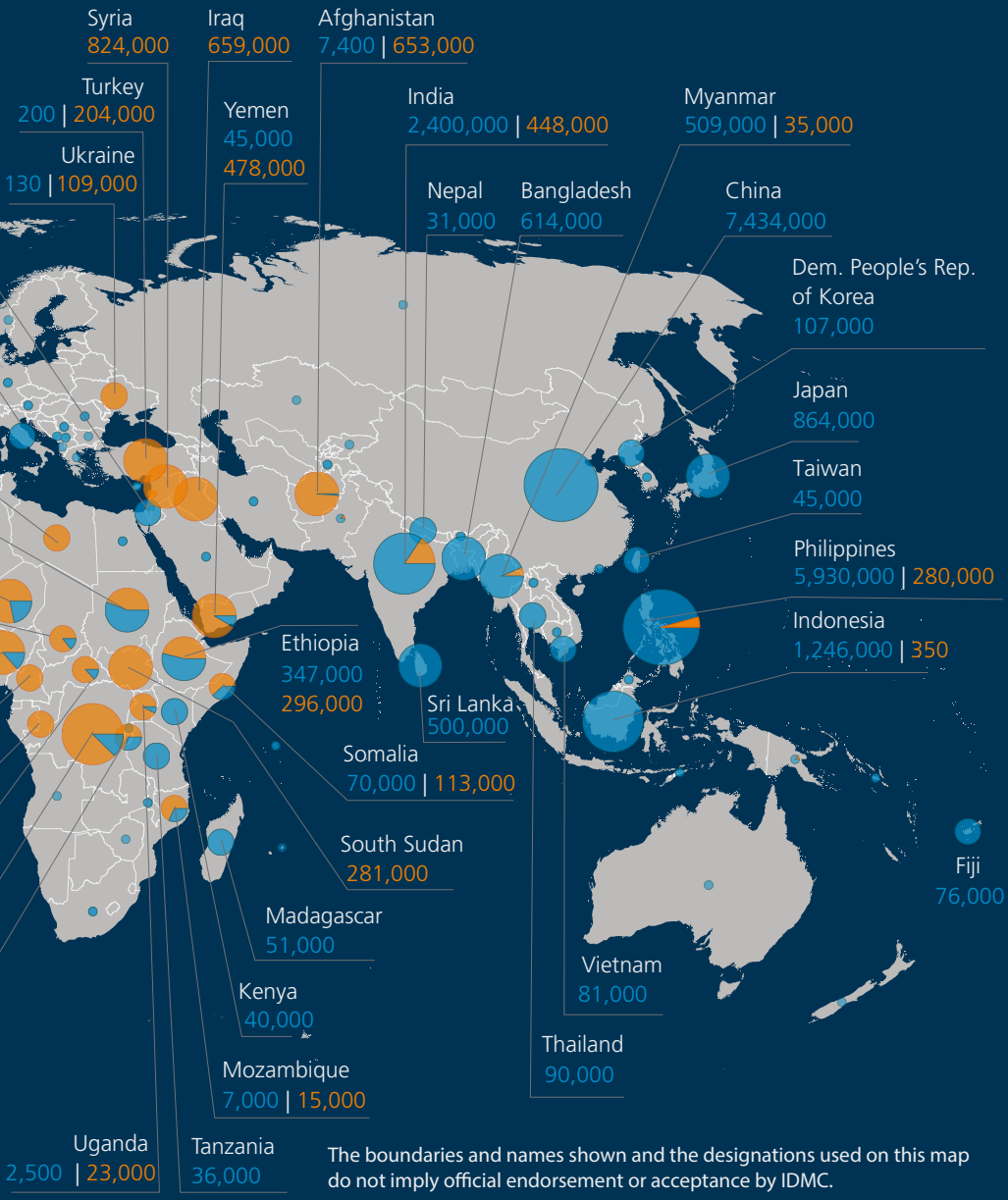
MAY 2017

New displacements by conflict



Country names and figures are shown only when the total new displacements value exceeds 20,000.

and disasters in 2016



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IDMC.

2016 was a year of stark contrast between the attention given to refugees and migrants and the lack of political concern for the millions of people displaced inside their country by conflict, violence and disasters. This year's GRID seeks to redress the imbalance and put the spotlight back on internal displacement as a key challenge of our times. The scale of this phenomenon, and its profound implications for entire communities and societies, highlight the importance of keeping it high on the global policy agenda.

Although progress has been made over the past three decades in raising the profile of internally displaced people (IDPs), the grim figures set out in this report highlight that we are still far from meeting their needs in a satisfactory manner. The evidence underscores the need for a long-overdue paradigm shift from an almost exclusive focus on immediate needs to understanding the interwoven causes and structural drivers of displacement, and from solutions driven by institutional mandates to joint investments to reduce vulnerability and mitigate longer-term impacts.

Without such a shift, countries will continue to struggle to reduce the economic and social impacts of internal displacement, and the number of people whose lives have been blighted around the world will only continue to rise.

A newly displaced woman walks with two children at a check point in Qayyara, south of Mosul, Iraq. Photo © UNICEF/UN040092/ Romenzi, October 2016

KEY MESSAGES

1 **Significant new internal displacement by conflict and disasters takes place every year, mainly in low and lower-middle income countries.** Those affected join the many millions of people already living in displacement, reflecting the intractable nature of the phenomenon and governments' inability to cope.

2 **Some countries drop off the international agenda only to re-emerge a few years later with large numbers of new displacements.** This was the case in 2016 for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and highlights how the failure to address the underlying causes of conflict and displacement results in recurrent crises.

3 Despite the fact that IDPs outnumber refugees by around two to one, **internal displacement has been sidelined in recent global policy processes and is overshadowed by the current focus on refugees and migrants.** There is a relationship between internal and cross-border movement, both in terms of flight and return, but its nature and extent need to be better understood.

4 **There is a need for more development spending** to be allocated to reducing existing vulnerabilities and future risk, and mitigating the longer-term impacts of internal displacement. Current humanitarian budgets are not designed to respond to the complex needs of IDPs caught up in protracted, cyclical and repeated displacement.

5 **Displacement will continue to have a major impact unless the drivers of poverty, environmental change and state fragility are addressed.** Many more political and financial resources should be invested in conflict prevention, disaster risk management, state-building and diplomacy to address the causes of displacement crises.

6 A more explicit focus on displacement risk presents an **opportunity to link policies and programmes more closely to the broader global development agenda.** This requires greater attention to displacement in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the New Urban Agenda if commitments are to be realised.

7 There have been numerous demands for **rigorous and transparent data on internal displacement, which is needed to establish a global baseline and measure progress toward targets.** Displacement is rarely monitored from its outset to its end, however, which means that global figures do not reflect the true scale, nature and patterns of the phenomenon.

8 **States are not investing sufficiently in the collection and publication of credible data on internal displacement.** This severely limits their capacity to address IDPs' needs, and our ability to paint a comprehensive picture of internal displacement worldwide.

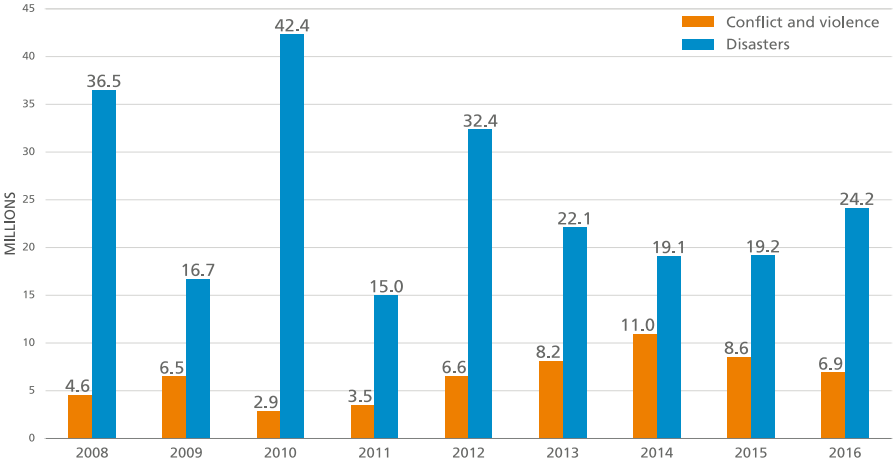
PERSISTENT PROBLEM, DEVASTATING IMPACTS

There were 31.1 million new cases of internal displacement by conflict, violence and disasters in 2016. This is the equivalent of one person forced to flee every second.

Disasters continue to cause the highest numbers of new displacements each year, but the number of people displaced by conflict has also been on an overall upward trend over the last decade.

The scale of the phenomenon and its increasing complexity have profound implications for individuals, communities and societies. Some families in Syria have been uprooted as many as 25 times over six years of armed conflict.[1] Six months after hurricane Matthew flattened entire communities in Haiti and displaced 175,000 people, a food security crisis has developed, adding to the country's pre-existing vulnerabilities. Murder, torture, forced disappearances and sexual violence have given rise to high levels of displacement in El Salvador, putting the country second in terms of new displacements relative to population size.

Figure 1: Total annual new displacements since 2008



Source: IDMC

HIGH RISK, LOW CAPACITY

Most new displacement in 2016 took place in environments characterised by high exposure to natural and human-made hazards, significant socio-economic vulnerability, and weak institutions and infrastructure. Of the 6.9 million new displacements by conflict, more than 95 per cent took place in high risk contexts.[2]

This implies that many of those displaced in 2016 will find themselves living in protracted displacement, because governments with low coping capacity will struggle to respond to IDPs' many and often urgent needs. The same countries can also be expected to produce new displacements in the years to come unless overall conditions improve, suggesting that the upward trend is likely to continue.

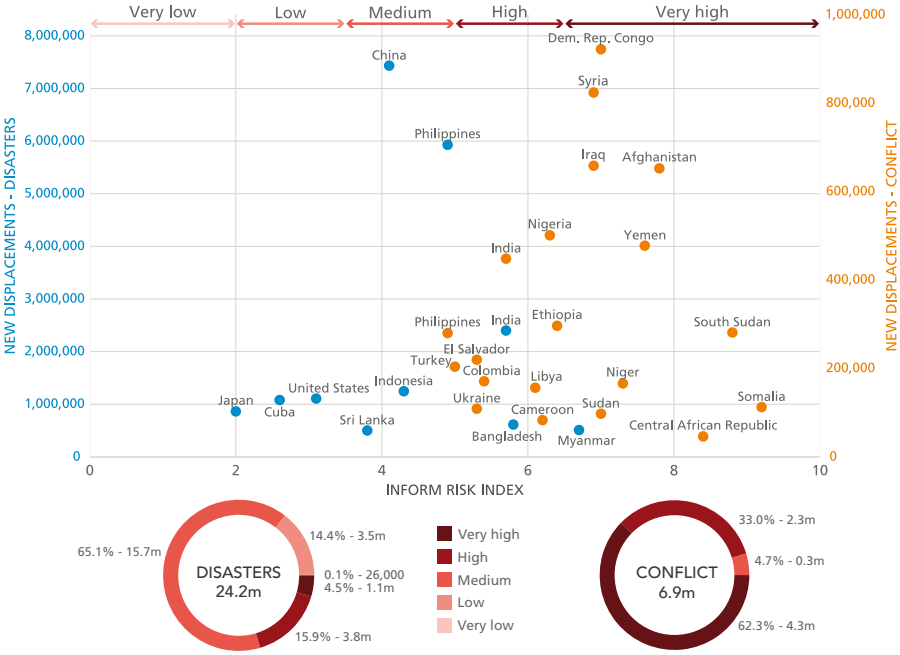
New IDMC research also suggests that displacement by disasters will continue at a similar if not higher scale in the future. The structural causes of vulnerability and exposure of populations in hazard-prone countries result in high levels of displacement risk, and the future impacts of climate change on the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events and environmental degradation can be expected to increase it further.

Low capacity to address underlying drivers is mirrored in the way displacement is distributed across the globe. More than half of the displacement by disasters in 2016 took place in low and lower-middle income countries, and two-thirds of the world's conflict-related IDPs, or 27 million people, live in low and lower middle-income countries weakened by decades of war. Not only

WHAT ARE WE COUNTING?

The GRID presents two types of headline figures: new displacements by conflict and disasters during the course of the year and the total number of people displaced by conflict at year's end. We commonly refer to "new displacements" or "incidents" and "cases" of displacement as this may include individuals who have been displaced more than once. Where we refer to the total number of people displaced, this is to mean single incidents or cases affecting one person. This can be the case in the context of specific disaster events and is also used to present the total number of people displaced by conflict at year's end.

Figure 2: New displacements by conflict and disasters in 2016, disaggregated by INFORM risk levels in the countries concerned



Source: IDMC, with INFORM data

are governments in these countries, many of which are in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, unwilling or unable to prevent displacement, they also have little capacity to meet IDPs' protection and assistance needs.

The fact that upper middle-income countries host around 13 million conflict-related IDPs overturns the development community's perception of violence as mainly associated with low-income countries, and has prompted new response strategies from organisations such as the World Bank. The exposure of populations in densely populated areas to displacement by disasters is also evident in over 10 million displacements that occurred in upper-middle and high income countries. These included the US and Japan, which are regularly among the countries with the highest figures, but also – more unusually – Israel, where wildfires displaced 75,000 people or one in 100 of the country's population.

COMMON DRIVERS, MANY CAUSES

Clear-cut distinctions between conflict and disasters as the immediate causes of internal displacement are increasingly difficult to uphold. Separating the many underlying and interlinked drivers of the conflicts and disasters that result in forced displacement is even more challenging. These complexities have been recognised before, but current data collection and analysis do not reflect them, and quantitative research remains limited.

Data from the Horn of Africa suggests that recurring drought, poor access to basic services and infrastructure, lack of livelihood options and ongoing conflict and insecurity converge in a toxic mix that leaves highly vulnerable and exposed people with no other option but to move. In Ethiopia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Somalia and South Sudan, the confluence of different drivers and causes of new displacement in 2016 was complex enough that distinguishing between final triggers was impossible. Consideration should be given to reporting displacement in such contexts across multiple drivers and causes.

Ethiopia is experiencing one of the most severe droughts in half a century related to the effects of El Niño. Photo: NRC, April 2016

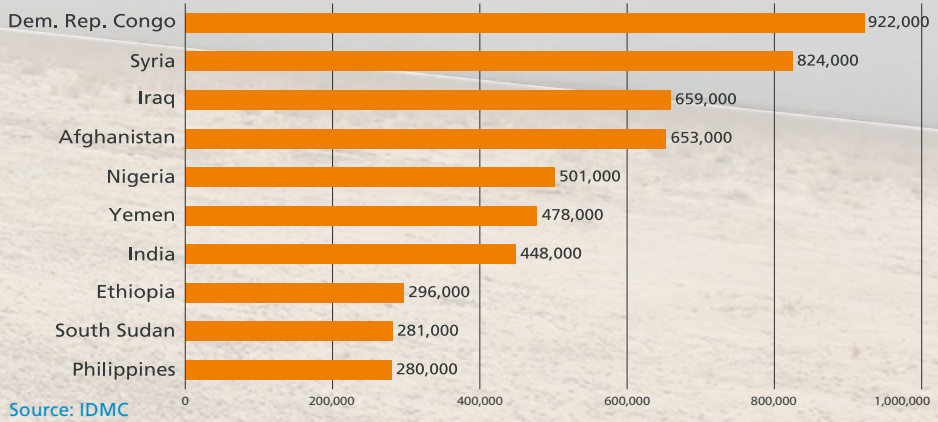
Displacement by conflict and violence in 2016

There were 6.9 million new internal displacements by conflict and violence in 37 countries in 2016, primarily in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. This is fewer than in 2015, but the figures still indicate an overall rising trend over the past decade. An average of 5.3 million new displacements a year has been recorded since 2003, roughly equivalent to 15,000 people being forced to flee every day.

	New displacements Jan – Dec 2016	Total number of IDPs as of the end of 2016
CONFLICT	6.9 million	40.3 million
DISASTERS	24.2 million	?

The decrease in new displacements compared to 2015 is largely the result of a fall in the number of new displacements in Iraq, Syria and Yemen, countries that accounted for more than half of the total new displacement by conflict in 2015. This should not, however, overshadow significant new displacement not only in these countries, but also in the DRC, Afghanistan and Nigeria, and high levels of displacement associated with drug and criminal violence in Central America.

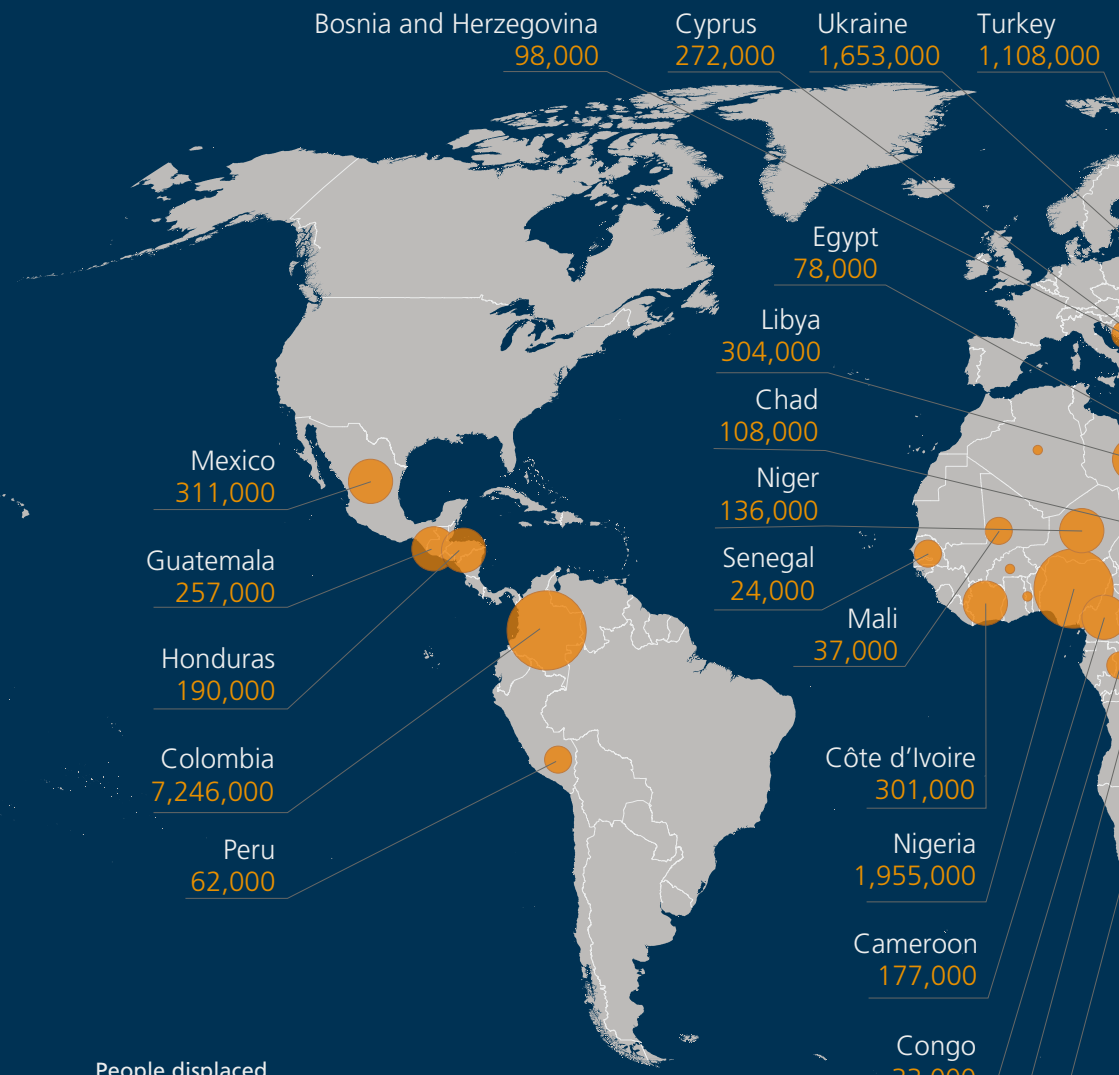
Figure 3: Countries with most new displacements by conflict and violence in 2016



Source: IDMC

People internally displaced by

as of 31 December 2016



Country names and figures are shown only when the total value exceeds 20,000 people displaced.

conflict and violence

(Total: 40.3 million)

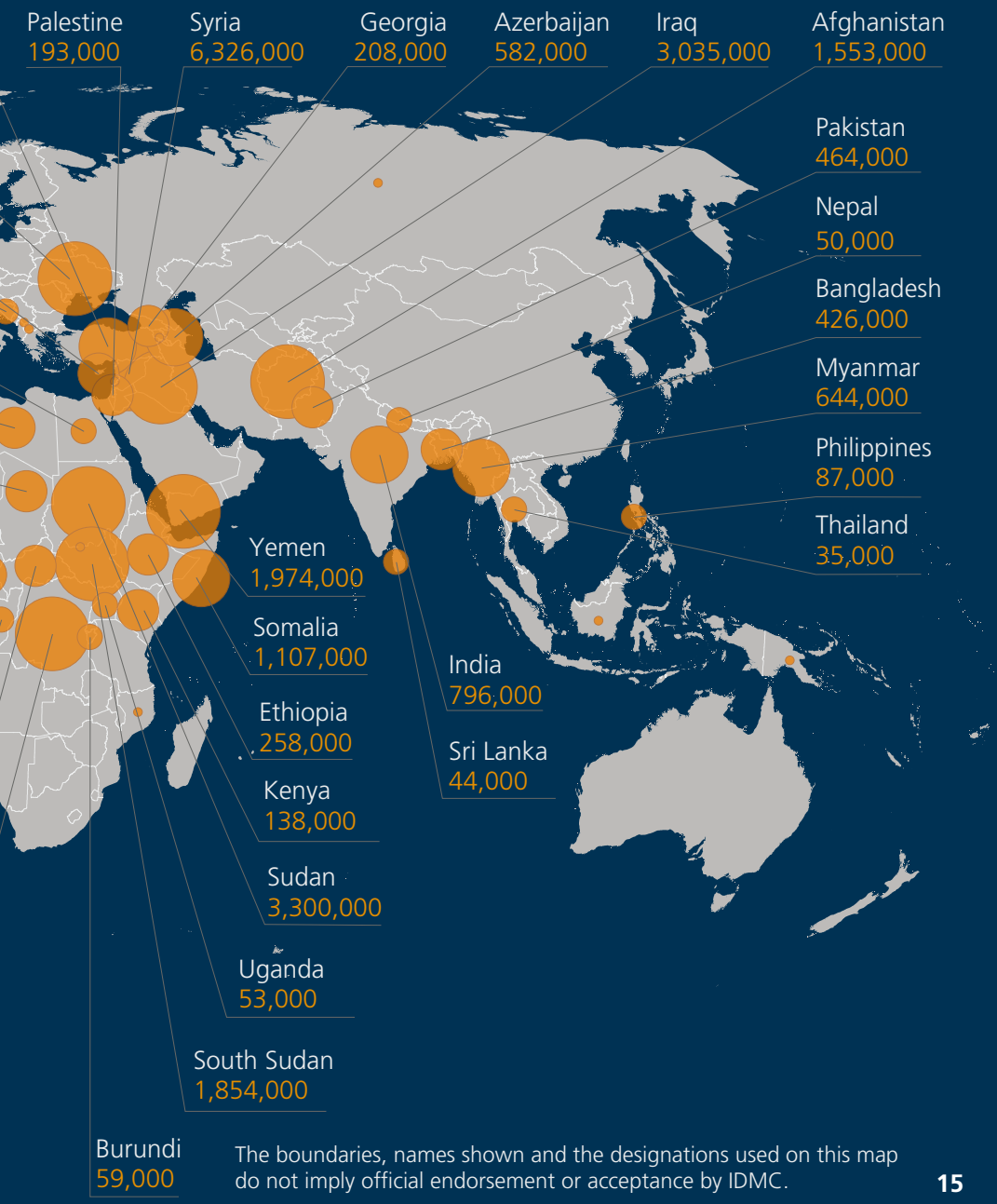


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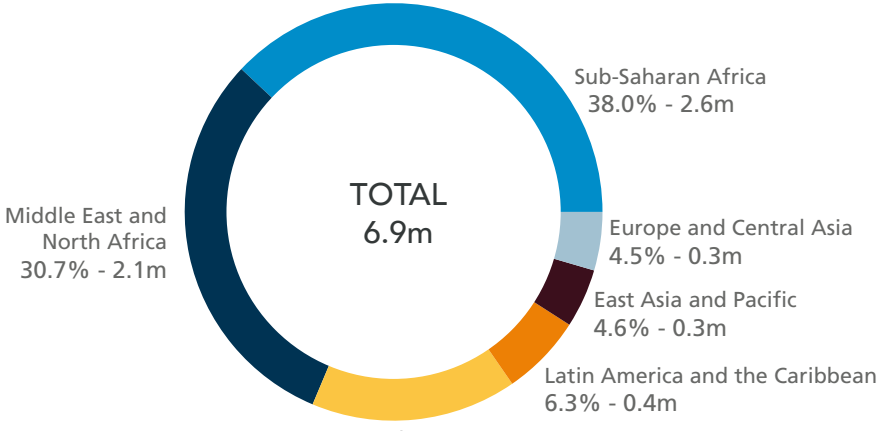
Figure 4: New displacements by conflict and violence by World Bank-defined region in 2016



Source: IDMC, with World Bank data

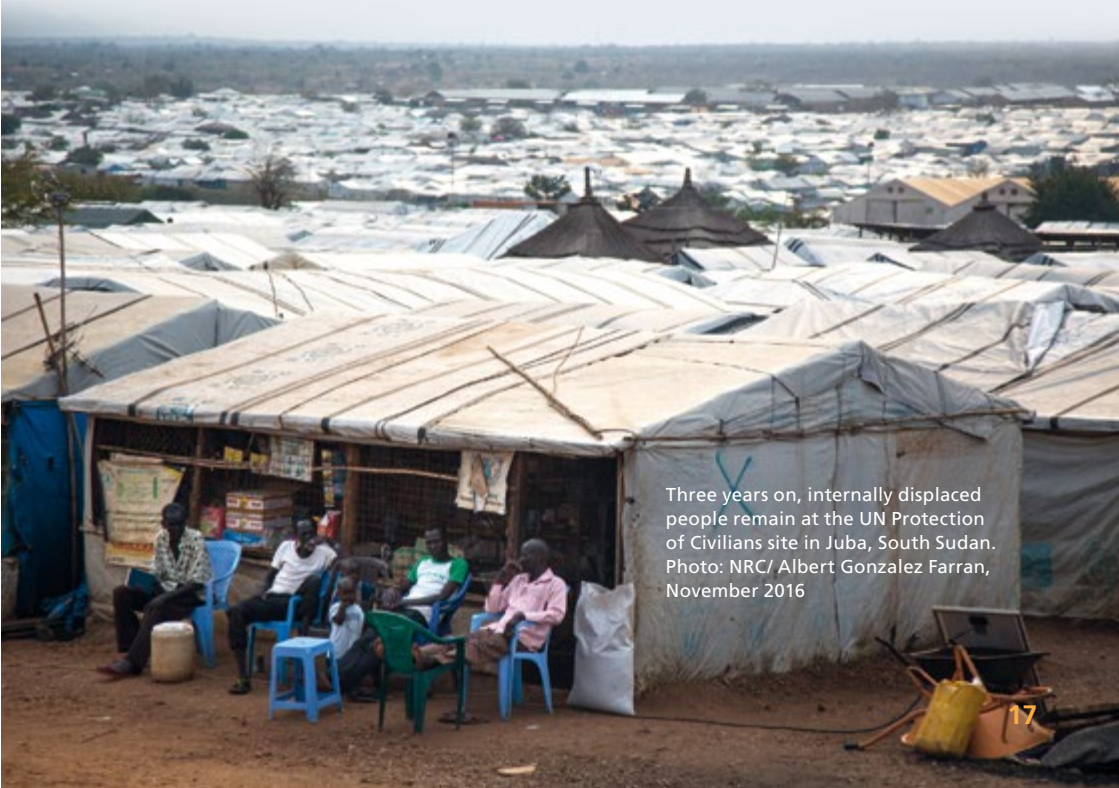
At the end of 2016 a total of 40.3 million people were living in displacement as a result of conflict and violence. Over three-quarters of the world's IDPs, or more than 30 million people, live in just ten countries. Of these, Colombia, DRC, Iraq, Sudan and South Sudan have been among the ten with the world's largest displaced populations every year since 2003. This reflects the intractability of conflicts and the protracted nature of displacement, most notably in the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa.

The upward global trend in the number of IDPs is also at least partly explained by inconsistent monitoring and accounting for caseloads over time. The lack of regular and updated information precludes us from measuring progress toward sustainable solutions, and continues to swell the global figures each year. Colombia's consistently high figures over the last 20 years, for example, are due in part to the fact that IDPs are never taken off the official registry.

Sub-Saharan Africa: overtaking the Middle East

Overall, sub-Saharan Africa overtook the Middle East in 2016 as the region with the highest level of new displacement by conflict. DRC had the highest numbers of new displacements in 2016. The figure of 922,000 was a rise of nearly 50 per cent on the previous year, driven by ongoing conflict in the provinces of North and South Kivu and an increase in inter-communal clashes in southern and central regions. Many people were forced to flee more than once. The Kivus account for 55 per cent of the 2.2 million people now displaced in DRC. Despite the escalating violence and displacement, which aggravates an already severe humanitarian situation after almost two decades of conflict, DRC remains largely off the international radar.

More than 500,000 new displacements were reported in Nigeria. Violence committed by Boko Haram and military operations against the group continued to plague the economically deprived Lake Chad basin, while the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan also deepened in 2016. Here more than 281,000 new displacements were reported, some in areas previously considered stable.



Three years on, internally displaced people remain at the UN Protection of Civilians site in Juba, South Sudan. Photo: NRC/ Albert Gonzalez Farran, November 2016

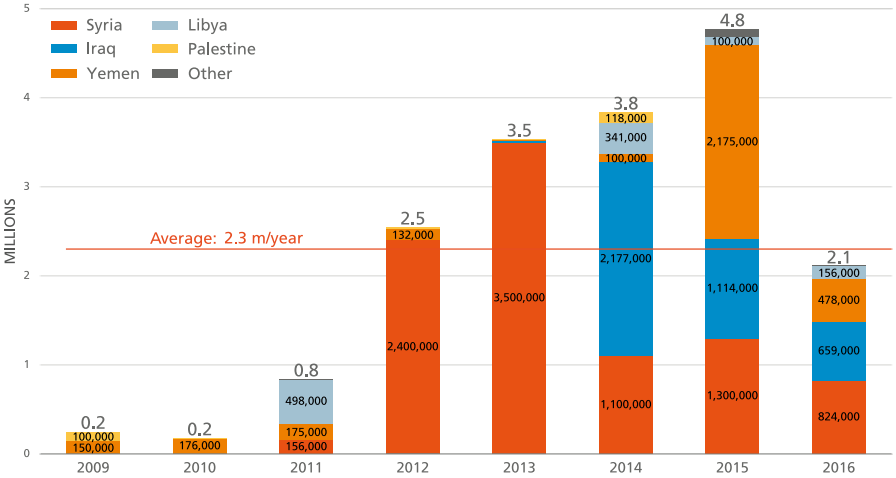
The Middle East: less displacement, but unceasing conflict

Following a peak in 2015, when the Middle East and north Africa experienced significantly more new displacement than the rest of the world combined, there were 1.97 million new incidents reported in 2016, a return to 2012 levels. The reduction is probably the result of a number of factors, including the relative stability of frontlines, restrictions in freedom of movement, and sieges in cities such as Aleppo and Mosul, which may have meant fewer people were able to flee.

That said, there were still 824,000 new displacements – an average of more than 2,200 a day – in Syria, where after six years of conflict, IDPs' conditions are dire and repeated displacements have become the norm.[3] The pace of displacement also continued at an alarming rate in neighbouring Iraq, where almost 660,000 new incidents were reported in 2016, as the government and its allies launched nine major military campaigns to retake territory from Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.[4]

More than three million Iraqis have fled their homes since 2014, but increasing numbers are also returning to their places of origin as the government regains control of territory. More than a million people are thought to have done so last year. There are concerns, however, about how voluntary and sustainable many returns are.[5]

Figure 5: New displacement by conflict and violence in the Middle East and North Africa, 2009 to 2016



Source: IDMC

Nearly two years of conflict and displacement have also devastated Yemen, pushing the country toward social, economic and institutional collapse. At least 478,000 new displacements were reported in 2016, linked mainly to two waves of violence in March and May. Displacement dynamics in Yemen are highly volatile, but our estimate does not accurately capture multiple displacements and back-and-forth movements. If these were quantified and reported, the figure may exceed 750,000. Significant numbers of returns were also reported.

Under-reported: displacement by generalised violence

Although armed conflict is the most visible and reported cause of displacement, and the only one to trigger the application of international humanitarian law, the consequences of generalised violence can be equally devastating and deadly for civilians. Twelve per cent of new displacements in 2016 were associated with criminal, political or communal violence across the world. From gang violence in Central America to post-electoral violence in Burundi, around 850,000 incidents were recorded. More than half of these were associated with criminal violence, but this type of displacement is not systematically monitored and reported, in large part because many IDPs are reluctant to reveal their situation for fear of reprisals.

We estimate that nearly 220,000 people were forced to flee generalised violence in El Salvador in 2016, which puts the country second in terms of displacement relative to population size. Given high rates of urban violence and homicide in some of the world's major cities, it is highly likely that many more people are displaced globally than the current data reflects. The dearth of information also means responses are weak and many people are left to fend for themselves, making the question of how to deal with the phenomenon a pressing one.

Displacement by sudden-onset disasters in 2016

There were 24.2 million new displacements associated with major natural hazards across 118 countries and territories in 2016, more than three times as many as those by conflict. Almost 230 million such displacements have been recorded since 2008, an average of 25.3 million a year. Five very large events triggered the displacement of between one to three million people each in 2016, and 26 events displaced between 100,000 and 999,000 people. Together, the 31 events accounted for 86 per cent of all displacement by disasters during the year.

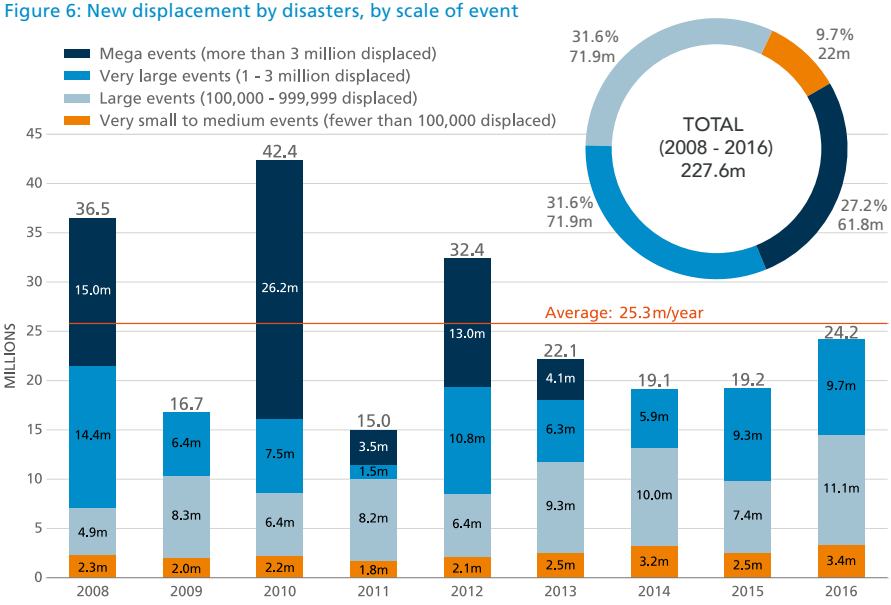
Large-scale disasters drive much of the variation in figures from year to year, but a meaningful analysis of trends is not possible because data on those

displaced is only collected for limited periods. That said, if mega-events are excluded from calculations over the last nine years, the figures for 2016 are the highest since 2008.

It is currently impossible to estimate the total number of people displaced by disasters as of the end of each year. With more monitoring and data collection over time, however, IDMC may be able to establish such headcounts in the future. For example, more than 600,000 Nepalese households are still thought to be waiting for permanent housing two years after the 2015 Gorkha earthquake, which displaced more than 2.6 million people.[6] In contrast, the number of people reported as displaced by typhoon Nock-Ten in the Philippines in December 2016 decreased from 2.6 million evacuees to 230,000 people staying in evacuation centres six days later, to only 368 a month after the event.[7]

Investment is needed to improve the reporting of displacement over longer periods after disasters, to allow for better analyses of these patterns and trajectories. Such information is vital to understand how variables such as hazards, exposure and vulnerability affect the scale and duration of displacement and the severity of its impacts. This in turn would help to ensure that those affected receive the protection and assistance they need, and that the risk of future displacement is reduced.

Figure 6: New displacement by disasters, by scale of event



Source: IDMC

The flood and landslides in the Ayeyarwaddy and Bago regions of Myanmar nearly destroyed Daw Tin Ngwe's house. Her crops were badly affected by the flood. Photo: NRC/Hla Yamin Elan, October 2016

Extreme weather events and acute vulnerability

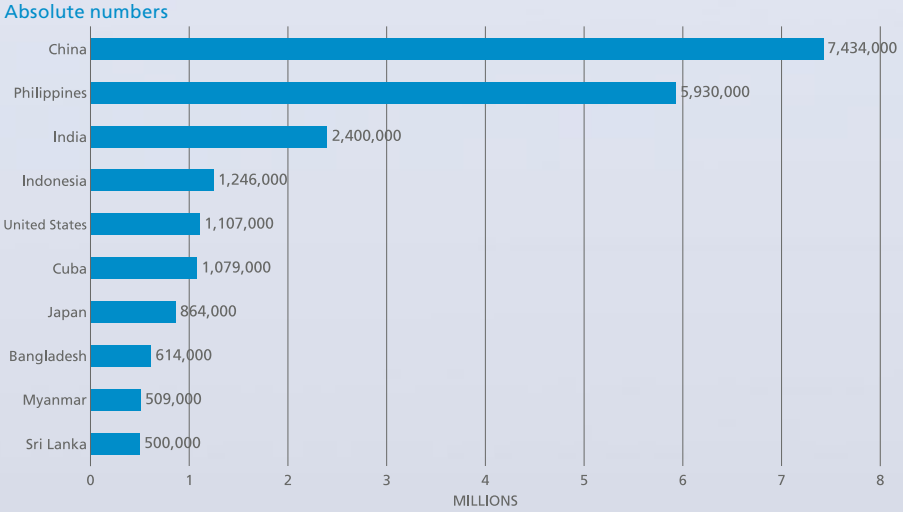
Ninety-eight per cent of new displacements associated with disasters in 2016 were triggered by climate or weather-related hazards such as storms, floods, wildfires and severe winter conditions.

The ten largest displacement events in absolute terms were all weather-related. Floods accounted for the majority of displacements in previous years, but in 2016 more than half, or 13.6 million, were caused by storms. Storms triggered seven of the ten largest displacement events in absolute terms, and nine out of ten relative to population size.

East Asia and the Pacific accounted for two-thirds of the displacement associated with disasters. There were 16.4 million new displacements across the region as a whole in 2016, almost double the number for 2015, and 7.4 million in China alone. The country experienced its wettest year on record and the worst floods in the Yangtze river basin since 1999.[8]

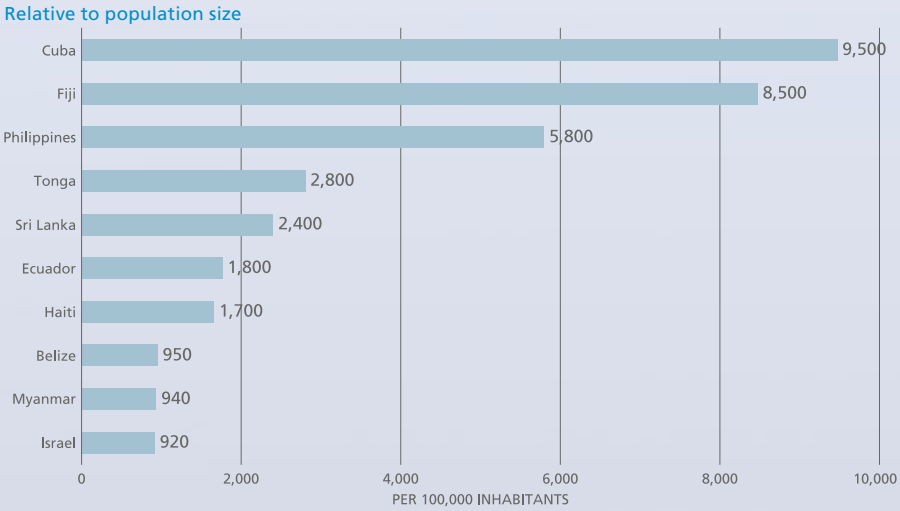
New displacements in South Asia more than halved compared with 2015, from 7.9 million to 3.6 million. India accounted for 67 per cent of the total, mostly the result of monsoon flooding in Bihar which caused 1.6 million displacements.

Figure 7: Countries with the most new displacements by disasters in 2016



China, the Philippines and India experienced the highest number of displacements in absolute terms in 2016, but the vulnerability of small, low-lying coastal and island countries to tropical storms and flooding becomes clear when displacement is considered relative to population size. Fiji and Tonga in the Pacific, and Haiti, Belize, and Cuba in the Caribbean were among the ten countries with the largest per capita displacements.

More than a million people, or nearly ten per cent of Cuba's population, were evacuated in six eastern provinces ahead of Hurricane Matthew, while in Fiji Cyclone Winston – the country's first category five storm – displaced more than 62,000 people. Winston also forced 3,000 people to flee their homes in Tonga.



There were no sub-Saharan African countries among the ten with most people displaced in both absolute terms and relative to population. Significant sudden-onset disasters did take place though, displacing around 1 million people and compounding the impacts of other hazards, including conflict, drought, coastal erosion and environmental degradation.

Along the Fukushima coast, enormous walls are being constructed to reduce the danger of tsunamis similar to that of 11 March 2011. Photo: IFRC/Masaya Noda, February 2016

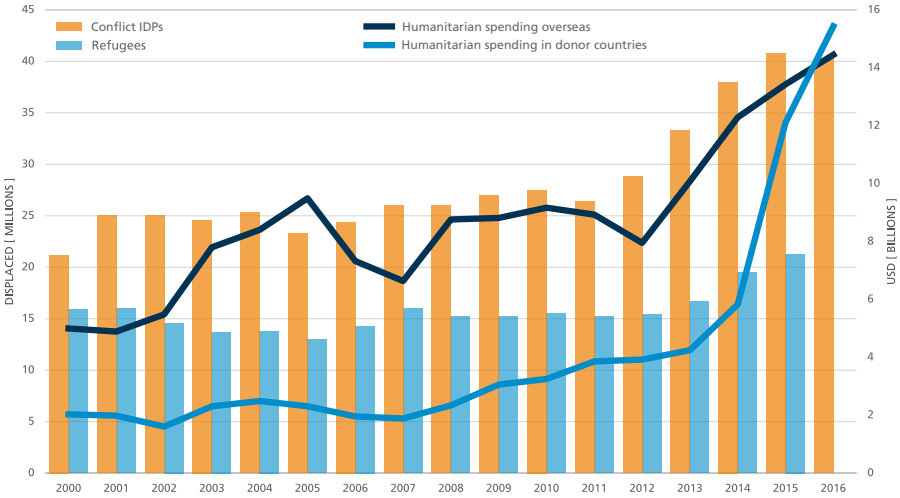
TODAY'S IDPs, TOMORROW'S REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS?

There have been roughly twice as many IDPs as refugees in recent years, and the gap between their numbers has been growing since 1997. People who flee conflict or persecution across an international border are eligible for globally recognised protection, but IDPs' fates lie in the hands of their own governments, some of whom are unwilling or unable to assist or protect them. In some cases they may have caused their displacement in the first place.

In contrast with these realities, internal displacement was largely side-lined in recent global policy processes and is overshadowed by the current focus on refugees and migrants. A more comprehensive approach is required that examines the causes and structural drivers common to both internal and cross-border displacement, and the push and pull factors that lie behind people's decisions to flee internally or abroad. There is an urgent need to prevent forced displacement, and to protect and assist all those who do flee and support them in achieving durable solutions, irrespective of borders.

A pickup truck filled with Afghans leaving for neighbouring Iran makes its way through the rough Nimrozi landscape. Photo: NRC/ Jim Huylebroek, August 2016

Figure 8: Refugees and IDPs displaced by conflict and violence, 1990 to 2016



Source: IDMC, with UNCHR and UNRWA for refugee data (2016 figures not yet available)

It is important that efforts to better understand when and why IDPs flee abroad are not used to legitimise the closing of borders or the adoption of policies to contain them in their own country. People have a fundamental right to freedom of movement both within and beyond their own country, and those who face threats to their lives and safety because of conflict and persecution have the right to seek asylum elsewhere.[9]

IDPs who cross borders: a scant evidence base

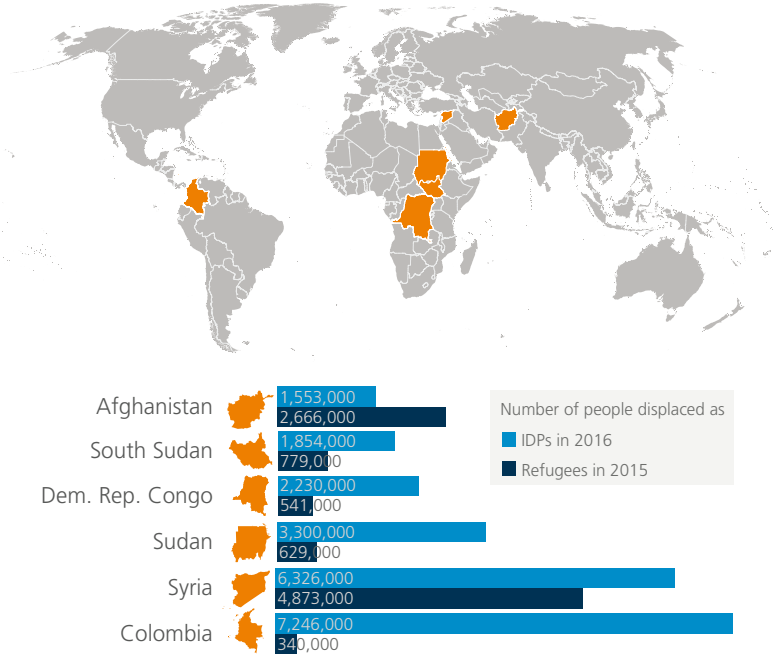
It is often assumed that many refugees were at some point internally displaced at the beginning of their journey,[10] but there is insufficient data and the relationship between internal and cross-border displacement is poorly understood. The importance of investigating it further cannot be overstated, not only to set the global agenda and for the purposes of national planning and preparedness, but because fleeing across borders may be IDPs' last resort.

Displacement is usually a survival strategy for people with the means and opportunity to escape, and is often a complex process involving more than one episode. People's movement varies over time and depends on a range of factors including immediate security risks, migratory histories and patterns, social and economic networks and the accessibility of safe areas. Families and communities often employ a range of strategies to spread risk and opportunities across different people and places.

A small number of case studies points to high numbers of refugees who were internally displaced before fleeing abroad. A survey of Afghans and Syrians interviewed in Greece in early 2016 suggested that 55 and 85 per cent respectively had previously been IDPs, refugees in other countries or another type of migrant before arriving in Europe.[11] A study of female refugees from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras indicates that two-thirds had tried to find safety in their own country before fleeing further afield.[12]

Of the ten countries that produced the most refugees in 2015 and IDPs in 2016, six – Afghanistan, Colombia, DRC, South Sudan, Sudan and Syria – were also among the ten with the largest numbers of IDPs. Displacement in Syria in particular highlights the connection between human suffering inside a country's borders and exodus abroad. More than half of the country's pre-war population of 22 million has been displaced, and reports suggest that some families have moved as many as 25 times. Increasingly desperate for safety, many eventually make the perilous journey abroad.

Figure 9: Countries with high numbers of IDPs and producing significant refugee flows



Source: IDMC, with UNHCR data

Why do IDPs cross borders?

For those able to attain a degree of safety in their own countries, IDPs' lack of access to livelihoods, sufficient income and basic services appear to be primary factors in deciding to move abroad. This was found to be the case for families preparing to leave Iraq, a third of whom were IDPs.[13] Pull factors tend to mirror push factors. They include potential economic opportunities and the prospect of services such as education and healthcare. Social networks, including the reunion of family members, are also a significant pull factor.

IDPs who flee beyond their own countries for reasons other than conflict, violence or persecution do not fit the legal definition of a refugee and, as a result, are unlikely to be monitored. The limited evidence available supports the assumption that, while numbers may be significant in some cases, far fewer people in this category flee across borders than internally.

Factors that drive people to flee disasters beyond their own country appear similar to those for people fleeing conflict and violence – the extent of the damage wrought, poor access to basic services and recovery assistance, and the proximity and porosity of the nearest borders. Those who do so tend only to flee to neighbouring countries or within the same region.

Returning refugees, tomorrow's IDPs?

Along with local integration and resettlement, return is considered a durable solution to the refugee cycle, but evidence suggests some returnees become internally displaced if conditions are unsuitable. According to the World Bank, 46 per cent of large-scale returns between 2000 and 2016 were accompanied by a considerable increase in the number of IDPs.[14]

Around 600,000 Afghans returned from Pakistan in 2016 to a country that was already experiencing high levels of internal displacement. UNHCR estimates that around half of them were unable to return to their place of origin, meaning they fit the government's definition of an IDP. In Africa, pressure on refugees to leave Kenya led to more than 67,000 people returning to Somalia. With the country in the grip of a food security crisis that is overlain with conflict in many areas, 25 per cent of returnees have not gone back to their places of origin and are likely to become internally displaced as a result.[15] There are also reports of returnees crossing borders again, either to Ethiopia or back to Kenya.[16]

These cases highlight how short-sighted return programmes can be. Rather than bringing displacement and vulnerability to an end, they simply shift it from one place to another. Given that return is often seen as a visible vote of confidence

A Somali family looks on as a plane arrives in Dadaab refugee camp to take them back to Mogadishu, Somalia. Photo: NRC/ Fredrik Lerneryd, September 2016

in a country's stability and economic prospects, it can sometimes be politically driven. This may mean that returnees' decisions are not voluntary and are less likely to lead to a durable solution. Experience shows that many returnees do not go back to their places of origin, moving instead to urban centres in search of opportunities and services. From Kabul and Monrovia to Luanda and Abidjan, returning refugees have contributed to significant population growth in many cities. It is difficult to discern whether people who return to urban areas that are not their places of origin should be classified as IDPs or migrants in search of better opportunities.

Deportation is increasingly used as a tool to manage migration. The US deported around 2.5 million people between 2009 and 2015, mainly to Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, where many faced violence and struggled to meet basic needs.[17] The EU and individual European countries have established "readmission" agreements with countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq that produce refugees, and those such as Turkey which are transit points.[18] Research suggests deportation can lead to internal displacement.[19] The conditions that triggered deportees' flight in the first place have not been resolved, and they become burdened with debt, social responsibilities and stigma.

Refugees and migrants who become internally displaced when they return home eke out a living in squatter camps or shanty towns, and may be compelled to move again in an effort to meet their basic needs or escape fresh rounds of fighting. They clearly cannot be considered to have found a lasting solution to their displacement, and much more research is needed to understand, document and respond to their plight.

Building a stronger evidence base

There is currently not enough research or data to understand the relationship between internal displacement, cross-border movement and return, and a number of questions need to be answered to develop the evidence.

First, we need to get better at capturing how many IDPs cross borders. We need to understand where and when it happens, what the triggers are and how they vary between different contexts and crises. More systematic data would allow us to analyse both historical and forward-looking trends, make contextual comparisons and inform responses.

To do so means data needs to be aligned and interoperable, with joint collection exercises to monitor people's trajectories, including across borders, for longer periods of time. If donors are serious about improving responses, they should invest in bringing data collection agencies together and piloting such a system.

Second, we need more qualitative data on the combination of factors that determine IDPs' onward and cross-border flight. Understanding how and when people make such decisions and which issues weigh heaviest on them is a prerequisite for allocating resources and taking action. Countries such as Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq, South Sudan, Sudan and Syria could provide a wealth of information on the factors that prompt, force or hinder cross-border movement.

Third, we need a much better understanding of the circumstances in which people return to their countries of origin, and a measure of the risk this carries for future displacement. We need insights into the factors which influence that risk, including voluntariness, and conditions in both host and return countries.

Monitoring returnees' trajectories over time is required, as is agreement that they become IDPs when insecurity and uncertainty make it impossible for them to reintegrate in a sustainable way. This means gathering data on the full range of indicators contained in the IASC framework for durable solutions systematically, comprehensively and longitudinally.

ADDRESSING SHORTFALLS IN IDP DATA

The demand for more accurate, rigorous and transparent data on internal displacement has been frequently and clearly articulated, and such information is recognised as central to a number of development and humanitarian policy processes at the regional and global level. This recognition has not, however, been matched by the political will and resources to collect it. And yet, it is important to remember that behind each displacement estimate are human beings, people whose lives have been uprooted and who need global attention.

The UN General Assembly and member states have repeatedly underscored the need for global data, and for IDMC to provide it.[20] The first step toward the ambitious target of reducing new and protracted internal displacement by 2030 suggested by the UN secretary-general in 2016 is to establish an accurate baseline from which to monitor progress over time. Doing so is not just about numbers. It is about addressing IDPs' needs and ensuring they achieve durable solutions to their displacement. Without comparable data on different situations and how they evolve over time, there is little evidence to tell us what works.

IDMC's current datasets cover displacement by conflict and violence in 56 countries and territories. They also cover 118 countries and territories that experienced displacement by disasters in 2016, and 176 since 2008. Although this represents the majority of countries with significant displacement, the current figures are not complete.

The GRID presents only a partial view of how many people are affected, the

THE IMPORTANCE OF DATA FOR GLOBAL TARGETS

A robust evidence base on internal displacement is essential to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai framework, the Paris Agreement and other commitments on climate change, the Nansen Initiative's protection agenda for people displaced across borders by disasters, the Valletta Summit on Migration and the New Urban Agenda. There is also a growing demand for evidence to inform the two-year negotiations toward the global compacts on refugees and migrants in 2018. The UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) has also recognised the need for better data on IDPs, including when they cross borders.

reasons they have become displaced and how long they remain so. A number of persistent constraints make robust estimates difficult, including:

- Limited geographical coverage
- Old data
- Low confidence in certain datasets
- Lack of data disaggregated by sex, age, location, needs and vulnerability
- Accounting for secondary and repeated internal displacement
- Identifying the start, end, dynamics and duration of displacement
- Limited coverage of certain displacement triggers, such as slow-onset disasters, development projects and forced evictions

The lack of data on what happens to IDPs over time is also one of the main sources of uncertainty in IDMC's end-of-year figure of 40.3 million people displaced by conflict and violence. It also means the impacts of displacement on IDPs and host communities is not fully understood, which in turn makes it more difficult to allocate resources based on sound evidence about what works.

Innovating to paint a clearer picture

IDMC is deploying innovative solutions to fill some of the data gaps. Our approach combines event detection and the collection and analysis of time-series data to provide information on how situations evolve over time, including secondary displacement and progress toward durable solutions.

To improve our detection of events on a global scale, we are developing a new semi-automated process that monitors displacement associated with disasters, conflict, violence and development projects. It will expand our data sources significantly and help to address – though not eliminate – some of the factors that impede us in painting a comprehensive picture.

For disasters, we are working more closely with partners to collect and analyse time-series data so we can infer both the total number of people displaced by an event, and track how that number and the needs of those affected change over time. We are also in the process of transforming our probabilistic risk model into a real-time tracking tool. When a hazard has been detected or is predicted to occur in a given location, we will be able to simulate the amount of destruction and displacement expected to result.

We are currently unable to monitor other causes of significant displacement such as development projects and forced evictions with the same breadth and consistency that we monitor displacement associated with conflict and disasters. New approaches are being developed, however, that will help to establish a sense of the scale of these phenomena in the future.

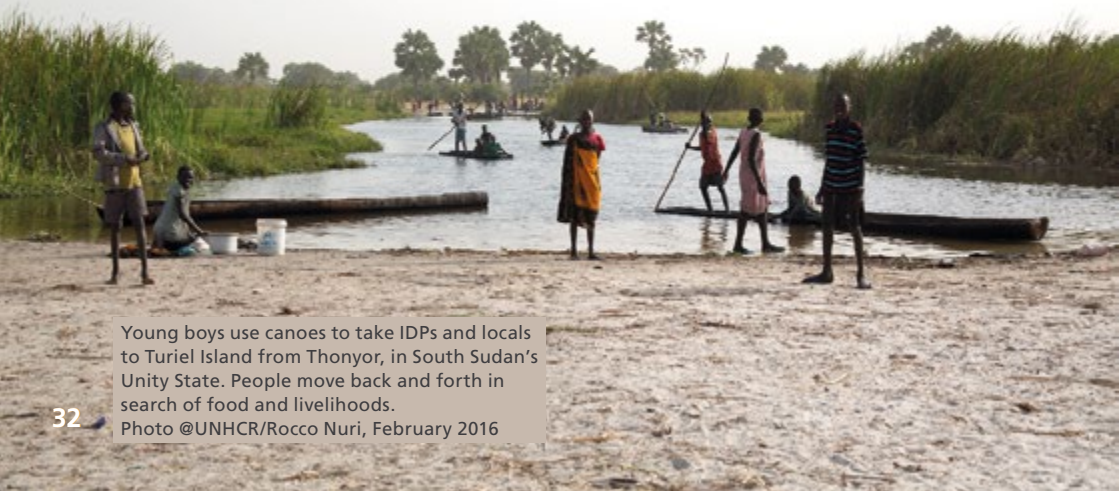
CONCLUSION

IDMC was established almost 20 years ago to provide the international community with a unique source of information on the numbers, needs and vulnerabilities of IDPs worldwide. By synthesising the latest evidence and research on what has become a truly global crisis, our annual GRID report reveals the growing scale and complexity of internal displacement, and the many shortfalls in national and international efforts to address it.

Two decades later, the recurrence and similarity in the findings we present each year cannot be ignored. Our calls for more data, for comprehensive solutions that bridge the humanitarian to development gap, and for more political investment in addressing the causes of displacement have gone unheeded, leading us to the following three conclusions:

1. There is a glaring gap between aspiration and reality. The international community has said it wants to halve the number of IDPs by 2030, but we expect the amount of displacement to continue increasing.

Despite increased donor spending, not enough investment is directed toward the factors that give rise to displacement in the first place. Protracted and neglected crises erupt in cycles, sending shockwaves through already fragile systems and institutions. Rather than addressing the causes that drive displacement risk, it is expected to increase as more people move into areas prone to hazards. Economic development is likely to lead to further displacement unless these issues are resolved.



Young boys use canoes to take IDPs and locals to Turiel Island from Thonyor, in South Sudan's Unity State. People move back and forth in search of food and livelihoods.
Photo @UNHCR/Rocco Nuri, February 2016

2. The extent of international attention, resources and political will does not match the scale of displacement and human suffering.

Since we began our monitoring in 1998, the upward trend in the number of IDPs has been inexorable. People internally displaced by conflict now outnumber refugees by two to one, but more money was spent last year on resettling refugees in donor countries than in the places where the crises that forced them to flee originated and continue to fester. If 2016 was a year of attention to refugees and migrants, it was also one of neglect toward IDPs.

3. Evidence alone is not enough.

We provide robust and compelling evidence on internal displacement year after year, and we work unceasingly with our partners to improve our data and paint a more comprehensive picture. Each year, however, our evidence fails to elicit a response that reflects the scale and complexity of the problem. To the extent that the GRID holds up a mirror, the reflection it projects is one of indifference, lack of accountability and states' failure to protect their own people.

2018 will mark the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. It will be an opportunity to reflect on the past and look ahead to the future. Rather than repeat exhausted pleas to prevent and resolve internal displacement, in anticipation of the milestone we call on world leaders to make an explicit expression of political commitment to this end. The adoption of a strong new resolution on IDPs at the 72nd UN General Assembly in September 2017 would provide an opportunity to turn years of aspirational language into definitive and firm commitments.

If governments are serious about improving the many millions of lives blighted by internal displacement and preventing others from suffering the same upheaval and trauma in the future, they will need to recognise, as Francis Deng did in 1996, that national sovereignty implies responsibility both "as a national obligation and a global imperative".[21]

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Cover photo:

Atai and her children pose in front of their make-shift shelter in the one of the IDP camps in Maiduguri, Nigeria. It is largely constructed from burlap sacks. Atai had lived with her family, working as a tailor, in her village, Bama. Just over two years ago, Atai and her children fled when Boko Haram attached the village. Boko Haram kidnapped her daughter and killed her husband during the brutal attack. © IOM/Muse Mohammed, February 2016

IDMC's work would not be possible without the generous contributions of its funding partners.

This Mini GRID summarises the main evidence and messages of the Global Report on Internal Displacement 2017 in a consise and easy-to-read format. The full report can be downloaded here:

www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2017

iDMC internal displacement monitoring centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) is the leading source of information and analysis on internal displacement worldwide. Since 1998, our role has been recognised and endorsed by United Nations General Assembly resolutions. IDMC is part of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), an independent, non-governmental humanitarian organisation.

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