



THE IDP-INITIATIVE

QUARTERLY UPDATE

DECEMBER 2020

This Update provides reflection on some of the more prominent ways in which the UNHCR engagement in situations of internal displacement has evolved during the past year. In addition to the June and September 2020 Updates, this Update provides examples of our work drawn from several country operations, as related to both our coordination leadership and our operational delivery. Broad themes covered are: integrated programming and area-based approaches, solutions, partnerships, localization and national capacities, and the centrality of protection. Included also is a statistical update on conflict-induced internal displacement trends, through mid-year 2020.

Mid-Year Trends 2020

By mid-2020, the number of persons internally displaced due to violence or conflict rose to **45.9 million**, up from 43.5 million at the end of 2019 (+6%). The total excludes those who were displaced due to extreme weather events or disasters. Within this figure, some 2.9 million people were newly displaced due to conflict during the first half of 2020.

45.9 MILLION
IDPS

are now internally displaced due to current or past conflict and violence, a 6% rise from mid-2019. This figure does not include persons displaced due to disasters.

2.9 MILLION
NEWLY DISPLACED

Within 20 countries in the first half of 2020

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

DRC



668,000

IDPs newly displaced due to conflict and violence, including in Ituri province and North and South Kivu.

SYRIA



588,000

IDPs newly displaced due to renewed fighting in Idlib governate.

BURKINA FASO



361,400

More than one in every 20 inhabitants is displaced by surging violence inside the country. Many have fled multiple times in Burkina Faso's north and east.

IDP RETURNS: THE LOWEST NUMBER IN MANY YEARS

JANUARY-JUNE 2019

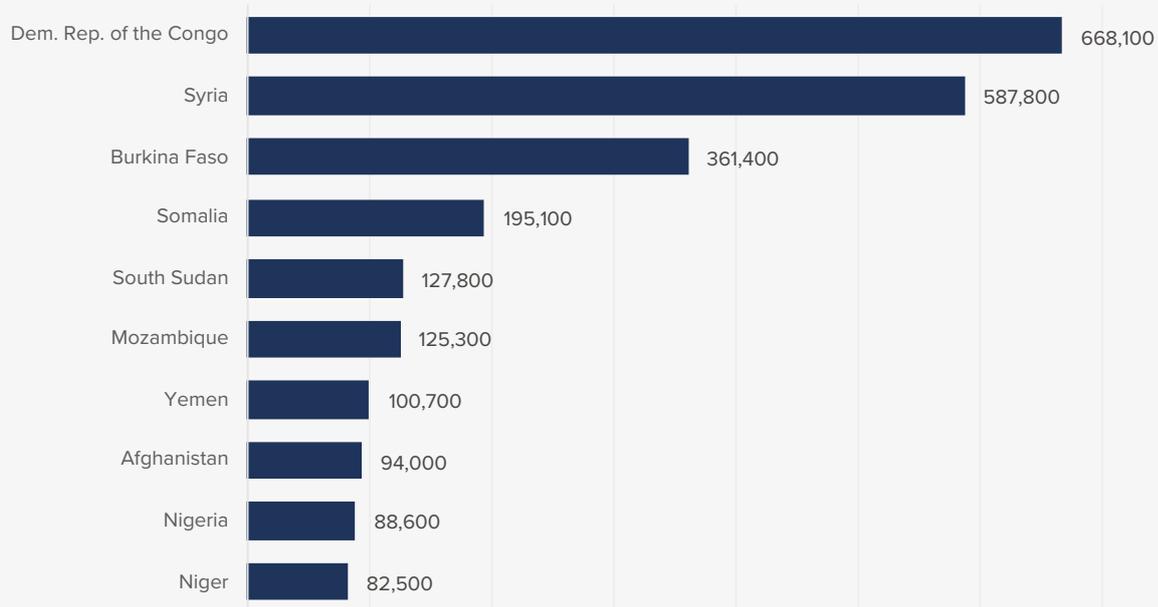
2.3 MILLION
IDP RETURNS

JANUARY-JUNE 2020

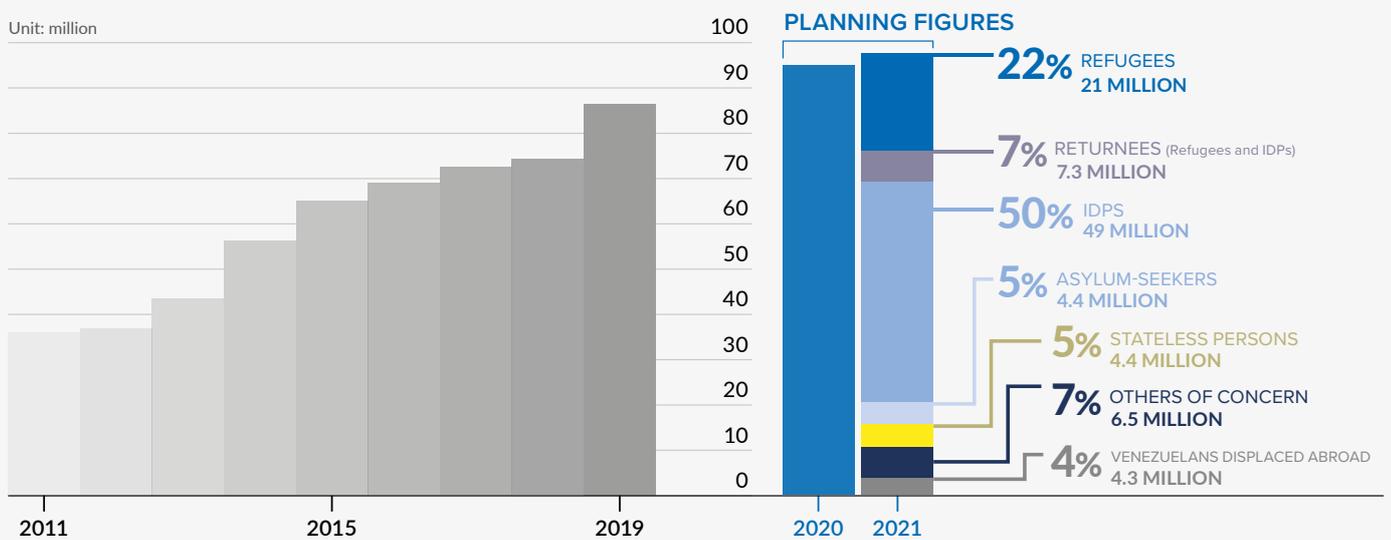
635,000
IDP RETURNS

= A DROP OF 72%

COUNTRIES WITH THE LARGEST NEW INTERNAL DISPLACEMENTS JANUARY-JUNE 2020



2021 PLANNING FIGURES: 97.4 MILLION OF PEOPLE OF CONCERN TO UNHCR, OF WHICH 50% ARE IDPS



Year-End Reflection

With the year drawing to a close, a reflection is offered on some of the more prominent ways in which the UNHCR response in internal displacement settings has evolved.

To recap, in 2017 UNHCR initiated an internal operational review¹ of our IDP engagement. Several shortfalls and areas in need of improvement were identified and organizational commitment was made towards a more decisive and predictable internal displacement response, encompassing both our coordination accountabilities and our operational delivery. A revised Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement was released in September 2019², and the Initiative on Internal Displacement³ was launched in March 2020.

This article seeks to summarize some of the progress which has been realized in 2020.

Emergency preparedness:

- New IDP emergencies were a near constant feature of 2020. During the year, UNHCR rapidly stepped up in new IDP emergencies in Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique and Niger.
- Our preparedness for these emergencies benefited from the new Preparedness Package in IDP Emergencies (PPIE)⁴, released in late 2019.
- With PPIE as a guide, UNHCR staff were better prepared to contribute to UN system-wide, and government-led or supported, risk assessment and early warning mechanisms. Staff were also better equipped to undertake coordination leadership during the initial phase of the new displacement; and expedited operational delivery.
- **The quick deployment of senior staff to new emergencies was a prominent achievement, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. This success was due in part to a reinforcement of the UNHCR Emergency Management Team with qualified first responders dedicated to IDP emergencies, and resources allocated to developing the PPIE.**

1 [UNHCR - Operational Review of UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement](#)

2 UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement, 18 September 2019, UNHCR/HCP/2019/1, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5d83364a.html>

3 [UNHCR Initiative on Internal Displacement 2020-2021.pdf](#)

4 [d46bf6ef-4e76-4887-8570-20bbbd019b1a \(unhcr.org\)](#)

Protection Leadership

Coordination Accountabilities

UNHCR's goal is to facilitate the protection and provision of assistance to those affected by forced displacement, including IDPs. Assuming a coordination and operational delivery in IDP situations to ensure protection of affected populations, remains central to UNHCR's response. We also provide life-saving assistance and work to identify solutions for displaced communities.

To ensure that the variety of United Nations and Non-Governmental stakeholders are well coordinated with state actors in the provision of assistance to IDPs, the Cluster approach is invoked whereby a group of agencies work together to set up and deliver an area of assistance, such as shelter, health care, camp management or food for the overall protection of those affected.

UNHCR is the global lead of the Protection Cluster; and co-leads the Shelter Cluster with International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); and the Global Camp Coordination Camp Management Cluster (CCCM) with International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

- UNHCR is Protection lead or co-lead in 35 locations, CCCM in 16 locations, and Shelter in 18 locations.
- Beyond just numbers, the impact of our expanded coordination leadership is felt by IDP populations through the measurable increase in the availability of referral pathways, feedback mechanisms, and shelter implements, among others.
- In a 2020 change, new internal mechanisms have been developed to enhance UNHCR's contribution to the three Clusters it leads. Strategic direction for cluster engagement is directly provided by UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioners for Operations and for Protection. This has elevated the strategic

impact of cluster leadership within the organization, and in particular at its Regional Bureaux encompassing all country operations.

Operational Delivery

In addition to the fulfilment of coordination accountabilities, UNHCR provides assistance and relief to internally displaced populations as a part of daily programme delivery. Such assistance is delivered by UNHCR both directly and in collaboration with partner agencies. In terms of changes to operational delivery, several developments have ensued in 2020 alone:

- In 2020, an overhaul of existing Result Based Management (RBM) systems was undertaken for smarter integrated and equitable programming which is being rolled out through 2021 and 2022.
- To enhance risk management, risks will be linked directly to the specific outcome statements they relate to, in each country operation under the new RBM model. As each outcome statement will have a population type, it will be possible to better identify all IDP-related risks as of 2022.
- **A mandatory managerial e-learning module on engagement in internal displacement situations is being finalised for roll out in 2021.**
- The establishment of Data, Identity Management and Analysis Units (DIMA) in Regional Bureaux have contributed to coherent regional overviews on IDP data.
- To further the IDP Step-Up, internal Planning Instructions for 2021 explicitly require UNHCR Offices to ensure predictable and decisive IDP programming for 2021, with an accompanying call to safeguard the momentum of past investments made.

- The launch of a data transformation strategy emphasizes strategic partnerships with key data partners.
- UNHCR’s engagement has occurred within a framework of supporting the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement through laws, policies and practices which protect the rights of IDPs, as well as collaborative action to prevent, address and resolve situations of internal displacement. Our co-leadership with OCHA of the GP20 Plan of Action – and our work with regional organizations, governments, national human rights institutions, NGOs and civil society have been key to these efforts.

UNHCR also continues to build strategic partnerships for IDP protection, including through the three-year, multi-stakeholder plan of action for the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (GP20). Following regional exchanges in 2020 with ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States, and IGAD, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, UNHCR spearheaded exchanges on internal displacement in the Middle East, Americas and Asia in collaboration with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the Platform on Disaster Displacement. In 2021, UNHCR will facilitate national, regional and global consultations to foster best practices around IDP protection and solutions – and galvanize collective action and support to displacement-affected States.

Multi-Lateral contributions

High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement

UNHCR has closely engaged with the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement by sharing experiences and by supporting the global and national discourse in relation to IDP Solutions. Towards this end:

- UNHCR continues to contribute to the Panel, its assigned Experts and Secretariat through consultations, and written submissions, including on Unlocking Solutions for Internally Displaced People based on our extensive experience in advancing solutions in refugee and IDP settings⁵.
- Field-level consultations continue to be arranged with IDP communities, whose views are shared with the Panel.

Solutions

Investments in solutions underpin our efforts. Solutions can be achieved where local communities are resilient, and greater resilience can be achieved via investments in national capacity, including by involving international financial institutions. UNHCR’s IDP Step-Up situates solutions as integral to all IDP engagement, be it through stakeholder management and support to local authorities and communities, or through enhancing partnerships beyond the traditional humanitarian stakeholders, to ensure the inclusion of development actors.

Solutions-orientation is unwaveringly central to our approach, most notably through advocacy and interventions for the inclusion of IDPs in national services and pandemic-related safety nets established by States.

⁵ See UNHCR submissions on the High-Level Panel website: <https://www.un.org/internal-displacement-panel/content/Inputs-from-Stakeholders>



© UNHCR/Angela Hurtado

Persons of concern attend an information session provided by UNHCR at the Casas de Derecho in Granizal, in the municipality of Bello, Antioquia department.

COLOMBIA

An Area-Based Approach for IDP protection and justice

The *Casas de Derechos* (Houses of Rights) are an example of an area-based approach that brings benefits to co-located IDPs, refugees, returnees and local communities experiencing similar protection needs and risks.

Colombia has experienced large-scale forced displacement for several decades. Over 8 million people have been internally displaced since 1985 by Colombia's internal conflict. In addition, 1.7 million Venezuelans entered Colombia in the last few years as a result of crisis in their own country.⁶ The Venezuela crisis also prompted

some 500,000 Colombians to return from Venezuela. Much of this forcibly displaced population resides in the same parts of Colombia, where violence is endemic. Accordingly, UNHCR has made deliberate efforts to design area-based approaches that have a positive impact on all persons of concern in specific geographic areas.

⁶ According to Migración Colombia, there are 1,715,831 Venezuelans in Colombia as of 30 September 2020. Please see the following for more information: <https://www.migracioncolombia.gov.co/infografias/distribucion-venezolanos-en-colombia-corte-a-30-de-septiembre>

The *Casas de Derechos* (Houses of Rights) were established in 2005 and have grown into an effective area-based approach.⁷ The *Casas de Derechos* aim to mobilize civilian State presence in areas with high concentrations of IDPs, high levels of violence and human rights violations but low presence of local and national institutions. Today, the houses have expanded their services to include Venezuelan refugees and migrants and Colombian returnees. The *Casas de Derechos* empower and support a network of community leaders, who identify and inform forcibly displaced populations about the locations and services available in the *Casas*. Largely staffed with officials from the Ombudsperson’s Office Human Mobility Delegate, the *Casas* are one of the few visible institutional structures in areas that otherwise have limited or non-existent State presence. Through an ongoing dialogue with communities, the *Casas* monitor and report on protection risks associated with armed violence and conflict – as well as alert and activate a response from concerned institutions. UNHCR and its partners provide regular trainings and technical guidance to the officials, leaders and the

communities themselves on issues such as human rights, mechanisms for peaceful conflict resolution and community self-protection measures. Efforts are likewise made to enhance community leadership.

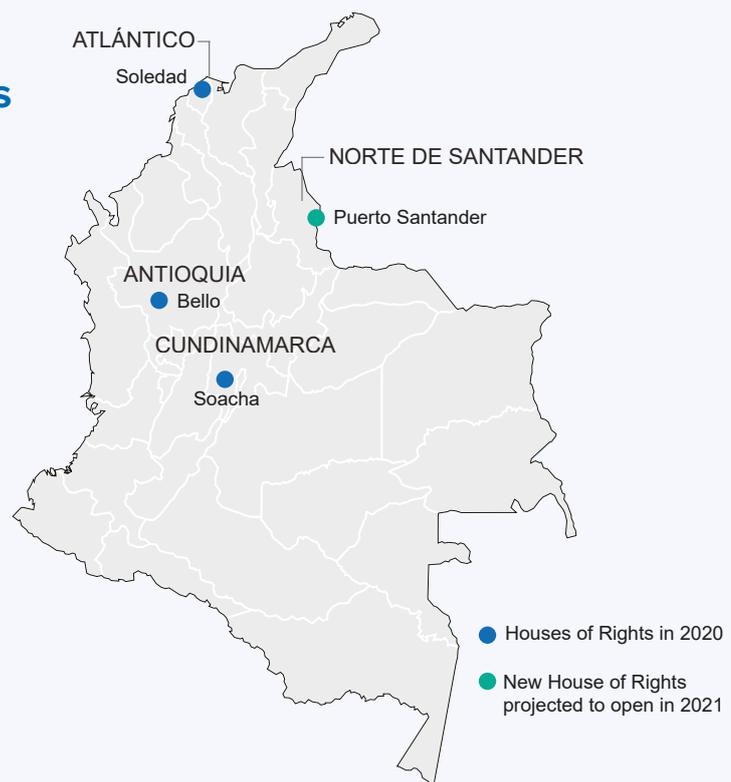
Importantly, the *Casas de Derechos* provide a space for communities to come together, feel safe, report concerns and receive care. Through the *Casas de Derechos*, Colombian IDPs and returnees, Venezuelan refugees and migrants and local communities can access information on their rights while being referred to local and national services. Government institutions, such as the Colombian Family Welfare Institute and the Secretaries of Health and Education, provide on-site services, such as vaccines and information sessions. **The *Casas* offer a well-known and identified location for public officials to deliver and coordinate the delivery of services, which in turn helps to foster enhanced trust of affected communities in local and national government.**

The *Casas* are strategically located in areas where armed violence remains high, and as such, victims

7 In addition to this project, UNHCR manages two other initiatives using the area-based approach, both taking place nationally: a project on legal clinics, and a joint project with the Public Prosecutor’s Office (Peace and Human Rights Delegates).

Area-based Approach in Colombia: Houses of Rights

UNHCR currently supports three *Casas de Derechos* in the municipalities of Soacha (Cundinamarca), Bello (Antioquia) and Soledad (Atlántico). A fourth Casa will open in early 2021 in the strategic location of Puerto Santander (Norte de Santander), near the Colombia-Venezuela border.



can file complaints directly to the Ombudsperson's Office and have their complaints referred to relevant institutions for action. Victims are also informed of legal alternatives in claiming rights.

A number of international and national NGOs are active in the Casas (such as the Norwegian Refugee Council and the national Pastoral Social), alongside Colombian universities.

The *Casas de Derechos* played a critical role in monitoring specific protection risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and undertook key advocacy. Evictions, for example, increased with the pandemic, and the *Casas* were able to record the number of people affected by this phenomenon, provide advocacy and support individuals in filing legal cases with the help of the universities. The *Casas* also contributed to the coordination of the government's humanitarian aid deliveries, enabling institutions to reach the most vulnerable among IDPs, refugees, returnees and host communities.

People approaching the *Casas* come with a host of issues. Most IDPs seek to understand their rights under Colombia's Victims and Land Restitution Law of 2011 (e.g. Law 1448). Venezuelan refugees and migrants approach the *Casas* for information and support in accessing asylum, regularizing their stay in Colombia and accessing humanitarian assistance, healthcare and employment.

Assisting 9,000 people a year, the *Casas de Derechos* have become a recognized, protective environment for Colombian IDPs and returnees and Venezuelan refugees and migrants. Over time, they have enabled local, national and international actors to reinforce their cooperation and responsiveness to the short as well as long-term needs of vulnerable populations, affected by widespread violence in remote locations.



© UNHCR/Margarita Vivas

Beneficiaries await their turn at the entrance to the Casas de Derecho in Granizal, in the municipality of Bello, Antioquia department.



Camp for IDPs in Ch'enmut, municipality of Chalchihuitán, Chiapas, 2018

MEXICO

Establishing a legal framework and operational responses to Internal Displacement

Thousands of persons have become internally displaced in Mexico, forced to flee from local violence, organized crime, and inter-community conflicts.

The situation of the internally displaced has, however, not been widely understood, due in part to the absence of a specific legal and institutional response framework. The Government of Mexico has recognized the magnitude and social impact of the phenomenon and has put forward a draft law to prevent and respond to internal displacement. Despite challenges, this initiative is an unprecedented step and offers a historic opportunity to protect the rights of displaced Mexican citizens.

The precursors to the current displacement situation date back to political violence which occurred in the 1970s, and to the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas which took place in the 1990s. More recently, internal displacement has been caused by community conflicts in Chiapas and Oaxaca, as well as by violence linked to organized crime in states such as Chihuahua, Michoacán, Guerrero and Sinaloa.

Thus far, several legal frameworks have been adopted at the state level – in Chiapas in 2012, and in Guerrero in 2014. In 2019, the Government of Mexico undertook to develop a national legal framework and requested UNHCR’s technical support for this initiative.

In response, UNHCR convened an inter-agency working group together with OCHA, OHCHR, IOM, UNICEF, UNWOMEN, UNODC, UNDP and UNHABITAT to provide comments on the proposed legislation. These were presented during an “Open Parliament on Human Mobility” of the Chamber of Deputies in March 2020. Recommendations focused on amendments required to incorporate additional international standards contained in the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. UN agencies also recommended consultations with displaced persons and civil society on the drafting of the law.

Following the introduction of several amendments, the Chamber of Deputies unanimously approved the draft law on 29 September 2020, which is now being reviewed by the Senate. The draft notably includes general principles, recognizes specific

rights and obligations and provides for the creation of a National Registry and a National Mechanism to coordinate the IDP response as well as a Citizens’ Council. While the law reflects numerous recommendations made by UNHCR and partners and represents an important achievement, a number of issues remain to be addressed – such as greater clarity on institutional responsibilities, coordination mechanisms and durable solutions to Mexico’s internal displacement. The legislative process also crucially requires the effective participation of victims and civil society. UNHCR and other UN agencies will continue to advocate for the full incorporation of international standards and for a comprehensive dialogue with civil society and the displaced population.

Several activities are already implemented in parallel to the draft law. A major challenge is the lack of data on the scale and root causes of displacement, which is key to inform the design of public policy. UNHCR is therefore also supporting an inter-institutional Working Group – with the participation of local and national authorities, civil society organizations, and the Joint IDP Profiling



Camp for IDPs in Jolcantetic, municipality of Chalchihuitán, Chiapas, 2018

© SIPAZ

Service (JIPS) – to carry out a study of the characteristics of internal displacement in Chihuahua, one of the states most affected by violence linked to organized crime. In addition, UNHCR is supporting the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (CMDPDH), to compile data and analyse displacement trends.

Creating an institutional and legal framework for prevention and response to internal displacement requires training and technical capacity. At the request of various government agencies and civil society groups, UNHCR has supported the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo to carry out the first regional course on internal displacement for Mexico and Central America. UNHCR will also work together with other UN agencies and the ICRC to create additional training programmes in Mexico.

In terms of direct support to IDPs, the Government of Mexico has also requested UNHCR to work with various federal agencies on a pilot basis to include vulnerable Mexicans and IDPs in its local integration programmes. Since 2016, this UNHCR

programme – carried out in cooperation with federal and local authorities – has relocated more than 8,000 refugees in various states of the country. The inclusion of IDPs could provide a basis for the further development of public policy in this area.

Coordination is also a key element of the response. UNHCR and other UN agencies have established an inter-agency working group to ensure coordination of the support that humanitarian agencies may provide to the Government, in areas such as legislation, training and capacity building, profiling and assistance.

Preventing and responding to internal displacement in Mexico requires state leadership, civil society participation and complementary support from UN agencies. The initiative of the Government of Mexico to establish a legal framework comes after decades of demands from displaced persons and civil society. It represents an unprecedented opportunity to advance in cooperation for the prevention of forced displacement and to ensure the enjoyment of the full range of rights by forcibly displaced people.

SYRIA

In Syria, UNHCR directly supported 1,045,974 individuals, including internally displaced persons and returnees, to receive vital registration documents, including identity cards, family booklets, and birth certificates. UNHCR and its partners achieved this by providing legal aid services and engaging with communities through community centres and mobile teams. UNHCR advocated for the passage of Legislative Decree 11/2019, which provides exemption from fees and monetary fines for the late registration of vital events. These activities are also in line with Sustainable Development Goal Target 16.9 – legal identity for all – and SDG Target 17.9, which seeks to support the statistical capacity-building in developing countries, monitored by the indicator “proportion of countries that have achieved 100 per cent birth registration and 80 per cent death registration”.



Fatima, an elderly Yemeni woman, lives in a small room without windows after she fled from conflict in Hudaydah, Yemen. She now lives in Ibb governorate. UNHCR and partners supported her with cash, and essential items like a mattress, blankets, and a kitchen set.

YEMEN

A Stepped-Up IDP Protection Strategy

Yemen continues to face an unrelenting conflict, triggering what the UN describes as the “worst humanitarian crisis in the world”.

Some 80% of the Yemeni population are estimated to need humanitarian assistance. With food security and health indicators amongst the lowest worldwide, several UN agencies have recently warned that Yemen is on the brink of famine⁸.

There is no anticipation of a significant breakthrough in the peace agreement, as active hostilities continue to harm civilians and cause widespread damage to homes and infrastructure. Political instability, governance and rule of law issues in a ravaged economy – hampered by a heavy currency

depreciation – put at risk the wellbeing and survival of the Yemeni population, exacerbated even further by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are more than 3.7 million persons displaced in Yemen, with more than 160,000 newly displaced in 2020 alone. UNHCR projects similar displacement trends for 2021. Natural hazards also have an increasing impact on the number of persons internally displaced, with more than 74,000 households estimated to be affected by flooding in 2020.

8

[Yemen Humanitarian Update Issue 6 \(June 2020\) \[EN/AR\] - Yemen | ReliefWeb](#)

IDP women, children and persons with specific needs such as the elderly, persons with disabilities and groups like the *Muhamasheen* (“the marginalized”), face heightened protection risks due to the combined effects of the conflict, the prevalence of conservative socio-cultural norms and the deterioration of their socio-economic conditions.

Access to civil status registration is challenged due to a lack of awareness and dysfunctional institutions. IDP children remain particularly vulnerable, as they are exposed to early marriage, child labour and other forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Gender-based violence (GBV) incidents are under-reported, with a culture of impunity and the lack of specialized service providers hindering effective interventions.

Almost a million IDPs are estimated to live in some 1,600 hosting sites across Yemen, which are only partially accessible to humanitarian actors. Loss of livelihoods lead many IDPs to negative coping mechanisms, while the relations between IDPs and host communities are often strained due to competition over scarce economic resources, discrimination and tribal tensions.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, discrimination towards displaced communities has worsened, with IDPs now often perceived as being among those who spread the disease. This stigma further narrowed job opportunities for IDPs who rely on unskilled daily labour to survive.

UNHCR Yemen has progressively expanded its interventions for conflict-induced IDPs. In September 2020, UNHCR launched its **IDP Protection Strategy**, which builds upon the 2019 *Policy on UNHCR’s Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement*. The strategy aims at mitigating the protection risks of IDPs in Yemen by addressing their specific needs with appropriate consideration for age, gender and diversity.

As part of the strategy, UNHCR continues to strengthen qualitative and quantitative protection monitoring at household and community levels to enhance the timely identification and referral of persons with specific needs; to determine their eligibility for assistance and to produce trends analysis that informs evidence-based programming and advocacy. More than 80,000 households have been assessed through this monitoring initiative in 2020.



© YWU

UNHCR’s partner moves from door to door to monitor and assess displaced people in need. This photograph of an elderly displaced man who wants to register for assistance was taken in Ibb governorate.

UNHCR maintains a network of thirteen Community Centres to carry out a range of protection interventions such as: GBV prevention and response (including case identification and management); child protection services (including recreational activities, psychosocial support, and referrals to specialized partners); legal awareness and counselling (focusing on personal documentation, family issues, and informal dispute resolution); as well as psychosocial first aid and psychosocial support to address situations of distress created by the cumulative effects of conflict, displacement and COVID-19.

More than 150 Community-based Protection Networks (CBPNs), associated to the Community Centres, have been established countrywide to identify vulnerable IDPs, foster community support and enhance two-way communications between IDP communities, UNHCR and its partners, including through community feedback mechanisms.

As socio-economic vulnerabilities among IDPs increase, cash-based interventions have emerged as a key complement of protection services in UNHCR's Yemen operation. **Over the last two years, a Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) programme in Yemen has grown to be UNHCR's**

most extensive cash programme benefitting IDPs globally. Since 2018, support has been provided to more than one million IDPs annually through cash interventions, likewise targeting more than one million IDPs in 2020 – including 70,000 families through its MPCA programme. Other UNHCR cash streams relate to rental subsidies, winterization and emergency protection. Over the last three years, UNHCR has also developed an extensive database comprising roughly 392,000 households – covering about two-third of the overall IDP population in Yemen. The situation of IDPs supported with cash is regularly assessed at the household level through home visits, which allow UNHCR to gather valuable information on their living conditions and socio-economic situation as well as their protection needs.

While focusing on new and protracted displacement, UNHCR continues to contribute to inter-agency efforts towards better analysis and increased support to durable solutions for IDPs in Yemen. Fulfilling its global accountabilities, UNHCR Yemen leads the Protection, Shelter/NFI and CCCM Clusters. In line with the guidelines of UNHCR's 2019 IDP Policy, the Yemen Operation maintains a tri-cluster leadership and area-based approaches to foster synergies and improve IDPs' protective environment, wherever feasible.

80% of the population in need of humanitarian assistance

+160,000 individuals newly displaced in 2020 alone

4 million individuals Estimated total of IDPs at the end of 2020

+74,000 households estimated to be affected by flooding in 2020

UNHCR's response for IDPs in Yemen

+80,000 households assessed through UNHCR's monitoring in 2020

+150 Community-based Protection Networks established countrywide to identify vulnerable IDPs, foster community support and enhance two-way communications

+1 million IDPs Supported annually since 2018 through CBI



Drilling of borehole in Western Bahr Ghaza.

SOUTH SUDAN

Facilitating the peace process through building partnerships for solutions

The National Dialogue Conference, initially planned for 2018, was held in Juba from 3-14 November 2020 under the theme “Come lets dialogue, come let’s heal our nation”.

Organized by the Government of South Sudan with President Salva Kiir as Patron, the Dialogue is an important component of the 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) which provides a window of opportunity to achieve sustainable peace and stability in the country. The conference deliberated on central issues for the future of South Sudan – security, social cohesion, governance, economy, free and fair elections and

nation building. UNHCR provided direct support to the Dialogue, facilitating the virtual participation of IDPs, returnees and refugees – who called for Government actions that would ensure safety and security, but also support economic development. They insisted on the need to secure appropriate allocation of resources at the state level, livelihood opportunities, restoration and access to land, housing and property and respect for human rights. They emphasised civilians’ most dire need,

“On power-sharing, South Sudanese should not look at power as a zero-sum game, where one tribe or ethnic group or one region is actually benefiting and the others are getting zero. We should look at it as something that will empower us, and if used well will lead us to the South Sudan we dream of.”

– Simon Marot, a South Sudanese national, during a presentation on Governance.



noting that “Security is one of the most and paramount preconditions for returning home, particularly demanding the leadership of South Sudan to promote respect for human rights and to facilitate access to justice for all”. The President agreed that issues of security, governance, land, and resource allocation require the full attention of the leadership of the country – and committed to include key national dialogue resolutions in the permanent Constitution.

UNHCR Representative Arafat Jamal’s called for IDP, returnee and refugee voices to be heard at all stages, including in consultations, which are shaping the path to peace, noting that “despite wanting to return home, refugees and IDPs are unable to do so until the conditions are conducive for returns and the root causes of the conflict and violence such as poverty, inequality, the denial of property rights, overstretched health and social services are addressed.”

Parallel to the peace process, **UNHCR has continued to invest on solutions for IDPs through enhanced partnerships with Government, humanitarian, development and affected populations.** The recent rehabilitation of the Sue bridge in Western Equatoria state, which has been on the brink of collapse from the time of active conflict in 2013, is one such example (see box on next page). UNHCR and the Jesuit Relief Service (JRS) worked jointly with the State Ministry of Infrastructure and Directorate of Roads and Bridges for Western Equatoria State to rehabilitate the bridge through a quick impact project (QIP) initiative, under UNHCR’s IDP Step-Up approach. This collaboration with the communities and government took place under the Partnership for Recovery and Resilience – PfRR (involving UNMISS, WFP, OCHA and UNDP).

Quick Impact Projects trigger Solutions: the Sue Bridge example

The village of Sue is located 65 km away from UNHCR’s Field office in Yambio. The bridge connects the rest of Western Equatoria to an area called “Nadiangere”, said to be of great economic importance for fishing and farming. Due to the breakdown of Sue bridge during the crisis, Nadiangere has been cut off from livelihood activities and humanitarian support for over three years.

UNHCR’s Field Office in Yambio collaborated with the Jesuit Relief Service (JRS), to secure the rehabilitation. The revamped bridge has tremendously improved communities’ livelihoods, enabling access to farming and fishing as well as humanitarians’ access to the affected populations. It has also boosted peaceful coexistence among IDPs, IDP/refugee returnees and the host community and revived interstate markets and trade which had been dysfunctional for years.

Similar quick impact projects, including vocational skills training, are implemented elsewhere in South Sudan. UNHCR and partners are targeting states with high concentration of IDPs and returnees with the aim to promote self-reliance, particularly of women and youth. Vocational training includes carpentry, soap and bread making, tailoring, sandals production, floating jetty construction, electrical welding and brick laying. Through the provision of start-up kits, some IDPs/returnees have opened small businesses that contribute to enhancing the local economy.

In Western Bahr Ghazal State, UNHCR works with local partners and state government to address the mounting tension emanating from water scarcity. Strategic drilling of water boreholes in densely populated areas of IDP returns can avert conflicts between pastoralists and farmers. They also foster livelihoods by providing water to sustain agricultural projects and cattle rearing.



Sue bridge after rehabilitation.

© JRS



Sign announcing Bakassi Camp's mobile court, supported by the Access to Justice Project.

NIGERIA

Securing Access to Justice for IDPs

Boko Haram violence and military counter-terrorism operations continue to affect more than 26 million people living in north-eastern Nigeria – and have led to the internal displacement of approximately 2.1 million persons.

The violence, displacement and breakdown of social cohesion have left communities and families in desperate need. Civilians have faced grave violations of human rights and humanitarian law, including death, injuries, sexual violence and exploitation, detention, forced displacement, attacks on civilian sites and forced recruitment. Children have witnessed or experienced extreme violence and displacement. Child Protection agencies estimate there are over 20,000 unaccompanied and separated children across the three States of Emergency. The Office of the

National Security Advisor (ONSA) estimates 8,000 children may have been recruited and used by Boko Haram in both combat and support roles.

To support local redress of grave human rights violations and abuses, UNHCR has **partnered with the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) to facilitate access to justice** for the most vulnerable IDPs, host communities and returnees. Through this collaboration, legal assistance, counselling and representation is provided free of charge.

The ongoing outcomes through this partnership include:

- Legal representation and counselling:** IDPs and returnees are assigned lawyers and represented in both civil and criminal hearings, ensuring their rights to a fair trial. In 2020, over 300 individuals have been represented by NBA in various cases relating to sexual and gender-based violence (including domestic violence), Housing, Land and Property (HLP) issues, Human Rights violations, matrimonial and inheritance law, breaches of contract and debt related affairs, criminal breaches of trust, defamation and impersonation. IDPs and returnees also receive legal counselling in cases that do not require litigation for amicable resolution wherever possible. 2,050 individuals have been counselled on matrimonial and inheritance cases, HLP rights, debt relief and breach of contract and breach of trust cases. IDPs, returnees and host community were supported in obtaining 500 letters of administration in cases of intestate succession, often complicated due to displacement.
- Assistance for Legal Documentation:** In collaboration with the National Population Commission (NPC), NBA and the local authorities mandated to issue official documents, UNHCR has, since 2017, supported the registration and issuance of 209,039 birth certificates to children aged 0 to 17 years in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states to prevent statelessness. Birth certificates are key documents to strengthen IDPs’ legal protection and guarantee access to basic services such as health and education. In 2020 alone, UNHCR has supported the issuance of 28,000 certificates of origin in Borno and Adamawa States.

- Establishment of Mobile Courts:** UNHCR supported the establishment of two mobile Magistrate and Sharia Courts in Bakassi and Gubio Road camps to attend to civil and criminal cases within and outside the camp. These Courts attend to matrimonial, domestic violence, divorce, child custody, maintenance, land ownership, peaceful coexistence, inheritance and defamation cases, as well as to cases relating to breach of trust, land trespass and damage of government property – among others.
- Radio Programmes:** Radio Programmes help UNHCR and partners raise awareness on Human Rights, Housing Land and Property rights, Alternative Dispute Resolution, presence of mobile courts and ways to approach NBA for free legal services, among others. The programmes air every two weeks in English, Hausa, Kanuri and Fulfulde.

Fatima was able to access a Mobile court to grant her a divorce after her husband deserted her and her seven children.



© UNHCR/Danielle Dieguen

Scene from the Mobile Court in Bakassi Camp, Maiduguri. November 2020.



© UNHCR/Daniel Bisu

“During our first displacement, I lost all my documents when our house was burned down. With the help of UNHCR, I have the indigene certificate. I am planning a visit to my relatives outside Banki, I am confident I will not have to pay at the check point.”

– Fusam*, IDP woman

Fusam proudly shows her daughter’s birth certificate and her own “indigene certificate”, July 2020.

Some of the key challenges faced in the implementation of the *Access to Justice* project include: insecurity posed by Non-State Armed Groups; limited resources available to meet the legal needs of the affected population; lack of functional Courts in the deep field, resulting in the use of *Alternative Dispute Resolution* channels (ADR) in criminal matters; absence of Civil Authorities – including the National Identity Management Commission – in the deep field; as well as, more recently, the suspension of court proceedings due to COVID-19.

To mitigate this, UNHCR constructed the Ganye High Court in Adamawa State to enhance access to justice. Through NBA, UNHCR also further advocates for the return of Courts in Local Government Areas and for the holding of virtual Court proceedings.

+300 individuals
represented by NBA since January 2020

2,050 individuals
received legal counselling

500 letters
of administration produced to support IDPs, returnees and host communities in cases of intestate succession

209,039 birth certificates
issued since 2017 to prevent statelessness in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states

28,000 “indigene certificates”
issued in Borno and Adamawa States



UNHCR distributing money in the frame of a cash-based intervention targeting IDPs in Ayerou, Tillabéri region (November 2020).

NIGER

A compass to navigate the IDP crisis

The number of IDPs almost doubled in the Tillabéri and Tahoua regions, located near the Malian border, during the past year. In order to provide an effective response to their needs, UNHCR works with local “protection monitors”, to support incident reporting and analysis of trends affecting the displaced population.

“In my village, on the border with Mali, armed men extorted our cattle and killed our leaders to make us leave”, explains Rissa Djibril*, a 40-year-old father of six. “I had no job at the time. The armed groups approached me to take part in the looting and crimes against the population. When I refused, they sent me death threats and also threatened to kidnap my wife and my children. I had to flee and decided to come here, in Intikane, where I can get the help of the State and UNHCR.”

Rissa arrived in the refugee hosting area of Intikane, in the Tahoua region, in December 2019. He was one of the first IDPs to settle there, alongside some 20,000 Malian refugees who were already living on the site. Today, there are 36,000 IDPs in Intikane – almost twice as many as refugees.

Over the past year, the security situation has seriously deteriorated in the Tillabéri and Tahoua regions which border Mali and Burkina Faso. The population has faced intimidation, extortion and kidnappings due to increased attacks by Jihadists groups in the area. Several community leaders have been assassinated. As a consequence, the number of IDPs has jumped from 78,000 in late 2019 to 137,000 as of 31 October 2020. Nowadays, tens of thousands took refuge in places like Intikane, where they benefit from UNHCR's support.

During the same period, armed groups have carried out attacks, increasingly encroaching into Niger's territory.

On 31 May 2020, fifty armed men stormed Intikane, located some 70 kilometres from the Malian border. They killed two refugee leaders and a local traditional leader, destroyed the water supply system, the phone antenna and burnt warehouses.

"They were shooting just outside our door", tells Rissa. "My wife and I grabbed our children to protect them. They saw people crying, fleeing. Even animals were running around: it was like a war movie scene." His seven-year-old daughter, Tounfa, fell unconscious. The armed men told them to leave. The next day, Rissa and his family, as some 7,000 IDPs from this region, fled to Telemces, 25 kilometres away, where they received UNHCR's support.

In 2020, the Agency delivered emergency shelters to 30,429 IDPs in the regions of Tillabéri and Tahoua, covering 22% of the total needs. UNHCR's operational assistance is provided in contexts where IDPs benefit of services initially created for refugees such as food, water, health, education, cash-based interventions and vocational training. A year ago, there were almost no IDPs living close to the refugee sites. Today, almost half of them have settled on or near these sites and receive UNHCR's assistance.

After the attack of Intikane, the Niger army deployed to secure the site, allowing refugees and IDPs to return in the following months. But for Tounfa, the trauma remains vivid: "She spends a lot of time lying down, talking to herself, fearing armed men will be coming soon for us", tells her father. "She barely eats, often cries and shouts at night. But she sees UNHCR's partner psychologist two or three times a week and she's slowly getting better."

As a protection monitor, Mohamed Youssef* goes every day to Intikane to identify cases such as Tounfa's and refer them for adequate care. A few weeks ago, he sought psycho-social support for her after she had a panic attack. Mohamed's job – which consists of reporting specific incidents but also trends – is crucial for UNHCR's understanding of the very volatile situation of Intikane. "The site has been secured by the army, but the threat has not disappeared", he explains. "An army patrol recently intercepted two armed militants on a bike who came as close as four kilometers from the site."

UNHCR leads the protection response to the displacement crisis in Niger, coordinating the work of 66 organizations. In Tillabéri and Tahoua regions, the Agency works with a network of 47 protection monitors and two NGO partners. UNHCR also helped establish 31 community-based groups in the same regions, allowing IDPs to voice their own protection concerns. These groups report regularly on incidents, vulnerable people, children at risk and cases of sexual and gender-based violence. They help sensitize IDP communities on issues such as child protection and peaceful coexistence with host communities.

“The protection monitors, as well as our community-based protection network, collect very important data in order to guide our response. Protection monitors are at the forefront of the humanitarian response.”

– Alessandra Morelli,
UNHCR’s Country Representative, Niger

Moustapha Nasser* monitors incidents in Ayerou, in Tallberi region, another commune where IDPs far outnumber refugees. “Since internal displacement started in February 2018, no one has returned home”, he says. “Jihadists consider protection monitors as their enemies, since we provide information on their activity. I have received death threats and someone close to me has been assassinated in the town of Ayerou, so I had to move away. I am now an IDP myself, but thanks to my network, I can still efficiently report on what is going on there.”

Some of the field informers working with Samer Karim*, another protection monitor, also had to leave their homes under armed groups’ threats. Samer works in the Torodi department, which borders Burkina Faso. “Many IDPs are moving towards the largest urban centres where they feel better protected and where there is a humanitarian presence”, he explains.

Robust protection monitoring is crucial to shape UNHCR adequate response to Niger’s internal displacement crisis. Identifying and anticipating trends substantially contributes to UNHCR’s analysis and monitoring of the situation – and hence to inform our operational response on the ground.

**Names of have been changed for security reasons.*



Protection monitors of UNHCR’s partner CIAUD sensitizing IDPs on malaria prevention in Ouallam site, Tillabéri region (August 2020).

His Majesty Rassam Naaba who supported 200 displaced families in acquiring land.



BURKINA FASO

Ouahigouya's solidarity to secure land for the displaced

1.05 million persons have been internally displaced in Burkina Faso. Attacks by armed groups on the local populace continue. Often displaced multiple times, many Burkinabé have now increasingly moving in search of refuge towards regional capitals and other locations further from their homes.

Support by the host community to displaced persons is critical. In Ouahigouya – the capital of the Northern region of Burkina Faso, some 50 kms away from Mali – local traditions led the authorities to exemplify this solidarity by helping IDPs secure land: His Majesty Rassam Naaba, Minister of the King of Yatenga in charge of foreigners, youth and guardian of tradition, has generously supported more than 200 displaced families with the provision of documents to facilitate the acquisition of land on which they can build their homes. UNHCR and partners have complemented with cash assistance to over 6000 persons in the region. Cash for shelter represents an innovative and dignified alternative to the provision of emergency shelter, allowing IDPs to design and build their homes according to their needs and preferences.

Facilitating and securing access to land during all stages of displacement is a critical foundation for the safety and protection of IDPs in Burkina Faso, and for the pursuit of durable solutions. UNHCR activated the Protection Cluster's Area of Responsibility on Housing, Land and Property rights (HLP) and ensured its coordination. UNHCR played a catalytic role as Coordinator of the HLP AoR by developing guidance on Burkina Faso's legal framework for accessing and securing tenure. HLP teams have further advocated to the different Government entities working on land issues – namely the Ministries for Urbanization, Agriculture and Finance – to facilitate the domestication of relevant provisions of the Kampala Convention in the current land reform in order to reflect IDPs' specific housing and land rights. Until October, UNHCR provided the HLP leadership, which is now co-led with NRC.

Challenges faced by IDPs in accessing land

Burkina Faso is party to the African Union's Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), but the Convention has not yet been domesticated by national law. With no national or local policies to manage their housing and property rights, IDPs currently do not benefit from a systematic access to land. They are often left to negotiate with local communities or their leaders to rent, borrow or buy plots for housing or

agricultural purposes. Even after successful negotiations, the lack of documentation to secure tenure exposes them to precarious living conditions, evictions, exploitation, abuse or even begging. Several displaced families have highlighted that lack of land is one of the main hindrances to solutions including return to their area of origin. This is often linked to gender, as female widows do not have the right to inherit land under the family law code.



Adar Ogle Egal, an internally displaced woman in Somaliland, was forced to move to Wajaale district with her family due to the severe drought

SOMALIA

Moving ahead on crucial legislation for more than 2.6 million IDPs

Conflict and climate shocks, including drought and floods, are reoccurring drivers of displacement in Somalia. In 2020, erratic and severe above-average rainfall resulting in flash and riverine flooding, compounded by insecurity, Covid-19 and desert locusts exacerbated the widespread vulnerabilities in one of the world's poorest countries.

Subsisting on less than \$2 USD a day, nearly 70 percent of Somalia's population live below the poverty line. This year, the UNHCR-led Protection and Return Monitoring Network recorded more than 68 percent new displacements as compared to the previous year. New and protracted internal displacement remains one of the most significant humanitarian challenges Somalia faces year after year.

Despite challenges, the Federal Government of Somalia (the FGS) has made tremendous progress in the protection and solutions for Somalia's internally displaced persons. On 26 November 2019, the FGS ratified the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of IDPs in Africa, known informally as the "Kampala Convention", and deposited the same with the African Union on 6 March 2020. The Kampala Convention is the world's first and only regional legally binding instrument for the protection and assistance of IDPs.

As the treaty calls for its domestication into national law, and at the official request of the National Commission for Refugees and IDPs (NCRI) on behalf of the FGS, UNHCR engaged expert consultant Professor Chaloka Beyani, former UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons and current member of the Expert Advisory Group of the UN High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, to assist the Government of Somalia with the development of the draft national IDP legislation. This followed extensive consultations with all stakeholders, including government officials, legal, policy and operational experts within government institutions, UN agencies, the United Nations Political Mission, humanitarian and development partners and donors, culminating in a draft Protection and Assistance for Internally Displaced Persons Act (IDP Act) which subsequently underwent technical expert review by Government focal points and related feedback stemming from same.

On 18 November 2020, a virtual Validation Workshop organized by NCRI directly supported by UNHCR facilitated Professor Beyani's presentation of the draft IDP Act to senior government officials and members of the international community, allowing for participants to collectively establish the validation process for adoption of the legislation. In her opening remarks, the NCRI Commissioner acknowledged the efforts that led to the development of this crucial legislation, which, once

adopted, would give effect to international obligations concerning the rights of IDPs. The Durable Solutions Donor Community commended the FGS for its prioritization of durable solutions in National Development Plan 9 and also expressly acknowledged NCRI, the Durable Solutions Secretariat and the National Durable Solutions Strategy. A primary theme arising from participants' comments included emphasizing the requirement for a Government-owned and led process to address Somalia's protracted internal displacement situation. Other thematic matters raised included encouragement of good cooperation, multi-stakeholder engagement and a "Whole-of-Government" approach to protection, assistance and durable solutions that builds on the country's Government and partners' progress. Following the validation workshop, NCRI took possession of the draft IDP Act on behalf of the FGS for translation and onwards advancement according to government and legal protocols and procedures.

In line with UNHCR's protection mandate and priorities, including to support government institutions in creating a favourable environment for protection and durable solutions for new and protracted internal displacement, UNHCR remains deeply committed to championing and supporting the Government of Somalia in its adoption of the IDP Act.



Khalimey, a 53-year-old mother of six is visibly busy in her small shop located in Salama 2, one of the settlements for Internally Displaced Persons supported by UNHCR in Galkayo, Puntland State in Somalia.

© UNHCR/Caroline Opile



UNHCR distributes non-food items at the site for internally displaced persons in Kasenyi. “The plastic sheeting I just received will help me replace the old one. It is rainy season here and water is leaking into my shelter, as if I was sleeping in the open.”

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Voices from the field: Jackie Keegan on UNHCR’s shelter response in Eastern DRC



We’ve asked our colleague Jackie Keegan, the Head of UNHCR’s Sub-Office in Goma, North Kivu Province how the revised IDP policy and the IDP Initiative have influenced UNHCR’s shelter response in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Thanks to the L3 that was declared at the end of 2019 and application of the IDP policy, UNHCR was able to step-up its coordinated protection, CCCM and shelter responses to the growing displacement crisis and reach thousands of families affected by conflict.

How did the IDP Policy and Step-Up impact your work on Shelter in the DRC?

The policy enabled us to decisively concretise our work for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, and to look at populations according to their needs and provide a response to their context and the broader community. It further reinforced the centrality of Protection, linking the work of shelter and distribution of non-food items directly to protection of people affected by conflict.

Our shelter response is not only limited to providing waterproof housing, it has become a substantial protection tool as it provides security, privacy and a way to live in a dignified manner. The situation in eastern DRC has deteriorated significantly in 2020, with now over 5.5 million people internally displaced, the largest displaced population in Africa. Many IDPs are in severe need of shelter and live in inadequate, unsafe dwellings, posing significant protection and health risks. We can limit the protection risks with houses that have proper walls and lockable door. Having a solid front door can make the difference in basic protection and can lower the need to flee in the night, avoiding the risks of displacement at least for a time.

UNHCR declared an internal level-3 emergency in the provinces of Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu in November 2019 to activate emergency procedures and in order to ensure access to additional human, material and financial resources to reach families in need. Without the IDP Protection strategy, there would simply not have been any budget to do the work the situation demanded. The prioritization of the response to the massive internal displacement also made it possible to insist on certain things that we may have not been able to do otherwise, such as focusing on community-level emergency preparedness and support for local response efforts, important in an area of chronic emergency. Through our community-based approach we are working more directly with communities and supporting the strengthening of local capacities. Local authorities have come to better understand the protection needs, becoming real leaders in the protection of human rights, and they are better able to articulate the needs of their communities with data and analysis that speak to humanitarian priorities.

How did the shelter work impact the lives of IDPs in the DRC?

The additional funding we received for shelter made it possible to improve the ordinary lives of over 35,000 families (over 175,000 persons). Thanks to the close cooperation between shelter, protection and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) teams, we were able to identify and assist the most vulnerable, but also to find durable solutions to displaced families.

We are reinforcing the capacity of host families by building additional rooms and housing on their land, and we have improved living conditions for families who have been residing at overcrowded sites for years through a villagization approach. We have progressively started closing sites, supporting communities in their apprehension for premature return, but helping them integrate in communities that they already know. Collaboration with IDPs and authorities on securing property rights helps some to move on, and decongested sites in turn become more liveable due to the created space.

Looking forward, what are the plans for 2021?

As the emergency in Eastern DRC continues, our team will continue to work together towards a common goal: a durable solution for those affected by conflict. Over 90% of displaced persons in Eastern DRC stay with host families. We will continue to reinforce local communities, focusing on the quality of work and strong partnerships.

Funding shortages for 2021 mean that the initial shelter budget can cover only a small percentage of the funds we had in 2020, so there will inevitably be gaps that we cannot fill. The Shelter Cluster will play an important role in helping to fill some gaps through cluster members.

Fundraising will thus also remain a priority. The shelter sector remains one of the least funded sectors in the DRC, though the needs remain important.



Community activists in Chasiv Yar village in Donetsk oblast in the east of Ukraine sew protective masks. Olga, a community worker at the Arts Centre for Children and Youth in Chasiv Yar village, Ukraine, makes a face mask on a sewing machine donated by UNHCR and NGO partner Proliska.

UKRAINE

Empowering community-based organisations

Working with communities is a mainstay of UNHCR's work in Ukraine, serving to strengthen the capacity of community groups to promote a sustainable approach to protection, and in preparation for responsible disengagement.

As of mid-2020, more than 1.5 million persons are internally displaced within Ukraine. Much of the available humanitarian assistance is currently delivered to the Eastern Oblasts, and in particular to locations near to the line of contact, understood to be the long de-militarized zone which separates Government and non-Government controlled forces.

With comparatively fewer resources available to support IDPs in Western and Central Ukraine, UNHCR has built upon one of Ukraine's strengths – its strong civil society and the widespread desire for solidarity among Ukrainians.

Community Engagement with Local Authorities

In Central and Western Ukraine, UNHCR and partners have mapped community groups, consulting them on their needs and expectations. Training was provided to help them set their own strategic vision, and to identify the development steps needed to realize this vision. Community groups have thus gained knowledge in matters of fundraising, advocacy, strategic planning, and project management, as well on how to collaborate with local authorities and the on-going

“Do not treat IDPs as a burden. On the contrary, displaced people are a valuable resource with new skills and expertise. While identifying solutions for themselves, IDPs bring opportunities for the whole community.”

– Female student during a Focus Group Discussion for the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, August 2020

decentralization reforms. To multiply the effects of these trainings, communities also undertook exchange visits, learning about the initiatives of others who face similar challenges. These included, as example, a visit to inclusive public spaces in Poltava, an exchange on fund-raising for youth sports in Ivano-Frankivsk, and the sharing of experiences related to the start of a social wardrobe system for economically vulnerable families in Vinnitsa.

Since April 2020, many IDP community groups have furthermore been involved in the local pandemic response. More than 40 local NGOs in Central and Western Ukraine participated in local coordination councils, identifying the needs of vulnerable IDPs, in particular the elderly and persons with disabilities. Interventions were created through which food was delivered, face

masks sewed, and support provided to large households, including those from the Roma community. Art therapy specialists and psychosocial support groups continued their outreach, through on-line means. Eight community groups successfully directed funding support to hospitals in remote areas, for the purchase of personnel protective equipment.

UNHCR’s IDP Policy calls upon all staff to contribute to a multi-stakeholder, whole-of-society approach to internal displacement – through wide ranging and inclusive partnerships with local and national authorities; local civil society, community-based organizations, local women’s organizations, and faith-based groups, among others. In 2021, UNHCR will further build on these successful examples with outreach to additional locations.



Odesa, southern Ukraine: an “Informal forum” for communities of IDPs and refugees was conducted to help communities elaborated projects for building bridges with host communities.

© UNHCR/The Tenth of April/Gallina Prytula

Community-based volunteers for primary legal aid

A Participatory Assessment conducted in 2019 highlighted that people living in settlements along the contact line, in Eastern Ukraine, often lacked access to primary legal aid. Residents reported need for additional help to access civil documentation, passports, property documents, pensions, social benefits as well as other public services. Since Free Legal Aid Centres (FLAC) cannot reach such remote locations, UNHCR provided support to FLAC to extend its services through a network of legal volunteers. The volunteers – selected among active community members – are well trusted in their villages, and are therefore able to efficiently assist IDPs in applying for subsidies, filing a pension-related request, renewing disability payments, approaching social services departments or even in reacting to situations of domestic violence or SGBV. Having completed an eight-week training on legal aid and public administration, twenty volunteers (including 15 women and five men) have started delivering primary legal advice in locations that would otherwise remain out of UNHCR’s reach. A closed social media group is used as a



© UNHCR/Proliska Nadliia Shostak

Bicycles are given by UNHCR and its partner organisation “Proliska” in Luhansk oblast to support legal volunteers or to capacitate social protection departments to do home visits.

collaborative tool for these trainers, volunteers and local authorities. UNDP plans to support the volunteers with bicycles, tablets, warm jackets and other items to increase their outreach in conflict-affected settlements. Plans are already underway to replicate this model in other parts of the country, with a focus on social protection issues and IDPs.



© UNHCR/Crimea SOS/Ivan Gryshko

A community-to-community exchange visits allows for consultations with local authorities on housing solutions for IDPs in Kryvyi Rih, Dnipropetrovsk region.

IDPs access to local political rights

In October 2020, local elections were held in Ukraine. IDPs actively participated in local election commissions. Additionally, some fifteen community members campaigned as candidates and at least three of them became members of local councils in Zhytomyr, Zolotonosha and Boryspil. This will help streamline integration of IDPs in local decision-making.



Elections are held to establish Senou's Site Management Committee. Senou is one of the 6 sites hosting IDPs in Bamako, Mali's Capital.

CAMP COORDINATION/CAMP MANAGEMENT

A deep dive into IDP Camp Coordination

The cluster approach was adopted by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in 2005 as a means to strengthen predictability, response capacity, coordination and accountability in humanitarian response.

As a part of this approach, the camp coordination and camp management cluster was established. More commonly known by its “CCCM” acronym, this cluster seeks to facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of protection and services at community level. Beyond camps, work in CCCM covers all communal displacement settings in rural or urban environments, including planned camps and settlements, spontaneous/informal self-settled camps, collective centres, reception centres, and transit centres.

In September 2020 and upon the appointment of Mr Dher HAYO as the Global CCCM Cluster Coordinator, UNHCR undertook a “deep dive” reflection to revitalize UNHCR’s CCCM engagement. Fifteen years have passed since the initial IASC designation of UNHCR as CCCM lead in conflict settings. Internal displacement has unfortunately increased over the years, but so have new opportunities to respond through area-based approaches and integrated programming – that are inclusive of all relevant population groups in a given operational context. Such approaches have expanded, as has the

CCCM Cluster in conflict situations

Localisation

Take localisation to another level, using a bottom-up approach

Area-Based Approach

Targeting whole populations in specific geographic areas, with diverse stakeholders and multi-sectoral support

Solutions

Exit strategies and durable solutions to be embedded in the first steps of CCCM work



Resources

The right person at the right place & the right time

Capacities

Tailored capacity and mentoring for CCCM approach

Funding

Explore external funding opportunities for strategic objectives of the CCCM Cluster

pursuit of transition strategies that link humanitarian and development action. Similarly, activities that build and sustain peace must be embedded in all IDP engagements.

The CCCM deep dive consisted of two separate rounds of direct consultations with internal and external stakeholders. The internal consultations included 48 UNHCR colleagues, drawn from a wide range of functions and functional grades at the country, regional bureaux and divisions levels. Protection and Shelter staff were included, along with those directly engaged in CCCM. The external consultations included personnel from IOM, DRC, DRC Acted Field and ACTED HQ.

The deep dive solidified several actions to be taken, with a view towards a more decisive and predictable CCCM cluster engagement at global and country level. In parallel, investments will be made to build capacity within UNHCR for CCCM engagement in internal displacement settings, such as strengthening country capacities and providing a predictable engagement at global level to improve capacity building across the organization and ensure rapid deployment of CCCM expertise to new internal displacement settings on short notice. Efforts will also be made to improve synergies with the UNHCR-led or co-led Clusters for Protection and Shelter.

As an aspect of its renewed step-up in the UNHCR operational CCCM engagement, UNHCR will prioritize efforts to define and design an efficient area-based approach in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders. UNHCR will increasingly seek to ensure that CCCM work is included within our solutions engagement and to allow for a strong engagement of IDPs themselves in identifying solutions. Data collected in the context of CCCM will be captured and tailored to ensure data needs of other clusters, Government (with protection safeguards) and development and peace partners.

An additional key thematic area identified is the importance of environmental considerations in our CCCM efforts, including to ensure clean energy, sustainability, and connectivity. The Sustainable Development Goal 11 – making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable – touches on the core of CCCM efforts.

Finally, CCCM will also seek to further the localisation agenda, especially in terms of engagement with non-traditional and local actors, as well as invest in building the capacity of local authorities.



© UNHCR/Claire Thomas

Mohammed Akbar is pictured with his children in a camp for internally displaced people where they live in Kabul. Mohammed and his family lived as refugees in Pakistan after fleeing the Taliban, and returned to Afghanistan eight years ago. They were unable to return to their home province in Afghanistan as people had claimed their land after they left the country.

ASIA-PACIFIC

Ensuring protection and solutions for internally displaced persons

The 3.3 million IDPs in the Asia-Pacific region reflect a 16 per cent increase over the past five years. Violence in Afghanistan and Myanmar continues to drive new displacement, while a lack of progress on addressing root causes hinders the possibility of return for IDPs and refugees alike.

Afghanistan is now the sixth largest situation of internal displacement globally, with over 330,000 persons newly internally displaced due to conflict in 2020. UNHCR continues to lead and coordinate the work of protection and shelter clusters in Afghanistan, Myanmar and the Philippines.

In **Myanmar**, internal displacement has risen since 2019 due to the Arakan Army conflict, which is now responsible for over one quarter of the 342,000 IDPs across the country, mostly in Rakhine and Kachin States. As the Government of Myanmar begins to implement its 2019 national strategy on camp closures and returns, UNHCR and its partners, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, are working to address challenges faced by IDPs in returning to their

places of origin. Some 130,000 Rohingya displaced in 2012 remain confined in IDP camps in central Rakhine State. While authorities permitted several hundred Rohingya IDPs, displaced since 2017, to return to their places of origin in February, they have faced difficulties accessing housing, land and property. Durable solutions also remain elusive for over 100,000 IDPs in Kachin and Shan States, where humanitarian access has been constrained.



© UNHCR/Roger Arnold

A displaced Rohingya Muslim father and his child await the visit of UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi at Dar Paing camp for internally displaced people in Sittwe, Rakhine state, Myanmar.



© UNHCR/Althea Gonzales

Philippines. Formerly displaced community gets long-awaited water supply.

In the **Philippines**, and in line with internal policy, UNHCR has intensified its support to the local authorities and engagement with key Ministries, with the objective of responsible disengagement from the IDP situation in Mindanao, by 2022.

Cover images clockwise from top left:

- © UNHCR/John Wessels
- © UNHCR/Artem Hetman
- © UNHCR/Doris Poni
- © UNHCR/Danielle Dieguen

Visit our [Global Focus](https://reporting.unhcr.org/financial) portal for more information on funding needs: reporting.unhcr.org/financial

More information on the IDP-Initiative can be obtained through the Office of the Principal Advisor on Internal Displacement.