

## **Submission by the Internal Displacement monitoring Centre (IDMC) to inform the report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons to the 78th session of the General Assembly**

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### **Climate change and internal displacement**

*The inputs provided in this section have been coordinated with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) office in Geneva, Switzerland and reflect views from IDMC and NRC.*

- 1. What issues related to internal displacement and climate change are most serious in terms of protecting human rights, reducing barriers, and fostering conditions for progressively achieving durable solutions that would warrant the Special Rapporteur's attention and reporting?**

Humanitarian crises are more and more complex and triggered by multiple and interconnected drivers. IDMC welcomes the work done by previous Special Rapporteurs to better understand the effects of climate change and disasters on displacement, and believes the SR has an important role to play to continue and build on this work in 2023 and beyond. Improving our understanding of the interplay between climate change, disasters and conflict and how it affects displacement dynamics and the rights of IDPs is much needed.

Little is known about the relationship between **food insecurity and internal displacement**, while the number of IDPs due to conflict and disasters is growing and most of them now live in countries or territories experiencing food crises and particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall patterns, more frequent and intense weather-related hazards exacerbate food insecurity for the most vulnerable countries and populations, by impacting agricultural and food systems, and degrading land and livelihoods. Exploring and analysing these nexus issues and the protection challenges they raise for IDPs could be the focus of the Special Rapporteur's attention and reporting. It would be also timely as food insecurity and climate change are placed on top of several global agendas (including ECOSOC HAS 2023 and COP28). IDMC has started to unpack the relationship between food insecurity and internal displacement in its [Global Report on Internal Displacement \(GRID\) 2023](#), by exploring common drivers and impacts of these overlapping crises, identifying data gaps but also durable solutions for people affected by displacement and food insecurity. A special attention of the Special Rapporteur to this issue could help taking this work forward and to better inform policies and measures to protect the rights and meet the needs of IDPs affected by climate change, food insecurity, conflict and generalized violence.

**Planned relocation** in the context of climate change could also be an interesting issue for the Special Rapporteur to look at more closely. The internal planned relocation of communities exposed to severe climate risks – such as sea level rise, coastal erosion, delta flooding, etc – is already implemented by several countries – Vietnam, Fiji, Philippines, China, India, etc - and recognized as a tool for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. However, planned relocation processes, when not properly done and anticipated, can also undermine socio-economic prosperity, cultural practices and human security, and threaten the human rights of people who have to relocate. As such, planned relocation is still considered as a last resort measure for population. The Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), together with IOM, UNHCR, GIZ and the Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law have conducted [a series of studies](#) aiming at establishing an evidence base on planned relocation cases worldwide. The Alaska Institute for Justice and NRC also conducted a study on “[Climate change, Displacement and Community Relocation. Lessons from Alaska](#)” which provides a concrete example of preventive planned relocation and provide an opportunity to understand the challenges and advantages inherent in such undertakings, and so to better prepare for them. Still, planned relocation processes remain underexplored and under documented. The Special Rapporteur could contribute to improve understanding and provide guidance on how to undertake planned relocation in a way that associated adverse impacts are mitigated and promote the inclusion and consultation of affected communities in decision-making to ensure their rights are respected and their cultural heritage preserved.

With the growing political attention to **losses and damages** associated with climate change impacts and the recognition by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that displacement is one of the greatest illustrations of non-economic losses and damages, the Special Rapporteur could also contribute to this debate by promoting a human rights-based approach to losses and damages, so that people displaced by climate change have their rights protected. Such an approach requires to ensure the effective participation of those most directly affected by climate change, in the design and implementation of loss and damage policies and actions. It also implies ensuring those people have access to loss and damage finance to maintain, restore or diversify their livelihoods so that they don't have to leave their homes, or that they can move and return in a safe and dignified manner.

***2. What specific groups or populations are particularly or differentially affected by climate change and internal displacement? Is their meaningful and full participation ensured and if so, how? If not, what are the main obstacles?***

Disaster displacement is a global phenomenon that affects every part of the globe but IDMC data shows that some regions are particularly at risk. The Pacific, East Asia and South Asia record most of the disaster displacement – triggered mainly by tropical cyclones, monsoon rains and floods - but the Americas are also severely affected by hurricane seasons, while Sub-Saharan Africa is experiencing prolonged droughts, intense rainy seasons and flooding. IDMC contributes to document and analyse disaster displacement in different regions through the annual [Global Report on Internal Displacement](#), regional reports ([Asia Pacific](#), [MENA](#) and [Africa](#)), [country profiles](#) and projects such as the [Pacific Response to Disaster Displacement](#). These regions could be the focus of particular attention from the Special Rapporteur in the identification of case studies or country visits.

Women and girls, children and youth, people with disabilities and LGBTQIA+ people living in displacement require particular attention given their specific needs, pre-existing vulnerabilities and often marginalized participation to decision-making affecting their lives. IDMC contributes to enhancing the evidence base regarding the differentiated impacts of displacement due to conflict and

disasters on specific groups, including recent research on [IDPs with disabilities](#), [access to education for IDPs](#) and [internally displaced children and youth](#). Barriers to their participation include their roles in the society, community and household, existing gender and cultural norms, the absence of services and unsafe or non-adapted services, etc. The lack of consultation and participation of these vulnerable groups threatens to leave them even further behind and at higher risk of repeated and protracted disaster displacement. But these populations and their representative organizations are best placed to articulate their concerns, and their contributions as agents of change should be recognised so they can play an active role in designing, evaluating and monitoring responses to internal disaster displacement.

[Indigenous peoples](#) are also among the most at risk of displacement, because of their usually high level of poverty and exclusion from economic and political structures, as well as dependence on resources and ecosystems particularly prone to the effects of climate change and hazards. Displacement can pose [specific challenges](#) to indigenous communities in terms of how to access aid and resources, who is responsible for temporary evacuations, or what options there are for durable solutions through return, reintegration or resettlement. Indigenous communities often live in isolated locations, which makes it challenging for authorities to respond and provide aid after a disaster, as it has been observed in the Philippines following [Typhoon Haiyan](#) in 2013. Displacement also uproots indigenous peoples who may lose traditional knowledge, the spiritual connection they have with the land and with their languages and cultures, which can result in specific psycho-sociological traumas.

Challenges related to data as well as knowledge gaps limit a collective understanding of the needs of displaced indigenous peoples and the best ways to assist them in overcoming their displacement. More data is needed on the prevalence, location, support needs and resources of displaced indigenous peoples to enhance efforts to achieve durable solutions to their displacement. Better data can also illuminate how intersecting factors, including age, disabilities, sex and gender affect their displacement experience, and so help addressing specific vulnerabilities of the most vulnerable groups and protecting their rights.

**3. *What actions would you suggest the Special Rapporteur take to address these issues, within the purview of her mandate and complementary to the actions of her predecessors?***

Since internal disaster displacement is a cross-cutting issue, there is a need to improve coherence between policy frameworks related to displacement, human rights, climate change, disaster risk reduction, development, peace and security. Promoting internal displacement considerations in development and urban planning, disaster risk reduction strategies and climate adaptation plans is also essential to ensure IDPs are included in national plans and strategies. Leaving IDPs marginalized or siloed can be an obstacle to sustainable development, climate action, peace and stability in receiving areas. This requires a multi-sectorial and multi-stakeholder approach with strong involvement of development, climate and peacebuilding actors, private sector, as well as IDPs and host communities. The Special Rapporteur should promote the need for better coherence between these different frameworks and engage with stakeholders involved in these different areas of work. She should also participate and/or contribute in the key related events and processes, to mainstream human rights considerations in all the discussions, including UNFCCC meetings (Task Force on Displacement, Glasgow Dialogue, COP28), Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), Sendai Framework and DRR related processes, as well as SDG-related events.

**4. *What are the main elements of effective preventive strategies for internal displacement driven by climate change, including adaptation measures and planned relocation policies?***

There is an increasing need to connect humanitarian, peacebuilding, adaptation and sustainable development efforts to prevent and respond to internal disaster displacement. Disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation are key, but more flexible and predictable financing is required. Ongoing discussions within UNFCCC on loss and damage finance are particularly important in this regard, and the Special Rapporteur should advocate with governments to ensure displacement considerations are included in loss and damage discussions and climate finance. However, other public and private sources of funding should also be mobilized (development assistance, humanitarian aid, adaptation finance, etc).

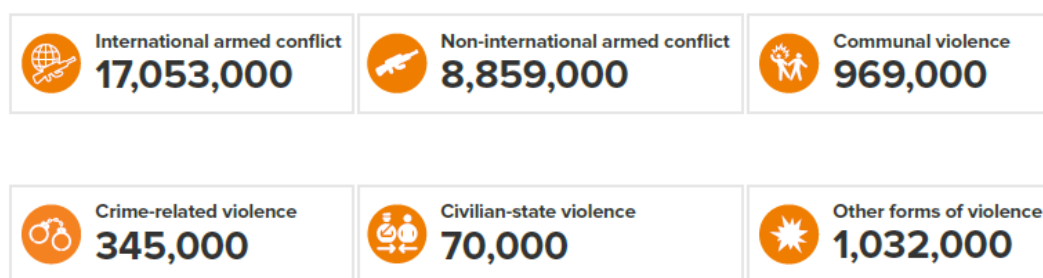
Despite its scale, there are also significant gaps in timely and accurate data on disaster displacement. This limits our understanding of the needs of those displaced and how to assist them in re-establishing their lives. It also impedes our ability to assess the full impact of displacement on individuals, communities and countries, and to estimate future risk. IDMC produced a [report](#) in 2019 taking stock of what we know and don't know yet at global level regarding disaster displacement, identifying data gaps about the duration, scale and location of disaster displacement and data collection challenges. Filling the data gaps is also particularly essential at local, national and regional levels. Disasters and climate impacts are essentially local phenomena, and trigger mainly internal displacements, so local authorities and national governments have a key role to play to prevent and respond to displacement. It implies supporting governments to strengthen their capacities to monitor internal disaster displacement, including by setting in place national data collection and reporting systems.

## **Internal displacement due to generalized violence**

**1. *What kind of situations or issues fall under the umbrella of “generalized violence” as a cause for internal displacement in your countries or contexts?***

In the 2023 Global Report on Internal Displacement, we accounted for 62.5 million people living in internal displacement as a result of conflict and violence around the world as of the end of 2022. Throughout 2022, 28.3 million internal displacements linked with conflict and violence were recorded globally, the highest figure in a decade. 60% of global conflict displacements were recorded in Ukraine as people repeatedly fled from rapidly shifting frontlines. Six out of ten displacements were triggered by international armed conflicts, but other forms of violence also triggered displacement:

## Breakdown by type of violence<sup>1</sup>



There was a 75% increase in the number of displacements triggered by non-international armed conflicts in the last three years, largely the result of escalating violence in the DRC, Ethiopia and Somalia. 106,000 internal displacements linked with violence were recorded in Haiti, a five-fold increase compared to 2021 and the highest figure ever recorded for the country.

- 2. What issues related to generalized violence and internal displacement are most serious in terms of protecting human rights, reducing barriers, and fostering conditions for progressively achieving durable solutions that are insufficiently considered by other stakeholders that would warrant the Special Rapporteur's attention and reporting?***

In situations of violence-related internal displacement, ensuring the security of IDPs is particularly challenging and must be given priority. Other issues receive less visibility but can be very important for longer-term solutions and recovery. These include ensuring psychological support to IDPs and other affected communities, ensuring continued access to basic services like healthcare and education, ensuring humanitarian access to IDPs for life-saving support, tackling issues of discrimination or marginalisation that may arise in host areas or areas of return that may prevent IDPs from (re)integrating and securing new sources of livelihoods, income, housing, and exercising their rights. IDMC analysed these impacts of displacement resulting from conflict and violence in countries like [Nigeria](#) and [Colombia](#).

- 3. What disproportionate impact does such violence have on specific groups? How are specific groups particularly or differentially affected by generalized violence and internal displacement?***

People from minority groups, older people and [people with disabilities](#), [women](#) and [children](#), but also in some contexts [men](#) who can be associated with past or current conflict are especially vulnerable. IDMC documents these differentiated impacts of displacement on specific groups in several reports and analyses (see hyperlinks above).

## (Re)integration of internally displaced persons

- 1. What issues related to integration or reintegration of internally displaced persons are most serious in terms of protecting human rights, reducing barriers and fostering conditions for progressively achieving durable solutions that would warrant the Special Rapporteur's attention and reporting?***

In many displacement contexts where IDPs are either trying to integrate in a new community or re-integrate in their community of origin, the main obstacle to durable solutions and (re)integration is lack of livelihood opportunities. This can be linked with a mismatch of skills (for instance when IDPs from rural areas move to urban areas), the absence of a social network which could help them get work, the arrival of too many people at once either fleeing or returning from displacement and too few job opportunities in the area to accommodate them all, and also to discrimination and marginalisation some IDPs may be confronted with.

Depending on the contexts, ensuring proper engagement with the non-displaced community and access to rights and services for IDPs (including by providing them with proper documentation if relevant) can help them achieve durable solutions. Tailored training and other forms of support can also be useful. Beyond the “physical location” aspect of solutions (i.e. where IDPs are located, in their area of origin or in a new community), and the end of all displacement-related needs and vulnerabilities as per the IASC framework on durable solutions for IDPs, essential aspects are feelings of belonging and acceptance in the community. These aspects, encompassing culture, religion, spirituality, social life, are too rarely documented and taken into consideration when planning durable solutions.

***2. What specific groups or populations among internally displaced persons face particular challenges in integrating or reintegrating, and what are these challenges? Which challenges are faced by host communities and how to address them?***

This very much depends on the context but usually people from minority groups and people with particular needs ([IDPs with disabilities](#), older IDPs...) face heightened vulnerabilities in displacement and in ending displacement-related vulnerabilities. People associated with parties to conflicts, for instance, may also face discrimination and even violence in their community of refuge or origin. People with different skills (i.e. farmers in urban areas) or languages will also struggle to integrate in a new community and may require dedicated support to bridge these barriers. One example is illustrated in this [case study](#) on the 2015 earthquake in Nepal.