HPG report

Independent review of the humanitarian response to internal displacement

Lewis Sida, Erin Mooney, Oliver Lough and Leen Fouad

with Kevin Kennedy, Tina Nelis, Abeer Hashem Al-Absi, Janvier Koko Kirusha, Fekadu Adugna Tufa, Raul Chambote, Mustapha Alhassan and Neem Institute, Francesca Randazzo Eisemann

March 2024

HPG Humanitarian Policy Group

ODI

IASC Inter-Agency Standing Committee

NRC NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL

This work is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

How to cite: Sida, L., Mooney, E., Lough, O. and Fouad, L. et al. (2024) *Independent review of the humanitarian response to internal displacement*. HPG report. London: ODI (www.odi.org/en/publications/independent-review-of-the-humanitarian-response-to-internal-displacement).

This PDF has been prepared in accordance with good practice on accessibility.

Graphic: 'River of Life', based on the stories told and images drawn by displaced people.
Emma Carter | ODI

Acknowledgements

About this report

This Review was made possible through the generosity of the governments of Canada, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United States of America.

The Review team wishes to thank the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) for strongly supporting and prioritising this Review, and the Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) for hosting and steering it, in particular Caelin Briggs and Sebastian von Einsiedel who provided valuable support to the team throughout.

A Reference Group provided advice and guidance throughout the Review, and proved critical to its success, dedicating significant time and energy to the process. This Reference Group comprised: the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs Paula Gaviria, The Resident Coordinator for Costa Rica Allegra Baiocchi, the Yemen Family Care Association representing ICVA, Save the Children representing SCHR, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Programme (WFP), donors (the United States and Germany representing a wider group), Norwegian Refugee Council, the International Office for Migration (IOM), the Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNICEF, International Committee of the Red Cross, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Office of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement, and the IASC secretariat. In addition to the Reference Group, the Review Team had strong support from the IASC Deputies who gave it serious time and attention, providing strategic oversight. The IASC Principals convened to endorse the report and set the future direction for its implementation.

The team would like to extend our gratitude to colleagues from OCHA in Nigeria, WFP in Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique, OCHA and IOM in Yemen, UNHCR in Ethiopia, and IOM and UNHCR in Honduras who hosted the research teams, providing logistics and arranging both in person and virtual meetings in support of our country focused research. In the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) at ODI, Sorcha O'Callaghan, Director of Programme, provided immense support and comments throughout this research and on the final report. Kevin Kennedy played a particularly crucial role as a Senior Advisor to the Review.

The Review could not have been completed without the excellent work of Clement Bruce (Project Manager), Rosalind Cook and Sara Hussain (Editors), Emma Carter (Design), Almas Korotana (Digital), Jessica Rennoldson (Publications) and Kate Oliver (Communications). Finally, we gratefully acknowledge all of the agencies and individuals across the humanitarian community and beyond who took part in interviews, focus groups and the online survey, and who commented on several versions of the draft report. Most importantly, we would like to thank all the people impacted by internal displacement who generously gave their time and shared their perspectives with the review team. The responsibility for the contents of the report rests solely with the independent Review Team.

Contents

Acknowledgements / 3

List of boxes and figures / 6

Acronyms / 7

Executive summary / 9

Findings / 9

Priority recommendations / 12

1 Introduction / 13

1.1 Purpose and objectives / 13

1.2 Methodology / 13

2 Internal displacement is increasing and complex / 14

2.1 Civilians caught in conflict and violence / 15

2.2 Disasters and the climate threat are intensifying / 15

2.3 Displacement is lasting longer / 15

2.4 Internal displacement is increasingly an urban phenomenon / 16

3 The specific needs and vulnerability of IDPs / 17

3.1 Displacement-specific needs / 17

3.2 IDPs' heightened exposure to broader humanitarian risks / 18

3.3 Should IDPs be the subject of specific attention in humanitarian response? / 19

4 Responses often fall short / 21

4.1 Limited integrated programming to respond to IDPs' multi-sectoral needs / 22

4.2 Protection is not yet central to IDP programming / 22

4.3 A focus on camps overlooks most IDPs / 23

5 National authorities should lead (but often can't or won't) / 25

5.1 Interacting with government leadership / 25

5.2 Where the collaboration could be better / 27

6 IDP voice, participation and agency / 28

6.1 To what extent are IDPs involved in making decisions that affect their lives? / 29

7 Solutions / 33
7.1 Evidence from the review / 34
7.2 Reshaping the system to better address durable solutions / 37
7.3 Education, civil documentation, housing, land and property rights are key / 40
7.4 Planning for solutions from the outset – immediate fixes / 41

8 Leadership, coordination and accountability / 42
8.1 The UN Emergency Relief Coordinator / 44
8.2 UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators / 44
8.3 What are the functions of leadership in an IDP response? / 45
8.4 Cluster approach to humanitarian response / 47
8.5 HCT leadership: evidence from the review / 49
8.6 Reinforcing RC/HC authority and agencies, accountability / 52
8.7 IASC leadership at the global level / 52

9 Data and financing / 54
9.1 Financing / 55

10 Recommendations / 57
10.1 Priority recommendations / 57
10.2 Delivering a timely response / 58
10.3 A joined-up response to address specific needs / 59
10.4 Putting IDPs at the centre of the response / 61
10.5 Helping people get their lives back on track / 62
10.6 Following through / 63

References / 64

List of boxes and figures

Boxes

Box 1 IDP Councils in Ukraine / 31

Figures

Figure 1 Number of IDPs from the end of 2013 to the end of 2022 / 14
Figure 2 IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs: eight criteria / 33
Figure 3 Key developments towards improving international humanitarian coordination for IDPs / 43

Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
AU	African Union
CBPF	country-based pooled fund
CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CLA	Cluster Lead Agency
CSO	civil society organisation
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DSID	Data for Solutions to Internal Displacement
DSWG	Durable Solutions Working Group
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
EGRISS	Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization
GBV	gender-based violence
GiHA	Gender in Humanitarian Action
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICCG	Inter-Cluster Coordination Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	internally displaced person
INGO	international non-governmental organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JIPS	Joint IDP Profiling Service
KII	key informant interview
MAF	Mutual Accountability Framework

NGO	non-governmental organisation
NSAG	non-state armed group
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OPAG	Operational and Policy Advocacy Group
P2P	IASC Peer-to-Peer mechanism
POLR	provider of last resort
RC	Resident Coordinator
RRM	rapid response mechanism
RSG-IDPs	Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons
SR-IDPs	Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons
UN	United Nations
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNGA	UN General Assembly
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSG	UN Secretary-General
UXO	unexploded ordnance
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	UN World Food Programme

Executive summary

Internal displacement has risen dramatically since the United Nations (UN) first began to draw attention to this issue in 1992, when there were an estimated 24 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) (UN, 1992). Today, there are more than three times that number, with the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) reporting 71 million IDPs at the end of 2022 and millions more in 2023 due to several escalating conflicts and many large-scale disasters (IDMC, 2023a; b).[1]

Far from slowing, this trend is accelerating at an alarming rate, driven not only by conflict, generalised violence and sudden-onset disasters but also increasingly by water scarcity, drought and food insecurity due to climate change. Indeed, it's estimated that climate change could lead to over 200 million people moving within their own borders by 2050 (Clement et al., 2021). The forecast, therefore, suggests internal displacement on an ever-more worrying scale.

Findings

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) humanitarian system is not responding effectively to the global crisis of internal displacement. This has been broadly true for the past 30 years and, despite certain improvements, remains the case today. All six case studies for this review highlight serious shortcomings, as have countless studies, system reviews and UN reform processes. The UN Secretary-General (UNSG)'s Action Agenda on Internal Displacement tells us 'more of the same is not good enough'.

While IDPs are the responsibility of affected states, the IASC system is critical when governments are unable or unwilling to respond. Yet, fundamentally, the IASC humanitarian system is too often:

- too slow to respond
- not joined up, if and when it does respond
- overlooking IDPs' specific needs
- focused more on internal processes than meaningfully engaging the people it aims to help
- too slow to help IDPs get their lives back on track.

The fact that IDPs suffer higher mortality and worse health outcomes in humanitarian emergencies than any other population group shows that the system needs serious improvement.

This is also true for protection, the lack of which compels many people to flee in the first place and often stands in the way of safe and durable solutions to their displacement. Moreover, both in conflict and disasters, displacement heightens exposure to protection risks, especially for women, children, persons with disabilities, older persons and minorities. The protection of IDPs and other

1 IDMC (2023) reports figures as of end 2022. Global IDP figures for 2023 will be available in Spring 2024.

civilians is a long-recognised policy commitment of the IASC but one that it struggles to fulfil in practice. Human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law by states and non-state actors need to be documented and challenged. But even where a lack of humanitarian assistance is exacerbating protection risks, as in case studies for this review, too little is being done.

Specific vulnerability: where responses fall short

IDPs have specific needs such as for shelter and a solution. Displacement also typically heightens IDPs' exposure to protection risks, compromises their access to food, water and sanitation, and interrupts their education and livelihoods. However responses are too often not joined up, meaning some needs fall through the cracks. Moreover, this review has seen evidence of unacceptably slow responses leading to increased suffering and protection risks.

The reason for paying attention to internal displacement in humanitarian response is not to argue that IDPs should automatically receive assistance just because they are displaced, but to ensure that IDPs' specific needs and risks are assessed and addressed as soon as possible.

A timely response requires that situations of mass displacement are recognised early at country, regional and global level. Governments need to be made aware of their responsibilities and encouraged to respond, even where this is difficult politically. The IASC system needs to be prepped to respond, needs to have early response capacities, and needs to deploy key coordination functions optimally.

Delivering a joined-up response is critical to meeting IDPs' multiple and interconnected needs. This requires better working between government, IDP representatives, civil society and the IASC system. It also requires genuine joint working within the IASC system.

IDPs should be at the centre of the response, but too often feel their concerns are neglected

IDPs are not being involved in decision-making and their agency and capacities remain largely overlooked. This review routinely heard IDPs prioritise livelihood support, education, safety of any returns, and having their rights respected, but in most cases such support was not available. Nor did IDPs feel they had access to information about what aid programmes were available, how they could influence them, and what the longer-term plans were to resolve their situation. While there are emerging examples of good practice in representation that can be replicated, such as IDP Councils and better support of local organisations, these remain too few for the time being.

IDP voices – their needs, aspirations and capacities – should be at the heart of a revamped humanitarian system that puts people at the centre through supporting holistic programming approaches from the early stages of displacement.

Humanitarians have a key role in solutions, and must start this work early

Humanitarians have a key role to play in advocating and laying the groundwork for solutions to internal displacement. But humanitarian assistance too often remains stuck in emergency mode long after the acute crisis is over, contributing to IDPs being stuck in limbo. Interventions supporting livelihoods, education, civil documentation, housing, land and property rights are key.

Donor funding, agency programming, aid coordination and socioeconomic profiling all need overhauling to deliver on solutions.

Leadership, coordination and accountability must be improved

IDP responses require a collaborative effort, meaning the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), the IASC and the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinators (RC/HCs) and UN Country Team/ Humanitarian Country Team (UNCT/HCTs) have key leadership roles. These all need renewing and reinforcing with regard to IDPs.

While clusters have improved on what went before, coordination needs updating to be more flexible, area-based, less rigidly bureaucratic and more accountable.

Data on IDPs is incomplete, fragmented and often politicised. While expertise exists at a global level and there has been significant progress, there is a need for more comprehensive, consistent and interoperable data, better analysis and better usage.

Financing for IDPs is a black box. The lack of clear figures makes analysis difficult, with the lack of visibility of IDP financing contributing to a general impression of neglect. There are some obvious fixes around improving financial tracking data for IDPs and incentivising joined-up working and localised approaches.

Charting a way forward

To fix these problems, the IASC needs to bring back IDPs as an issue of focus. It needs to monitor IDP crises globally and respond swiftly, in coordination with the government, when national responses to protect and assist IDPs fall short. On the ground, UN RC/HCs need to quickly 'fire up the system' when mass displacement takes place (or signals suggest it might happen) and they must be able to rely on individual IASC agencies to each play their part. They also need to have the authority, not just on paper but in practice, to arrange system elements according to need and context.

Perhaps the most important change that is needed is to genuinely centre IDPs (along with other people in need) in the design and implementation of the humanitarian response to their own situation. This is a key provision of the UN *Guiding principles on internal displacement* and a long-standing IASC commitment. It is also at the heart of the ERC's new Flagship Initiative, as is the need for a more flexible,

responsive and contextualised IASC humanitarian system. Attention to the specific needs of IDPs and IDPs' voices, capacities and agency must be integral to the IASC response. Not only is this an important principle that promotes IDPs' dignity, but it is pragmatic too, as getting IDPs back on their feet sooner frees up an increasingly overburdened aid system.

Priority recommendations

1. Ensure **a timely response** by better global focus by the IASC, better rapid response mechanisms (RRMs), and prompt cluster activation and deployment.
2. Ensure a stronger, more **joined-up response** by enhancing government capacities and strengthening the RC/HC leadership role, with strengthened mutual accountability measures and more authority to organise clusters for the context. Reinvigorate ERC leadership on IDPs.
3. Fundamentally reorient the humanitarian system's approach to **participation and empowerment of IDPs** and other affected communities, to ensure their voices define priority-setting, programming and decision-making. Increase and expand support to local IDP organisations, and the delivery of empowering aid, such as cash.
4. **Protection needs to be at the heart of response and solutions**. More robust and timely deployment of capacity is needed, as well as higher-level support for humanitarian diplomacy on the most difficult issues.
5. Better **lay the groundwork for solutions** through concentrating on giving people agency and choice from the beginning, and having a stronger focus on urban environments. Areas such as livelihoods, education and rights should be a priority, not an afterthought. Systems, coordination and funding should reflect this.
6. **Develop and implement an updated IASC policy on IDPs**.
7. Advocate and work with both humanitarian and development donors and IASC leadership to bring on **longer-term, more impactful financing for protracted situations**.

1 Introduction

This independent review of the humanitarian system in contexts of internal displacement was commissioned by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in January 2023. It was a recommendation of the UN Secretary-General (UNSG)'s High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement (2021) and a commitment in his Action Agenda (UNSG, 2022).

1.1 Purpose and objectives

The purpose of this review is to understand how the humanitarian system can better meet the key protection and assistance needs of IDPs, and deliver outcomes for IDP populations and their host communities. Its primary objectives were to:

- assess whether IASC leadership arrangements, coordination structures and programming processes, and advocacy efforts, at global and country levels, meet the specific needs and vulnerabilities of IDPs in terms of assistance, protection and laying the groundwork for durable solutions, in both humanitarian emergencies and protracted crises
- provide actionable recommendations on how the IASC can better meet the specific protection and assistance needs of IDPs and deliver collective outcomes to IDP populations and displacement-affected communities, while adhering to humanitarian principles and system standards
- strengthen the quality of responses in contexts of internal displacement.[2]

1.2 Methodology

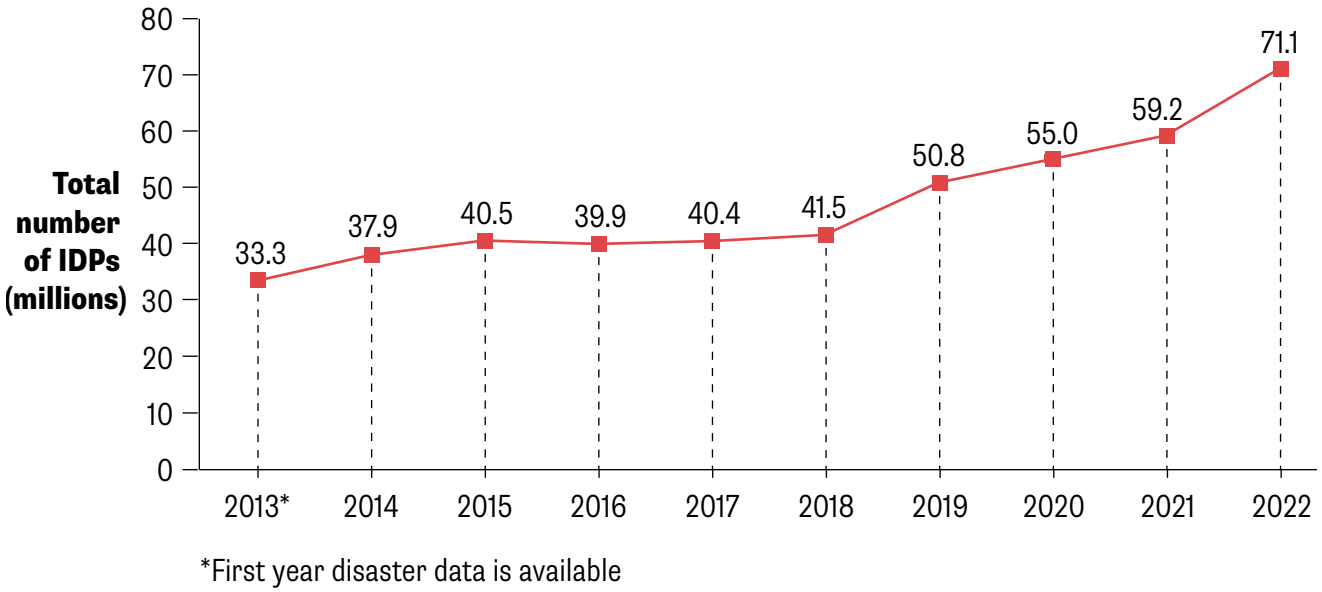
The review used primarily qualitative enquiry supported by secondary data, combining broad-based consultations at global level with deep dives into specific country contexts. These took place alongside sustained policy engagement with key constituencies within and beyond the IASC system, working to ensure that validation of findings and development of recommendations were as collaborative and broadly owned as possible.

2 For the full terms of reference, see the IASC website at: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/deputies-group/background-note-independent-review-humanitarian-response-internal-displacement

2 Internal displacement is increasing and complex

The number of IDPs reached a record high at the end of 2022 with 71.1 million people living in internal displacement worldwide, the highest number ever recorded and a 20% increase from the previous year (Figure 1). Over the past 40 years, the global population of IDPs has increased massively, from only 1.2 million in 11 countries in 1982 (Cohen and Deng, 1998: 3) to today's record high.

Figure 1 Number of IDPs from the end of 2013 to the end of 2022



Source: IDMC Global Report on Internal Displacement (2023a)

Moreover, many IDPs experience increasingly prolonged and often repeated displacement due to the protracted nature of conflicts or the overlap of conflict and natural hazard disasters (disasters). The year 2023 began with Colombia and Syria having the most IDPs (6.8 million each) but witnessed surging IDP numbers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (6.9 million), Sudan (5.9 million) and Gaza, Palestine (1.9 million). Around the world, numerous disasters in 2023, including earthquakes, cyclones and floods, also caused significant internal displacement, including of IDPs already displaced by conflict.[3]

The overwhelming majority of the world's IDPs are women and children (boys and girls). At the end of 2022, 35.8 million women and girls were living in internal displacement as a result of conflict, violence and disasters (IDMC, 2023c).

3 Global figures for IDPs due to conflict, violence and disasters as of end 2023 will be published by IDMC in Spring 2024.

2.1 Civilians caught in conflict and violence

The number of conflicts worldwide – more than 100 – is at its highest level since World War II (UCDP, n.d.; UN, 2023a; UN, 2024). In early 2023, that is, even before the severe escalations of several conflicts this past year, the UN reported that 2 billion people – a quarter of the world's population – live in places affected by conflict (UN, 2023b). Civilians continue to bear the brunt and sometimes even are the target of the violence, which can last for years on end: the average conflict persists for more than 30 years (ICRC, 2016; UN, 2023a, citing ICRC, 2022a).

Beyond armed conflicts, terrorism, which also disproportionately affects conflict-affected countries, remains a global threat. Moreover, generalised violence falling below the threshold of armed conflict is exacting a devasting toll: the UNSG has pointed out that from 2015 to 2021, organised crime was responsible for as many deaths as all armed conflicts combined (UNSG, 2023, citing UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2023). Human rights violations, abuses and persecution continue to place many individuals and groups at serious risk in many countries around the world (see, for example, Human Rights Watch, 2024).

Of the staggering 110 million people forcibly displaced as a result of conflict, violence, human rights violations and abuses, and persecution in the world today, the majority (nearly 60%) remain in their country as IDPs (UNHCR, 2023a).

2.2 Disasters and the climate threat are intensifying

The risk of being displaced due to disasters reportedly has more than doubled since the 1970s (IDMC, 2015: 8). Currently, sudden-onset disasters, such as floods, storms, earthquakes and mudslides, displace on average 25 million people every year. Slow-onset disasters, such as drought and land degradation, displace millions more (UNDRR, n.d.). Climate change looks set to intensify this trend, with the World Bank predicting that as many as 216 million people could be on the move internally within countries by 2050 (Clement et al., 2021: 80). Many will be children: floods alone are expected to displace 96 million children over the next 30 years, an average of 3.2 million children a year (UNICEF, 2023).

2.3 Displacement is lasting longer

Displacement is lasting longer and many IDPs are experiencing repeated uprooting due to the protracted nature of conflicts or the combined effect of conflicts and disasters. While the causes of protracted internal displacement are highly contextual, they typically stem from: long-lasting conflicts; governance challenges; affected states' insufficient political commitment or capacity to fulfil their primary responsibility to address internal displacement; limited involvement by international organisations to go beyond providing humanitarian aid and expedite the search for solutions for IDPs; and a lack of specific financial incentives.

2.4 Internal displacement is increasingly an urban phenomenon

Reflecting global trends of growing urbanisation, the majority – at least 60% – of IDPs are living in urban environments (UNHCR, 2023b: 27). These areas – characterised by informality, insecurity, and poor service provision, infrastructure and spatial planning (ICRC, 2018; Bergby, 2019; UNGA, 2021) – are also often 'high-risk' areas as they are prone to environmental disasters, hazardous waste and conflict wreckage, which leads to 'increased vulnerability, violence, and discrimination without the institutional arrangements to decrease the likelihood or mitigate the impact of those risks' (UN-Habitat and UNHCR, 2020). Moreover, gang violence associated with organised crime often centres on urban areas, which is also where armed conflicts increasingly are being waged, with devastating and indiscriminate impacts on civilians (ICRC, 2018; 2022b).

3 The specific needs and vulnerability of IDPs

Key messages

- IDPs have specific needs such as for shelter and a solution.
- Displacement also typically heightens IDPs' exposure to protection risks, compromises their access to food, water and sanitation, and interrupts their education and livelihoods.
- IDPs often suffer higher mortality and worse health outcomes than other humanitarian caseloads.

IDPs have specific needs and often are also exposed to heightened vulnerabilities and risks as a result of their displacement. This is widely recognised by member states of the UN. And it is the reason why successive UNSGs have, for over three decades now, called for specific attention to the plight of IDPs (see for example, UN, 1992; UNSG, 2022; 2023: 5).

To begin with, in some situations, the very fact of being displaced can constitute an abuse of rights (Mooney, 2005a). IDPs (and refugees) may be the victims of a deliberate policy targeting them for displacement and forced relocation. Minority groups are particularly vulnerable to this practice, which often occurs along ethnic or religious lines and can amount to 'ethnic cleansing' and in some cases genocide. In situations of armed conflict, international humanitarian law prescribes that unless the security of the civilians involved or imperative military reasons so demand, any decision for the displacement of populations is prohibited. Under international criminal law, the forced removal of populations, including outside of the context of armed conflict, is a crime against humanity. The UN *Guiding principles on internal displacement* affirm a right not to be arbitrarily displaced. The prohibition of arbitrary displacement also applies in natural disasters unless for reasons of safety or health, and in large-scale development projects not justified 'by compelling and overriding interests'.[4]

3.1 Displacement-specific needs

Beyond the need to be protected from becoming displaced in the first place, once displacement occurs, IDPs need to: (1) be able to leave an area of danger, reach a safe (or comparatively safer) location and not be forced back to areas where they are at risk; (2) find shelter and a place to stay temporarily; (3) find a way to meet basic needs, including for food and water, while displaced; (4) avoid discrimination because of being displaced; (5) have lost or destroyed personal identity documentation

4 UN *Guiding principles on internal displacement*, Principle 6. For the international legal standards on which this principle is based, see Kälin, 2008.

restituted and documents issued to children born during displacement; (6) have land and other immovable property they left behind protected against being illegally occupied and taken over by others and, if this occurs, have it restituted; (7) be able to register as voters and participate in elections while displaced; and (8) access a voluntary, safe and durable solution to their displacement.[5]

3.2 IDPs' heightened exposure to broader humanitarian risks

IDPs face increased exposure to protection risks in the course of flight and once displaced. These include: family separation; sexual and gender-based violence including in IDP camps; child recruitment; harassment; abduction; risk of harm from mines and unexploded ordinances; and discrimination. This has been extensively documented over many years in numerous reports and analyses.[6]

IDPs also suffer the worst rates of excess mortality in humanitarian emergencies of any population group. A 2016 study using operational data from aid agencies showed death rates among IDPs were twice that of the baseline (Leus et al., 2001; Owoaje et al., 2016). Deaths among IDPs were higher than the resident population. The same 2016 study concluded that displacement was an important determinant of this excess mortality.

IDP living conditions, in addition to being precarious in terms of security of tenure and unsafe especially for women and children, typically are overcrowded and rudimentary. Insufficient basic sanitation and running water, limited shelter options, inadequate medical services, and congested conditions render IDPs highly susceptible to health risks from communicable diseases, including cholera and tuberculosis (see, for example, IOM and WFP, 2021; Salama et al., 2001; and other health studies cited in Mooney, 2005a).

Hunger and food insecurity often intersects with displacement. A recent International Food Policy Research Institute study found that an estimated 80% of IDPs suffered acute food insecurity (Hernandez et al., 2023). A recent survey in several countries showed that IDPs faced significantly greater difficulties in accessing food compared with non-displaced persons in the same area, and that these increased the more often IDPs were displaced (IDMC, 2023a).

Studies reporting worse health outcomes and excess mortality among IDPs found this was mostly due to easily preventable diseases associated with their living conditions in displacement, that is, conditions that could be alleviated with the right kind of humanitarian intervention (Cantor et al., 2021; Salama

5 Supporting evidence for each identified need is detailed in Kälin, 2023 and Mooney, 2005a.

6 For instance, by successive UN Representatives of the Secretary-General on IDPs (RSG-IDPs) and UN Special Rapporteurs on the Human Rights of IDPs (SR-IDPs), the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children in Armed Conflict, the Protection Cluster (global and field-level), UN agencies, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), International Committe of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, affected governments, civil society including IDP associations, donors and academic literature.

et al., 2001; Mooney, 2005a). The trauma often associated with displacement or the circumstances compelling it also exact a high psychological toll: in Colombia, suicide attempt rates were found to be many times higher among IDPs than in the host community (Cogo et al., 2022).

3.3 Should IDPs be the subject of specific attention in humanitarian response?

Despite the evidence that displacement creates specific needs, heightened vulnerabilities and protection risks, there is a strong discourse in some humanitarian circles that argues IDPs are not any more or less vulnerable than the rest of the humanitarian caseload and thus should not be the subject of any specific focus of attention in humanitarian response.

Often, including in consultations for this review, the shorthand for this argument is 'status versus vulnerability', that is, people should be helped on the basis not of their displacement 'status' but rather their vulnerability. There are several problems with this framing of the debate.

First, it rests on a fundamental misunderstanding of the IDP issue. To be an IDP is not a legal status. The international definition of IDPs articulated in the UN *Guiding principles on internal displacement* is simply a descriptive definition connoting the factual state of being internally displaced; it does not create a specific legal status and never sought to do so. A legal status is not needed for IDPs because unlike with refugees, who require a special legal status under international law as they are outside their own country and bereft of its protection, IDPs remain citizens or habitual residents of their country and are entitled to its protection and assistance on that basis (Kälin, 2008). In other words, IDPs do not require formal recognition as such in order to invoke their rights.

And while it is often necessary for humanitarian responders, including governments, to be able to identify IDPs through individual IDP registration, global guidance stresses that this should always have a specific purpose, such as entitlement by IDPs, who are in need, to access emergency shelter assistance or to stay in a camp, or eligibility for specific support to achieve a durable solution (Brookings Institution, 2008: 13–15, 68, 76). By contrast, it therefore may not be necessary to register IDPs who do not require such assistance.

Second, the 'displacement versus vulnerability' dichotomy is a false one in that these two issues are inherently connected. Displacement results in compound vulnerabilities. This is one of its defining aspects. People run away from home in the middle of the night with what they can carry and flee to a nearby town where it is perceived to be safer. Once there, they urgently need, but often struggle to find, shelter, food, clean water and sanitation. Overcrowded and unsanitary conditions in which they find themselves heighten IDPs' susceptibility to communicable diseases; health care may be far away or too expensive to access. Family members may become separated or even abducted by armed actors during flight. The journey itself is often dangerous, for instance due to mines and unexploded ordnance (UXOs), armed attacks, criminality or rising floodwaters. IDPs may not be welcomed by the local communities of different ethnicity or religion, or by the authorities. And if it becomes protracted, displacement quickly depletes whatever money and assets IDPs could take with them and finding new

sources of income can be a real struggle. Out of economic desperation, women and girls may fall prey to sexual exploitation. Children and youth may be out of school for years. There is uncertainty as to whether or when they will ever be able to safely return home or find another solution.

The reason for paying attention to internal displacement in humanitarian response is not to argue that IDPs should automatically receive assistance just because they are displaced, but to ensure that IDPs' specific needs and risks are assessed and addressed as soon as possible. To simply include IDPs in the sample population for humanitarian surveys and assessments is not enough. Yet, the reality is that multi-sector humanitarian assessments rarely consider the specific vulnerabilities of IDPs.

4 Responses often fall short

Key messages

- Responses are often delayed and, when they do occur, are not joined up, and do not meet minimum standards in many cases.
- Protection is not central to IDP response despite protection risks often being the driver of displacement, pervasive during displacement, and a primary impediment to durable solutions.

Evidence from this review suggests that the humanitarian response to internal displacement is too often late, fragmented and chaotic.

As Chapter 3 on vulnerability makes clear, IDPs experience specific needs and suffer some of the worst outcomes across a range of humanitarian indicators. Unfortunately, this review has found that the IASC system is still not addressing these vulnerabilities systematically. There are major coverage gaps in the level, type and quality of assistance and protection services delivered to IDPs.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), not a single Minimum Humanitarian Standard (formerly Sphere Standard) was being met in the IDP response in Goma where 600,000 people had been displaced for over eight months. This was despite the fact that these widely accepted 'minimum' humanitarian standards were first developed in DRC (then Zaire) nearly 30 years ago. Moreover, DRC has had a permanent humanitarian presence and infrastructure in place for that entire time, and Goma has had multiple acute displacement crises in that period.

This situation of serious gaps in meeting IDPs' humanitarian needs was mirrored in all of the IDP sites visited for this review. Nor are these case studies uniquely bad. Globally, from Darfur and Bentiu to Diffa and Herat, millions of IDPs find themselves without even the basics such as clean water and a roof over their head.

Certainly, some coverage gaps are due to the shortfalls in humanitarian funding: none of the case study countries received even half the funding requested for 2023; only one (Nigeria) reached even 40%, while Honduras received only 15%. Access constraints are also significant, including bureaucratic constraints imposed by states and non-state actors. However, there are also severe programming gaps that further limit what humanitarians are delivering to the IDPs they can reach and with the available funds.

Attention to IDP response issues, including protection and solutions, should routinely be included in humanitarian accountability and support mechanisms such as peer-to-peer missions and Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations.

4.1 Limited integrated programming to respond to IDPs' multi-sectoral needs

IDPs have multiple, interconnected needs. However, programming is siloed, with each cluster, sector or individual organisation largely working independently, according to their own sector response plan or project. This results in not only programming gaps but also duplications and inefficiencies. Moreover, opportunities are missed to maximise the effectiveness of the programming that is possible with the resources available, leading to a response that typically is not greater than the sum of its parts. Most disturbingly, the lack of integrated programming for IDPs is in some cases also causing secondary displacement.

The lack of integrated programming for IDPs was a finding in all six of the case studies. In northern Mozambique, a group of local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) flagged this as the major impediment to an effective humanitarian response to internal displacement, noting:

> One of the biggest challenges is the lack of integrated services. There are very different responses depending on the area and who has a project. Some communities benefit from GBV [gender-based violence] programmes, some from livelihoods, some from WASH [water, sanitation and hygiene] and so on.

4.2 Protection is not yet central to IDP programming

In all of the case studies for this review, IDPs face tremendous protection risks. The lack of safety – from conflict, generalised violence and disasters – is what drove most to flee in the first place. In some cases, such as Honduras, violent forced eviction and expropriation of property is a major cause of displacement, both for individual families in urban areas and entire indigenous and pastoral communities. GBV is both a major cause of displacement, and a consequence for many IDPs, especially women and girls in all of the case studies, and with notoriously high rates in DRC and Honduras.

Many IDP women and girls spoke of being subjected to sexual exploitation and having to resort to survival sex simply to access basic necessities. In Mozambique, IDP women reported having to trade sexual favours in order to get on the lists for assistance; they urged that these lists should be compiled by female staff. Recent cuts of food assistance also meant that girls as young as 11 were engaging in sex with men in the local community for as little as $0.25. In DRC, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) described an 'epidemic of survival sex' among IDP women driven by a lack of livelihood opportunities. In Nigeria and Mozambique, children and youth had been targeted by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) for abduction and IDPs were desperate for news about their missing loved ones.

IDP camps do not necessarily offer safe refuge from abuses and attacks. Just after the visit for this review, in June 2023, 46 people were massacred in an IDP camp near Bunia, DRC. In all of the situations of ongoing conflict visited, IDPs expressed deep concern about the lack of safety in areas to which they

often eventually hoped to return, and in some cases were being strongly encouraged or even forced to do so before they felt it was safe. Indeed, insecurity had forced some IDP returnees to flee again, including back to camps.

While ensuring the protection of IDPs and other civilians is primarily the responsibility of government, the humanitarian response also needs to do more. On the positive side, all of the case study countries for this review had adopted, or were finalising, Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) Protection Strategies. This is an important start. Yet, as both the recent IASC Protection Policy Review (Cocking et al., 2022) and this review found, translating this policy commitment into protection programming and advocacy remains very much a work in progress.

Key elements of the IASC Protection Policy (IASC, 2016) are still not being implemented today. In particular, there is little to no protection risk analysis by sectors other than the Protection Cluster and little attention to protection by any sectors during disasters. Consequently, there also is limited protection programming by non-protection sectors to prevent and mitigate identified risks. Moreover, with a few exceptions, advocacy on protection concerns is still overwhelmingly left to protection actors rather than meaningfully taken up by humanitarian leadership and the HCT as a whole.

In addition, protection is not always well understood and effectively championed. In Yemen, IDPs near the frontline in Hodeida were at direct risk of shelling. Despite this, the HCT agonised for weeks over whether they could move this population out of harm's way as it might not be voluntary. In the end the IDPs were moved, but after an unnecessarily long delay.

Globally, the Protection Cluster needs to improve the speed and quality of its delivery of protection analysis and guidance. It also needs to ensure timely deployment of cluster coordination staff with requisite knowledge and skills, including in IDP protection. This was also a finding of the recent IASC Protection Policy Review.

4.3 A focus on camps overlooks most IDPs

Reflecting a global trend, in all the review case studies (save Honduras) the IDP response was overwhelmingly concentrated in large camps and collective settlements. Camp-based populations are easier, logistically, to identify and to access for programme delivery. Camps are often preferred by governments, including in some cases for reasons of security to limit IDPs' freedom of movement.

However, even when largely focused on camps, the response falls far short. For instance, in Abs, Yemen, all seven IDP camps visited by the review had seen a decreasing level of basic services, including water, for which there is virtually no service. Shelter has not been replaced for several years. Food and cash are the main inputs.

Camps present specific protection problems. For example, in conflict settings there is the risk of infiltration by armed actors. Freedom of movement can be highly controlled. Other protection issues, including sexual violence and exploitation, tend to be rife.

While images of crowded camps often come to mind when thinking about displacement, the reality is that most IDPs are not in camps (Brookings Institution, 2013). In some major IDP crises, 90% of IDPs were not living in camps (Mooney, 2012). Camps therefore represent just the 'tip of the iceberg' with most IDPs either staying with family and friends, taken in by and living with strangers, renting private accommodation if they can afford to do so, living in official or unofficial emergency shelters (often schools or community centres), or living in makeshift settlements, for example, on the side of the road, under bridges, in train cars, in destroyed buildings, and even in caves (Mooney, 2012). This is true in both rural, including remote, and urban areas.

Internal displacement is also increasingly an urban phenomenon. While precise data on the number of IDPs in urban areas is still challenging to compile, it is well established that a large and growing proportion of IDPs now reside in cities. The UNSG's report for the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, noted:

> In urban areas they are at risk of falling to the bottom of society, given that they are not easily identifiable and tend to be unemployed or work in low-paid insecure or informal sectors; to be in female-headed households; to have children at work instead of school; and to experience housing insecurity. National and local health and education systems, social protection mechanisms and infrastructure may be unavailable or overwhelmed by the volume of demand. (UNSG, 2016)

Addressing the situation of IDPs and other persons in humanitarian need in urban areas still requires much greater and more systematic attention from the humanitarian community. This review recommends the need for specific expertise on urban issues, for instance from UN-Habitat, as well as a new approach to service delivery. Area-based coordination will be especially important on this issue, given that each urban context will present specific challenges (and opportunities) and will require a tailormade approach.

5 National authorities should lead (but often can't or won't)

Key messages

- Humanitarians have some success in supporting national authorities to lead but more should be done to reinforce national responsibility towards IDPs.
- Stronger advocacy on IDPs' protection concerns is needed with state and non-state actors, and support to national human rights institutions.

Aside from some disaster situations and a handful of states with capacity, governments with huge internal displacement crises rarely have the resources or knowledge to lead on their own. This is why the IASC system is deployed.

Besides capacity gaps, there also are cases where a government is unwilling to protect and assist IDPs. Indeed, in several situations, the government (or de facto authorities) is complicit or even directly committing the human rights violations causing people to flee, sometimes even deliberately displacing them. In these situations, IDPs seek support from their own community, civil society and, if present, national and international humanitarian actors.

Advocating for and supporting governments to effectively fulfil their primary responsibility to protect, assist and find solutions for IDPs is a key role and commitment for the IASC.

5.1 Interacting with government leadership

Benchmarks of the 'national responsibility' for addressing internal displacement required of governments have been established that set out 12 key measures any government facing an IDP crisis is expected to take (Mooney, 2005b[7]). These range from, in the first instance, acknowledging the existence of IDPs (which some governments deny) to putting in place appropriate national legal, policy and institutional frameworks, allocating budgetary resources, and creating conditions for safe, voluntary and durable solutions for IDPs.

7 Developed at the request of the UN RSG-IDPs and officially presented by the RSG to the UN Human Rights Council in 2006, the Framework has been incorporated into various UN global guidance and regional frameworks including the African Union (AU) Programme of Action on IDPs. It has been translated into over a dozen languages.

One of the key benchmarks is to establish an institutional mechanism to lead the national IDP response, with subnational spokes. Depending on the country, this mechanism may take the form of an existing ministry, establishing a new executive office or even ministry, and/or creating a bespoke inter-ministerial body. In some cases, such as Honduras and Ukraine, dedicated IDP offices and action plans are also established by municipal governments. Where IDP situations persist, it is also recommended that national legal and policy frameworks for ensuring protection of IDPs' rights and securing solutions are put in place.

The way in which the IASC system interacts with government has been much critiqued. Some governments interviewed for this review (although not all) felt excluded from humanitarian decision-making and had different priorities for IDPs. They complained that they lacked resources and expertise and were not listened to. The clearest case of this uneasy relationship within the case studies is in northern Nigeria, with the Governor of Borno State.

Not all examples of international–national cooperation are like this. Parts of the IASC system work with governments to help develop national legislative and policy frameworks to address internal displacement, and this has been a significant area of success over the past three decades of intensive IDP work. Currently the Global Database on Laws and Policies on Internal Displacement reports 291 specific IDP instruments across 51 countries (although only 18 countries have actually passed comprehensive IDP laws) (UNHCR, n.d.). In the six case studies for this review, two had adopted IDP laws (Honduras and Nigeria), three had policies (Mozambique, Nigeria and Yemen) and both DRC and Ethiopia were drafting laws or policies.

In Yemen, DRC and Nigeria the 'subnational' level is the most relevant for IDP responses. In Mozambique and Honduras, both the national and subnational levels are vital, as internal displacement is truly a national challenge, affecting many provinces and departments, whether due to conflict, violence or disasters. Complementing national laws and institutional support in Honduras, dedicated IDP units and strategies have been created at the local level, with the support of UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in municipalities most severely affected by displacement due to generalised violence.

International humanitarian organisations of course only operate with the consent of the government, and strong governments will often exercise strict control through a combination of legal and administrative measures impacting humanitarian access. In some cases – for instance where the government is responsible for causing displacement as part of a deliberate targeting of a population group – it may severely restrict, even deny, access to those IDPs and thus curtail the ability of the international community to report on human rights abuses or offer succour. More prosaically (and more often), coercive government control via executive or bureaucratic instruments can be about controlling the flow of (considerable) resources that the international community can deploy.

5.2 Where the collaboration could be better

Particularly in situations of displacement due to internal armed conflict, the relationship with the authorities is rarely easy, especially when governments are acting with brutality or seem uncaring towards IDPs. Yet even then there are obvious practical areas where collaboration can and should take place. In the case studies for this review, in addition to putting in place laws, policies and institutional arrangements, several governments have made land available to IDPs for farming and either temporary or permanent housing. They have, often with international support, expedited civil documentation for IDPs. Both of these examples should be priorities for humanitarian advocacy and support. Moreover, policy measures can often have a much greater impact than aid alone. For instance, facilitating the admission of IDP children to local schools will have tremendous knock-on benefits for IDPs in both the short and the long run. The international system can advocate and work with governments to incentivise such policies.

There is also often a need for practical support, such as training, IT, basic infrastructure, even sometimes temporarily subsidising personnel and fuel, of government offices and national human rights institutions directly engaged in protecting and assisting IDPs. Such support has been proven to pay dividends: in Honduras and Mozambique, for example, the impact of recent disasters was widely recognised as less devastating than in neighbouring countries on account of the technical capacity built up, with international humanitarian support, in each country's national displacement management agency over the years. And after all, the ultimate aim is for such national capacities to entirely lead responses to IDP crises in future.

6 IDP voice, participation and agency

Key messages

- IDPs are not being involved in humanitarian decision-making, and their agency and capacities remain largely overlooked.
- There are emerging examples of good practice in representation that can be replicated, such as IDP Councils and better support of local IDP organisations.
- Access to information helps people plan and should be prioritised.

The principle that IDPs should participate in decisions that affect their lives has been enshrined in IASC policy and operational guidance. The *Guiding principles on internal displacement* highlight the right of IDPs 'to participate in governmental and public affairs' in displacement, as well as 'the planning and management of their return or resettlement or reintegration'. The principle of consultation and participation is also in the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention; AU, 2009), many national IDP laws and policies, UN Security Council Resolutions, UN agency manuals and NGOs' guidelines.

Yet in practice, past evidence suggests that these policies and commitments are rarely acted upon. In her 2017 report to the UN General Assembly (UNGA), the then Special Rapporteur Cecilia Jimenez-Damary noted that:

> ...interaction with internally displaced persons commonly reveals a lack of information provided to them at all phases of displacement; infrequent or un-sustained engagement by responsible authorities; an absence of or inadequate mechanisms and processes for consultation and participation; and decision-making processes that are characterized by "top-down" approaches that fail to take their views, needs and objectives fully into account. (UN SR-IDP, 2017: 5)

Similarly, the report of the High-Level Panel states that 'too often, [IDPs] are not heard by policymakers and are unable to shape their own futures as decision makers in their own right' (UNSG High Level Panel on Internal Displacement, 2021: 21). These observations are reflected in the results of this review's survey, where 41% of respondents felt that IDPs were not meaningfully included in decision-making, compared with 32% who did, and 27% who were unsure.

6.1 To what extent are IDPs involved in making decisions that affect their lives?

> We are always forgotten. We feel we are invisible. We received vests as community leaders of persons with disability, but when the food distribution happened we were ignored. So, we threw our vests away! We need our voices to be listened to! (Member of Committee of IDPs with Disabilities & Older Persons, Northern Mozambique)

Across the case studies, infrastructure to engage IDPs was mostly established in the form of complaints desks, feedback boxes, hotlines, focus groups and perception surveys. Promisingly, these efforts were generally backed up by specific investments in Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) technical capacity at response level, with HCT community engagement or accountability working groups established.

However, as has been documented in other research (e.g. HAG, 2021) there is a danger of becoming too focused on process: even as agencies and NGOs interviewed for this study regularly reeled off lists of mechanisms they had established as evidence that IDPs were being adequately consulted, IDPs themselves regularly reported feeling ignored, or only consulted for the sake of expediency (see also Squire et al., 2022). Moreover, key informant interviews (KIIs) at all levels up to and including RC/HCs acknowledged that IDP voices are still widely missing from direct participation in strategic decision-making.

Beyond 'being consulted', there's a wider question of ownership of IDP programming that needs to be addressed. Even at operational level, short-term and externally designed programming is still generally being run 'for' rather than 'by' IDPs, which means that their existing capacities and agency are not being properly engaged. In Nigeria, some organisations were seeking to implement survivor and community-led response models that put budgets and planning directly into the hands of IDP communities (see Corbett et al., 2021), but this approach is generally still the exception rather than the rule. Across case studies, we found examples of pre-existing and long-standing community solidarity structures, such as savings and loans groups in DRC, that could be supported to play a much more active role in responses but are not being effectively tapped into.

Fundamentally, setting up the infrastructure for IDP participation in decision-making can only take humanitarian responses so far in becoming more IDP-centred if humanitarian action in internal displacement settings is not structurally set up to listen to and act upon what IDPs are actually asking for, or to effectively support their agency and aspirations.

More broadly, humanitarians are still struggling to actually respond to the fairly basic demands IDPs themselves are consistently making of them. Across the case studies, and especially in protracted settings, IDPs are desperate for long-term, predictable support to the efforts they are already making to build a future for themselves in displacement and beyond, especially around restarting their own livelihoods and accessing education. IDPs do not – nor should they be expected to – see a distinction

between sector and agency mandates, or between 'humanitarian' and 'development' needs and remain understandably baffled by seemingly arbitrary blockages on how humanitarian actors can help them. The current supply-driven, siloed and emergency-focused model is not set up to listen to or deliver on these priorities and in many ways – such as the preference for supporting IDPs in easily managed, regimented camps at the expense of a less-restricted existence in host communities – actively undermines IDPs' agency. Any discussion around participation therefore needs to be situated within a broader effort to shift how IDP responses are run, as one civil society organisation (CSO) put it, 'from charity and vulnerability to agency and rights'. This is closely related to how 'laying the groundwork' for solutions is understood and handled, as Chapter 7 describes.

6.1.1 Decision-making and representation

Genuine IDP participation in decision-making is linked to the thorny challenge of representation. Many KIIs were sceptical of calls to involve IDPs directly in decision-making forums such as the clusters or the HCT, concerned that any such presence would be tokenistic and insufficiently representative. Instead, they pointed to the potential for local organisations to fulfil this role (see Box 1 for an example way forward), as well as other mechanisms of indirect representation such as Ground Truth Solutions perception surveys.

One component of the representation puzzle is the extent to which the system is able to work with what's already there. 'Community leaders' are widely relied on by both IDPs and the responses that serve them as mediators and entry points. In some cases, official or elected leaders may end up being displaced alongside their communities, preserving their representative roles in displacement, as was the case in Tigray. In others, the disruptions of displacement may bring new actors to the fore whose roles may be much more exploitative in nature, as with the notorious 'gatekeepers' of IDP camps in Somalia. In most cases, their role is often highly ambivalent: in Mozambique for example, one survey found that they were simultaneously the most and least trusted source of information, and though an important resource for their communities, also a potential source of exploitation and abuse (CEAAP WG, 2022). Moreover, IDP women in Mozambique complained of having to trade sexual favours with community leaders in order to get on the lists they compiled and controlled as to who should be prioritised for humanitarian assistance.

There is a widespread assumption that greater participation in coordination structures by local organisations will support greater IDP participation. However, this assumption tends to need more unpacking.

First, there is often little distinction made between local organisations in general, and IDP-led organisations in particular. As evidence from work with women-led organisations has demonstrated, who an organisation is run 'by and for' is often a vital question in terms of how effective they are at representing their constituents' interests.

Second, the comparative absence of IDP-led organisations also means that responses need to do more in the interim to think about which local organisations might best represent the concerns of IDPs, whether they are explicitly IDP-run or not. For example, local organisations represented in cluster meetings may be effective at implementing projects but may not necessarily be the ones most trusted by IDPs or able to engage with their needs and priorities.

Both of these factors point to the need for humanitarians to be much more sensitive to the importance of supporting and cultivating civic space in IDP responses. While this tends to be considered as outside the scope of humanitarian response and straying into the realm of politics, the health of civic space and the range of local organisations and groups working within it can have a critical impact on how effectively IDPs can have their voices heard and listened to within humanitarian action (e.g. Roepstorff, 2020).

More broadly, experience with area-based approaches suggest that they may serve as effective vehicles for facilitating greater interface between IDPs, host communities, and local or municipal governments. And on many of these issues, there is significant scope to work more closely with non-humanitarian actors such as national human rights institutions – as in Honduras and Ethiopia, where the national Human Rights Commission in both countries has an explicit focus on the rights of IDPs as part of its mandate. Supporting national human rights institutions to integrate internal displacement into their work is one of the 12 above-mentioned benchmarks of national responsibility (Mooney, 2005b). Global guidance and many examples of good such practice exist (UNHCR, UN SR-IDP, Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and UNDP, 2022; Ferris et al., 2011).

Box 1 IDP Councils in Ukraine

The IDP Council model pioneered in Ukraine by national NGO Stabilization Support Services represents one possible avenue toward more systematic and comprehensive participation of IDPs in decision-making. These councils were piloted in the years immediately prior to the 2022 Russian invasion and have now been incorporated into Ukraine's national strategy on IDPs and solutions. Through the mandate of the national Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories, they have been rolled out in over 500 locations nationwide. The councils serve a primarily consultative role, interfacing directly with regional, local and municipal administrations to ensure that their rights are respected, and that the specific needs of IDPs are reflected in the governance and service delivery of their local areas.

The model is flexible, with councils formed in different ways depending on local conditions. In many cases, the councils involve a mix of IDPs (selected via open application or from pre-identified candidates) and civil servants working on relevant briefs. This allows for smoother interactions between IDPs and state bodies, as well as building mutual understanding and trust. A key element of the committee formation process is the training that IDPs receive both on rights and on how to engage with Ukraine's government policy and planning process.

6.1.2 Communication and access to information

For IDPs, planning how to invest their efforts and resources is extremely challenging in a situation of flux and uncertainty. As a consequence, access to timely information is especially important in allowing them to make informed decisions as they navigate uncertain circumstances as best they can. Access to accurate information about the conditions in areas of potential return or resettlement is an essential component of a voluntary decision by IDPs about solutions.

Yet across case studies, the review found communication between humanitarian actors and IDPs was often weak. In Mozambique for example, one study reported that only 14% of IDPs had even interacted with humanitarians (CEAAP WG, 2022). Another study in Nigeria found that humanitarian communications and feedback mechanisms were not trusted by IDPs because they were often unavailable in languages people understood (TWB, 2021).

Beyond access, thinking strategically about how to communicate with IDPs as a constituency – such as reflecting on which decisions will affect their interests in what ways, and what tailored communications might be needed as a consequence – can also be a major weakness. In Ethiopia, the decision to pause distributions of emergency food aid in Tigray in early 2023 over aid diversion concerns was communicated late, if at all. IDPs who spoke to the review team described it as 'like a light being switched off', impacting them at a specific point in time when their expectations for return were high and plans to do so well underway. This failure of engagement generated a sense of not just uncertainty but betrayal, substantially undermining IDPs' trust in the response.

7 Solutions

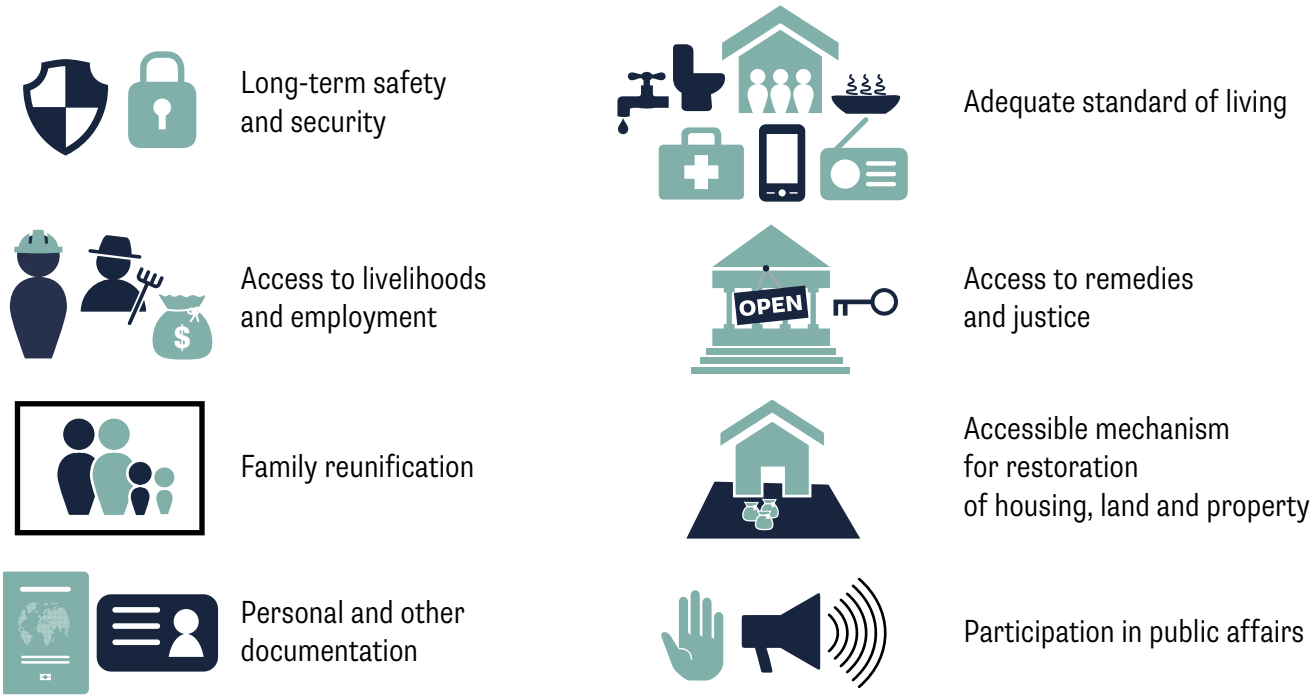
Key messages

- Humanitarians have a key role to play in advocating and laying the groundwork for solutions to internal displacement.
- Humanitarian assistance too often remains stuck in emergency mode long after the acute crisis is over, contributing to IDPs being stuck in limbo. Interventions supporting livelihoods, education, civil documentation, housing, land and property rights are key.
- Donor funding, agency programming, aid coordination and socioeconomic profiling all need overhauling to deliver on solutions.

The *Guiding principles on internal displacement* affirm that 'displacement shall last no longer than required by the circumstances'.

At the request of the ERC and with the support of the UN RSG-IDPs, the IASC developed a Framework on Durable Solutions to Internal Displacement (IASC, 2010), which applies to both conflict and disasters. In line with the *Guiding principles*, it describes the key human rights that should guide durable solutions and criteria that determine to what extent a durable solution has been achieved (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs: eight criteria



The Framework emphasises that achieving durable solutions will be: a gradual, often long-term process of reducing displacement-specific needs and ensuring IDPs' enjoyment of human rights without discrimination; a complex process, addressing human rights, humanitarian, development, reconstruction and peace-building challenges; and a process requiring the coordinated and timely engagement of different actors.

The government, as ever with IDPs, must be in the lead though often will require international support. There have been several attempts to prioritise better system-wide responses to IDP solutions. In 2011, the UNSG issued a directive to UN RC/HCs to ensure UNCTs develop, with technical support from UNHCR and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), a joint strategy for supporting governments in resolving displacement due to conflict (UNSG, 2011). Solutions featured prominently in the 2016 Agenda for Humanity emanating from the World Humanitarian Summit (Agenda for Humanity, n.d.), a 2017 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)-commissioned study (Kälin and Chapuisat, 2017) led by the former Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons. Most recently these solutions were the main focus of the 2021 UNSG's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement and now the UNSG's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement.

To carry out the Action Agenda commitments on solutions the UNSG appointed a Special Advisor on a time-limited basis, to help, 'jump start and drive implementation of the action agenda, with a focus on solutions'.

This review agrees with both the UNSG Action Agenda and the Office of the Special Advisor that there is much more the humanitarian system could do to facilitate solutions. Humanitarians have a key part to play in this. Too often the IASC system has deployed to save lives but has then become stuck as displacement turns protracted.

Many of the factors that drive protracted displacement are beyond the control of the humanitarians. Unfortunately, the difficulty of finding solutions for displaced people in protracted conflict and insecurity has often meant that humanitarian organisations have not done the things that are in their control to improve the situation. Too often the approach has been 'aid until the money runs out', rather than thinking about what could be done to help with agency, sustainability and reinforcing people's capacities, even in protracted displacement.

7.1 Evidence from the review

> There is little assessment on land availability and access by IDPs, returnees, host communities, also looking at their own perception of how humanitarian aid is meeting their specific needs or not. Main conclusion from their comments is that we don't usually try to understand who these people are, where they come from, what they used to do. Then we have the issue of delivering standardised packages, not listening to the skills, backgrounds, specific needs. Biggest challenge is that we don't listen or try to understand who people are and want to do in the future. (Global KII)

From interviews, focus groups and participatory research for this review it is clear that many IDPs want to go home. However it is equally clear that many understand this to be impossible in the short to medium term because it is not safe to do so, whether due to ongoing conflict or to persistent disaster risk. And even 'going home' is not simply about place. It's about getting back to some form of normal life. People want dignity, agency – the ability to look after themselves and their families. To be safe, to have hope for the future.

> Amid severe lack of livelihoods, we had to go to plantations belonging to people from the host community, in order to work during the farming seasons. We would work all day long under the sun as cleaners in the fields, for which we would get some tomatoes, okras and mallow in return; it was like our daily sustenance that we would usually share with our families at home. Sometimes, we would graze the few sheep/goats near those farms, which we brought from Haradh. (IDP in Abs, Yemen)

In most places where there are major IDP crises, protracted displacement exists alongside new displacement and people cope however they are able. Aid forms part of this coping but is viewed as unreliable and not always appropriate.

In DRC there are IDPs in camps in Bunia who have been displaced for six or seven years with no chance of going home as ethnic killings continue daily. Over this time aid has slowly dwindled to the point where they no longer receive food or cash, and precious little else. Children are begging in the town, and increasingly large numbers of street children present a security threat. Yet the local NGO formed by concerned Congolese businesswomen providing free education in the camps has never been funded and is struggling to stay afloat despite minimal costs.

In Mozambique many people originally displaced by conflict in Cabo Delgado have started to return home. This is partly because food rations have been cut significantly, and partly a result of government encouragement. However, amidst ongoing conflict, some IDPs' places of origin are not safe, so though they have 'returned' to their district of origin they remain displaced as a result of insecurity, including brutal attacks by NSAGs against civilians.

> It's not our choice to be here, to be displaced. Back home we were living on our own, we were not dependent on assistance. If today you tell us there is guaranteed safety back home, you will not see us here. Some people tried to return, they went home. But there were security problems so they fled again back here to the camp. (IDP woman, Northern Mozambique)

Mozambique has also adopted a policy of local integration and resettlement, both for IDPs due to conflict and those displaced by disaster. In practice this has involved a policy of converting IDP camps into villages. This is largely working well, with humanitarian and development actors working in concert and with the government to provide these IDPs with a wide range of multi-sectoral support. But there are gaps, especially when it comes to IDPs' access to good-quality agricultural land and for others to pursue their traditional livelihood in fishing. There also were challenges in ensuring IDPs' participation in the local community's decision-making structures.

> We told them that we need some credit to buy boats and fishing nets we lost, taken away by the cyclone. We also told them that we as fishermen could have a shifting schedule among ourselves. One group of 10 to 20 men could go to Beira for fishing in the sea for a fortnight and the other fortnight the other group could go. Our wives would remain here in Savane or go to Dondo and sell dried-salted fish as we don't have electricity and fridges here to conserve the fish. Unfortunately, they ignored our request and came here to build a fish pond for 15 men only to manage it. It is not working, and the project collapsed. (IDP man in Savane resettlement site, Mozambique)

In Yemen, most IDPs have limited options to return (so far) due to the ongoing conflict lines, UXO, lack of political settlements, land issues and other barriers. But as in Bunia, DRC and Northern Mozambique, funding and therefore assistance has either plummeted or ceased altogether (causing some people to displace themselves again to areas where assistance is still available). In Northeast Nigeria, the government has strongly pushed for camps to close and to send IDPs home. Many IDPs, finding no viable livelihood in their area of origin or fearing further insecurity, have displaced themselves once more, now into the major cities.

Following the end of the conflict in Tigray, Ethiopia, there is a new focus on internal displacement, and a proposed government policy. However, the focus remains quite narrowly on return. Public infrastructure and local governance remains weak or hardly exists, and there is little support in situ once people arrive 'home'. People are often returning because they have no other choice: 'you give us nothing here, we can't eat, we live in a prison, why should we stay, we're going back'.

Finally in Honduras, generalised violence means the theoretical normal trajectory – of a person becoming displaced, then living in a place of displacement, then eventually returning or resettling elsewhere in the country – does not apply. As one senior humanitarian explained: 'It is not like in a situation of armed conflict where eventually the war ends, there is a peace agreement, and durable solutions to displacement can then be cemented'. Rather, 'solutions to displacement' are primarily about reducing the risks that compel people to flee, that is, protecting people against displacement.

In this review's case studies and other IDP contexts worldwide, from Colombia to South Sudan, IDPs find forging new lives a struggle. Of course, creating the conditions – for example, of peace, safety and equal opportunity – in the country is beyond the control of IDPs (and of humanitarians) and is the responsibility of the government. Meanwhile, there is very rarely a clearcut way forward. Mostly it is the case that people try to make new lives in displacement, often in what become informal settlements on the periphery of towns and cities. Their asset base erodes, major assets such as land and livestock were left behind, and their resilience is increasingly stressed. Negative coping strategies become routine and health outcomes deteriorate. They often face specific barriers – for example, loss of identity documentation and school certificates, to access education and public services. They also may face discrimination on ethnic, religious or political grounds, or simply for the fact of being displaced.

In Somalia, it's well-established that displacement has become a business opportunity for elite business interests among Mogadishu's dominant clans. An 'IDP economy' has evolved whereby people displaced to the periphery of the city find themselves dependent on 'gatekeepers' who are the interlocutors with the aid organisations. IDPs must pay part of their ration to the gatekeepers and can be, 'forced, pressurised, or incentivised to remain in camps'. Within this corrupt system, 'gatekeeper-ship' can even be bought and sold.

What this evidence suggests – and in fact has long been understood among IDP experts – is that overemphasis on return, which may be a long time in coming, especially in cases of protracted conflict, can stand in the way of getting on with other solutions to which IDPs also have a right. Solutions that involve local integration and resettlement elsewhere in the country, whether permanent or interim could be implemented, until those IDPs who do prefer to return safely can do so. Actually, solutions are about helping people to cope on their own – livelihoods, education, investments to support rapid urban growth on the periphery, providing services and finding ways to turn massive surplus labour into sustainable economic growth.

7.2 Reshaping the system to better address durable solutions

The humanitarian system is built around a logic and mythology of 'lifesaving' assistance. In practice however, the times when it is called on to really save lives – to respond in extremis – are comparatively rare. And as we have seen during the course of this review, when it is genuinely called on to do so (Goma mass displacement at the end of 2022, Mozambique in 2018–2020) it is often late, chaotic and uncoordinated.

In the majority of cases the humanitarian system is engaged in something that can be described as 'care and maintenance'. This is the mode in which it is primarily engaged in the biggest 'humanitarian crises' by dollar value across the world – Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Somalia, Ukraine, DRC, Ethiopia – each currently in receipt of over US $1 billion this year and over US $2 billion last year (both Sudan and South Sudan are just shy of a billion received so far and will likely be over this number by year end).

And as everyone in the system acknowledges but seems powerless to address, most of these countries have been in the 'emergency appeals' system for years, that is, there is a Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). Somalia and DRC have been in the appeals system since its inception in 1992 (31 years and counting), as has Sudan. Afghanistan and Ethiopia have been briefly out of the system, but are back in. Syria has been in the system for over a decade, as has Yemen. Ukraine is a relative newcomer, having only entered in 2014. Of the 26 HRPs in 2023, none have been in the system for a single year. Three (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras) have been in the system for only two years and the rest have been present for years. Of the seven flash appeals, all have been in the international system previously, and of the nine refugee response plans, all are in the same countries as HRPs, all representing decades-old crises.

As we have already seen, all of the biggest crises are either exclusively IDP crises or have a very significant number of IDPs (millions). Most of these – while of course it is complex – have high numbers of protracted IDPs. The same appeals that have lasted for years are supporting people in displacement for years. And even when people 'go home' they are often 'back again' before long or suffering some other form of displacement (DRC is the classic example).

Annualised 'emergency' funding leads to (largely) standardised emergency-type interventions – tarpaulins, non-food items and hygiene kits, food rations, emergency toilets and so on. These either continue for years, or come and go periodically. But as we have equally seen throughout this review (and covered above in Chapter 6 on IDP voice), almost immediately IDPs want to establish a viable life for themselves. In fact, they have no choice because aid at best simply fills some gaps.

- IDPs want: jobs, education, safety.
- IDPs get: hygiene kits and food handouts.

This is a function of the broken system. It has become a humanitarian cliché to talk of giving people boreholes instead of doing water trucking. But amazingly – despite this phrase being almost ubiquitous, it took five years in Yemen for the WASH Cluster to commission work into the relative cost effectiveness of one over the other.

Partly the systemic problem lies with donors. Too often in this review we have heard donors talk about 'only funding lifesaving assistance', as is currently the case in Ethiopia. Despite decades-long work establishing a government-led safety net, despite the decentralisation of nutrition services almost two decades ago, despite the clear acknowledgement that structural solutions to emergency problems work best in that country, we are still peddling the 'lifesaving' trope.

Partly the systemic problem lies with the agencies and the emergency routines built over many years. Standardised kits ready to go; supply lines of tarpaulins; food aid purchased with sophisticated advance option contracts; boxes of emergency broad spectrum antibiotics, dressings and sutures, enough for 10,000 people for three months. These routines are essential in emergency – genuinely lifesaving. But they are inadequate in protracted situations and inadequate to help people towards a 'solution'.

Clearly one part of the solution is to reconsider funding approaches. This review is not arguing for more resources – although more would certainly be helpful.[8] Rather it is about the structure of the funding, and the activities that are prioritised for financing. This is a matter for donors and agencies jointly. Donors must look at their funding more thoughtfully and start to tease out where they think

8 In 2022, humanitarian funding hit an all-time high of US $41.18 billion (tracked in the UN Financial Tracking Service (UN FTS)). The authoritative *Global humanitarian assistance* report by Development Initiatives gives a higher figure of US $46.9 billion. Both these figures are substantial increases from 2021 when it was US $30.31 billion and US $36.9 billion respectively. In 2002, just 20 years previously, this figure was US $4.9 billion (UN FTS), and two years earlier in 2000 it was US $2.03 billion, the first time the global humanitarian appeal had gone over US $2 billion.

there needs to be genuine emergency lifesaving assistance, and where they are actually financing longer-term safety nets of last resort. Agencies need to offer up a different menu – emergency when really needed, dignity and agency once populations are stabilised. This is an effort of co-creation, and also includes educating policymakers in major donor countries, who it is assumed will reduce funding if they don't think it's 'lifesaving'.

Another part of the solution is to develop new programme approaches and new routines. This, too, is not beyond the capability of big agencies. The UN World Food Programme (WFP) has an admirable evidence- and data-driven approach. It could easily apply this scientific thinking to the graduation question – what will work to get people sufficiently on their feet so they are no longer dependent on handouts? Similarly, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and UN-Habitat (and the International Labour Organization) could join forces to think through how we support livelihoods in peri-urban settings where the majority of today's IDPs find themselves. The combined brilliance of these agencies, with World Bank data and analysis, UNDP policy heft, and international NGO (INGO), local NGO and CSO delivery skills, we can surely come up with something better than hygiene kits?

Studies by the World Bank and others highlighting the positive economic impact of refugees were influential in driving the more solutions-focused approach we have currently (World Bank, 2023). And higher populations mean a larger consumer base and stronger market, even with low purchasing power. Also, if relevant, the engagement of NGOs with services and assistance inject further stimulus into the market.

There is much talk of 'nexus' and humanitarian–development–peace coordination, with the debate going back for almost as long as that on IDPs. Glaring gaps in humanitarian–development coordination, both generally and specifically regarding IDPs, were found in all of the review's case studies. Typically, the complaint among humanitarians continues to be that development actors 'show up too late' to IDP responses (e.g. Northeast Nigeria and Yemen). However, as the case of Mozambique illustrates, even when development actors engage in a timelier manner, humanitarian–development coordination is problematic to near non-existent. But perhaps by focusing on particular aspects of a broader strategy – economic opportunities, or safety nets, or basic services – a more practical and solutions-focused coordination might emerge.

Finally, a significant part of reshaping the system must be how the IASC system works with governments. Capacity, policy work, practical support in IDP locations – all of these are done, but not in a joined-up fashion, and not as part of a broader strategy.

7.3 Education, civil documentation, housing, land and property rights are key

Certain key issues for IDPs, including education, civil documentation, and housing, land and property rights, tend to be seen by the broader humanitarian community as lower priority 'development' issues, to be addressed primarily in 'the solutions phase'. Yet, these issues are essential not only in their own right, but also for IDPs' protection, food security, access to health care, and livelihoods.

IDPs' access to education needs much greater priority in humanitarian response. It tends to be among the least-funded clusters but, as is well-established, is critical to children's development and protection. The specific obstacles IDP children face in accessing education need to be addressed in humanitarian response, with the government.

Beyond basic humanitarian aid, education, health and livelihood support are essential elements of a solutions-oriented response. In our interviews with IDPs, their concerns for their children and their future was a constant refrain. Education provides near-immediate benefits in terms of children's protection, psychological well-being and development, and a richer and more meaningful life for IDP children, and is the avenue for a better future. With children in school, their parents or other caregivers are freed up to pursue economic activities.

Housing, land and property issues also still tend, like education, to be deprioritised in the humanitarian response and seen largely as a development issue. Earlier attention to these issues is important not only for laying the groundwork for solutions but also for IDPs' food security, livelihoods and protection from evictions. Illegal property expropriation can also be a major cause of displacement, as in Honduras.

Similarly, replacement of civil documentation that is lost, destroyed or stolen during displacement is critical for solutions (and is one of the IASC criteria) but cannot wait until that stage. It is a critical protection measure, in particular for family tracing and the protection of children from trafficking and child labour. As affirmed in the *Guiding principles*, IDPs have a right to have documentation lost or destroyed in the course of displacement replaced as soon as possible.

> I need food, or the money to buy it. I'd rather acquire a livelihood skill so I can become independent, maybe by learning how to tailor and make caps so I can have economic power before I get married. Girls don't attend schools anymore and life is very difficult for them. (Female youth, Monguno camp, Borno state, Nigeria)
>
> There are people here who have skills, university graduates, we just need the opportunity. We need to get opportunities like small income generating activities, and if we are supported, we can generate income and help ourselves. (Female IDP, Qoloji Camp, Somali Region, Ethiopia)

7.4 Planning for solutions from the outset – immediate fixes

Two quick fixes that have long been advocated and this review agrees with, are to formalise the various Durable Solutions Working Groups (DSWGs) and to tackle the transition of clusters. This is a bureaucratic and technical fix that can only take us so far but is probably better than the status quo. A DSWG should be established early in any IDP crisis (no later than six months), as a matter of course. It should be convened under the auspices of the RC/HC and have a set attendance that includes development agencies such as UNDP, UN-Habitat and the International Labour Organization, human rights actors, and regular HCT attendees.

Clearly the government needs to be brought on board with solutions, and this is a political issue to be managed under the leadership of the RC/HC. As the IASC Framework emphasises, development actors will be key. In refugee situations, the involvement of the World Bank and donors has played a critical role in unlocking rights. Something similar is required for IDPs. The work of the World Bank and UNHCR Joint Data Centre in supporting the first ever national census in Honduras to integrate IDP issues is a good example. The massive investment of the World Bank in Northern Mozambique also holds tremendous potential for IDP solutions, although coordination with humanitarians needs to be improved.

These are hardly new ideas: the UNSG called for mobilisation of all relevant parts of the system – humanitarian, human rights, development and political – back in 1992 in order to address the global crisis of internal displacement. Now, more than 30 years later and with many millions more IDPs, doing so is surely overdue.

The creation of the Office of the Special Advisor on IDP solutions for a specific period of time has created new momentum and urgency to advancing solutions for IDPs through targeted support to governments, UN RC/HCs and UNCTs, and warrants full IASC support.

7.4.1 Participation and solutions

Across the review, solutions were identified as an especially glaring participation gap for IDPs. Governments across case studies tended to adopt fairly top-down approaches to solutions, often favouring return over all other options, usually based on political expediency as much as the needs and interests of IDPs or the objective safety of return areas. This rarely accounts for potential differences between groups of IDPs as to what solution might work for them. In many cases, it is questionable whether IDPs are even being given a real choice.

Ultimately, the potential for IDPs to take part in decisions around solutions is closely linked to how effectively they have been incorporated in humanitarian and state decision-making processes during the early stages of the response. If the mechanisms for meaningful participation haven't been established by the time solutions are under discussion, the scope for IDPs to have their voices heard in these processes similarly is likely to be limited.

8 Leadership, coordination and accountability

Key messages

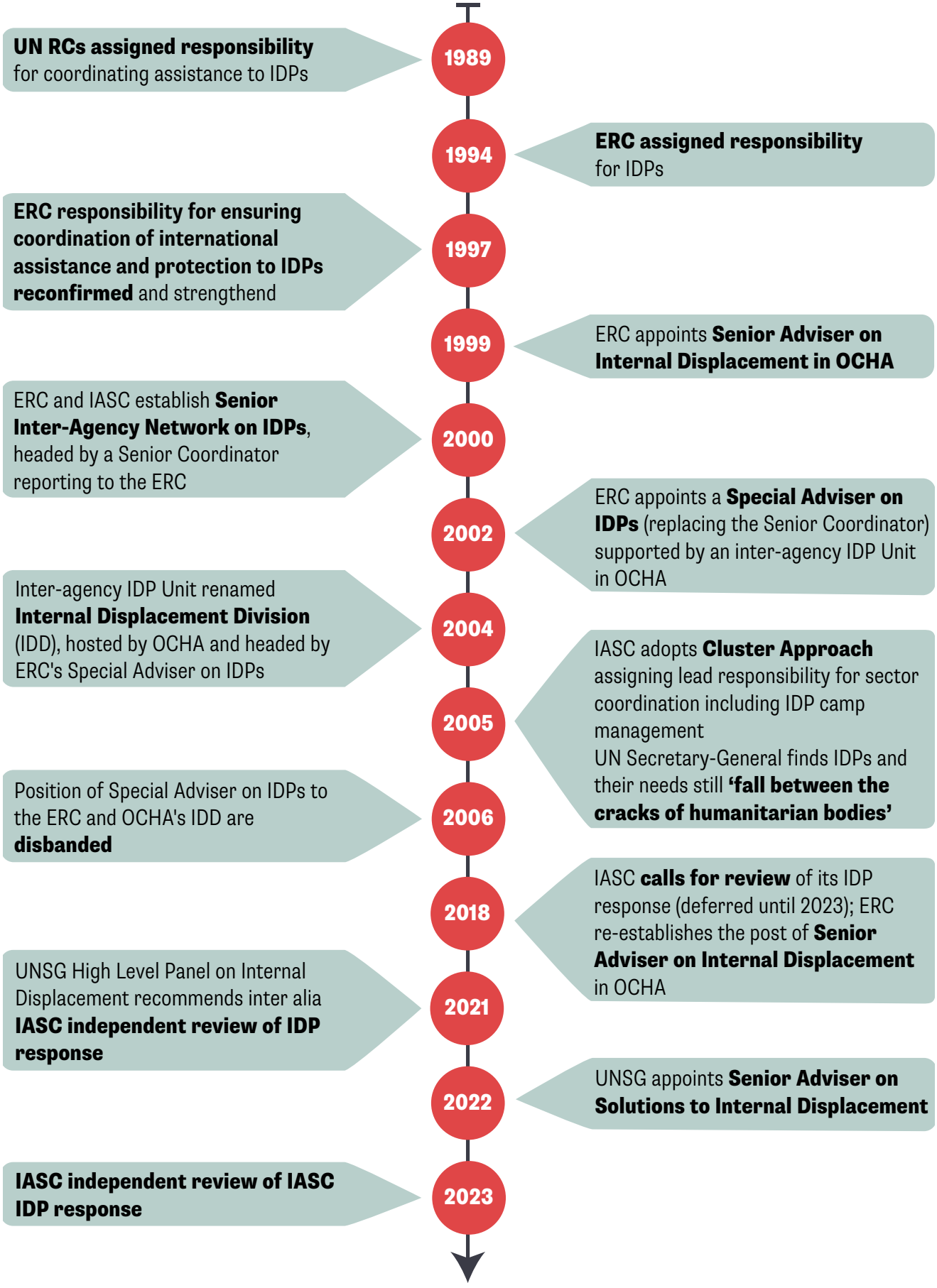
- IDP response requires a collaborative effort, meaning the ERC, the IASC and the RC/HCs have key leadership roles. These all need renewing and reinforcing.
- While clusters have improved on what went before, coordination needs updating to be more flexible, area-based, less rigidly bureaucratic and more accountable.

For decades now, the international community has recognised that supporting affected countries to address **internal displacement demands a system-wide approach and that the effectiveness of this approach, in turn, depends on coordination** (Figure 3). In 1991, the first system-wide review undertaken by the United Nations to 'assess the experience and capacity of various organisations in assisting' IDPs and other displaced persons 'and the whole spectrum of their needs, in supporting the efforts of the affected countries' concluded:

> the complexity of the issues involved [...] cover the whole spectrum from relief, to reconstruction, to development. This necessarily needs mobilisation of the entire United Nations system. Therefore, coordination arrangements at the international and country levels become central in ensuring an effective response from the system. (UNSG, 1991)

Yet, **in practice, the IASC's collaborative approach to internal displacement has been a persistent challenge** for the international system (see for example, Cohen and Deng, 1998; Holbrooke, 2000; Bagshaw and Paul, 2004; Charny, 2005; McNamara, 2006; Ferris, 2014). This is true both before the 2005 Humanitarian Reform triggering introduction of 'the cluster approach' to humanitarian response and in the nearly 20 years since. Most recently, it was a common finding in all six of the review's case study countries, all of which had activated the cluster approach.

Figure 3 Key developments towards improving international humanitarian coordination for IDPs



8.1 The UN Emergency Relief Coordinator

The ERC is responsible for global leadership on ensuring protection and assistance of IDPs in humanitarian response.[9] The consistent affirmation over time that humanitarian actors should respond to IDP crises through a collaborative and multi-agency approach underscores the need for effective IASC coordination, under the leadership of the ERC.[10]

The ERC role in leading IDP responses was first spelled out in 1994 by the IASC. The UNSG's 1997 UN reform significantly strengthened the role of the ERC and reaffirmed its role regarding IDPs. This responsibility is defined as ensuring that the protection and assistance needs of IDPs are effectively addressed in humanitarian response.

The IASC, which was established in 1991 to improve system-wide coordination efforts and provide support to the ERC (UNGA, 1991), recommended that the ERC's responsibilities regarding IDPs entail: advocacy on protection and assistance needs of IDPs; resource mobilisation and identification of resource gaps in IDP responses; establishment of a database and global information regarding IDPs, including monitoring and issuance of periodic situation reports; and support to field operations, including in the negotiation of humanitarian access (IASC, 1998). Current guidance to RH/HCs restates these responsibilities (IASC, 2004).

8.2 UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators

> I reaffirm that Humanitarian Coordinators are expected to coordinate and lead on these collective efforts, including as they relate to IDPs. (UNSG, 2022)

At country level, the UN HC/RC is responsible for the strategic coordination of international humanitarian responses for people in need, including IDPs.[11] **The UNSG has explicitly assigned UN RCs with responsibility for coordinating international assistance to IDPs since 1989**.[12] In 2022, the

9 The ERC, a position established by UNGA resolution 46/182 (1992), is recognised in successive resolutions of the General Assembly for over 20 years as having 'a central role for the inter-agency coordination of protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons'. See, for example, UNGA Res 56/164 (2002), para. 12; UNGA Res. 78/205 (2023), para. 17.

10 The UNGA has long called upon 'all relevant United Nations humanitarian assistance, human rights and development organizations concerned to enhance further their collaboration and coordination, especially through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, in order to promote and better carry out protection, assistance and development activities for internally displaced persons and to enhance further their accountability'. See, for instance, UNGA Res. 56/165 (2002), para. 12; UNGA Res. 78/205 (2023), para. 21.

11 Aside from refugee responses, where UNHCR is mandated by various GA resolutions to mobilise resources and organise response, coordination and solutions.

12 UNGA res. 44/136, adopted 15 December 1989, para. 7, endorsing the recommendation of the UNSG assigning UN RCs this responsibility.

UNSG reaffirmed the designation of the UN RCs as 'the UN's lead on solutions at the country level' and that, whenever there is an international humanitarian response, HCs 'are expected to coordinate and lead on these collective efforts, including as they relate to IDPs' (UNSG, 2022: 12, 21).

Current global guidance to RCs and HCs on leadership in humanitarian action generally emphasises that 'key roles for RCs and HCs' include 'to raise awareness of the **specific vulnerabilities and needs of affected people, including IDPs**' (IASC, 2023: 37) and to:

- work with the HCT, Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) and clusters (including the Protection, Shelter, and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Clusters) to ensure that IDP concerns are adequately reflected and addressed in cross-cluster coordination
- lead the development of strategies for durable solutions in consultation with national authorities[13]
- foster humanitarian–development–peace collaboration to implement durable solutions strategies (IASC, 2023: 157).

The RC/HC is responsible for 'determining the most adequate and efficient coordination "architecture" for the situation', and 'taking into account the context, including scale and complexity of the response needed, available resources, and existing capacities and mechanisms'.

8.3 What are the functions of leadership in an IDP response?

In discussing leadership, it is worth setting out what we mean by 'leadership' in the IDP context. In the absence of authority over the disparate parts of the system, it is no surprise that the 'leadership' carries out certain tasks better than others.

One element entails leadership in engaging with the government. For instance, advocacy (especially for political commitments from the government to devote national resources to support IDPs) is a task most likely ultimately carried out by the RC/HC. In DRC, the RC/HC advocated at the highest levels for land for IDPs newly displaced in the east, with some success. There were examples like this across the case studies, including supporting adoption by the government of IDP law or policy. On more politically sensitive IDP protection issues, however, the record of RC/HCs has long been a challenge (Bagshaw and Paul, 2004) and remains very patchy.

13 This is in line with the UNSG decision of 2011 assigning the RC responsibility specifically for developing, with national authorities, and in collaboration with UN agencies as well as relevant clusters if these have been activated, a strategy for solutions to internal displacement.

The review has proposed six criteria for effective leadership:

- **Ensure the IDP response is timely**. Displacement often happens rapidly, involving large numbers of people, whose safety and lives are often at serious risk. In such cases, especially where health systems are poor and people are already under-nourished, communicable disease outbreaks can kill large numbers. Rapid response saves lives.
- **Ensure the response is joined up**. As has been repeatedly emphasised in this review and elsewhere, IDPs have multiple needs, which require a multi-sector inter-agency response.
- **Ensure that protection is at the centre of the response**. Leadership has a responsibility to talk about the most fundamental issue of protecting IDPs' safety and human rights. IDPs are often the most marginalised, suffering serious human rights abuses both before and during displacement. IDPs also have a right to a safe and voluntary solution to displacement. The IASC recognises that in IDP crises, protection must be at the core of any humanitarian response.
- **Ensure that minimum humanitarian standards are met**. While this is often difficult to achieve in practice because of resource or access constraints, achieving these standards must always be the objective, and leadership should be clear about why they have not been achieved if that is the case.
- **Ensure there is a plan to promote solutions and IDPs' self-reliance**. People in displacement need solutions as quickly as possible. Advocating with the government for solutions and planning at the beginning of the response to 'pass the baton' to development actors ensures humanitarians don't get stuck in 'care and maintenance mode' and keep doing the same thing until the money runs out, leaving IDPs in limbo.
- **Carry out advocacy**. This tends to be performed well on issues of humanitarian access and resource mobilisation generally. Advocacy by humanitarian leadership on protection issues and specific IDP needs, such as security of tenure and access to land, civil documentation, access to public services without impediment, and safe, voluntary and sustainable solutions to displacement, must be strengthened.

One area that is arguably within the control of leadership but was not done very well in any of the case studies was in setting out a strategic vision for IDP responses, and especially how they might evolve. This is probably connected to the one-year, or maximum two-year, HRP being the sole planning instrument for the IASC system and it having to incorporate all aspects of any response as a result. HRPs rarely feature IDPs beyond presenting the numbers, and in those countries where there are IDP-related objectives, these tend to be quite basic. This may also relate to the uneasy 'government in the lead, government not in the lead' conundrum set out previously.

Moreover, HRPs also do not lend themselves well to the type of humanitarian–development nexus programming that IDPs require. Any vision for IDPs beyond straightforward assistance often requires resolution of issues that are beyond the IASC system, for example, economic development, land reform, justice and peace.

In reality, however, IDPs often find themselves stuck in the 'grey zone' for years – not able to return, not able to make a new life where they are. In anticipating such situations, the IASC system could make

a real difference beyond immediate lifesaving response. Interim solutions are widespread and clearly a strategy that went beyond the immediate would offer space for the system to think about these issues (and potentially pull together the disparate actors). Developing a strategy for IDP response was also a clear recommendation of the High-Level Panel, and a commitment of the UNSG in his Action Agenda, as well as a previous long-standing part of IASC IDP policy and guidance.

8.4 Cluster approach to humanitarian response

In 2005, while noting that '[r]ecent steps have been taken to ensure that agencies provide assistance to such groups within their respective areas of competence, on a collaborative basis', the UNSG observed – using words similar to those of his predecessor years before – that **'IDPs and their needs often fall into the cracks between different humanitarian bodies'**. Also like his predecessor, he committed 'to strengthen further the inter-agency response to the needs of IDPs, under the global leadership of my Emergency Relief Coordinator, and at the country level through the humanitarian coordinator system' (UNGA, 2005).

A system-wide review of humanitarian response commissioned by the ERC in 2005 subsequently found that 'despite the fact that a collaborative approach has been agreed upon by the international community and that it has the backing of the IASC membership … **[t]he major weakness in recent responses to IDP crises has been the absence of operational accountability and leadership in key sectors of IDP-specific vulnerability**' (IASC, 2005: 49–50). Such key sectors specified were: camp management, emergency shelter, protection, and return, reintegration and recovery. As a result, '[t]he impact of the leadership role for IDPs by the [ERC] – as the UNSG's focal point on IDPs – and his field-level counterparts, the [HCs], is in practice minimized by the lack of operational accountability among UN agencies for addressing IDP needs in these areas'. The review concluded:

> In the 'collaborative approach' for IDPs, the international humanitarian coordination system works by goodwill and consensus and depends too often on the authority and skills of HCs. While its role has to be maintained and reinforced, there is also a need to make progress in designing a more explicit model where, sector operational accountability will be clearly identified at the level of a designated organization[.]

When deciding to activate clusters, the RC/HC, in consultation with the HCT, is to select the Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) based on their coordination and response capacity, operational presence and ability to scale up. While global guidance suggests that 'the selection of CLAs ideally mirrors global arrangements', it also recognises that 'this is not always possible, and in some cases other organisations may be in a better position to lead' (IASC, 2020: 81). The RC/HCs thus have the mandate and flexibility to put in place humanitarian coordination arrangements that are 'fit for purpose' for each situation.

When a 'cluster approach' is activated, it is important to recall, as global guidance emphasises, that 'clusters are intended to be temporary structures, handing over their responsibilities where/when national capacity is sufficient' (IASC, 2020: 79). The aim is that the 'coordination architecture for

international responders builds on and complements existing national- and local-level mechanisms, instead of creating separate or parallel structures'. As such, there should be 'adaptation of coordination structures over time, including an increased role for local actors, national authorities and/or development partners as the situation moves from emergency to recovery' (IASC, 2020: 75).

What this points towards is a more flexible and adaptable cluster system, with stronger accountabilities from the start. While this review found that clusters have improved on what went before, it is also now time to update the clusters in line with the flexibility originally envisaged. Two further elements could be considered in this update, namely RRMs and multi-purpose cash. Transition must also be far better thought through, as set out later.

8.4.1 Rapid response mechanisms: helping achieve timelier action

Another significant innovation to humanitarian response in recent years has been the ad hoc addition of RRMs. These existed in most of the case studies for this review and exist in most countries with large IDP populations and flows.

There are two major advantages to RRM-type mechanisms in acute displacement crises. First, they are multi-sector, meaning the complexities of getting the entire cluster system mobilised at once are mitigated. Second, they are fast by nature, meaning that they can potentially address some of the life-threatening aspects of mass displacement (although there is still a need for a rapid WASH response and sometimes vaccination interventions).

8.4.2 Cash as a modality, still under-used

The use of multi-purpose cash as a modality has grown significantly in recent years (Development Initiatives, 2023). However, it remains a very small proportion of the overall volume of humanitarian aid, despite many obvious advantages.

For IDPs, cash is particularly useful as it is inherently multi-sectoral. Given that the majority of IDPs are now in urban contexts, cash has a major advantage. People can procure all of their basic needs with cash (clean water, for instance, is routinely purchased by households in a high degree of rapidly urbanising contexts) (see for instance Post and Ray, 2020). Shelter (rent), household items, food, health care and education are all cash-dependent in urban economies, and the flexible nature of cash means that IDPs can prioritise their own individual needs rather than having others decide for them.

Finally, cash distributions have the added advantage that they can in time link to national social protection systems. For the most vulnerable among IDPs it may be that they are never able to fully support themselves (for instance, single-headed families with children with profound disabilities). Where safety nets exist, these families can be transferred from 'humanitarian' care to national systems.

8.5 HCT leadership: evidence from the review

> HC has little power vis-à-vis the Agencies and INGOs, who are accountable to their own Agencies: 'To make the HC accountable without making anyone accountable to the HC doesn't work'.
>
> Lack of incentives for RC/HCs re: their responsibilities for IDPs or for protection. There are not enough positive incentives for them to prioritise this. The chain of incentives is more focused on maintaining good relations with the government. Meanwhile there are 'strong disincentives and high costs of speaking out, ensuring centrality of protection'. (Comments to this review via the survey)

While the role of the ERC, IASC, RC/HC and HCT is clear in leading and managing IDP responses, this review has found that similar to 2005, the system still depends too often on goodwill, consensus and the skills of RC/HCs. Despite the guidance, in a majority of the case studies there was a lack of clarity as to who is in charge of coordinating the IDP response.

RC/HCs were leading the humanitarian system, and the humanitarian system was responding to situations of internal displacement, but mostly haphazardly. Responses were late and fragmented, and serious gaps were not plugged. In some contexts, a change in the leadership led to better focus on the IDP issue, arguably highlighting that not all RC/HCs see the issue equally. Moreover, the six case studies are not unique. This situation is mirrored in many other contexts, and leadership was a central theme in both the KIIs for this review and the survey. A large proportion of people within the system believe leadership needs bolstering. This was particularly reflected in global KIIs.

The practical upshot of this diffuse leadership is that IDP responses when measured against the six criteria for effective leadership discussed in Section 8.3 rarely measure up.

- In DRC, the response to 600,000 people displaced by the M23 crisis fell dramatically short, with an emergency appeal only issued eight months after initial displacement. While the response prevented a widespread cholera outbreak with a coordinated focus on provision of clean water, it was under-resourced and chaotic for too long.
- In Mozambique, the IASC took an almost unbelievable four years for the cluster system to activate in response to the conflict in the north, by which point the number of IDPs had risen from 100,000 in 2017 to 646,000 in late 2020. While the WFP and International Organization for Migration (IOM) had begun responding early (in 2017) the entire 'collaborative' system did not, leaving major sectoral gaps.
- In Nigeria, the IASC system continues to overlook major displacement from 'banditry' in the northwest of the country.
- In Yemen, the inter-agency humanitarian evaluation concluded that IDPs had been shamefully overlooked in the wider response, with large camps without even basic toilets. By the time of the country visit for this case study the situation had somewhat improved for IDPs, although there were still large areas of neglect. An OCHA mission to the areas with the second largest population of IDPs in the country highlighted a range of urgent needs, including clean drinking water.

Furthermore, the review found that there was:

- **Limited awareness among UN RC/HCs of their designated responsibilities regarding internal displacement**. This is perhaps inevitable as surprisingly, globally, HCs' responsibilities regarding IDPs do not even feature in their induction.
- **Selective and severely delayed triggering of system-wide humanitarian response to major displacement crises**. The IASC considers 'the number of IDPs' among the possible criteria of urgency that could trigger the IASC's 'scale-up' protocols. Yet, there is no systematic global monitoring and reporting to the ERC and IASC of major new or escalating IDP crises demanding IASC attention, despite 'global information on IDPs' counting among the ERC's responsibilities on IDPs.
- **Lack of accountability of global CLAs to operationalise the clusters they lead at country level**. Frequent turnover of Cluster Coordinators, often in place for no more than a few months, is a problem, particularly pronounced for the Protection Cluster, as noted both in the case studies – for example, Yemen and Northeast Nigeria (Cocking et al., 2022) – and globally (see global KIIs). Deploying staff with the requisite knowledge and skills, both technical and in coordination, is a challenge (KIIs; see also Cocking et al., 2022).
- **Resistance by global CLAs to alternative arrangements at country level even when they cannot deliver**. As noted above, UN RC/HCs have the authority to put in place coordination arrangements that differ from the global clusters, including deciding not only whether to activate the cluster system but also which clusters to activate and which agency will lead each cluster. However RC/HCs and the ERC lack levers of accountability with the agencies to insist they deploy the required capacity and at the same time they reportedly have been loath to 'go to war' with the agencies resisting alternative arrangements.
- **Some clusters, especially CCCM, inherently require mobilising a multi-sectoral response but lack the authority to coordinate other clusters**. Often it is the local implementing partner that bears the brunt of the lack of services (in the face of IDP frustration).
- **A fragmented humanitarian response, working in sector 'silos'**. OCHA has a key role to play in supporting the HC 'to ensure that cross-cutting protection concerns, including those of IDPs, are adequately reflected and addressed in the work of all clusters through its inter-cluster coordination role' and 'to ensure an effective and coherent multi-cluster response to IDPs, including through consolidation, analysis of data and information across all clusters' (OCHA and UNHCR, 2014, cited in IASC, 2021). The bringing together of clusters is usually undertaken by the ICCG. In feedback for the review, the ICCG is generally viewed as being overly process-oriented and not operational. The ICCG is viewed primarily as a vehicle for delivering the HRP, discussing supplementary appeals, sometimes pooled fund allocations, and general policy and guidance issues.

One issue that is repeatedly raised is the wide range of responsibilities assigned to RC/HCs. With so many competing priorities, it is hard for this position to give the time and energy needed for the IDP issue. Unlike many other responsibilities, the 'collaborative approach' to IDP responses requires that several agencies join up to deliver one holistic response. This requires quite detailed and active management, rather than, say, a set of strategic engagements that may require less day-to-day attention.

Worse, IDP issues are often contentious with the host government, on which the RC (part of the RC/HC formulation) is highly dependent. Challenging a host government on its neglect (or worse, its human rights abuses) might run directly counter to other UN priorities. RC/HCs are rarely backed by the UN HQ when they take courageous decisions to confront government, making it even less likely they will take on difficult IDP responses above all other competing priorities.

Finally, RC/HCs have very little executive power. Their role is more akin to a figurehead – they have seniority, convening power and a relationship with the global leadership – but they cannot tell implementing organisations what to do. Their sole lever of power beyond consensus-building and collegiality is that of being the 'designated official' for security. This gives some limited power over movements of staff, but it is an authority to be used sparingly and is hardly a proactive instrument.

In several of the case studies, area-based approaches were enabling greater cross-sector collaboration. This was particularly evident in Marib, Yemen, where IOM leads the area-based response, and in certain areas of Northeast Nigeria. However, this does raise questions of how such approaches intersect with what – in the current humanitarian architecture – has become a very siloed coordination system, and who, if anyone, should be the 'custodian' pushing for and facilitating such area-based approaches.

What is clear is that much more joint programming is needed in responding to internal displacement. Some such efforts are underway and need to be expanded. For example, in recent years UNHCR has introduced a 'tri-cluster' approach, which aims to ensure an integrated response across the three clusters (the CCCM Cluster in conflict; the Shelter and Non-Food Items Cluster in conflict; and the Protection Cluster). The benefits of this were evident, for example, in Mekele, Ethiopia. Similarly, in some cases cross-cluster linkages are increasingly being made across the three clusters that UNICEF leads (WASH, Education and Nutrition) as well as the child protection sub-cluster. The fact that both of these examples of joint programming involve clusters led by the same agency raises the question: how can multi-sectoral programming be more systematic, in particular when it entails clusters led by different organisations?

Funding mechanisms, both of bilateral donors and the UN (e.g. the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and country-based pooled funds (CBPFs)), potentially could be instrumental in promoting the type of joint programming required to better serve IDPs. They also have a role in reinforcing RC/HC authority. For example, in Somalia in 2017, the HC introduced an eligibility requirement for CBPF resources: a minimum of three clusters working together for a collective outcome in a specific area. This thereby combined a multi-sectoral and area-based approach.

8.6 Reinforcing RC/HC authority and agencies, accountability

To enable the RC/HC to have a genuine leadership role on IDPs would therefore entail a number of measures.

First, there needs to be a reciprocal accountability between agencies and the RC/HC. Currently the heads of UN agencies contribute to the performance review of the RC/HC, but this is not reciprocal. Interestingly this is no longer the case on the development side. Since the 'empowerment' of the RC position a few years ago, there has been a Mutual Accountability Framework (MAF) in place. This is a detailed document setting out what the agencies can and can't do, and how they should interact and report to the RC. This is lacking on the humanitarian side but could be introduced.

Second, the responsibility to lead on IDP matters needs to be made much clearer to RC/HCs, in the guidance, in their onboarding (induction) and training, and in their interactions with the ERC and the IASC. RC/HCs in countries with large IDP populations should report to the global level routinely on the state of the IDP response, ideally with robust data showing progress on key humanitarian indicators, including protection, and work towards solutions.

Third, the operational nature of emergency responses to mass displacement needs to be properly addressed. The cluster system doesn't work to deliver this predictably, and RC/HCs do not have time on their own to roll up their sleeves and make a response work. Where Deputy Humanitarian Coordinators are deployed this can make a real difference, as it did in both DRC and Mozambique. But this has to be made explicit and clear, and the role better defined. OCHA can also fill this role, especially if a core group of key agencies/clusters are present and willing to work together.

Finally, the fraught question of how the IASC system can support government to exercise its duties, while still providing lifesaving assistance and protection, needs more support from HQ and from donors. In cases such as Nigeria, an earlier push to engage at the highest levels is needed. The IASC system should deploy the right level and profile of people(i.e. senior advisory capacity in the RC Office) and, as needed, should deploy high-level humanitarian diplomacy to support HC/RCs to advocate with governments and NSAGs in especially powerful positions, bringing the implementing agencies along. This can't be left to junior staff trying to cope with the challenges of response, or to over-burdened in-country leadership trying to preserve relationships. **There should also be thought given to how to strengthen, fund and capacitate government agencies responsible for IDP response, especially where they are keen and willing to fulfil their duties**.

8.7 IASC leadership at the global level

While the operational, country level is the most important to get right for delivering an effective response, clearly the most senior levels of the humanitarian system have their role to play. Sending the signal that IDPs matter is vitally important. Given the joined-up nature of needs, working together effectively is also of major importance.

Global leadership, therefore, has a number of important roles. There is a need to advocate for IDP protection. There is a need to ensure resources are prioritised to the most acute situations. There is a need to resolve disputes that cannot be sorted out at the country level, quickly and efficiently. Finally, there is a need to manage the system for delivery, streamlining and simplifying where possible and holding to account elements of the system that do not perform.

These responsibilities lie with the ERC and the heads of global operational agencies, in the form of the IASC.

In recent years, however, the IDP issue has faded from the view of the IASC. During the late 1990s and into the mid-2000s, IDPs featured consistently at global level. IDPs were a standing item for the IASC, and the RSG-IDPs (now Special Rapporteur – SR-IDPs) would routinely brief the Principals on IDP issues. Now, despite there being four well-functioning and powerful groupings in the IASC – the Principals, the Deputies, the Emergency Directors Group and the Operational and Policy Advocacy Group (OPAG), plus creation in 2018 of a full-time Senior Adviser to the ERC on Internal Displacement – there is no systematic examination by the IASC of its IDP global response. Moreover, KIIs for this review suggest that when difficult issues can't be resolved at country level (who leads a contested cluster, for example), the IASC does not step up to help. There is no straightforward dispute resolution mechanism, nor – apart from full cluster 'activation' – does there seem a way to focus country operations on an emerging IDP situation and potentially mitigate its worst outcomes.

The leadership of clusters at country level seems to be a particularly challenging issue. In the original conception of cluster leadership, global clusters were fixed but on the ground there could be arrangements based on capacity. This now seems to have fallen by the wayside, while at the same time the concept of 'provider of last resort' (POLR, whereby a global lead would step in if there were no country capacity) doesn't seem to function either.[14] As a result, we have the worst of both worlds. Clusters can be taken on initially by an agency with good on-the-ground capability, then contested by a 'global lead' that has little or no country presence. In situations where there is no country capacity for a particular cluster, this situation can drag on for months and sometimes years without being resolved. Resolution should naturally lie with the global leadership.

A less obvious, but equally important duty of global leadership is anticipatory. Many situations are recurring, and some can be seen early as they build towards crisis. Rapid displacement is a consequence of slower forces – such as the build-up of conflict, prolonged drought and economic collapse. Reports of intensifying human rights violations and, in particular, of increasing numbers of IDPs in a country should ring the IASC's alarm bell. Leadership should be signalling to country operations to get ready, talking to governments early on about their responsibilities, and challenging donors and member states to take action before the worst happens.

14 Technically, the POLR definition is: 'The designated Cluster Lead Agency is the Provider of Last Resort (POLR). This means that, where necessary, and depending on access, security and availability of funding, the cluster lead, as POLR, must be ready to ensure the provision of services required to fulfil crucial gaps identified by the cluster and reflected in the HC-led Humanitarian Response Plan' (IASC, 2015).

9 Data and financing

Key messages

- Data on IDPs is fragmented and often politicised. While expertise exists at a global level and there has been significant progress, there is a need for more comprehensive, consistent, interoperable data, better analysis and better usage.
- Financing for IDPs is a black box. The lack of clear figures makes analysis difficult, with the lack of visibility of IDP financing contributing to a general impression of neglect.
- There are some obvious fixes around incentivising joined-up working and localised approaches.

Major improvements have been made in the availability and quality of data on IDP populations and humanitarian needs in recent years. Nevertheless, the data landscape for IDPs is fragmented and contested at both global and country levels, and leadership from the ERC, RC/HC and OCHA is lacking.

Data actors interviewed for this response felt that the absence of strong leadership on IDP data, from the IASC at global level and from RC/HCs and the OCHA at country level, has created a 'wild west' situation. Despite substantial work on standards for government data collection through the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS), and global capacities such as the IDMC, the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS) and IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), there remains an inconsistent approach to IDP data, IDP definitions, and the understanding of their specific needs and vulnerabilities.

This problem is being compounded by the political economy of data in the humanitarian sector more broadly, where donor demands for better data from partners mean that data has become a resource agencies use to fundraise – by using it as a proxy to 'sell' their ability to do effective work. This generates incentives for competition rather than collaboration. Overall, these dynamics are contributing to a lack of coherence around data at both the operational and strategic level, with limited interoperability between different data systems and lack of effective links between what data is being generated and how it is being used. Effective registration and identity management is a major operational challenge when this is not carried out effectively by governments for this reason. Multiple agency registration and needs assessment processes can't be combined to create an effective picture, meaning even basic numbers are disputed.

Beyond numbers of IDPs, improved data is needed on their vulnerability and needs. There is a call to increase attention to IDPs in humanitarian multi-sector needs analyses that provide the basis

for the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and collective humanitarian response planning in the HRPs. Additionally, there is a need to systematically integrate displacement into other core data sets underpinning HNOs and HRPs such as Food Security and Livelihoods Assessments.

Significant data gaps also exist around the specific needs of marginalised IDPs, IDPs in urban settings, displacements due to natural hazard-related disasters, and IDP capacities and aspirations.

IDP data remains subject to political manipulation and requires safeguarding as part of advocacy to protect humanitarian space. This can happen when governments are not keen to highlight internal problems or are keen to show that they have resolved internal crises. National statistics organisations, academics and civil society need to be engaged by humanitarian data providers at an earlier stage to better enable both more nationally owned IDP data and effective solutions processes. This might also safeguard against manipulation by giving data more authority and has the potential to overcome fragmentation.

The volume of IDP data collected is not matched by a similar level of sophistication around its use. There are inadequate links between the collectors and users of data, and specific processes for developing a common understanding of IDP situations are often lacking.

Intentions surveys designed to support solutions processes lack nuance and should be complemented by wider efforts to measure progress along solutions pathways. These efforts should also include assessment of ongoing humanitarian need in areas of resettlement, return or local integration.

IDPs themselves should be empowered to understand and own the data that is collected from them, as well as supported to embark on their own analysis exercises in line with their needs and priorities.

9.1 Financing

There is not enough money to go round, and more is unlikely to be forthcoming. This means more needs to be done to allocate and use existing resources effectively.

While humanitarian needs have risen relentlessly in the past decades, and IDP numbers have tripled since the turn of the century as we have discussed here, humanitarian financing has increased almost 20-fold over the same period. The reasons for this are complex, contested and beyond the scope of this review, but all indications are that this rise will not continue, and in fact even current levels of financing will be difficult to maintain.

For IDPs the lack of general visibility as a group with specific needs in many humanitarian operations has made it difficult to know how they fare compared with other caseloads. There is no tracking of IDP-specific financing (unlike for instance with refugees), so no way of telling whether they are well served, on a par with other caseloads, or under-served. This in turn makes analysis of their funding situation

challenging. More efforts are needed to link how money is spent to how IDPs needs are met in order to ensure transparency and accountability and catalyse change. For instance, are the poor mortality rates and health outcomes documented a result of lower per capita financing for IDPs, or other issues?

The lack of IDP-specific financing or IDP financing analysis also means it is difficult to focus the system on the specific needs of IDPs. The need for joint working to address multiple needs – covered at length in this report – could be incentivised by funding packages that specify this. Humanitarian pooled funds lend themselves to this type of incentivisation, both the CERF and CBPFs. Consortia funding is another way to achieve this result.

Financing can also form an important part of the toolkit to foster greater local ownership from the earliest stages of responses by states, civil society and IDPs themselves. This type of financing can support area-based approaches and reinforce the idea of collaborative and joint working. Area-based financing can support local services, including through municipalities. Crucially, CBPFs and partnership-based INGOs have become the main source of financing to local organisations, including those run by or for IDPs.

In protracted crisis settings, neither humanitarian nor development financing is responding effectively to situations where continued acute needs and the need for longer-term support – whether in pursuit of durable or interim solutions – exist at the same time, often within the same populations. Across the case studies, we also saw a significant gap between when humanitarian financing 'drops' people, and when – if ever – they are picked up by longer-term sources of support such as social protection or development programming. As discussed previously, what more frequently happens is that humanitarian aid persists until the money runs out, and then people are left to fend for themselves.

Humanitarian funding envelopes of 6–12 months, along with a lack of flexibility in how money can be spent, mean humanitarian actors are often stuck providing basic, short-term emergency support in contexts where IDPs are asking for more solutions-oriented assistance that enables greater self-reliance in displacement and helps them create a future beyond it.

10 Recommendations

This review has found that fundamentally the IASC humanitarian system is too often:

- too slow to respond
- not joined up, if and when it does respond
- overlooking IDPs' specific needs
- focused more on internal processes than meaningfully engaging the people it aims to help
- too slow to help IDPs get their lives back on track.

These recommendations set out practical and actionable measures to address these gaps, as well as centring IDPs at the heart of the response, making protection key and pushing as early as possible for solutions.

10.1 Priority recommendations

These recommendations are a summary of the more detailed ones set out in the following sections. Each addresses an element of the problem statement.

1. Ensure **a timely response** by better global focus by the IASC, better RRMs, and prompt cluster activation and deployment.
2. Ensure a stronger, more **joined-up response** by enhancing government capacities, strengthening the RC/HC leadership role with strengthened mutual accountability measures, and more authority to organise clusters for the context. Reinvigorate ERC leadership on IDPs.
3. Fundamentally reorient our approach to **participation and empowerment of IDPs** and other affected communities, to ensure their voices define priority-setting, programming and decision-making. Increase and expand support to local IDP organisations, and of empowering aid, such as cash.
4. **Protection needs to be at the heart of response and solutions**. More robust and timely deployment of capacity is needed, as well as higher-level support for humanitarian diplomacy on the most difficult issues.
5. Better **lay the groundwork for solutions** through concentrating on giving people agency and choice from the beginning, and a stronger focus on urban environments. Areas such as livelihoods, education and rights should be a priority, not an afterthought. Systems, coordination and funding should reflect this.
6. **Develop and implement an updated IASC policy on IDPs**.
7. Advocate and work with both humanitarian and development donors and IASC leadership to bring on **longer-term, more impactful financing for protracted situations**.

10.2 Delivering a timely response

A timely response requires that situations of mass displacement are recognised early at country, regional and global level. Governments need to be made aware of their responsibilities and encouraged to respond, even where this is difficult politically. The system needs to be prepped to respond, needs to have early response capacities, and needs to deploy key coordination functions optimally.

1. **Ensure systematic focus by the IASC on emerging and ongoing IDP situations**, reinvigorating the ERC leadership role.
   a. Ensure any significant situations of internal displacement resulting in humanitarian needs for which national capacity is insufficient are brought to the attention of, and addressed by, the ERC and IASC in a timely manner.
   b. Institute 'light touch' systematic global monitoring and reporting to the ERC and IASC Emergency Directors Group of new and/or escalating IDP situations.
   c. Institute annual reporting on IDP outcomes in major displacement contexts, as part of early transition arrangements.
2. Where a deterioration of the security situation is anticipated, **RC/HCs should signal to country operations to prepare**, talk to governments early about their responsibilities and advocate for donors and member states to engage.
3. **Ensure an effective mechanism for rapidly responding to new displacements**, providing newly displaced IDPs in need access to emergency assistance (i.e. cash, food, water, shelter, urgent medical care and protection services). **An enhanced RRM** linked to the main coordination arrangements should be set up to deliver this, handing over to clusters once they have established capacity.
4. **Give RC/HCs enhanced authority to arrange the coordination system according to the context and timeline**. Support and facilitate RC/HCs to put in place, in consultation with the HCT, humanitarian coordination arrangements that are best suited to the context/phase of response, including:
   a. at national or subnational level enabling best-placed operational organisations to lead clusters, or alternative coordination models, rather than global leads automatically and without regard to capacity
   b. area-based management at a subnational level, where it's better suited to the context
   c. phased deployment of clusters according to the phase of the crisis (emergency, stabilisation, transition)
   d. considering key groupings of IDP relevant clusters such as the UNHCR 'tri-cluster' model
   e. early transition to other models of coordination beyond clusters.
5. **Ensure, whenever clusters are activated by the RC/HC and HCT, that CLAs designate a Cluster Coordinator within 72 hours**, deploying within two weeks any additional cluster coordination capacity needed for emergency response. If a CLA is unable to do so, the RC/HC is authorised and expected to designate, in consultation with the HCT, alternative coordination responsibilities for the cluster/sector concerned. The ERC must be kept apprised of the status of coordination arrangements and, with the RC/HC, must ensure any major gaps are addressed.

6. **Ensure swift resolution of any country-level debates over cluster leadership**. Cluster performance mechanisms should either be enacted or revised so they are meaningful, with non-performing cluster leads replaced. The ERC and IASC Emergency Directors Group must be kept apprised and act to address any such problems that cannot be resolved at country level.

10.3 A joined-up response to address specific needs

Delivering a joined-up response is critical to meeting IDP's multiple and interconnected needs. This requires better working between government, IDP representatives and the IASC system. It also requires better genuine joint working within the IASC system.

Reinforcing government responsibility

7. **Advocate for governments to designate clear institutional responsibilities for IDP response**. Support government agencies responsible for IDPs through capacity strengthening and in garnering support from other government ministries to promote a 'whole of government' approach.
8. **Advocate for national legislation and policies on internal displacement** in line with the UN *Guiding principles on internal displacement* and for bridging the gap between human rights norms and implementation.
9. Where appropriate and in line with humanitarian principles, humanitarian actors should work to promote and **support the capacity of national statistical organisations**, other line ministries, academia and civil society to take part in data collection, analysis and use in IDP situations from the earliest possible stage. Reference should be made to the inter-agency Data for Solutions to Internal Displacement (DSID) Taskforce and Recommendations (see DSID, 2023; IOM, 2023).
10. **Country operations need to be supported with humanitarian diplomacy** on difficult IDP issues by high-level, time-limited support. This should be available to RC/HCs and communicated by the ERC and RC/HC at challenging moments. Potential resources include: the IDP Protection Expert Group, which is co-chaired by the Special Rapporteur on IDPs and includes all the former mandate holders, as well as other senior-level experts; the ongoing IASC pilot; Assistant Secretary-General-level support; peer-to-peer mechanisms; or other vehicles for senior-level support to the RC/HC function on humanitarian diplomacy.

Reinforcing IASC capacities

The IASC is committed to a collaborative response to IDP crises. This has been reaffirmed countless times, including during this review. It requires all parts of the system to work in a joined-up fashion, which in turns requires enhanced leadership and optimised coordination.

11. **Enhance the RC/HC authority to lead coordination** of IDP responses at country level, including greater practical authority to mobilise and hold to account system elements, by:

a. Putting in place a new humanitarian and IDP-specific MAF for HCs (mirroring the MAF for RCs). This should specify the accountabilities of HCT members to the HC. Membership of the HCT could be made contingent on signing up to the MAF, as could funding streams.
b. Ensuring there is operational leadership capacity to complement RC/HC leadership, properly delegated (for instance the deputy humanitarian coordinator) in major IDP crises where such is needed.
c. Strengthening support to RC/HCs in fulfilling their coordination responsibilities regarding IDPs. This requires apprising RC/HCs of their IDP responsibilities during their onboarding and of key guidance and sources of expert IDP support they can draw upon if needed. It also includes OCHA consistently fulfilling, both at field and global levels, its specified responsibilities regarding IDPs in the areas of inter-sectoral coordination on displacement issues. The IASC Peer-to-Peer mechanism (P2P) should include IDPs in its list of stated priorities and devote specific attention to IDP issues in its country missions supporting HCs and HCTs. Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations should routinely consider IDPs in their terms of reference.

12. **The responsibility to lead on IDP matters needs to be made far clearer to RC/HCs**. This should feature in updated guidance far more clearly. There should also be a reporting mechanism to the IASC and the ERC, built on better country-level data, that reinforces the mutual responsibilities on IDP response.
13. Strengthen responses, both by the Protection Cluster and collectively by the IASC and HCTs, to the protection of IDPs. RC/HCs have a clear responsibility to ensure this, OCHA has a key role to play in supporting this via the ICCG, and all clusters and IASC members have committed to integrating protection into humanitarian programming, both individually and for collective outcomes. Specific attention must be paid to strengthening the response to gender-based violence (including domestic violence), which is widespread in IDP situations and sometimes a specific driver of displacement, and to addressing IDPs' psychological and mental health needs. The Protection Cluster needs to improve its delivery of regular protection analysis to HCTs and ensure timely deployment of cluster coordination staff with requisite skills including in IDP protection and coordination. The findings and follow-up to the IASC Protection Policy Review should be implemented without delay.
14. **Spell out clearly the roles and responsibilities of each cluster** both in emergency response and transition/stabilisation:
    a. in the first 6 months of an emergency response, including identifying and addressing displacement-specific emergency needs and responding to identified needs in IDP camps in coordination with the CCCM Cluster and to identified needs of non-camp IDPs
    b. in the next 18 months, when the response should begin to transition towards solutions-oriented 'nexus' programming and at least interim solutions for IDPs. Given that humanitarian situations often entail ongoing emergencies – for example, new displacements in certain areas alongside more stable, even protracted, humanitarian situations in other areas – these timelines of course should be specific to areas and their different context.
15. **Boost humanitarian CBPFs in IDP crises** to allow for more effective cross-sectoral responses in line with IDP needs rather than agency mandates.
16. **Joint programming** to address the multi-sectoral needs of IDPs and other persons in need should be prioritised by RC/HCs and HCTs and incentivised (e.g. by CBPFs and bilateral donors).

17. **The CCCM Cluster's mandate should be extended beyond camps to also encompass coordination and management of formal and informal collective IDP sites** (e.g. collective centres, evacuation centres), as it usefully has done so, on an ad hoc basis in certain IDP contexts, for several years. While the name of the cluster does not correspond to this important evolution of the cluster's work and potentially could be revised (a decision that the review recommends be left to the cluster), the priority should be on implementation. Funding to CCCM, which typically is among the least funded clusters, must be increased.
18. **Task UN-Habitat, OCHA, UNHCR, IOM and other interested parties to develop options on how the system can better address the humanitarian needs of urban IDPs** (and other urban populations in humanitarian need), drawing on expertise such as from the Shelter and CCCM Clusters. The strategy or options paper should focus on systemic changes that will lead to an urban response model, such as the focus on municipalities and area-based approaches.
19. At country level, **DTM's de facto role as data provider for IDP core data should be formally mandated** and properly resourced. This should be done within the existing framework of the RC/HC and **OCHA's mandate to coordinate data**, acknowledging states' responsibility as the primary collector and provider of IDP data and drawing on UNHCR experience in registration and identity management.
20. At country level, **IDP profiling exercises** should be built into large-scale IDP responses as standard. To avoid the creation of new processes, these should draw on the expertise of state capacities as well as sector leaders such as UNHCR, JIPS, UN-Habitat and standards setters such as EGRISS, and secondary data wherever possible, with clear links to durable solutions processes.
21. **Commission analysis on how IDP funding might be quantified**, or at the very least made more visible, without having to rework the entire HRP and financial tracking system currently in place.
22. **Develop a global strategy and guidance for engaging with private sector mega-projects** implementing large-scale humanitarian and recovery programming and for promoting their awareness of humanitarian principles and coordination mechanisms.

10.4 Putting IDPs at the centre of the response

23. IDP voices – their needs, aspirations and capacities – should be at the heart of a **revamped humanitarian system that puts people at the centre** through supporting long-term, holistic programming approaches from the early stages of displacement.
24. **Pilot the establishment of IDP representative bodies** in a few large-scale protracted IDP settings, drawing on lessons and good practice such as IDP Councils in Ukraine (see Box 1). These must be inclusive and representative of the IDP population – in particular women, girls and persons with disabilities. Make formal links between these representative bodies and strategic response design, that is, shaping top-level objectives for the HRP or similar instruments, and solutions strategies.
25. Humanitarian IDP responses should proactively seek out, engage with and **support IDP-led or IDP-focused organisations or institutions**, helping them to grow, engage with each other and access decision-making spaces.
26. Specific attention should be paid to **supporting organisations that work at the intersection of displacement and other forms of marginalisation or vulnerability**, such as women-led organisations, organisations for persons with disabilities, indigenous rights groups, and LGBTQI+ organisations.

27. **Strengthen financial support to local organisations**, including IDP organisations where these exist, through:
    a. greater access to CBPFs, including through dedicated allocations and technical capacity support; CBPFs should strengthen allocations for locally led organisations and prioritise funding to IDP-led organisations
    b. strengthening the wider funding ecosystem for IDP-led and IDP-focused organisations, including through support to locally led funding networks and de-risking instruments
    c. implementing a tracking system for financing flowing to IDP-led and IDP-focused organisations, maintaining a broad approach to avoid becoming bogged down in technical specifics around reporting.
28. **Expand the use of cash** (specifically multi-purpose cash) as a modality where there are functioning markets and no serious protection concerns. Cash is multi-sector by nature and optimises choice.
29. **Humanitarian advocacy** should systematically incorporate realising the rights of IDPs as citizens and habitual residents to participate in government and public life, including elections, and to participate in the planning and management of solutions to their displacement.
30. IDP representatives and CSOs should be incorporated into **DSWGs** or equivalent spaces as standard. There should be a formal role for such representatives that has some decision-making authority.

10.5 Helping people get their lives back on track

Humanitarians play a key role in enabling solutions and must prioritise planning for solutions from the outset.

31. **The funding architecture for humanitarian aid beyond the immediate lifesaving phase must be changed**. There needs to be a concerted effort among donors and IASC leadership to bring on longer-term, more appropriate financing for protracted situations.
32. **Prioritise livelihoods, education, and housing, land and property earlier in the humanitarian response**, and with adequate resources, including addressing the specific barriers that IDPs face in accessing education.
33. **A DSWG should be established no later than 6 months after clusters are set up in coordination with government authorities, where possible**. The DSWG should develop a strategy for solutions, or at least interim solutions for IDPs, and a plan for transition from strictly emergency response. The DSWG should be under the auspices of the RC/HC and constitute a set list of organisations including humanitarian, peace and development actors and the government.
34. There should be a concerted effort to engage government (including local government) on solutions as soon as possible. This should be led by the RC/HC on behalf of the HCT and the DSWG and should seek clarity on government arrangements for solutions, emphasising they must be voluntary and safe. Where possible, a clear division of labour between the IASC and government should be established and structures for implementation agreed. Key policies should be identified, and help and incentives put in place for these to be approved early.
35. **The DSWG and the HCT should work with the World Bank, regional development banks and key bilateral donors to develop incentives for key solutions-oriented policy**. Similar to

the success we have seen in UNHCR collaborations with the international finance institutions on refugees, there is a need for a realistic, well thought-through strategy that combines policy work, financial incentives at the macro level and HCT implementation capacity.

36. The RC/HC and the HCT should work with the government from the outset of the response to secure a **clear designation by the government of a focal point institution** for overseeing solutions for IDPs, development of a national strategy for solutions and, as needed, legislative amendments to unblock obstacles to IDP solutions. These are important prerequisites for durable solutions.
37. **A systemic set of actions should be considered to enable early involvement of local and national government** (where possible) and development actors, such as collecting the right kind of data, routine consultation on IDPs on their future and the boosting of government capabilities (where appropriate).
38. Where states are actively involved in the displacement of their own citizens, committing human rights abuses – for instance reported as such by the Human Rights Council or the Office of the Special Rapporteur, **then higher-level support may be needed in support of country-based leadership** to advocate for the safety and dignity of IDPs. IASC organisations and structures including the RC/HC and HCT should not back coercive government strategies on internal displacement and should look to HQ for support in the difficult conversations needed to progress the situation of IDPs in such situations, referencing humanitarian principles, which should of course apply in all humanitarian situations.
39. **RC/HC leadership in IDP contexts should leverage the mandates and in-country programming of UN agencies that are not solely humanitarian focused**. As an example, UNICEF, UNDP, FAO, UNFPA, UN Women and others can provide linkages between the initial IDP-specific humanitarian response and longer-term development solutions – delivered in partnership with governments – covering education, employment and inclusion in peacebuilding processes. Similarly, cross-cutting coordination mechanisms spanning the humanitarian, peace and development nexus – such as Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) Working Groups and UNCT/HCT Gender Theme Groups – should also be leveraged to ensure continued focus on the specific needs of different sections of the IDP population throughout the cycle of displacement and in efforts to find durable solutions.

10.6 Following through

40. Develop and implement an **updated IASC policy** on IDPs, incorporating the recommendations from this review and relevant elements from the recent review of the IASC Protection Policy.
41. **The IASC must measure IDP outcomes systematically**, over time. The system must move away at a strategic level from measuring sector-based activities to key population-based metrics such as mortality, malnutrition, health outcomes, economic indicators and length of displacement. These should be reported on an annual basis in HRPs (or their successor) and at a global level to the IASC. A link to Sustainable Development Goal reporting could be considered.
42. **The IASC and ERC should promote better knowledge and use** by RC/HCs, HCTs and IASC member agencies/INGOs and their staff of the UN *Guiding principles* on IDPs and core IASC guidance on IDP issues including the IDP Protection Handbook, IASC Protection Policy, Framework for Durable Solutions, and Operational Guidance on Protection in Natural Disasters, including through dedicated training on IDPs and protection, and integrating IDP issues into broader humanitarian trainings.

References

Agenda for Humanity (n.d.) 'Core responsibility #3: Leave no one behind'. Webpage (https://agendaforhumanity.org/cr/3/index.html#3A).

AU - African Union (2009) *African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa* (*Kampala Convention*) (https://au.int/en/treaties/african-union-convention-protection-and-assistance-internally-displaced-persons-africa).

Bagshaw, S. and Paul, P. (2004) *Protect or neglect: towards a more effective united nations response to the protection of internally displaced persons*. Brookings Institution Project on Internal Displacement and OCHA.

Bergby, S. (2019) 'The role of planning in humanitarian response, looking at urban crisis response in Lebanon' in Porter, L. (ed.) 'Borders and refuge: Citizenship, mobility and planning in a volatile world' *Planning Theory & Practice* 20(1): 105–111.

Brookings Institution – University of Bern Project on Internal Displacement (2008) *Protecting internally displaced persons: a manual for law and policymakers*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution.

Brookings Institution (2013) *Under the radar: internally displaced persons in non-camp settings*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution.

Cantor, D., Swartz, J., Roberts, B. et al. (2021) Understanding the health needs of internally displaced persons: a scoping review. *Journal of Migration and Health* 4: 100071.

CEAAP WG – Community Engagement and Accountability to Affected Populations Working Group (2022) *Information and communication needs assessment: final report*. Cabo Delgado, Mozambique

Charny, J. (2005) 'New approach needed to internal displacement' *Forced Migration Review* October: 20–21.

Clement, V. et al. (2021) *Groundswell part 2: acting on internal climate migration*. The World Bank.

Cocking, J., Davies, G., Finney, N., et al. (2022) *Independent review of the implementation of the IASC Protection Policy*. HPG commissioned report. London: ODI.

Cogo, E., Murray, M., Villanueva, G., et al. (2022) 'Suicide rates and suicide behaviour in displaced people: A systematic review' *PLoS ONE* 17(3): e0263797.

Cohen, R. and Deng, F.M. (1998) *Masses in flight: the global crisis of internal displacement*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution.

Corbett, J., Carstensen, N. and Di Vincenz, S. (2021) *Survivor and community-led response: practical experience and learning*. HPN Network Paper 84. London: ODI.

Development Initiatives (2023) *Global humanitarian assistance report 2023*. Development Initiatives (https://devinit.org/resources/global-humanitarian-assistance-report-2023).

DSID (2023) *Proposal for improving data for solutions to internal displacement*. DSID Taskforce.

Ferris, F. (2014) *Ten years after humanitarian reform: how have IDPs fared?* Brookings Institution – LSE Project on Internal Displacement.

Ferris, E., Mooney, E. and Stark, C. (2011) *From responsibility to response: assessing national approaches to internal displacement*. Report for the The Brookings Institution, pp. 99–112

HAG – Humanitarian Advisory Group (2021) *Accountability to affected people: stuck in the weeds*. Melbourne: HAG.

Hernandez, M.A., Ecker, O., Läderach, P. and Maystadt, J.-F. (2023) 'Forced migration: Fragility, resilience, and policy responses' in *Global food policy report 2023: rethinking food crisis responses*, ch 7, pp. 72–81.

Holbrooke, R. (2000) 'Ambassador Holbrooke remarks on "in-country refugees", 28 March 2000.

Human Rights Watch (2024) *World report 2024: events of 2023*. Human Rights Watch.

IASC (1998) Recommendations to the review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, final version, 15 October 1998, para. 14.

IASC (2004) Implementing the collaborative response to situations of internal displacement: guidance for UN Humanitarian and/or Resident Coordinators and Country Teams, September 2004. Endorsed by IASC Principals, 2004.

IASC (2005) *Humanitarian response review*. IASC.

IASC (2010) *Framework on durable solutions 2010*. IASC.

IASC (2015) *IASC Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level*, revised July 2015 (https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-transformative-agenda/iasc-reference-module-cluster-coordination-country-level-revised-july-2015).

IASC (2016) *Protection in humanitarian action policy*. IASC.

IASC (2020) *Leadership in action: guidance for UN resident and humanitarian coordinators*. IASC.

IASC (2021) *Leadership in humanitarian action: Handbook for the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator*. IASC.

ICRC (2016) *Protracted conflict and humanitarian action: some recent ICRC experiences*. Geneva: ICRC.

ICRC (2018) *Displaced in cities: experiencing and responding to urban displacement outside camps*. Geneva: ICRC.

ICRC (2022a) *Explosive weapons with wide area effects: a deadly choice in populated areas*. Geneva: ICRC.

ICRC (2022b) 'Humanitarian needs to deepen in dozens of conflict zones as world's attention wanes'. ICRC, 29 November 2022.

IDMC (2015) *Global estimates 2015: people displaced by disasters*. Geneva: IDMC.

IDMC (2023a) *Global report on internal displacement 2023*. Geneva: IDMC.

IDMC (2023b) *Mid-year update on internal displacement*. Geneva: IDMC.

IDMC (2023c) *Gender dynamics in internal displacement*. Geneva: IDMC.

IOM (2023) *PROGRESS 2023: periodic global report on the state of solutions to internal displacement*. Geneva: IOM.

IOM and WFP (2021) *Populations at risk: implications of COVID-19 for hunger, migration and displacement*. IOM and WFP.

Kälin, W. (2008) *Guiding principles on internal displacement: annotations*, revised edn. Washington DC: The American Society of International Law and The Brookings Institution.

Kälin, W. (2023) *Internal displacement and the law*, Ch. 3. Oxford: Oxford Academic.

Kälin, W. and Chapuisat, H. (2017) *Breaking the impasse: reducing protracted internal displacement as a collective outcome*. New York: UNOCHA.

Leus, X., Wallace, J. and Loretti, A. (2001) 'Internally displaced persons' *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine* 16(3): 116–123.

McNamara, D. (2006) 'Humanitarian reform and new institutional responses' *Forced Migration Review* December: 9–11.

Mooney, E. (2005a) 'The concept of internal displacement and the case for internally displaced persons as a category of concern' *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 24(3): 15.

Mooney, E. (2005b) *Addressing internal displacement: a framework for national responsibility*. Brookings Institution – University of Bern Project on Internal Displacement.

Mooney, E. (2012) IDPs outside of camps. Statement. UNHCR REFWORLD (www.refworld.org/reference/confdoc/unhcr/2012/en/85245).

OCHA and UNHCR (2014) Summary conclusions from discussions between UNHCR and OCHA on protection and internal displacement.

Owoaje, E.T., Uchendu, O.C., Ajayi, T.O. and Cadmus, E.O. (2016) 'A review of the health problems of internally displaced persons in Africa' *Nigerian Postgraduate Medicine Journal* 23(4).

Post, A. and Ray, I. (2020) Hybrid modes of urban water delivery in low – and middle – income countries. University of California, Berkeley.

Roepstorff, K. (2020) *Localisation and shrinking civic space: tying up the loose ends*. Berlin: Centre for Humanitarian Action.

Salama, P., Spiegel, P. and Brennan, R. (2001) 'No less vulnerable: The internally displaced in humanitarian emergencies' *The Lancet* 357: 9266.

Squire, V., Fayehun, O., Jones, B., et. al. (2022) *Data and displacement: assessing the practical and ethical implications of data-driven humanitarianism for internally displaced persons in camp-like settings, final project report*. Coventry: University of Warwick.

TWB – Translators Without Borders (2021) *Information without understanding, rights without meaning*. Garden City, ID: TWB.

UCDP (n.d.) Uppsala Conflict Data Program (https://ucdp.uu.se/).

UN (1992) Analytical Report of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1992/23, 14 February 1992.

UN (1998) *Guiding principles on internal displacement*. Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General. 11 February 1998. E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2

UN (2023a) Report of the Secretary-General on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 12 May, para. 1.

UN (2023b) Statement by the Deputy Secretary-General to the UN Security Council, 26 January, UN doc. S/PV.9250.

UN (2024) Security Council 2023 Round-Up, 9 January.

UNGA (1989) *Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its 44th session*. A/RES/44/136

UNGA (1991) 46/182, Annex. UNGA.

UNGA (2002) *Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons*. 20 February 2002. A/RES/56/164.

UNGA (2005) In *Larger freedom: Towards development, security and human rights for all*. Report of the Secretary-General, 21 March 2005, A/59/2005 para. 210.

UNGA (2021) *Housing, land and property issues in the context of internal displacement*. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of internally displaced persons, 21 April 2021, A/HRC/47/37.

UNGA (2023) Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons. 22 December 2023. A/RES/78/205

UNDRR – UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (n.d.) 'Disaster displacement: How to reduce risks, address impacts, and strengthen resilience'. Webpage. UNDRR (www.undrr.org/words-into-action/disaster-displacement-how-reduce-risk-address-impacts-and-strengthen-resilience).

UN-Habitat and UNHCR (2020) *Guidance for responding to displacement in urban areas*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat and UNHCR.

UNHCR (2023a) *Mid-year trends*. UNHCR.

UNHCR (2023b) *Global trends: forced displacement in 2022*. UNHCR.

UNHCR (n.d.) DIP IDP law and policy instruments database.

UNHCR, UN SR-IDPs, Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and UNDP (2022) *Protecting internally displaced persons: a handbook for national human rights institutions*. UNHCR.

UNICEF (2023) Children displaced by a changing climate: preparing for a future already underway, 2023. UNICEF.

UN Office on Drugs and Crime (2023) *Global homicide report*. UN.

UNSG (1991) Report on refugees, displaced persons and returnees. UN Doc. E/1991/109/Add.1 (1991), para. 129.

UNSG (2011) Decisions of the Secretary-General, 4 October meeting of the Policy Committee, Decision No. 2011/20 – Durable Solutions: Follow-up to the Secretary-General's 2009 report on peacebuilding, Annex 1.

UNSG (2016) *One humanity: shared responsibility*. Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit. UN doc. A/70/709 (2016), para. 74.

UNSG (2022) *Action agenda on internal displacement*. UN.

UNSG (2023) *Our common agenda: a new agenda for peace*. UN.

UNSG High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement (2021) *Shining a light on internal displacement: a vision for the future*. UN.

UN SR-IDP (2017) Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons to the UN General Assembly. UN Doc. A/72/202, 24 July 2017.

World Bank (2023) *Kakuma as a marketplace: a consumer and market study of a refugee camp and town in Northwest Kenya*. Washington, DC: World Bank Group.

The Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) is one of the world's leading teams of independent researchers and communications professionals working on humanitarian issues. It is dedicated to improving humanitarian policy and practice through a combination of high-quality analysis, dialogue and debate.

Humanitarian Policy Group
ODI
203 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8NJ
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7922 0300
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7922 0399
Email: hpgadmin@odi.org
Website: odi.org/hpg