

Forum: Human Rights Council

Issue: Measures to rehabilitate internally displaced persons

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Position: Chair of the Human Rights Council

Introduction

Internally Displaced persons, defined as "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized border" by the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, 1998, especially in situations of armed conflicts, are generally subject to higher vulnerability and suffer significantly higher rates of mortality than the general population. The number of those fleeing violence and conflict in 2016 was estimated at 40.3 million (The Global Observatory), with an unknown number of people displaced as a result of natural disasters. They often remain at high risk of physical attack, sexual assault and abduction, and are frequently deprived of adequate shelter, food and health services. Furthermore, they are often more disadvantaged than refugees (who are displaced outside of their national borders) because they do not benefit from assistance provided by international agencies unless the national government requests such assistance.

Definition of Key Terms

Internally Displaced persons

According to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, internally displaced persons (also known as "IDPs") are "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized border."

Internally displaced persons include, but are not limited to: families forced to flee their homes under threat of armed attacks, residents of poor neighborhoods rendered uninhabitable by impact of weather-related, geophysical or technological hazards, indigenous communities forced from their

ancestral lands for infrastructure projects, families pushed to leave by constant harassment by criminal gangs, etc.

Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

The Guiding Principles are 30 standards that outline the protections available to internally displaced persons (IDPs). They detail the rights and guarantees relevant to the protection of IDPs from forced displacement to their protection and assistance during displacement up to the achievement of durable solutions.

The Responsibility to Protect

The Responsibility to Protect is a global political commitment endorsed by all member states of the United Nations at the 2005 World Summit in order to address its four key concerns to prevent genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crime against humanity. It is based on the idea that sovereignty is not a privilege, but a responsibility.

General Overview

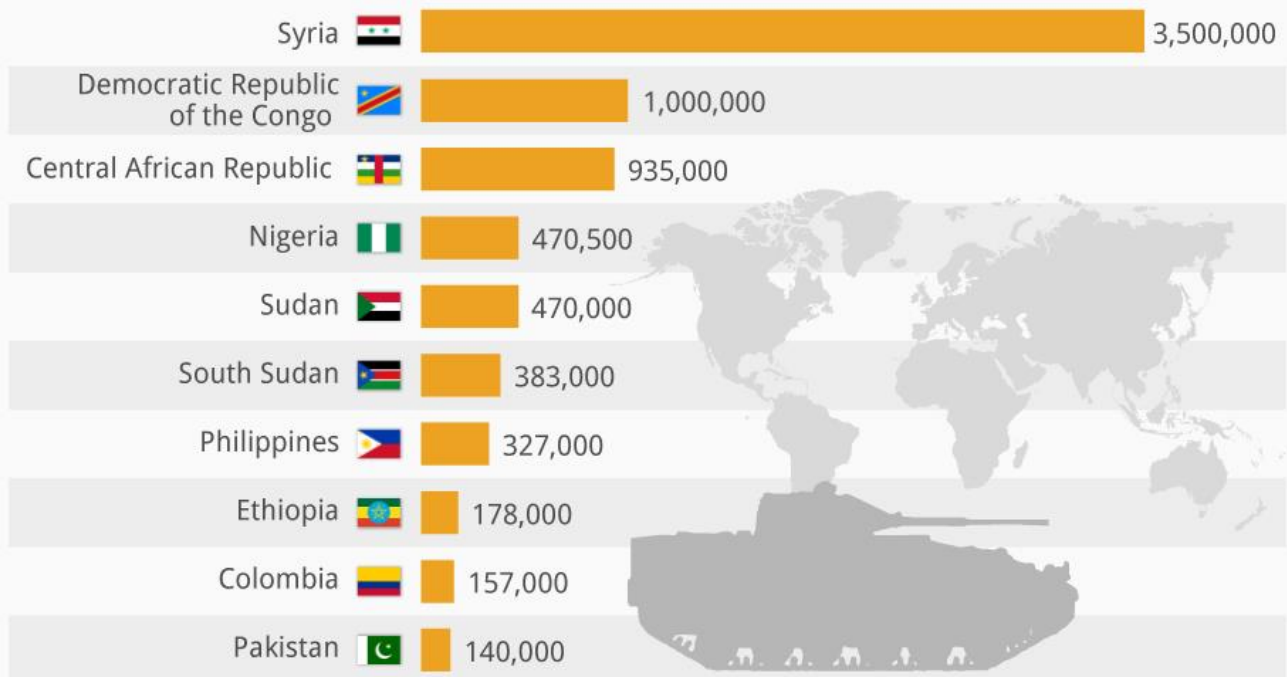
Risks faced by Internally Displaced Persons

According to the Global Observatory, 40.3 million people are displaced due to conflict and violence, with an unknown number of people displaced due to natural disaster. On average, 5.3 million people have been displaced annually in the past 13 years due to insurgency, political instability and terrorist activities, particularly in the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa. Three quarters of the IDPs reside in ten countries of the world, with 5 of them being located in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Internal displacement has a significant effect on the health and well-being of the affected population. The effects may be categorized into direct, including violence and injury, and indirect, such as increased rate of infectious disease and malnutrition. A lot of risk factors work during the process of displacement including movement of mass population, overcrowding, economic and environmental degradation, inadequacy of safe water, poor sanitation and waste management. These conditions are further compounded by the absence of shelter, food shortages and poor access to healthcare. Moreover, IDPs, particularly those fleeing from conflicted zones, are at a high risk of mental health problems. A lot suffer from post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSDs) in reaction to violence and depression in reaction to loss. Women and children are often subject of sexual violence in IDP camps.

8.2 Million People Newly Displaced by Conflict in 2013

The 10 countries with the highest number of newly internally displaced people in 2013



Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

Mashable statista

Figure 1: statistics of number of newly displaced people in 2013

Syria

Syria, now on its seventh year of armed conflict, has one of the largest populations of IDPs, estimated at 6.6 million. One of the main causes of displacement are conflict-relevant events such as the use of explosive weapons in urban areas. Most IDPs in Syria have experienced multiple displacements, and rarely find lasting safety with UNICEF estimating that some children have been displaced up to seven times before reaching safety. 750,000 of these IDPs are living in their last resort sites; informal settlements, reception and transit centers, planned camps, and collective centers (schools, residential buildings, warehouses, and municipal buildings). According to a test done by Peace Science Digest, a majority of these people were reported both direct and indirect exposure to a traumatic event and nearly 30% experienced physical torture.

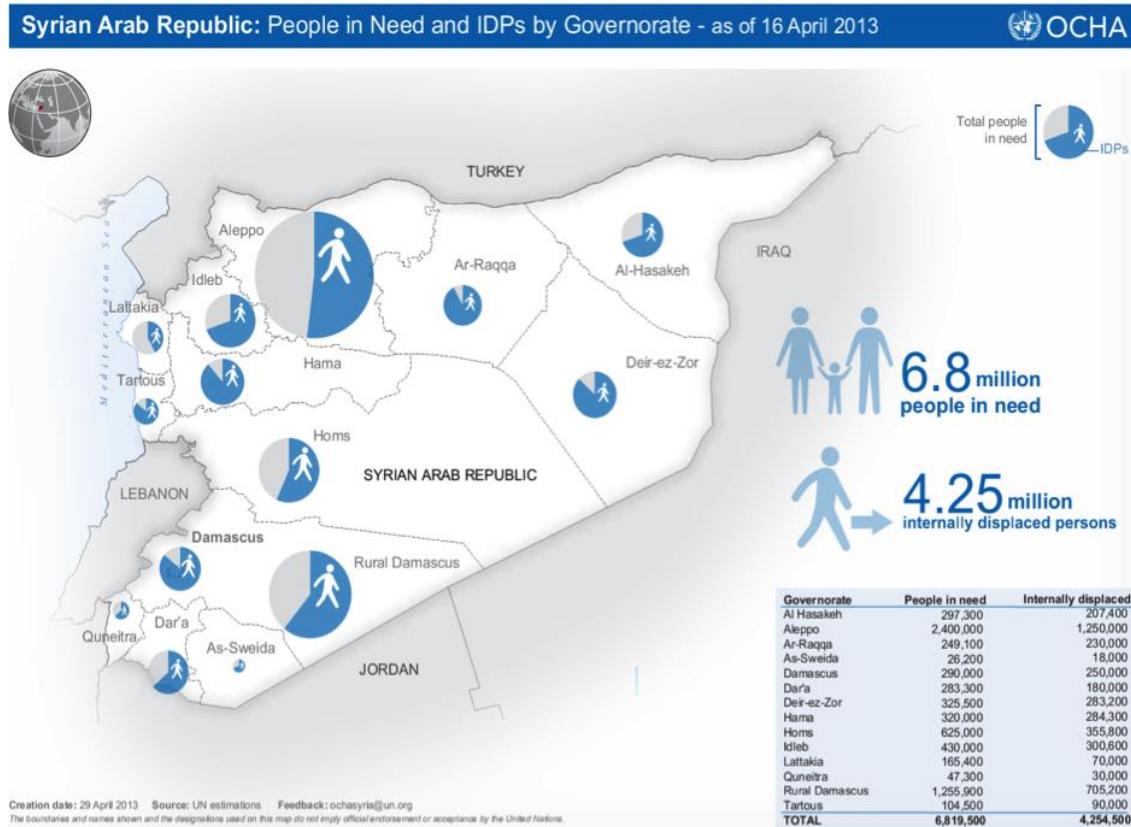


Figure 2:A map showing the number and ratio of IDPs out of people in need

Nigeria

In Nigeria, the insurgent activities of the militant armed group Boko Haram and military operations against the group in the past 6 years have forced over a million people to flee their homes. This has resulted in an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in the North-eastern part of the country and the Lake Chad region. Furthermore, inter-communal clashes from ethno-religious disputes, tensions between Fulani herdsmen and farmers have resulted in over 700,000 people being displaced from the Middle Belt region of Nigeria. Floods in urban centers were responsible for the bulk of disaster-induced displacement, causing a total of 122,000 new displacements, the majority due to widespread flooding in Benue state. In 16 camp sites, hosting a total of 14,650 families, some households are living without shelter and the number of families in need of shelter reaches up to 24 percent of the total number of IDPs on site.

Iraq

The humanitarian and displacement situation in Iraq has always been one of the most severe and volatile in the world since 1968. Historically, displacement in Iraq has been driven by a combination of internal armed conflict, external intervention, and political, ethnic or religious affiliation persecution. As a result of deliberate state policies of expulsion, an estimated 600,000 to 800,000 persons are displaced in the north of the country and an estimated 300,000 in the center/south. The plight of Iraq's internally displaced is bound up with issues of water, land, oil, minority and majority rights, ethnicity and religion, citizenship and national allegiance, and systems of justice.

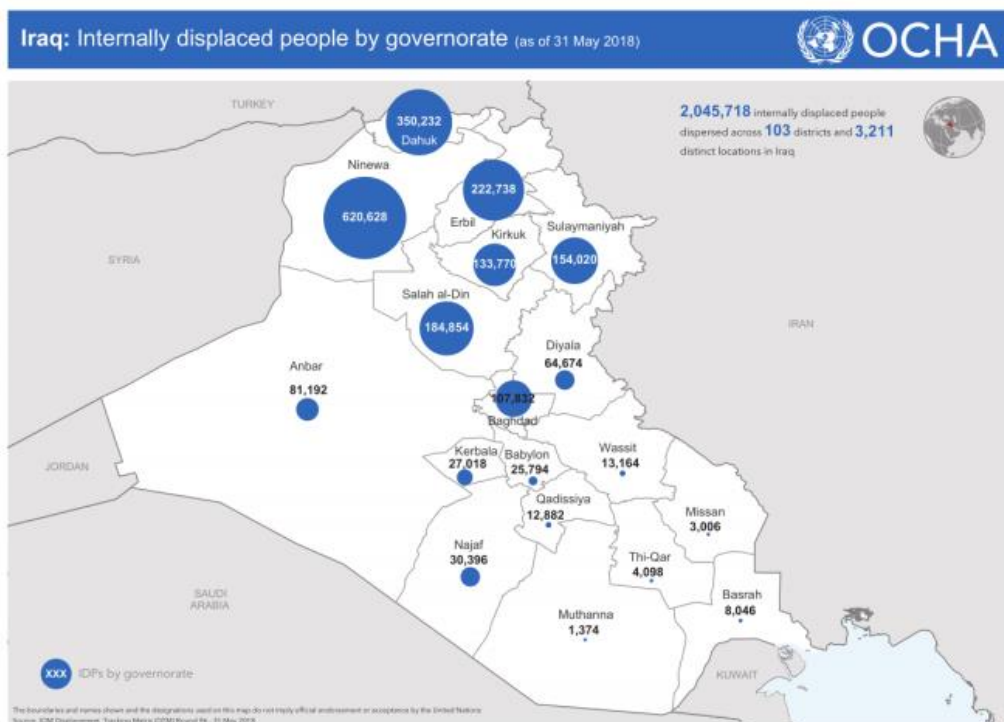


Figure 3: A map showing then number of IDPs by governorate in Nigeria

Women and Children

Women and children take up over 70 percent of internally displaced populations, experiencing a wide range of health risks. They are extremely vulnerable to physical and mental health problems and are often victims of physical and sexual violence in IDP camps. In IDP camps, women are at higher risk of unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortion, morbidity and mortality. Sexual violence may lead to physical injuries, sexually transmitted infections such as HIV, unwanted pregnancies and mental health effects. Most of the children in IDP camps and other places out of home are most likely to not receive appropriate education.

Rights of the Internally Displaced Persons

If they are no longer on the other side of an international border, vulnerable populations will not be protected by international refugee law, including the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol, and it is highly unlikely that their situation will be addressed by the Global Compact for Refugees.

However, despite the absence of a specific international legal framework, IDPs are protected by International Human Rights Law and domestic law at all times, and in armed conflict, benefit from the protections that any civilian is entitled to under International Humanitarian Law. This is the basis for the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which, without creating new legal obligations, identify the clear and existing responsibilities of sovereign states to respond to the needs of IDPs.

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

Since the early 1990s when internal displacement was recognized as a global phenomenon, there has been progress in enhancing protection and mobilizing a coordinated response to the plight of IDPs. This includes the development of normative standards, such as the Guiding Principles in 1998, the IDP Protocol of the Great Lakes Pact (2006), and the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of IDPs (Kampala Convention) (2009). These standards and other key guidance have inspired many more national policies and laws on internal displacement and helped numerous States design effective responses to internal displacement. Endorsement of the Nansen Initiative's Protection Agenda by more than 100 States in a global consultation in 2015 demonstrates wide acknowledgement of the challenge of disaster displacement.

The framework, formally called the Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People (2018-2020), calls on all relevant nations and organizations to step up efforts to prevent, respond to and resolve internal displacement. It also proposes concrete methods to strengthen the participation of internally displaced persons in decisions concerning them and expand national laws and policies on internal displacement as well as actions to improve data collection and analysis on displacements globally.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
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1949	UNRWA established by the General Assembly
December 14 th , 1950	UNHCR established by the General Assembly
July 28 th , 1950	Legal foundation and basic statute guiding for UNHCR adopted
1998	Establishment of the Guiding Principles
December 2003	The first known attack of Boko Haram in the state of Yobe, Nigeria
2006	Establishment of the IDP Protocol of the Great Lakes Pact
2009	Establishment of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of IDPs (Kampala Convention)
March 15, 2011	Start of the Syrian Civil war
January 2013	Start of ISIS attack in Iraq

Possible Solutions

Internally displaced people are exposed to risks of death and injury even on their way back to their homes or in their original home communities. It is crucial for governments to **ensure the safety of returnees**. People returning to their home communities must not suffer from attacks, harassment, intimidation and persecution or any other form of punitive action upon them returning. They must be protected from dangers of landmines and unexploded ordnances (UXOs). Furthermore, Returnees must have access without discrimination to basic public services, documentation and employment and income-generating opportunities

Internally displaced people are often put in poor living conditions where they are exposed to infectious diseases and are often forced to drop out of school. In order to improve the quality of lives of IDPs, nations must **provide minimum financial aid to the displaced**. At a minimum, returnees must have access to mechanisms for property restitution or compensation. The governments should provide shelter if not able to aid the reconstruction of damaged houses. The living conditions in camps and must also be improved in ways such as but not limited to improved sanitary, provision of purified water, etc. in order to prevent diseases in camps.

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