

# 2018 GLOBAL REPORT ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT (GRID 2018)

## HIGHLIGHTS DOCUMENT

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### KEY FIGURES

IDMC recorded 30.6 million new displacements associated with conflict and disasters in 2017 across 143 countries, out of the 200 countries and territories monitored. Internal displacement is a global phenomenon, but it is disproportionately concentrated. The ten worst-affected countries accounted for more than a million new displacements each.

Thirty-nine per cent (39%) of new displacements were triggered by conflict and 61 per cent (61%) by disasters.

### CONFLICT FIGURES

#### New displacements - conflict and violence

The number of new displacements associated with conflict almost doubled, from 6.9 million in 2016 to 11.8 million in 2017. Syria, DRC and Iraq accounted for more than half of the figure.

#### Countries with most new displacements in 2017

1. Syria: 2,911,000
2. Dem. Rep. Congo: 2,166,000
3. Iraq: 1,379,000
4. South Sudan: 857,000
5. Ethiopia: 725,000
6. Philippines: 645,000
7. Central African Republic: 539,000
8. Afghanistan: 474,000
9. Somalia: 388,000
10. El Salvador: 296,000

#### Total number of people living in internal displacement as of end of 2017

There were 40 million people living in internal displacement as a result of conflict and violence as of the end of 2017. Seventy-six per cent of these internally displaced people (IDPs) were concentrated in just ten countries.

An additional 8.5 million people that have been reported as returned, relocated or locally integrated across 23 countries may still be internally displaced as it is not confirmed that they have found solutions to their displacement.

### DISASTER FIGURES

### New displacements - disasters

IDMC recorded **18.8 million new displacements associated with disasters in 135 countries**, and as in previous years, those with high disaster risk in South Asia, East Asia and Pacific and the Americas were disproportionately affected. Weather-related hazards triggered the vast majority of the new displacements, with **floods accounting for 8.6 million, and storms, mainly tropical cyclones, 7.5 million.**

### Countries with most new displacements in 2017

1. China: 4,473,000
2. Philippines: 2,529,000
3. Cuba: 1,738,000
4. United States: 1,686,000
5. India: 1,346,000
6. Bangladesh: 946,000
7. Somalia: 899,000
8. Viet Nam: 633,000
9. Ethiopia: 434,000
10. Nepal: 384,000

## WHAT ARE WE COUNTING?

The 2018 GRID presents two types of headline figure: new displacements caused by conflict and disasters during the course of 2017, or “flow figures”, and the total number or “stock figure” of people displaced by conflict at the end of the year (see figure below).

	<b>New displacements Jan-Dec 2017</b>	<b>Total number of IDPs as of end of 2017</b>
<b>CONFLICT</b>	11.8	40
<b>DISASTERS</b>	18.8	?

## THE THREE PARTS OF THE GRID

**Part 1, ON the GRID**, presents internal displacement data collected by IDMC in 2017. Beyond the number of new displacements due to conflict, disasters and development projects, this part also discusses thematic displacement headlines that occurred over the year, showing the extent and depth of internal displacement across geographies.

This year, our Global Report introduces a regional breakdown, analysing data, drivers, impacts and key policies on internal displacement in different countries and regions. Each region contains thematic or country spotlights that provide more detail on specific contexts.

**Part 2, OFF the GRID** reflects on the 20 years since the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement were published. It assesses progress in accounting for IDPs and developing policies and laws to protect and

assist them, and shows that despite growing commitment by many countries and the humanitarian and development communities, the main drivers and triggers of displacement and the conditions that prevent durable solutions remain largely unchanged.

We propose a shift from understanding internal displacement as an unforeseeable and external shock to which countries must respond, to its recognition as an inherent and contingent liability, the true scale and cost of which must be accounted for on national balance sheets and in development agendas.

**Part 3, INSIDE the GRID** presents the main challenges we face in making the often-neglected issue of internal displacement more visible. It discusses impediments to monitoring numbers, trends and risk, and the new approaches, technologies and partnerships we are deploying to address them.

Finally, the conclusion lays out a set of actions for national and international levels to make progress on reducing internal displacement in the coming years.

## TOPLINE KEY MESSAGES

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1. **IDMC's latest estimates demonstrate a collective failure to address existing internal displacement and to reduce the risk of future displacement.**
2. **Since the publication of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement in 1998, programmes and policies to protect and assist IDPs have not been sufficient to cope with, much less reduce, the growing number of new displacements or the cumulative number of IDPs over time. A new approach is essential.**
3. **Beyond the need to improve humanitarian responses to these crises, more investments must be made at the national and international levels in sustainable development, peacebuilding, addressing the impacts of climate change and disaster risk reduction.**
4. **Failure to address long-term displacement has the potential to undermine the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and progress on other international agreements.**
5. **Countries facing internal displacement must drive policymaking.** Over the coming years, countries will have to better account for IDPs and displacement risk, and make addressing internal displacement an integral part of development planning and governance at both the local and national level.
6. **Authority and accountability should lie with the highest levels of government, combined with the devolution of resources and decision-making power to local authorities.** To enable this, national capacity for monitoring, planning and implementation needs to be systematically built and maintained.
7. **To make genuine progress at the national, regional and international levels, there needs to be constructive and open dialogue on internal displacement.** This must be led by countries impacted by the issue, with the support of international partners, and in line with their national priorities and realities.

# PART 1: ON THE GRID

## INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN 2017

### KEY FINDINGS

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#### GLOBAL FIGURES

- | People continue to be forced to flee within their own countries across all regions of the world. Internal displacement occurred in 143 of the more than 200 countries and territories we monitor, with very different levels of severity between and even within countries. It is a global phenomenon, but disproportionately concentrated. The ten countries with the highest numbers of new displacements during the year each accounted for more than a million.
- | Of 30.6 million new displacements worldwide, 39 per cent were triggered by conflict and 61 per cent by disasters. The number of new displacements associated with conflict almost doubled, from 6.9 million in 2016 to 11.8 million. Syria, DRC and Iraq together accounted for more than half of the figure.
- | Disasters also triggered internal displacement across the globe, with 18.8 million new displacements recorded in 135 countries. Mirroring previous years, countries with high disaster risk in South Asia, East Asia and Pacific and the Americas were disproportionately affected.

#### REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

The distribution of displacement across the globe in 2017 mirrored the patterns of previous years. Most of that associated with conflict took place in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, although there were also significant new displacements in South Asia and East Asia and Pacific. Displacement associated with disasters was prevalent in East Asia and Pacific, South Asia and the Americas.

##### Sub-Saharan Africa

Almost half of the new displacements associated with conflict and violence took place in Sub-Saharan Africa. At 5.5 million, the figure was double that for the previous year. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was hardest hit with almost 2.2 million, more than twice the number in 2016 and more than the next three worst-affected countries in the region combined. South Sudan, Ethiopia and the Central African Republic (CAR) accounted together for more than 2.1 million new displacements.

##### Middle East and North Africa

The Middle East and North Africa accounted for 38 per cent of new displacements associated with conflict and violence, with almost 4.5 million. New displacement was concentrated in Iraq, Syria and Yemen, all of which the UN classified as level-three emergencies.

##### East Asia and Pacific

Sudden-onset disasters triggered most of the displacement recorded in East Asia and Pacific. We estimate that disasters displaced 8.6 million people during the year, accounting for 46 per cent of the global total. China, the Philippines and Viet Nam were among the ten worst-affected countries in the world, with 4.5 million, 2.5 million and 633,000 respectively.

### South Asia

Disasters triggered most of the displacement in South Asia, with the exception of Afghanistan where 474,000 new displacements were associated with conflict. Many of the 2.8 million new displacements associated with sudden-onset disasters took place in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka during the monsoon season.

### The Americas

At 4.5 million, the number of people displaced by disasters in the Americas was about ten times higher than the figure for conflict and violence. People fled their homes from Canada to Chile to escape earthquakes and climate extremes in the form of cyclones, wildfires and floods. New displacements associated with conflict and violence increased from 436,000 in 2016 to 457,000. Mirroring previous years, countries such as El Salvador, Colombia and Mexico were among the worst affected.

### Europe and Central Asia

Three-quarters of the displacement recorded in Europe and Central Asia was associated with disasters. Accurate figures for that associated with conflict were difficult to come by. Ceasefire violations along the contact line in Ukraine led to 21,000 new displacements, but a number of issues prevent the accurate profiling of the country's IDPs.

## PART 2: OFF THE GRID

### KEY FINDINGS

2018 marks 20 years since the adoption of the Guiding Principles. As we reflect on two decades of efforts to protect and assist IDPs, it is clear that while progress has been made, much more needs to be done, particularly in terms of establishing the conditions for durable solutions and reducing the risk of displacement occurring in the first place.

We propose a way forward in which affected countries lead efforts to address the phenomenon as part of their national economic, security and development agendas, and we highlight three areas in which political leadership and institutional investments are needed to bring about vital change at the national, regional and global level:

- | First, existing displacement and future risk need to be better understood through comprehensive assessments of their scale and nature. A solid evidence base is vital to make the case for the significant investments that will be required.
- | Second, national capacity to deal with internal displacement and reduce future risk will need to be systematically built and maintained. This includes policy planning, implementation and follow-up at the highest levels of government, combined with the devolution of resources and decision-making to local authorities to enable them to help IDPs achieve durable solutions.
- | Third, internal displacement must be integrated into existing development mechanisms, particularly national development plans and poverty reduction strategies. The capacity across line ministries and service providers to understand and address internal displacement needs to be supported in a more targeted manner

## REFRAMING THE ISSUE

- | The large numbers of new and long-term displacements we presented in this report affect the achievement of economic and social development goals at the national and international level. They increase the vulnerability and exposure of already marginal populations and overstretch local governments' capacities to respond.
- | From China to the Horn of Africa, from Pakistan to Burundi and from Turkey to Mexico, displacement risk accumulates as a result of conflict and political instability, economic concentration in areas prone to natural hazards, environmental degradation, weak governance, lack of social protection and high levels of poverty and inequality.
- | Displacement risk may not be at the top of most national governments' agendas, but it is a contingent liability that affects countries' economic and development balance sheets as the years go by. All new development investment, whether in economic infrastructure, housing, urban development or agriculture, has the potential to either increase or reduce displacement risk.
- | Between now and 2030 it is estimated that \$2 trillion to \$9 trillion a year will be invested in water, sanitation, energy, transport and housing infrastructure. If investments of this scale are informed by an understanding of how they are likely to affect displacement risk in the long-term, they could have a significant impact on global sustainability and resilience.

## DISPLACEMENT DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT

- | There are numerous challenges in collecting and analysing comprehensive information on internal displacement. The current interest in data and statistics on development represents a significant opportunity to fill some of the gaps, but the drive for more data on international development has not necessarily meant higher quality.
- | A new push is needed now for validated, credible and interoperable data. Standard metrics and statistics on displacement are vital for the implementation and monitoring of a number of international frameworks across the development spectrum. They are also needed to inform the agreement and implementation of the global compacts on refugees and migration, which are scheduled for adoption later this year.
- | Beyond the 2030 Agenda's principle of leaving no one behind, internal displacement is directly relevant to all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Targets on migration and mobility under SDG 10 and high-quality disaggregated data under SDG 17 should clearly include the phenomenon. SDG 11 on urban resilience and SDG 13 on climate action can only be achieved if large-scale forced displacement is addressed. Yet while IDPs may be recognised by countries' humanitarian bodies, they are "off the grid" and ignored in their core development processes.

## WHERE NEXT? MONITORING PROGRESS

- | There is a glaring lack of a common framework for action and accountability on internal displacement, without which stakeholders are unable to set clear priorities for action and targets for progress in addressing the phenomenon. It also presents a political obstacle, because those advocating for IDPs' protection and durable solutions find it difficult to make the case for greater political will and investment.
- | A country-led framework is required, aligned with broader development goals and which allows for the development of national and global programmes, targets and standards for reducing internal displacement and displacement risk. Such a framework should recognise the relevance of the Guiding Principles, but take as its starting point the priorities set by governments and communities facing internal displacement.

The right indicators and metrics will need to be defined to plan for, invest in and monitor progress over time, and these will revolve around three key questions. What do countries and their partners invest in displacement governance and how? Which resulting capacities and conditions determine a country's displacement risk and its ability to support IDPs? And is displacement increasing or decreasing in terms of the number of IDPs and the distribution, duration and severity of the phenomenon?

If implemented regularly and over time, this three-tiered approach would provide countries and the international community with a more solid basis for agreeing and planning more effective approaches to addressing displacement. Monitoring in this way would also allow us to understand progress regardless of spikes caused by flare-ups in conflict or the impact of disasters, and to guide countries and investments over time.

We will test this approach in 2018 in a number of countries with significant levels of displacement, and present our initial results to them for discussion. Together with these pilot countries, we will develop a systematic national review of indicators on the policies, drivers and impacts of displacement that need to be monitored over time. Our aim then is to expand the approach to all countries confronting the phenomenon and provide regular information in the form of a country dashboard.

## PART 3: INSIDE THE GRID

### KEY FINDINGS

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We continued to make concerted efforts to bring as much internal displacement as possible “on the GRID” in 2017, and to paint a more comprehensive and three-dimensional picture. To keep doing so we need ever more credible, validated data on the magnitude, duration and severity of displacement, its impacts on those displaced and their host communities, and the risk of it occurring in the future.

Comprehensive monitoring on a range of indicators is required not only to measure progress against a number of global policies and targets related to internal displacement. We also need this data to reframe the issue in terms of displacement risk, and to equip governments with the evidence and tools to address and reduce it with timely and effective interventions and responses.

We analysed more data than ever before this year, entering more than 5,000 displacement-related “facts” in our database. We achieved this through the use of new tools and approaches and by putting greater emphasis on event-based monitoring. We also attempted to assess the severity of each situation to help direct resources where they are most needed.

Despite our best efforts, a number of gaps remain that increase the uncertainty of our estimates and pose a challenge for policy development and programming. These include decaying data, limited geographic coverage, difficulty in distinguishing between new and secondary or tertiary displacements and challenges in obtaining disaggregated and geospatially referenced data on IDPs and their movements.

Policy discourse has begun to shift away from a focus on response and toward managing and reducing displacement risk. Disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation agendas frame displacement in this way, and measuring new displacements and understanding the factors that drive them is required for effective action. Nor will the goal of halving the number of IDPs by 2030 be met unless the risk of new displacement is reduced.

This target also underscores the need for better monitoring and understanding of returns. We obtained data on returning IDPs and refugees for 25 countries in 2017, and the evidence suggests that few if any should be “taken off the books” as IDPs because many returned to conditions of high vulnerability, remain displaced in their areas of origin or have become displaced again.

The notion of when displacement ends is also complex and difficult to determine. The process of achieving a durable solution can be long, complex and take many forms. Defining each stage in the process and tailoring it to each situation is an enormous undertaking from a practical and technical perspective. Establishing clear metrics and corresponding figures, and collecting information on them in a consistent way is equally challenging.

Assessing the severity of displacement is vital for focusing attention and political will and for allocating resources where they are most needed. Without knowing the amount of time and resources required to achieve collective outcomes, it will remain challenging for both donors and governments of countries affected by displacement to take responsibility and help IDPs achieve durable solutions.

Our inability to account for displacement associated with drought and other complex and slow-onset phenomena amounts to a major blind spot with global consequences, and results in a geographical bias in our global figures. It also means that we are missing opportunities to improve humanitarian responses to complex emergencies and inform national, regional and global policy processes that aim to reduce drought risk.

This year we were able to estimate new displacements associated with drought for the first time, and the figures were high. Across Burundi, Ethiopia, Madagascar and Somalia we put the figure at 1.3 million. This refers to people who reported drought as the primary cause of their displacement when data collected on other indicators was consistent with our conceptualisation of the phenomenon.

Our new figures for people displaced by, or at risk of being displaced, by dam construction represent a small fraction of overall displacement associated with development projects. We have focussed initially on this type of displacement because the phenomenon was relatively easy to describe, detect and measure, and because some data on dams at least was readily available.

Our emerging figures for the Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA) reflect displacement associated with gang violence. We still struggle to report on these situations comprehensively, because data is severely lacking. Recent inter-governmental initiatives to address and respond to this type of displacement in NCTA require a more rigorous evidence base to develop more coherent solutions to what is essentially an invisible crisis.

By calling attention to the challenges we face and describing the ways in which we are working to overcome them, we are making an explicit appeal to our data partners to share ownership of the issue. Comprehensive, reliable and interoperable data on internal displacement and the risk of it occurring is needed to reframe the phenomenon, encourage national governments to take responsibility for it and help them to address and reduce it.



# CONCLUSION

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To reduce displacement risk, protect and assist those already displaced and help them to achieve durable solutions, countries have to be in the driving seat. Investments in equitable development, peacebuilding and disaster risk reduction will have to go hand in hand with coordinated humanitarian action.

Despite progress in implementing the Guiding Principles over the last 20 years, internal displacement is still not a key component of national and global development agendas. Efforts to address the phenomenon are not yet seen as investments in risk management and sustainable development.

The UN secretary general, António Guterres, has highlighted the urgent need for a more effective and holistic approach to understanding and dealing with crises. Were he to make internal displacement an integral part of his agenda, he would be at the forefront of a much-needed paradigm shift from reaction to prospective action, and from fragmented response to prevention and sustained development investment.

Internal displacement is a reflection of our failure to ensure the physical safety and wellbeing of the most vulnerable, and it is the starting point of broader crises. But it doesn't have to be. If we change the narrative and listen to those who are suffering as well as those who are responsible and capable, we may truly turn the tide on phenomenon and convert the promise to leave no one behind into reality.

Human and state security, economic growth and social stability are impossible to achieve in countries that have large numbers of people living in protracted displacement, or face recurrent new displacement and high levels of risk. Displacement is both a cause and consequence of insecurity and low or unequal economic and social development.

By assessing the true costs of internal displacement on local and national economies, we intend to encourage countries and those interested in reducing the phenomenon to focus their attention on the trade-offs inherent in the setting of national priorities and development and humanitarian budgeting.

The country-led framework we propose to facilitate planning, target setting and monitoring is a first step in that direction. It would help countries understand internal displacement in relation to the communities' security, national economies and political priorities. It also incites more comprehensive reporting on progress against a number of important global agendas and targets. See Table 1 below.

In order to achieve collective outcomes, we call on a range of development and humanitarian stakeholders, including national ministries, to cooperate and coordinate in accounting for displacement risk, building governance capacity on the issue and integrating it into existing development instruments and mechanisms.

Country-led strategies are needed that harness the benefits of mobility and growth while managing the risk of crises and displacement. This would put countries in the driving seat, but the international community should also move internal displacement up its agendas and provide more coordinated support.

### Account for internal displacement risk

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- 1 Invest in administrative and statistical capacities for improved data collection, analysis and progress monitoring for internal displacement in line with requirements for planning and reporting against the SDGs
- 2 Establish or improve displacement risk assessment and early warning capacities at the local and national level

### Build displacement risk governance capacity

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- 3 Show political will by locating responsibility for a national accounting system for IDPs and for the monitoring of internal displacement at the highest level, backed by the necessary political authority and resources
- 4 Share power by decentralising responsibility for the prevention of displacement and IDPs' protection to the local level, backed by the necessary devolution of authority and dedicated human and financial resources
- 5 Promote accountability by encouraging national audit offices and similar control mechanisms to undertake periodic reviews of progress in reducing displacement within national development plans and strategies

### Integrate displacement risk into existing development instruments and mechanisms

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- 6 Ensure that internal displacement is considered in national development plans, poverty reduction strategies and sector investment plans
  - 7 Develop social and economic investment plans for municipalities and regions with high numbers of IDPs, resource constraints and low infrastructure and social service capacities
  - 8 Invest in ecosystem services and natural resource management in line with frameworks such as the Convention on Biodiversity, the Framework Convention on Desertification and Deforestation and the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction
  - 9 Accelerate action on peacebuilding and conflict prevention at all levels in line with regional frameworks and peace processes
  - 10 Shift from humanitarian assistance and protection to greater investment in preparedness and prevention, including comprehensive social protection and welfare programmes that target particularly vulnerable groups
-