Impact of COVID-19 on internally displaced

Discussion with NGO Partners

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Forced displacement by its very nature renders humans vulnerable

- Loss of lives, livelihoods, homes, belongings, culture, security…
- Reduced "trust" in national prevention & response systems
- Deprived of familiar environment in displacement further limits human ability to 'survive' & at a minimum 'manage' additional shocks
- Pandemic related impacts can be far reaching AND must be anticipated by States and service/ aid providers to mitigate risks
- Across the humanitarian, development and peace spectrum.

IDMC – Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020

TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre[4]

UNHCR Global Trends 2019

79.5 MILLION

FORCIBLY DISPLACED WORLDWIDE

at the end of 2019 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order.

26.0 million refugees

20.4 million refugees under UNHCR's mandate

5.6 million Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate

45.7 million internally displaced people[1]

4.2 million asylum-seekers

3.6 million Venezuelans displaced abroad

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Prominent pandemic related risks for IDPs

Barriers in accessing national health systems

Crowded living conditions accelerate virus spread

Poor nutrition leads to weakened immunity

Loss of livelihoods leads to exploitation and abuse

Persons unable to flee, even locally

Information available does not serve IDPs

Tensions with Host Communities

Practical Challenges for IDPs grappling with the pandemic as witnessed by UNHCR field operations

- **Poverty drives IDPs to abandon quarantine** - risk infection to seek work. (all contexts)
- **Limited access to masks in the local market.** Even if available, they are unable to prioritize the expenditure. (scarfs can mitigate this partially). (Burkina Faso, Mali)
- **Group Mental Health and Psychosocial Support programming** - impacted due to prohibition of mass gatherings. (Philippines, Ukraine)
- **Climate and conflict induced incidents, on top of COVID-19** eg Ethiopia. Similarly, Baidoa Somalia is having a cholera outbreak on top of COVID-19….Locusts too
- **Remittances are cut off,** from abroad- Somalia estimate 40% reduction in transfer
- **In Syria, the pound plummeted 50% in June** – increasing suffering for the 6m IDPs
- In Mali, **IDPs continue to move to the main towns** for assistance and protection.
- **Food supply is becoming problematic** in this lean period across most IDP operations in Africa in particular, with prices rising in the urban areas

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Priority areas for cooperation

- Advocacy, including local, national and regional
- Community engagement and information raising
- Cash – delivery & recipient selection
- Peaceful co-existence interventions
- Near-term programming – to "bridge" risks
- Sharing best practices in remote programming
- Referral pathways, mapping new options

Pandemic matters for consideration by IDPs HLP

4 Imperatives for Consideration by the IDPs High Level Panel

1. **Amplify the SG's appeal for a global ceasefire.** Conflict is a key root cause of internal displacement ceasefire will prevent further displacement + offer solutions for some cases;

2. **Inclusion of IDPs in national programs and social safety nets** responding to the medium and long term socio-economic impact which is devastating already impoverished IDPs;

3. Urge member states and development partners to ensure that IDPs benefit from all **State-led initiatives benefiting from international financial support**;

4. **Advocate against any moves that risk forced return to insecure places of origin** on the basis of exceptional measures within the response to the pandemic

UNHCR's Enhanced Commitment to Internal Displacement

Strategic Directions 2017-2021

2017

Operational Review

2016-17

Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement

2019

Guidance Package for UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement

2019

UNHCR's Initiative on Internal Displacement

2020-21

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UNHCR's IDP-Initiative (IDP-I)

The main objectives of the IDP-Initiative are to:

1. Generate examples of good practices and lessons learned to inform the continued roll-out of the IDP Policy
2. Contribute to heightened visibility of internal displacement situations, and their impact on affected populations
3. Inform resource mobilization strategies and equitable resource allocation
4. Enable focused support to the target operations on thematic, strategic or operational issues