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## **A tale of three cities: internal displacement, urbanization and humanitarian action in Abidjan, Khartoum and Mogadishu**

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## Introduction

There has been growing attention to the issue of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the 1980s onwards. Most of the attention has, however, focused on displacement in rural areas with the particular interest in camp situations. Given this narrow approach, IDP movements to urban areas remained largely neglected until recently. There are, for instance, numerous new publications on this issue, including the comprehensive background paper accomplished by UNHCR<sup>1</sup>. Besides this, several new profiling exercises have been conducted on various urban contexts<sup>2</sup> and novel methodologies for profiling are being developed. Also, inter-agency cooperation on urban displacement and the number of international conferences dealing with urban displacement have grown.

The increasing attention to the issue of urban displacement has also been manifested in the recent statements made by the High Commissioner for Refugees, who emphasized the need to increasingly focus on humanitarian action in urban context:

It is clear to us that the pattern will be more and more of urban contexts of displacement and this not only changes the protection and the assistance requirements, but also changes the solutions perspective.<sup>3</sup>

The substantial expansion in the policy and academic interest in urban displacement is partly due to the realization that approximately half of the global IDPs and refugees are living in cities.<sup>4</sup> Thus, humanitarian actors, UNHCR in the frontline, are becoming more and more aware of the fact that they have to focus on cities. Accordingly, they need to rethink their approaches and tools, which have traditionally been utilized in rural areas.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, when humanitarian action in urban areas is designed, it is obvious that the link between urban displacement and urbanization has to be considered. This relation is currently unexplored and poorly understood.

The link between urban internal displacement, urbanization and humanitarian action is explored in this paper. The comparative analysis focuses on three urban IDP situations in Sub-Saharan Africa, namely Khartoum, Sudan; Abidjan, Ivory Coast; and Mogadishu, Somalia<sup>6</sup>. The case study analysis focuses on the patterns of displacement, profile of urban IDP population and comparison of the needs of IDPs and other urban inhabitants. The assistance and protection by authorities and humanitarian community is also considered, focusing on UNHCR's work. Also, relevant durable solutions for urban IDPs are discussed in relation to these three case studies. Finally, conclusions are drawn from the case study analysis by reflecting the issues of urbanization and urban humanitarian action.

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<sup>1</sup> Fielden (2008)

<sup>2</sup> Jacobsen (2008a, 2008b), UNHCR (2007b, 2007d)

<sup>3</sup> Guterres (2008)

<sup>4</sup> Jacobsen (forthcoming), Ressler (1992), Gueterres (2008)

<sup>5</sup> Cheng-Hopkins (2009)

<sup>6</sup> I am indebted to Jeff Crisp for providing me the idea of the title.

## **The analytical link between internal displacement and urbanization**

Internal displacement and urbanization are tightly interconnected, yet the link between them is seldom analyzed. However, as stated by the High Commissioner for Refugees, there is a clear need to analyze and contextualize this link:

Even without displacement, urbanization is taking place and these two trends are inter-related and not easy to analyze. This represents a huge challenge for the humanitarian community.<sup>7</sup>

It is obvious in many situations that violence and conflict have speed up the unpreventable urbanization process. Staying in the city may be preferred by many of the urban IDPs, particularly if they do not have legal right to property or land in their place of origin. Also the longer the IDPs stay in a protracted situation in a city, the more unlikely they are to return to their places of origin.<sup>8</sup>

Urban areas have long been idealized and perceived mostly as locations of opportunities, but given the uncontrolled urbanization, it has become evident that life in a city can be very difficult. Although there are more services in cities, the urban poor might not have any better access to them than in the countryside. Moreover, during the last few decades threats to urban security have increased significantly. There is as well a clear trend of increasing urbanization of poverty.<sup>9</sup>

Despite all these difficulties more than half of the world's population is currently living in urban areas, and the urban population continues to grow, while the number of rural inhabitants will decrease. Consequently, all future population growth will take place in urban areas, and 80 per cent of the world's urban dwellers will be in developing countries by 2030.<sup>10</sup>

It is important to perceive the link between urbanization and internal displacement both as a challenge and an opportunity in urban growth. As an opportunity, tackling displacement may offer ways to advocate wider urban development strategies and there can also be a chance to include the urban poor in these efforts.<sup>11</sup> Even though forced migration, and in particular internal displacement, has clearly impacted on urbanization and urban transformation, it has long been overlooked and unobserved in the urbanization and also in forced migration literature.<sup>12</sup>

Neither have the challenges of displacement for urban management and urban development been widely discussed in scholarly or policy terms. This can be partly because at the global level some 13 million urban IDPs and approximately 6 million urban refugees do not present a very significant number of people when urbanization is discussed at the global scale. However, when the link between forced migration and urbanization is observed at the national or city level, it becomes obvious that

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<sup>7</sup> Guterres (2008)

<sup>8</sup> Jacobsen (forthcoming)

<sup>9</sup> UN-HABITAT (2003, 2007)

<sup>10</sup> ECOSOC (2008: 2)

<sup>11</sup> Van Duijn and Seaman (2002)

<sup>12</sup> Van der Auweraert (2008), Landau (2004)

displacement can affect profoundly urban growth creating both novel challenges but also possibilities.

Given the clear link between urbanization and displacement it has been realized that “the greatest analytical purchase comes from integrating the study of urban forced migrants with more general discussion of urbanization and urban phenomena.”<sup>13</sup> Such an approach offers conceptual and methodological thoroughness and possibilities for comparative analysis. The theories of urban studies can also be applied in urban forced migration research. There are, however, very few theoretical frameworks on how to perceive this link between urbanization and (internal) displacement.

One possible approach to analyze this link is provided by Van Duijn and Seaman<sup>14</sup> regarding their work with Nepalese urban IDPs. They analyze the link by using the concept of absorption. This framework presents an innovative and comprehensive way to address the urban displacement crisis. It is particularly useful in situations where the government is reluctant to recognize the conflict and the subsequent displacement, and in situations where IDPs are not solely targeted but their needs are addressed as part of a larger community of urban poor. The essence of this approach is neatly summarized in the following:

The two issues are inextricably linked. Any attempt to address the needs of IDPs must include those who end up in urban areas. Any attempt to manage the process of urbanization must acknowledge the impact of IDPs and their capacities and vulnerabilities.<sup>15</sup>

The framework of absorption is focused on reinforcing the capacity of urban areas to deal in a sustainable way with a relatively sudden population growth. It is aimed at reducing vulnerabilities and increasing capacities of all the different actors involved in urban displacement by utilizing self-help and self-reliance of communities. For absorption framework to function well, it is important that different actors, such as government, international organizations and local NGOs cooperate in a substantial way.

In general absorption is about managing urbanization and targeting urban population as a whole, but the approach also acknowledges the specific needs of IDPs. Absorption of IDPs to the wider fabric of city can be achieved by using four main strategies: developing infrastructure and services, creating sustainable economic opportunities for marginalized urban communities, encouraging good governance, and enhancing IDP coping strategies. Given the wide range of activities it reinforces cooperation between humanitarian and development actors.

Another theoretical framework for the analysis of the link between urbanization and displacement is that of human vulnerability. As a concept human vulnerability refers to the security of people, not states. The term vulnerability can further be defined as:

the probability of an individual, a household or a community falling below a minimum level of welfare..., or the

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<sup>13</sup> Landau (2004: 2)

<sup>14</sup> Van Duijn and Seaman (2002), Interview with Van Duijn, Oxford, 4.12.2008

<sup>15</sup> Van Duijn and Seaman (2002: 4)

probability of suffering physical and socio-economic consequences... as a result of risky events and processes and their inability to effectively cope with such risky events and processes.<sup>16</sup>

The key issue regarding the vulnerability of IDPs is to analyze their ability to adjust to threats and to recover from shocks. For displaced people living in urban areas, the level of resilience can be reduced compared to the other urban residents, given the additional burden of displacement and the displacement specific protection concerns. In general the urban poor, which most of IDPs also belong to, are disproportionately victimized and marginalized given the unequal distribution of risk and vulnerability.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to the risks that all urban poor face, IDPs who live in cities are typically bearing the supplementary risks and burdens related to their position as forced migrant. However, differences in living standards between IDPs and non-IDPs in urban areas seem to be mitigated over time.<sup>18</sup> Other differences, such as a lack of identification papers, and access to services and employment may pose long lasting specific needs for urban IDPs.<sup>19</sup> Further city-specific empirical research is needed to conclude whether IDPs or other forced migrants in urban areas are more vulnerable than local poor, and if they are, in what aspects.

### **The causes and patterns of urban displacement**

The IDP situation in Khartoum can be characterized as “a complex urban and protracted displacement situation” as IDPs have arrived to the city during the last 25-30 years for a variety of reasons such as drought, the civil war between the north and the south and more recently the conflict in Darfur.<sup>20</sup> Khartoum has experienced large influxes of people fleeing rural areas also because of famine.

When displacement in Sudan is analyzed it is important to remember that the population in Sudan is highly mobile and majority of migrants are moving for a variety of reasons. About 40 per cent of the people are estimated to be on the move annually for a variety of reasons.<sup>21</sup> IDPs that are mostly fleeing war, drought and famine have a variety of reasons to reach the capital city.<sup>22</sup> For instance, the presence of international aid organizations ensures some level of assistance for the IDPs. In the capital they may also be able to create pressure on the government and focus attention to their needs. The employment rate in the capital is better than in main regional cities, even though unemployment is also high in Khartoum.

The typical pattern of displacement and migration in Sudan has been from rural-to-urban areas. The overall nature of Sudanese internal movement, however, changed in the beginning of 1980s when socially unprotected people started to move massively from impoverished areas. In addition, migrants’ motivations changed: The conflict became the main reason for moving and not economical reasons as previously. Consequently, entire households began to migrate and this increased the number of people fleeing. Furthermore, the direction of displacement changed so that the majority of people from the south began to flee to the north, particularly in the Greater

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<sup>16</sup> UN-HABITAT (2007: 23)

<sup>17</sup> UN-HABITAT (2007: 7-9)

<sup>18</sup> Jacobsen (forthcoming)

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Acting Deputy Director, UNHCR

Khartoum area. Most of the voluntary migrants and drought-displaced came to Khartoum directly, unlike the war-affected people. They typically used chain migration patterns. This can partly be explained by the geographical distance between the capital and the South, where majority of war-affected IDPs came from.<sup>23</sup>

Khartoum area has long been clearly the first choice of destination for the majority of displaced. As a consequence of the urban internal displacement, Khartoum has experienced rapid urbanization already since the 1970s.<sup>24</sup> Sudan had in the beginning of the 1990s, however, one of the least urbanized populations compared to the other least developed countries, and therefore the “hyper urbanization” of the capital city has been unexceptional. Between 1983 and 1990 approximately 1-1.4 million forced migrants came to Khartoum Province. This amounted to the annual population growth rate of 10-12 per cent, which is extraordinary high.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to these previous changes in the pattern of displacement, there are at least three more recent patterns that can be identified as a consequence of huge displacement to Khartoum: Secondary movement of returnees back to the city, forced intra-urban evictions of IDPs, and voluntary migration from Khartoum because of the increased urban pressure and deteriorated quality of life. After the 2005 Peace Agreement more IDPs have began to return to their places of origin, mostly in rural areas of South Sudan.

However, because these areas cannot necessarily sustain a large number of returning IDPs, a trend of secondary movement back to Khartoum has been identified. No systematic information is, however, available on this pattern of movement.<sup>26</sup> Demolitions and forced evictions are another specific pattern of displacement occurring as intra-urban displacement in Khartoum. There is a clear link between relocations and the urban growth manifesting in a way that the most vulnerable are pushed out of the city.<sup>27</sup> It is clear the IDPs have significantly increased urbanization of Khartoum. The flow of IDPs has been so enormous that urban planning is only insufficiently addressing the needs of the inhabitants. Given the worsening life conditions and diminishing opportunities in Khartoum, many who are able, move out of Khartoum.<sup>28</sup>

The conflict in Somalia has been ongoing for decades, but the situation has been deteriorating since 2007. Accordingly, the humanitarian situation has continued to weaken and 16 000 civilians have been killed and a million displaced since 2007.<sup>29</sup> Fighting has been taking place between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces and their Ethiopian allies, and insurgents including the Islamic Courts Union. Internal displacement continues in and around Mogadishu, and there are currently an

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<sup>20</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>21</sup> Hamid (1996)

<sup>22</sup> Bannaga (2002: 35-36)

<sup>23</sup> Hamid (1996)

<sup>24</sup> UNHCR (2008d)

<sup>25</sup> Hamid (1996)

<sup>26</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>27</sup> IRIN (2008)

<sup>28</sup> Bannaga (2002)

<sup>29</sup> Reuters (2009)

estimated 1.1 million IDPs in the country. The situation got even worse due to drought and economical crisis.<sup>30</sup>

There is a clear general rural-to-urban migration patten in Somalia due to difficulties in rural areas, which has increased urbanization. There is little reliable statistical information on urbanization in Somalia, but urban growth rate is estimated to be 5 to 8 per cent per year. Currently, 34 per cent of the Somali population lives in urban areas.<sup>31</sup> Besides voluntary migration, rural-to-urban displacement is also taking place and has increased since the 1990s.

The internal displacement situation in Mogadishu has been described as protracted situation given that fact that most of the urban IDPs have moved to the capital already in the early 1990s.<sup>32</sup> Returnees are also moving progressively more to cities.<sup>33</sup> The protracted character of urban displacement is, however, challenged because the secondary displacement of urban IDPs has increased particularly after 2007.<sup>34</sup> There are various observations on how many protracted IDPs have actually left the city. One source confirms that:

Despite estimates [from 2008] which say that approximately 700, 000 people were displaced because of violence in Mogadishu during 2007 (of which 630, 000 left Mogadishu), it would seem that the overwhelming majority of the protracted IDPs remain in Mogadishu.<sup>35</sup>

One explanation to this is that most of the people who left the city were better-off, and only the most vulnerable IDPs and other urban poor have actually stayed in the capital city, perhaps moving from one IDP settlement to another. In 2009 for the first time in two years people are also starting to return to Mogadishu. This is mainly due to the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Mogadishu. The returnees are partly former protracted IDP families who now intend to stay in the city permanently. Continuous new displacements inside the city make local integration difficult.<sup>36</sup> Secondary movement of IDPs who have tried to return to rural areas, but who have been forced to move back to Mogadishu, is also a distinctive displacement pattern, as is the intra-urban displacement which is taking place according to the spreading violence.<sup>37</sup>

The patterns and dynamics of displacement in Somalia are difficult to analyze given the fact that almost all Somalis have been displaced by violence at least once. Also, about 60 per cent of Somali population lives in nomadic lifestyle.<sup>38</sup> Given the highly restricted humanitarian space in the city, the IDP profiling and registration have been problematic. The patterns of population movements have been therefore difficult to monitor.

After several political crises, an armed conflict and violence between government and rebels exploded in Ivory Coast in 2002. The internal conflict was fought over issues related to national identity, voting rights, anti-foreign politics and land tenure.<sup>39</sup> As a consequence an estimated half a million civilians fled their homes mainly from the

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<sup>30</sup> IDMC (2008c)

<sup>31</sup> Atkinson and Couté (2003)

<sup>32</sup> UNHCR (2007d)

<sup>33</sup> UNHCR (2008a)

<sup>34</sup> Email correspondence on Mogadishu, Protection Officer, UNHCR field office in Nairobi

<sup>35</sup> SAACID (2008)



North to the government controlled south. Many of them were displaced to cities and majority to the largest city of Abidjan. Since the Ouagadougou Peace Agreement signed in 2007 and the following post-conflict phase, many urban IDPs begun to return to their areas of origin. There are, however, fears of renewed conflict and violence in the city of Abidjan, given the current political impasse.<sup>40</sup>

Majority of the IDPs in Abidjan are from regions affected by armed conflict, and hence the primary reason for their flight is violence and war. According to one study nearly half of the IDPs are from the three most effected conflict regions, and a significant proportion of the came also from the district where Abidjan is located.<sup>41</sup> Nearly one third of the households made transitional movements in other locations before reaching their final urban destination. This movement focused on other smaller cities on the way to Abidjan.<sup>42</sup> A relatively insignificant trend of intra-urban displacement also occurred as IDPs are more likely to be re-located within Abidjan than non-IDPs.<sup>43</sup>

### **The number and profile of urban IDPs**

In 2007 the population of Sudan was estimated to be nearly 40 million with 10 per cent of the population being displaced either as IDPs or refugees.<sup>44</sup> In 2008 there was an estimated 1.7 million IDPs in the city, comprising between 23-30 per cent of the population in Khartoum.<sup>45</sup> The majority of IDPs in Khartoum are living outside the camps and other official resettlement areas. Only about 10 per cent of the IDPs in Khartoum are in camps.<sup>46</sup>

These estimations are, however, unreliable because there is no accurate IDP registration or demographic data available at present. This makes also the identification of specific needs of IDPs difficult.<sup>47</sup> The UNHCR planning figures for Khartoum has decreasing numbers of IDPs and slightly increasing numbers of refugees. IDPs are estimated to decrease to 1 million in the end of 2009 and there are currently about 32 000 urban refugees and asylum seekers in the capital.<sup>48</sup>

Migrants in Khartoum can be categorized in three different groups: war-displaced, drought-displaced and voluntary migrants. The displaced people who moved to Khartoum have lost most of their property and have typically also lost some of their relatives. They also consider themselves to be physically in danger. Out of the war-affected displaced the primary reason for coming to Khartoum were employment and escaping war. They also believe that the central government is more like to provide

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<sup>36</sup> Redmond (2009)

<sup>37</sup> UNHCR (2007d)

<sup>38</sup> IDMC (2007a: 99)

<sup>39</sup> Refugees International (2007)

<sup>40</sup> UNICEF (2007)

<sup>41</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)

<sup>42</sup> UNHCR (2007b)

<sup>43</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)

<sup>44</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>45</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)

<sup>46</sup> Bannaga (2002: 34)

<sup>47</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>48</sup> UNHCR (2008d)

assistance than the local authorities.<sup>49</sup> Because the state does not systematically register IDPs it is extremely difficult to analyze their profile and demographic characteristics. It is, however, believed that IDPs in Khartoum have a highly mixed profile and they are integrated locally at various levels.<sup>50</sup> Average time of displacement in Khartoum is 12 years, and hence can it can be defined as a protracted situation. Most of the IDPs are living dispersed around the city. Few of them are habiting the main four camps and approximately 30 official squatters.

Women are estimated to represent one third and children under five constitute nearly 20 per cent of the IDP population in Khartoum.<sup>51</sup> Besides women and children there is also a significant number old men, and only a minority of IDPs are young people capable of establishing livelihoods and self-reliance.<sup>52</sup> Given the significant number of IDP children, the average household size is from six to seven persons.<sup>53</sup> It has also been estimated that some 10-15 per cent of IDPs originate from Darfur. The majority is from South Sudan and the three Transitional Areas.<sup>54</sup>

All in all, the protracted nature of displacement and the massive number of IDPs in Khartoum have shifted the situation from a typical urban displacement requiring humanitarian action more into a long-term developmental issue. Also the fact that IDPs are very difficult to define and identify, has affected the humanitarian responses. Solutions for the situation, which is affecting the entire city, can only be found in comprehensive developmental policies and pro-poor strategies.<sup>55</sup>

There are approximately 1.1 million IDPs in Somalia. An estimated 400 000 are located in urban areas and majority of them, about 250 000 live in Mogadishu.<sup>56</sup> IDPs have made up 20 to 25 per cent of Mogadishu population during the last couple of years. These urban IDPs are dispersed over 200 settlements and nearly two-thirds of them live in collective centres and public buildings. The IDP population is vastly mixed with locals, migrants, refugees and returnees.<sup>57</sup>

There are two main groups of IDPs in Mogadishu: Conflict-induced displaced person from South and Central Somalia, and persons displaced by natural disasters, which are often hosted in cities by their tribesmen.<sup>58</sup> More than half of the IDPs identified violence and conflict as their main reasons for displacement. The second important reasons for their flight are drought and flood. According to one profiling study only eight per cent of IDPs said that they have been displaced more than once.

This is rather surprising compared to the other analysis, which have emphasized the role of forced evictions and secondary displacement. Nearly 90 per cent of the IDPs came from South or Central Somalia, and the largest groups came from the areas surrounding Mogadishu. More than two thirds of the IDPs living in Mogadishu left their places of origin and also arrived to their current location during the period of

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<sup>49</sup> Hamid (1996)

<sup>50</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>51</sup> IDMC (2006)

<sup>52</sup> Bannaga (2002: 41)

<sup>53</sup> IDMC (2007b)

<sup>54</sup> UNHCR (2008d)

<sup>55</sup> Email correspondence, Protection Officer, UNHCR Khartoum, 3.2.2009

<sup>56</sup> UNHCR (2008a)

<sup>57</sup> IDMC (2007a: 85, 94)

<sup>58</sup> UNHCR (2008a)

1991-1995. Given the fact that a majority of them were still most likely displaced in Mogadishu until 2007, they were to be considered living in protracted IDP situation until the new outbreak of violence that year. The gender distribution of this pre-2007 IDP population was balanced with a slight majority being females, and the average size of a household was nearly seven persons. It is a higher number than the average, which most of the aid agencies work with. However, it is lower than in the other profiling locations outside the capital.<sup>59</sup>

IDPs in Ivory Coast are largely concentrated in urban areas, and around 80 per cent of them were located in urban areas in 2005.<sup>60</sup> Nearly 70 per cent of all IDPs in the country live in the four million inhabitant city of Abidjan, and the estimations of their numbers vary from 500,000<sup>61</sup> to less than 300,000.<sup>62</sup>

It is somewhat unclear whether IDPs are concentrated in few areas of the city<sup>63</sup> or if they are spread in all over the city.<sup>64</sup> It is, however, clear that the vast majority of IDPs live with host families or communities. The fact that there is only one IDP camp in the country is partly due to the traditional Ivorian hospitality.<sup>65</sup> 72 per cent of urban IDPs live with a head of household and 12 per cent are separated from their family.

Female-headed households represent 42 per cent of households.<sup>66</sup> Men comprise a minority of urban IDPs. Women are a majority in other rural and urban locations, and not just in Abidjan.<sup>67</sup> More than half of the IDPs are married or co-habiting, and IDP households tend to have more children than the locals, the average being nine.<sup>68</sup> One indicator of the IDP profile is also the prevalence of particularly vulnerable IDPs. Five major categories of vulnerable persons are identified for targeted operation. These include the groups of women, children, sick, disabled and elderly over 60 years.<sup>69</sup>

### **The needs of urban IDPs and non-IDPs**

Humanitarian actors are currently debating and trying to gather empirical information on the essential question of whether or not urban IDPs have distinctive needs. Answering this question would help them to design their projects, which should either target IDPs or not. Access to services and specific protection needs are the two key issues to consider when IDPs and non-IDPs in urban areas are compared.

In terms of access to services and living conditions, higher densities of IDPs are found in the poor areas of Khartoum. IDPs are also more likely to live in poorer quality dwellings than non-IDPs.<sup>70</sup> Access to land in the city is highly determined by the time of arrival and the consequent definition of an official IDP. IDPs who came to

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<sup>59</sup> UNHCR (2007d)

<sup>60</sup> Sika et al. (2005)

<sup>61</sup> UNHCR (2007a)

<sup>62</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)

<sup>63</sup> UNHCR (2007b)

<sup>64</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Acting Deputy Director, UNHCR; Refugees International (2007)

<sup>66</sup> UNHCR (2007b)

<sup>67</sup> Sika et al. (2005)

<sup>68</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)

<sup>69</sup> UNHCR (2007b)

<sup>70</sup> Jacobsen (2008a)

Khartoum pre-1983, which is prior to the civil war in South Sudan, were identified officially as IDPs and accordingly received a plot of land. Other “unofficial” IDPs are in more serious risk of being evicted, because of the lack of land.<sup>71</sup> IDPs are less educated than non-IDPs in Khartoum.<sup>72</sup> However, the city had the highest proportion of IDPs with university education compared to the other locations in North Sudan.<sup>73</sup>

In general no significant distinction between IDPs and non-IDPs is found in relation to employment. Employment and education patterns are differentiated more by gender than by the IDP status. Overall, the household difficulties are more likely to depend on the location rather than whether people were IDPs or not.<sup>74</sup> However, Khartoum has one of the lowest proportions of working IDPs when compared to the other IDPs in North Sudan.<sup>75</sup>

The lack of livelihood options for IDPs is evident in the capital, and many IDP women are illegally selling alcohol, thus suffering from the risk of being arrested.<sup>76</sup> The means of income-generating activities used by IDPs have diversified since the move to the city, because most of the people had to give up their agricultural livelihoods and consequently they are not self-employed anymore.<sup>77</sup>

When it comes to the access of services and basic necessities, IDPs and migrants mostly share the same difficulties related to housing, food and water.<sup>78</sup> It has even been suggested that IDPs “enjoy their rights as any other non-displaced citizens in Khartoum.”<sup>79</sup> Issues related to employment, experience of crime, access to water and transportation are, however, identified as IDP specific issues.<sup>80</sup> It has been argued that urban poverty, not the displacement, is the main concern in Khartoum. Hence, the situation cannot be improved solely through humanitarian action, but it requires fundamental developmental efforts from the government with the support of the international community.<sup>81</sup>

Besides access to services, some protection needs are shared by the IDPs with the other urban poor.<sup>82</sup> However, there are also several IDP-specific protection challenges in Khartoum. IDPs are more likely to be evicted than the other urban population. Interestingly it has also been found out that the intra-urban IDPs were less likely to be evicted than the IDPs who have arrived from outside the city.<sup>83</sup> Protection of IDPs against involuntary eviction has been the key protection challenge in Khartoum over the past year.

Evictions are part of the comprehensive urban re-planning policy that the government is implementing in the capital city. Since 2003 to 2006 approximately 250 000 to 300 000 IDP households have become homeless in Khartoum because of the demolition of

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<sup>71</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>72</sup> Jacobsen (2008a)

<sup>73</sup> IDMC (2006)

<sup>74</sup> Jacobsen (2008a), Hamid (1996: 122-123)

<sup>75</sup> IDMC (2006)

<sup>76</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>77</sup> Hamid (1996: 109)

<sup>78</sup> Hamid (1996)

<sup>79</sup> Baggana (2002: 101)

<sup>80</sup> Jacobsen (2008a)

<sup>81</sup> Email correspondence, Protection Officer, UNHCR Khartoum, 3.2.2009

<sup>82</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>83</sup> Jacobsen (2008a)

their houses and following forced relocations.<sup>84</sup> For example in October 2007 the government of Sudan demolished thousands of homes in three official IDP camps declaring that this action was part of an urban development programme. As a result many of the IDP households became homeless, because they were not provided with another place to live in. Forced relocations have also resulted in violence, arrests and even deaths of IDPs.<sup>85</sup>

Initially relocations were justified as providing better living conditions for IDPs who have been living in extremely harsh situations in the city. However, the locations where the government relocated IDPs were worse off with severe lack of employment and services.<sup>86</sup> There are hardly any basic services or jobs, malnutrition is a significant problem, there is no relief distribution, the crude mortality rates are concerning, and diseases are spreading. Also, the access to safe water and latrines is disturbing.<sup>87</sup> Unlike the promises made by the authorities in Khartoum, relocations have continued in 2008.

It is estimated that since 1989 at least 665 000 IDPs have been forcibly relocated in Khartoum State and nearly half of the relocations have taken place since 2003.<sup>88</sup> Besides protection concerns related to forced evictions, the lack of documentation has created protection challenges. The lack of identity documents is widespread among urban IDPs, but it is also common among the local population. This results in the lack of access to services and livelihood opportunities.<sup>89</sup> 36 per cent of the IDPs held no identity documentation in 2003. Nearly 40 per cent of the children born in displaced families have no documentation.<sup>90</sup> IDPs in Khartoum have also identified in participatory assessments arbitrary arrests, lack of security, limited access to employment, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and child abduction as their main protection concerns.<sup>91</sup>

Overall, regarding assistance and protection needs the UN inter-agency Rapid Needs Assessment found that the IDPs in Khartoum were worse off than the IDPs in Darfur in 2005 and since then there has not been any noteworthy upgrading in the situation.<sup>92</sup> In Khartoum there are also slightly more vulnerable IDPs than in the average in all of the Northern Sudanese states.<sup>93</sup> Both urban refugees and asylum seekers, and IDPs constitute the most vulnerable category of people in Khartoum. They are sharing the marginalization of the other urban poor, but additionally also suffering from specific challenges related to their displacement.<sup>94</sup>

Like in the case of Khartoum there are different indicators on whether IDPs in urban Somalia, and more precisely in Mogadishu, have distinctive needs compared to the other local population. According to one source, the IDP population in Mogadishu is extremely mixed with the locals and other migrants, and therefore these different

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<sup>84</sup> UNHCR (2007e)

<sup>85</sup> Home Office (2007)

<sup>86</sup> Hamid (1996)

<sup>87</sup> IDMC (2007b)

<sup>88</sup> IRIN (2008)

<sup>89</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>90</sup> IDMC (2007c: 159)

<sup>91</sup> UNHCR (2008fd)

<sup>92</sup> UNHCR (2007e)

<sup>93</sup> IDMC (2006)

<sup>94</sup> UNHCR (2007f)

categories of people share the same living conditions and basic needs.<sup>95</sup> However, other sources indicate that IDPs in urban centres in Somalia have intolerable living conditions; they lack protection, and have limited access to basic services. Furthermore, the life quality indicators are even lower for urban IDPs than those of other Somalis and returnees.<sup>96</sup>

When it comes to access to services it has been concluded that IDPs tend to have less access to employment, education and other facilities. The society wide clan-based discrimination is also apparent among IDPs.<sup>97</sup> Housing and shelter issues form a severe crisis that faces IDPs. Many of the IDPs have been living in empty public buildings.<sup>98</sup> Conditions in the settlements also vary depending on whether they are classified as official or temporary. In the official permanent settlements some basic infrastructure and services have been constructed with the support of humanitarian actors.<sup>99</sup>

A significant number of IDPs use begging as their main source of food since food aid is very limited. More than half of the IDPs have an average of one meal per day. Besides food, also access to water is one of the main humanitarian problems. In term of various supplies the problem is not in the lack of them but rather in their distribution given the difficulty of accessing Mogadishu. Based on these indicators it is, however, difficult to say whether the needs of IDPs actually have different needs compared to the entire city population.

In terms of education nearly 90 per cent of the IDPs reported that their children did not have access to school.<sup>100</sup> IDPs' access to education is determined by income and ethnicity. Vast majority of IDPs have no access to health facilities, even though the majority them have alarming health conditions. Mortality rates among displaced children are up to 60 per cent higher than other populations.<sup>101</sup>

A dramatic change in livelihoods has been identified among the IDP population. While two-thirds of the IDPs relied on agricultural livelihoods prior to the displacement, during the displacement in Mogadishu trade, market activities and casual employment were used by more than 80 per cent of IDPs as their main means of livelihood. Begging has also increased significantly<sup>102</sup> since there are fewer income-generating activities in Mogadishu as the conflict is also affecting the city. If the security situation keeps worsening, many Somalis may soon be unable to make any money in order to obtain the basic necessities for life.<sup>103</sup>

The general protection situation is very weak in Mogadishu given the lack of competent central authority and thus the implementation of international protection standards is very difficult. Some of the IDPs attempt to leave to country every year and seek asylum abroad.<sup>104</sup> Given the general insecurity in Mogadishu, it is rather

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<sup>95</sup> IDMC (2007a: 94)

<sup>96</sup> UNHCR (2008a)

<sup>97</sup> IDMC (2007a: 103)

<sup>98</sup> Home Office (2007)

<sup>99</sup> IDMC (2007a: 94)

<sup>100</sup> UNCHR (2007d)

<sup>101</sup> IDMC (2007a: 142)

<sup>102</sup> UNHCR (2007d)

<sup>103</sup> Home Office (2007)

<sup>104</sup> IDMC (2007a)

surprising that the majority of the IDPs (84 per cent) felt relatively safe in the city before the uprising of the conflict in 2007. The main reasons of feeling unsafe are related to looting, rape, murder, harassment and eviction. There seems to be, however, a relatively significant group of nearly 30 per cent of the IDPs who consider being more vulnerable than others. The reasons for specific vulnerability are related to poverty, female headed households, pregnancy, illness, disability, or membership to a minority clan.<sup>105</sup>

When it comes to freedom of movement nearly 90 per cent of IDPs felt that they were free to move. For some the general insecurity posed a reason to consider that their movement was somewhat limited. In Mogadishu forced evictions do not seem to be a serious protection issue, since only less than five per cent of the IDPs mentioned experiencing eviction threats. However, the reclaiming of the buildings by the government was anticipated but postponed.<sup>106</sup> The Government returned to Mogadishu in December 2006 and is likely to reclaim official buildings, which are inhabited by IDPs and other urban poor. When taking place, this will pose a potential protection threat.

The needs of IDPs and other war-affected people in Abidjan are unclear, and it has been debated whether IDPs have any distinctive needs. According to Refugees International:

One humanitarian noted, 'People being displaced are not in real need,' but an official noted, 'There is real humanitarian need here. People don't think there is an emergency because there aren't camps.' The representative of an inter-governmental agency added, 'About 30,000 of the most vulnerable are in shanty towns in Abidjan.'<sup>107</sup>

According to a recent profiling study IDPs and non-IDPs in Abidjan do not differ statistically in their type of housing. A slightly larger proportion of IDPs lives in temporary shelters than non-IDPs. IDPs are also more likely to be renters than owners, and more likely to be hosted by others.<sup>108</sup> Only 3 per cent of the IDP households in Abidjan own their homes.<sup>109</sup> Related to housing, it was noticed that IDPs are significantly more likely to have been re-located within the city and these relocations are related to the demolition campaigns. Rather surprisingly, IDPs are slightly more educated than non-IDPs.

This is evident also in literacy rates, which are higher for IDPs than non-IDPs. Displaced men and women have also more university education than other locals.<sup>110</sup> IDPs living in urban areas in Ivory Coast also have more access to education than their rural counterparts.<sup>111</sup> In terms of employment IDPs are more likely to be unemployed than non-IDPs. Overall education and employment patterns are differentiated more by gender than by IDP status.<sup>112</sup> It has been reported that both

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<sup>105</sup> UNHCR (2007d)

<sup>106</sup> UNHCR (2007d)

<sup>107</sup> Refugees International (2007)

<sup>108</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)

<sup>109</sup> UNHCR (2007)

<sup>110</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)

<sup>111</sup> Sika et al. (2005)

<sup>112</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)

rural and urban IDPs have worsening health situations since the conflict broke out. Abidjan is, however, identified as one of the location where there are higher proportions of IDPs with worsened health situations than average.<sup>113</sup>

Standard of living does not differ significantly between IDPs and other urban living in Abidjan. This is mostly explained by the fact that IDPs are living within host communities. Overall, in a recent IDP profiling study it is concluded that:

There were no major lack of access of IDPs to food services, health and sanitation, housing, education, and judicial and administrative services. However, where there were differences, IDPs generally appeared to be worse off.<sup>114</sup>

Also another profiling study confirms that there is no major difference on the access to services and basic needs by IDPs and non-IDPs.<sup>115</sup> However, in general massive displacement in Abidjan has affected the standard of living indicators. Mass displacement to Abidjan has resulted in the lack of water and sanitation, and these facilities might collapse due to over-exploitation.<sup>116</sup> Displacement has also increased prostitution and sexual exploitation, especially in cities.

The question of identity documents is essential for ensuring sufficient protection for IDPs. According to one profiling study 92 per cent of the heads of IDP households in Abidjan have various identification documents, but 10 per cent of other IDPs do not have any identity papers.<sup>117</sup> In another profiling study it is concluded that IDPs were less likely to have a birth certificates than the other populations.

However, they had other documents at similar rates than non-IDPs, and IDPs held some cards even at higher rates than other respondents.<sup>118</sup> Further regarding protection concerns particularly IDP women and girls have difficulties of ensuring the basic needs and this has increased the rate of prostitution in Abidjan and other cities.<sup>119</sup> In addition, IDPs are more likely to feel that their living area was unsafe compared to the other urban population.<sup>120</sup>

### **Government policies towards urban IDPs**

The primary protection and assistance of urban and rural IDPs belongs to the national authorities. However, like in any IDP situation, the government can be unable or unwilling to provide necessary services and protection. Therefore, the surrogate protection and assistance by the humanitarian community, which is implemented currently increasingly under the cluster approach, is essential.

In the case of Khartoum the Sudanese government has been trying to tackle the internal displaced since the 1980s. It has developed various laws and policies for assisting and protecting IDPs. However, in general the impacts of these efforts have been weak. Both political and institutional obstacles have hindered the efforts. Also practical and financial problems have occurred.<sup>121</sup> The Government has also been reluctant taking the lead in the IDP issues in Khartoum, except on the return initiatives.<sup>122</sup> Given the uncontrolled urbanization in which internal displacement has

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<sup>113</sup> Sika et al. (2005)

<sup>114</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)



contributed in and the lack of strong governmental humanitarian action, the role of voluntary associations and NGOs has become essential in Khartoum.<sup>123</sup>

The Khartoum State, not the Sudanese government, is mainly responsible for the support and solutions for IDPs in the city. The State of Khartoum has created a commission to deal with the displacement situation in the city. Nationally the Humanitarian Affairs Commission under the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs is responsible for the IDP assistance and protection, but its efforts have been focusing on the return of IDPs.

In addition various other governmental actors are involved in Khartoum.<sup>124</sup> The state has been providing basic services for urban IDPs on the organized sites in Khartoum, and public policy has played a significant role in the lives of urban IDPs. Provisions of housing, services, resettlement and also distribution of subsidized commodities and regulation of the access to employment are policies that have affected the IDPs in the city.<sup>125</sup>

Even though the authorities have implemented policies to improve the situation of displaced people, it has also implemented various urban restructuring programmes, which have resulted in forced evictions and homelessness of urban IDPs. These urban renewal projects have included actions such as elimination of unauthorized settlements, renewing old parts of the city, and relocating urban functions in the city.<sup>126</sup> It has even been argued that “relocation is the key component of the national displacement policy in Sudan.”<sup>127</sup>

In general the government is addressing the needs of IDPs as part of wider urban poor population. There is, however, a perception that the government is not doing enough to support these pro-poor policies, the most critical issue being land and housing. The Khartoum State has, however, in 2007 created a document of guiding principles to guide relocations. They are not always followed and shortcomings are still common in relation to forced evictions.<sup>128</sup>

In Mogadishu the transitional government perceives urban displacement mostly as an unavoidable consequence of the conflict and is concerned about the negative impact of mass displacement. The authorities have implemented incentives for urban-to-rural migration. Rural-to-urban migration has also been tried to mitigate by the government.<sup>129</sup> Even though IDPs in Somalia are among the most vulnerable people they have not been protected by local or de facto authorities. The establishment of the

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<sup>115</sup> UNHCR (2007b)

<sup>116</sup> UNICEF (2007)

<sup>117</sup> UNHCR (2007b)

<sup>118</sup> Jacobsen (2008b: 8)

<sup>119</sup> UNHCR (2007b)

<sup>120</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)

<sup>121</sup> Hamid (1996: 144)

<sup>122</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>123</sup> Bannaga (2002: 51)

<sup>124</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>125</sup> Hamid (1996: 122-123)

<sup>126</sup> Bannaga (2002: 96)

<sup>127</sup> Hamid (1996)

<sup>128</sup> Email correspondence, Protection Officer, UNHCR Khartoum, 3.2.2009

<sup>129</sup> UNHCR (2007d)

Transitional Federal Government created new hopes for stronger government efforts for the assistance and protection of IDPs. However, improvements have not taken place.<sup>130</sup> Since 2007 the government has evicted and violently targeted IDPs in order to them to leave the city. Many of the previously protracted urban IDPs have escaped the city in recent years. Therefore, under the current situation the authorities cannot be perceived to assist or protect urban IDPs.

Given the lack of protection provided by authorities, there are so called “gatekeepers” who control IDP settlements. They provide “protection” in exchange for aid, which has been given to IDPs. If IDPs cannot pay, they might experience forced labour and associated protection risks such as rapes.<sup>131</sup> An additional form of protection and assistance has been provided by the Somali civil society, which is well organized. For example Islamic charities provide assistance to IDPs in Mogadishu, mainly focusing on education and health care facilities.<sup>132</sup>

In the case of Abidjan the government of Ivory Coast has formed an inter-ministerial committee to coordinate the protection of and assistance of IDPs. One aim of the committee is to form a national action plan on IDP protection.<sup>133</sup> The authorities have declared that the main goal of the government’s IDP policy is the return of all displaced people to their homes.<sup>134</sup> Thus, the government authorities have focused their IDP efforts mainly on return. These policies have, however, faced some obstacles and also the implementation of the national legal framework for IDP protection has been delayed.

In addition, funding constraints have generally affected the national response to the internal displacement situation. For instance no government funding was allocated to the return programme for 2008.<sup>135</sup> Given the uncertainty of the overall situation in the country, government action and international support are needed. The focus on these efforts should, according to Refugee International,<sup>136</sup> be in development initiatives that would reinforce the option of local integration.

### **Protection and assistance provided by humanitarian actors**

International NGOs have been working with IDPs in Khartoum much earlier than the UN and hence their efforts have been crucial for a long time. In addition to the late action, the international community has been accused for not directing enough efforts and funds towards Khartoum. Bannaga has stated that:

The displaced in Khartoum have been ignored by the organizations of the United Nations and foreign voluntary organizations. Arguably, it is an international injustice.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> IDMC (2007a: 101)

<sup>131</sup> IDMC (2007a: 102)

<sup>132</sup> Ibid. (2007a: 201)

<sup>133</sup> IDMC (2007a), UNHCR (2007a)

<sup>134</sup> IDMC (2008a)

<sup>135</sup> Ibid. (2008a)

<sup>136</sup> Refugee International (2007)

<sup>137</sup> Bannaga (2002: 71)

Also according to the UNHCR the situation in Khartoum has received decreased humanitarian attention in the recent years. In spite of this, the international community has been working with the IDPs in the city since late 1980s. The work has included implementing various programmes mainly through NGO partners. UN has been more involved in Khartoum during the main evictions in 2003-2004, but since the conflict in Darfur has intensified, IDPs in Khartoum have received less attention.

UNHCR is concerned that there is a severe gap in the response since NGOs and humanitarian agencies are doing less, and the government and the development actors are not increasing their action.<sup>138</sup> There is, however, clear evidence that the IDP situation in Khartoum is not anymore a typical humanitarian situation. Thus, the future efforts have to be more development-orientated focusing on the poor urban population as a whole. The gap that the phasing out of humanitarian actors left has not been sufficiently filled by the international development actors. The overall marginalization and poverty are worsening the assistance and protection needs of IDPs and other urban poor.<sup>139</sup>

In total the UN and its partners are planning to use significantly more funds on early recovery than in humanitarian work in 2009 in Khartoum and other Northern States. Main sectoral focus will be in education and culture, food security and livelihoods, and health and nutrition. Protection and human rights is the fourth largest sector in terms of budget. The UN is the largest actor contributing more than 70 per cent of the early recovery and humanitarian funds. The biggest UN organizations and agencies in budgetary terms are WFP, UNICEF, IOM and UNHCR. Other international organizations are the second largest actor in Khartoum and other Northern States, followed by national NGOs and Red Cross and Red Crescent with much smaller programme budgets.<sup>140</sup>

The humanitarian community is currently working with IDPs in Sudan by using the old collaborative system. Their IDP work is focused on advocacy, capacity-building, legal counselling, SGBV (sexual and gender based violence) awareness, IDP protection, and protection monitoring during return and registration. The new cluster approach has not officially been launched in Sudan, but the current system does not differ substantially from it, and UNHCR, for instance, is acting as a chair for the Khartoum Protection Working Group. The group involves different UN agencies, and national and international NGOs.<sup>141</sup> For the humanitarian community it has been difficult to promote and implement right-based programmes and special protection-focused projects. This is mainly because the government is willing to accept humanitarian and development assistance, but it has been very cautious on protection work.

In Khartoum UNHCR has been providing various forms of assistance and protection to urban refugees and asylum seekers since the 1960s, but the Khartoum office got more involved with urban IDPs only in the end of 2005.<sup>142</sup> UNHCR's IDP work in Khartoum has mainly been protection and return focused, and the agency has recently gained an important role as a protection actor in the capital city. UNHCR has been

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<sup>138</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>139</sup> Email correspondence, Protection Officer, UNHCR Khartoum, 3.2.2009

<sup>140</sup> United Nations and Partners (2008: 3-6)

<sup>141</sup> UNHCR (2008c)

<sup>142</sup> UNHCR (2007f)

enhancing local protection capacities and providing information on return by organizing go-and-see visits to South Sudan for IDPs. UNHCR will also continue to monitor the protection of IDPs in six camps in Khartoum, support IDP communities in finding durable solutions, and support sustainable livelihoods for IDP women upon return.<sup>143</sup> Overall problems of the humanitarian work have included the difficulty of NGOs to get permits to work with IDPs, limited access to IDP camps and lack of funds. The scale of the IDP population in Khartoum is also one of the key challenges and it clearly exceeds the capacity of the UN system as a whole.<sup>144</sup>

Somalia was declared by the UN the most dangerous operational environment in 2005<sup>145</sup> and the situation in Mogadishu has remained very difficult, since the humanitarian space is constantly declining. The term humanitarian space has not been officially defined. The clearest manifestation of the erosion of humanitarian space is the increasing insecurity of aid workers. Also the decreasing safety of beneficiaries and access to them are consequences of limited humanitarian space.

Furthermore, the increase of non-traditional actors and methods in humanitarian work is another sign of the diminishing of humanitarian space.<sup>146</sup> The limited humanitarian space in Mogadishu has resulted to the fact that many international organizations do not have substantive field presence in the city.<sup>147</sup> The situation has lately got so difficult that many organizations have not had any kind of presence in the city since mid-2008.

Given these difficulties the role of civil society is very important in Mogadishu. This is mainly because the official government is not functioning effectively and international humanitarian actors cannot extensively work in the city. Lately the international agencies have had no permanent presence in the city and international staff only visits Mogadishu on short-term missions to deliver aid. Some national staff has, however, been working for the international agencies more permanently until recently.<sup>148</sup> There is also no agency with a mandate to identify IDPs and assess their status, and the lack of information makes programming even more difficult.<sup>149</sup> Furthermore, monitoring of aid programmes is impossible and operations are largely managed remotely, mainly from Nairobi in Kenya. Thus Mogadishu offers a uniquely complex operational environment.

Overall in Somalia the international community is working with IDPs under the cluster approach. The UN has also created a joint IDP strategy, which is used as basis in various protection programmes. The main goals of the IDP Strategy are to assist local authorities in enhancing IDP protection and living conditions, and in finding durable solutions for the displaced. UNHCR has become more involved with the IDP activities in Somalia during the past couple of years. A special Somalia IDP programme was started in 2006. It is focused on protection, community mobilization, emergency shelter, non-food items and basic infrastructure. Emergency activities are,

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<sup>143</sup> UNHCR (2008d)

<sup>144</sup> UNHCR (2007f)

<sup>145</sup> IDMC (2007a: 203)

<sup>146</sup> IASC (2008: 1)

<sup>147</sup> IDMC (2007a: 201-202)

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. (2007a: 86)

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. (2007a: 98)

however, closely linked to search for durable solutions.<sup>150</sup> Besides shelter cluster, UNHCR is also the cluster lead for protection, jointly with OCHA.<sup>151</sup>

In relation to Abidjan, the common humanitarian strategy for Ivory Coast in 2009 is formulated in the 'Critical Humanitarian Needs and Funding Gaps' document. Several NGO and 12 UN projects are included in this strategy. The humanitarian community is using both the cluster approach and collaborative approach in the country. Cluster approach has not been fully established, but a protection cluster was activated in 2006. UNHCR is the lead at the global level on this cluster. The humanitarian action for IDPs in Ivory Coast has suffered from funding constraints and according to one profiling study only less than ten per cent of IDPs had received any kind of assistance.<sup>152</sup> In particular humanitarian agencies have supported return movements and their activities have increasingly shifted to early recovery.<sup>153</sup>

### **Durable solutions for urban IDPs**

The principle durable solutions for IDPs in Khartoum are either return to their places of origin or integrate locally. Relocation to another part of the country, the third typical durable solution for IDPs, has not been extensively utilized in Sudan. Overall, the focus on return by the government as a preferred solution has resulted in ignoring the other options. The 2005 peace agreement increased the prospect for return of IDPs from Transitional Areas and the South.

There are different estimations on how many of the urban IDPs in Khartoum want to return to their places of origin. Estimations vary between 65 per cent<sup>154</sup> and 22 per cent<sup>155</sup> of IDPs in Khartoum. The Government of Southern Sudan has a strong interest to see as many IDPs as possible return because of the upcoming census and the referendum. The UN also considers of major focus for the coming years to be in return operations.<sup>156</sup>

However, some urban IDPs think that it would be difficult for them to return to rural areas, because they are now educated and there are no other employment opportunities besides agriculture. The option of return is also strongly linked to access to land in Khartoum and in places of origin. Only 23 per cent of the IDPs in Khartoum had received a plot. Also uncertainty about the security situation in their home locations is a factor influencing the likelihood of return.<sup>157</sup>

Furthermore, integration to the places of origin has not been very successful and therefore secondary movement back to the capital is taking place. This demonstrates that return is not necessarily a durable solution for urban IDPs. UNHCR has, however, traditionally been supporting to increase returns from Khartoum mainly

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<sup>150</sup> UNHCR (2008a)

<sup>151</sup> UNHCR (2008b)

<sup>152</sup> Jacobsen (2008b: 8)

<sup>153</sup> IDMC (2008b)

<sup>154</sup> UNHCR (2008d)

<sup>155</sup> Jacobsen (2008a)

<sup>156</sup> UNHCR (2008d)

<sup>157</sup> IDMC (2006)

because it has been the objective for the government. An estimated 300 000 IDPs left the city to return to home during 2006.<sup>158</sup>

Local integration is considered to be the second best durable solution for IDPs in Khartoum, and it is becoming more and more important after couple of years of mainly focusing on return. Relocations and forced evictions have, however, hindered IDPs' ability to gain self-reliance and integration. The conflict-induced IDPs have been concluded to be much more likely to stay in Khartoum compared with the drought-displaced and voluntary migrants.<sup>159</sup> There seem to be rather consistent estimations that approximately half of the IDPs intend to stay in the city.<sup>160</sup>

Particularly generations born in displacement in the capital city prefer staying in Khartoum. Some households are also split, because half of the members have returned while some are still living in the city.<sup>161</sup> However, for most of the IDPs in the capital city the eventual and preferred solution would be local integration. Accordingly UNHCR and other humanitarian actors are increasingly trying to promote local integration as a new durable solution for stakeholders, authorities and development actors.<sup>162</sup> This has, however, not been very successful given the political support by the authorities for return.

Before 2007 more than half of the IDPs in Mogadishu wished not to return to their places of origin, but opted for local integration and nearly 80 per cent of those IDPs who wished to remain were planning to settle permanently.<sup>163</sup> Even most of the IDPs who lived in miserable temporary settlements hoped to stay. The desire for local integration was rather surprising given the fact that Mogadishu is one of the most dangerous places in Somalia. Also, access to basic infrastructure or income-generating opportunities is minimal. Therefore sustainable local integration of urban IDPs is very difficult in Mogadishu.

Return has, however, been even more difficult given the scarce security situation. IDPs who have lived in urban settings for more than a decade often do not wish to return to their previous rural lives. Returning refugees also mostly live in slum areas in cities and face the same destitution as IDPs. Given all these considerations, the UN Country Team's IDP strategy for finding durable solutions has focused on local integration in urban areas.<sup>164</sup> However, as mentioned before, the situation in Mogadishu got much worse in 2007 and many IDPs have been forced to flee the city. Hence, currently local integration in Mogadishu is not a durable solution.

The other durable solutions, namely return and relocation have not been widely used by urban IDPs in Mogadishu. Only 44 per cent of IDPs in Mogadishu wanted to return before 2007. Physical safety, housing, access to services, and job opportunities influenced the most on return decision as did the return of other members of the community. Only very few IDPs have been willing to be relocated inside Somalia or

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<sup>158</sup> UNHCR (2007e)

<sup>159</sup> Hamid (1996)

<sup>160</sup> Jacobsen (2008a), Hamid (1996)

<sup>161</sup> Email correspondence, Protection Officer, UNHCR Khartoum, 3.2.2009

<sup>162</sup> UNHCR (2007f)

<sup>163</sup> UNHCR (2007d)

<sup>164</sup> IDMC (2007a: 94, 79, 197)

resettled to a new country.<sup>165</sup> Again, the situation has changed and substantive relocation and secondary displacement has taken place.

In relation to Abidjan the government has a clear preference on seeing urban IDPs to return. According to the finding of various urban IDP profiling studies, IDPs themselves are also more willing to return than non-IDPs. One study showed that 44 per cent of IDPs in Abidjan wanted to return home and only 34 per cent wanting to remain in the city.<sup>166</sup> According to another profiling exercise 66 per cent of households expressed the desire to return. However, only 20 per cent of IDPs in Abidjan wished to return immediately.<sup>167</sup>

Another report has indicated that even 72 per cent of the IDPs in Abidjan would go back to their places of origin when the situation has completely normalized. The figure of returnees can, however, vary depending on where the IDPs are originally from.<sup>168</sup> Return has been recently increasingly possible for IDPs in Abidjan due to the significant political changes and consequent improved security situation. With regards to the voluntary nature of return of urban IDPs, it should be noted that some politicians have tried to push IDPs to return to their homes despite the unsure security conditions, because of electoral matters.<sup>169</sup>

Despite this IDPs have continued to voluntarily return home throughout 2008 due to the implementation of the Ouagadougou Peace Accord. Some of the returns, however, have not been sustainable, while new displacement has continued to be reported in some part of the country.<sup>170</sup>

The preference for return is somewhat surprising given the fact that the IDPs appear to be relatively well integrated in the city. One explanation for the rather good integration in the city, suggested by Jacobsen,<sup>171</sup> is that many of the IDPs who came to Abidjan were sympathetic to the authorities and thus they felt relatively well received. Also the conflict was not taking place in the city, hence creating better circumstances for integration.

Interestingly the government of Ivory Coast, however, seems to be more willing to let refugees to stay in cities. They have been promoting self-reliance and local integration of urban refugees who do not opt for voluntary repatriation. Very few urban refugees have, however, successfully integrated into the local economy in 2007. UNHCR has also been implementing local integration projects for urban refugees in the country.<sup>172</sup> The positive reaction on local integration for refugees can perhaps be partly explained by the mere fact of numbers: There can be nearly 500,000 IDPs, but only 3,200 refugees in Abidjan.

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<sup>165</sup> UNHCR (2007d)

<sup>166</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)

<sup>167</sup> UNHCR (2007b)

<sup>168</sup> Sika et al. (2005)

<sup>169</sup> UNHCR (2007a)

<sup>170</sup> UNHCR (2007c)

<sup>171</sup> Jacobsen (2008b)

<sup>172</sup> UNHCR (2007c)

## **IDPs, urbanization and humanitarian action**

As the previous case studies have shown, there is a clear link between urbanization and urban internal displacement. This connection is manifested at least in three different ways: in the protracted nature of displacement, the numbers of IDPs and the patterns of their movement, and finally in the conflicting preferred solutions.

Firstly, the protracted nature of displacement in Abidjan, Khartoum and somewhat also in Mogadishu contributes to urban growth. The limbo situation can, however, change either by further displacement, as partly in the Mogadishu case, or by finding a durable solution, which has not been the case for the majority of IDPs in these cities. However, when a city is experiencing a protracted displacement for years or even decades, its influence on urban growth and urban development is apparent.

Secondly, the number of IDPs fleeing in cities and the pattern of their movement can affect the development and functioning of the city. This is clearly seen in Khartoum, where IDPs encompass even 30 per cent of the population. Consequently the large number of IDPs typically creates pressures to urban services. This is obvious especially in Khartoum where it is clear that there is a great need to reinforce the developmental aspect of the national and international response. The situation can be better characterized as a developmental than purely humanitarian issue. Also in Abidjan and Mogadishu, the significant numbers of IDPs are creating urban growth.

Abidjan, in particular, is experiencing a protracted situation where local population is hosting and living closely with the IDPs. The on-going conflict in Mogadishu has resulted in re-displacement of some of the IDPs who have been living in the city for decades. However, some of these IDPs are currently returning back to the capital city. It is also believed that most of the IDPs have never left the city in spite of the violence, mainly because of the lack of resources for fleeing and resettling.

Thirdly, it is rather evident that given the pressure that a massive protracted urban displacement can create for a city, the commonly preferred solution by the authorities is the return of IDPs. This is also the case in Khartoum, Abidjan and Mogadishu. However, the IDPs do not often agree on this. It has been concluded in previous studies that the longer the IDPs stay in the city, the more unlikely they are to return. After living in an urban area for several years or even decades these urbanized people do not want to return to rural areas. Reasons for this can be many, such as the integration in the city, or the reluctance and inability to re-establish rural lifestyle and livelihoods.

The option of local integration is commonly expressed by urban IDPs as the favoured solution. In both Khartoum and Mogadishu approximately half of the IDPs wished to remain in the city. Only in the case of Abidjan it seems that majority wanted to return to their places of origin, or at least move out from the city. This can be explained partly by better security situation and improved reintegration prospects compared to Sudan and Somalia.

As seen from the analysis presented in this paper, the question of durable solutions is closely linked to the process of urbanization. Authorities may assume that since the solution of local integration would eventually add to the urban growth, unlike the other two options of return and relocation, it should be prevented if they wish to control urban growth. However, if the self-sufficiency and potential of urban IDPs



would be recognized earlier on, their impact on cities could more likely present an asset and not a burden. Therefore, the question of durable solutions is certainly linked to the larger issue of positive and negative consequences of urbanization.

Besides the relation between urban displacement and urbanization, the issue of humanitarian action in Abidjan, Khartoum and Mogadishu was explored in this paper. As the case studies evidently showed, humanitarian action in urban context can vary significantly and pose different types of challenges. In particular three types of challenges can be identified from the analysis of urban IDP situations in Abidjan, Khartoum and Mogadishu.

Firstly, there are situational challenges related to the particularities of the given context. Secondly, the specific nature of a city as a geographical location presents novel confrontations compared to the traditional rural setting. Thirdly, the particular nature of urban displacement compared to rural displacement poses profound challenges, especially in relation to the question of targeting and distinctiveness of needs.

It is of great importance that situational and contextual factors are taken into account when humanitarian action for urban IDPs is designed. Hence, there cannot be only one fixed form of urban humanitarian work. Rather the strategies have to be adjusted according to the specificities of the given situation. The political, economical, social and developmental particularities of the specific city and the state have to be considered. Also the different causes of displacement may require different responses. Working with urban IDPs during or after a conflict requires different approaches than if urban IDPs are fleeing natural disasters or forced evictions related to development programmes. This has been evidently shown in the extremely difficult situation in Mogadishu where humanitarian space is limited.

Different phases of displacement may also require various initiatives and approaches. For instance in Khartoum the response is shifting from humanitarian action to developmental work. Furthermore, the scale and pattern of urban displacement has noteworthy implications to humanitarian response. Therefore, situational analysis of the patterns and influxes are essential.

City as a distinctive geographical location also poses new challenges for humanitarian action. For instance violence and armed conflict creates specific effects in urban areas. This is because the density and concentration of population intensifies the effects of conflict and catastrophes. This is clearly seen in a case of Mogadishu and the ongoing conflict in the city. Also ways of surviving are different in cities than in rural areas.<sup>173</sup> In addition, there are distinctive logistical challenges related to urban humanitarian action. Poor infrastructure and a lack of relevant maps can hinder the efficiency of work.<sup>174</sup>

Furthermore, the interpretation of humanitarian law in urban context can be different from its rural reading. Even though most of humanitarian and organizations have an office in the largest cities, their work has traditionally focused on rural villages or camps; hence they may have ignored the people of concern around them in a city.

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<sup>173</sup> Harroff-Tavel (2008)

<sup>174</sup> Jacobsen (forthcoming)

This has been the case in Abidjan and Khartoum; Mogadishu being an exception because of the remote management of the humanitarian action.

International humanitarian organizations have also been concerned of not having sufficient human and financial resources to get involved with relief in cities. This is also reflecting the behaviour of donors, who have been reluctant to fund programmes for urban displaced communities mostly because they are perceived to be expensive and also because they are assumed to motivate IDPs to leave the rural camps in order to move in cities.<sup>175</sup> Lack of funding and both national and international humanitarian and developmental efforts are evident in all of the three case studies discussed in this paper.

Furthermore, key humanitarian actors can be different in cities than in rural areas. It has, for instance, been suggested that central and municipal governments and the private sector can be engaged in humanitarian action more effectively and quickly in urban centres than in rural areas.<sup>176</sup> Also especially in Mogadishu but also in Khartoum and Abidjan the role of national and international NGOs and civil society is essential. In cities humanitarian activities also need to be well coordinated between different actors, given the distinctive nature of urban context without clear boundaries. In addition, levels of participation must also be higher in cities than in rural camps, and displaced people need to engage fully to the activities aim at improving their situation.<sup>177</sup>

Another important challenge related to the distinctiveness of a city is the relationship between urban development work and humanitarian action. It has been argued that “working on urban context and with urban poverty should not be conceptualized solely as a developmental challenge, but also as a humanitarian issue.”<sup>178</sup> However, there seems to be a clear gap between these two activities, which is particularly evident in Khartoum, but also to some extent in Abidjan.

Given the on-going conflict in Mogadishu, there is still more need for humanitarian than developmental aid. Even though the gap between humanitarian and developmental work is also apparent in rural context, it has distinctive significance in urban areas. The gap is also evident in the fact that the current development actors have been paying very little attention to the impact of IDPs on urban areas. This might be because the development initiatives have traditionally been focused solely on rural areas.<sup>179</sup> Also the link between internal displacement and urbanization is poorly understood by development actors.

The third challenge related to humanitarian action provided for urban IDPs is the specific nature of urban displacement compared to forced migration in the rural context. To begin with, it has long been falsely assumed that urban IDPs are self-reliant solely because of living in a city.<sup>180</sup> The lack of self-sufficiency is clearly shown in all the three case studies analyzed in this paper. Another profound challenge is to identify the ‘hidden’ IDPs and to profile their needs. This is complicated because

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<sup>175</sup> Landau (2008)

<sup>176</sup> USAID (2008)

<sup>177</sup> Dix (2006)

<sup>178</sup> Dix (2006: 7)

<sup>179</sup> Van Duijn and Seaman (2002)

<sup>180</sup> Ressler (1992)

urban IDPs can be very difficult to distinguish from economic migrants or other urban poor. Often there is no systematic registration of IDPs, as the case studies of Abidjan, Khartoum and Mogadishu showed. It is also ethically questionable whether IDPs even wish to be identified. They may want to remain unidentified and hidden for security reasons.<sup>181</sup> However, this is not always the case. For instance in Kampala, Uganda IDPs have recently asked the government to acknowledge them and to provide assistance to them.<sup>182</sup> Hence, a challenge of identifying people who need assistance and protection in a very heterogeneous location of a city is extremely difficult and also ethically questionable.

Nevertheless, for efficient humanitarian work and resource use targeting is a crucial issue in urban context, even if it poses a danger of exclusion. The preliminary question about targeting is whether urban IDPs should be targeted as a special group, or if assistance programmes should be designed to address the needs of a larger population of urban poor. This is a significant question, because most of the urban IDPs live either self-settled or with hosts among the local population. Thus, their targeting is not as easy as IDPs who live in clearly bounded camp settings. As seen, the difficulty of identifying IDPs is an essential challenge in Abidjan, Khartoum and Mogadishu.

Related to the fundamental question of targeting Jacobsen has concluded that:

findings indicate that in general urban IDPs are poorer, at a greater disadvantage and experience more insecurity than their non-IDP neighbours.... there is justification for providing assistance and addressing their protection needs... However, it is difficult to justify special treatment for IDPs...<sup>183</sup>

Based on the three case studies discussed in this paper, it seems that IDPs and the locals share many of the same assistance needs and some of the protection needs. In addition IDPs do, however, have specific needs related to their situation as displaced. In Khartoum employment, experience of crime, access to water and transportation have been identified as IDP specific needs. Also it seems to be clear that IDPs are more likely to be evicted than other urban poor.

Overall, it has also been concluded in previous studies that IDPs in Khartoum are worse off than IDPs in Darfur, and that there are more vulnerable IDPs in the capital city than elsewhere in the North Sudan. In a case of Mogadishu it has been shown that besides sharing many difficulties with other locals, IDPs have limited access to services such as employment and education, and their life quality indicators are lower than the locals'. In addition mortality rates for IDP children are much higher than the local average. There also seems to be a group of IDPs who perceive to be more vulnerable than others. Evictions have not been identified as an IDP specific concern in Mogadishu, but they are expected to increase since the government may be taking over the buildings in which IDPs are living. Therefore, this can be assumed to become mainly an IDP specific protection concern.

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<sup>181</sup> Jacobsen (forthcoming)

<sup>182</sup> Refugee Law Project (2008a, 2008b)

<sup>183</sup> Jacobsen (forthcoming)

Also in the case of Abidjan IDPs seem to have experienced more intra-urban relocations than other populations. In the de facto capital of Ivory Coast IDPs are more likely to be unemployed than other people, and there is also a higher number of IDPs with severe health problems than in other locations. IDPs in Abidjan also possess some identity documents less than the other locals. In addition they may suffer from living in more unsafe areas.

In many cases aid may need to be targeted to entire communities and not solely to dispersed displaced people.<sup>184</sup> If urban IDPs are, however, decided to be targeted there are various methods of doing that<sup>185</sup>, and the most appropriate should be chosen based on the specific nature of the situation. In cases where less than two-thirds of the urban population has similar needs, some kind of targeting should be done to increase the effectiveness of resource use.

One sensitive option is to target only to IDP specific issues, such as particular forms of discrimination, lost property or lack of identity cards.<sup>186</sup> Geographical targeting might be difficult with urban IDPs if they are highly dispersed around the city. Targeting can also be made based on institutions, households or other demographic factors. Also only the most vulnerable urban IDPs can be target. Community targeting can pose specific challenging in cities because it normally requires accountable and strong community structures, which urban IDPs do not typically have.

One possible targeting approach with urban IDPs, who sometimes do not want to be identified, could be self-targeting. In this method beneficiaries are 'self-selected' by deciding to participate. The key issue when IDP specific targeting of aid and protection programmes is considered is whether IDPs actually have any distinctive needs which would justify the exclusion of other urban poor.

## **Conclusion**

This tale of three cities with substantial urban displacement has analysed the link between IDPs, urbanization and humanitarian action. Three conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of IDPs and urbanization and another three conclusions are conducted from the exploration of the link between urban IDPs and urban humanitarian action. These conclusions are based on the case study specific analysis of displacement in Abidjan, Khartoum and Mogadishu and reflected by theories of urbanization and urban humanitarian action.

To conclude, internal displacement can affect urbanization significantly –as seen from the case studies. This is evident in many different ways. Firstly, the protracted nature of displacement adds to urbanization. Secondly, the number of IDPs and the patterns of displacement can influence the urban growth. Thirdly, the preferred durable solutions can vary depending on the perception of how IDPs affect urbanization.

This paper also explored the challenges related to increasing urban humanitarian action. The case study specific analysis of IDPs in Abidjan, Khartoum and Mogadishu, identified three types of challenges: situational challenges, challenges

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<sup>184</sup> Dix (2006)

<sup>185</sup> USAID (2008)

<sup>186</sup> Jacobsen (forthcoming)

related to a city as a specific geographical location, and finally challenges related to the distinctive nature of urban displacement.

It is extremely problematic to target urban IDPs as a particular group, because they are typically living among the other urban poor and hence often share the assistance and sometimes also the protection needs of the entire population. If some kind of targeting is, however, needed it should not necessarily focus on IDPs as a group of displaced people, but rather on IDP-specific needs or to the most vulnerable groups of inhabitants, including the neediest IDPs.

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