

# Working with the internally displaced

The number of people who have been displaced within their own countries as a result of armed conflict has grown substantially over the past decade, and now stands at approximately 25 million. Many of these internally displaced persons (IDPs) face serious and persistent threats to their well-being. Many have been displaced for long periods without any prospect of a solution to their plight. Under international law, States bear primary responsibility for the rights and welfare of their citizens – including those who are internally displaced. UNHCR, with its long record of protecting and assisting the displaced, provides strong support to national and international responses to internal displacement.

## IDP operations

Currently, UNHCR is active in some 29 IDP operations. In 11 of these – in the Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Pakistan, Somalia and Uganda – the Office participates in the cluster approach. This approach is part of the humanitarian reform process which aims for a more predictable, effective and accountable humanitarian response. Indeed, partnerships with other agencies and NGOs are an essential component of UNHCR's work with IDPs.

## IDP policy and strategy

UNHCR consults regularly with its Executive Committee (ExCom) on its role in the UN's humanitarian reform initiative and the cluster approach. In February 2007, the Office presented its policy on *The Protection of Internally Displaced Persons and the Role of UNHCR*. In July 2007, the Office presented its *IDP Policy Framework and Implementation Strategy*. UNHCR conducted real-time evaluations of its role in IDP operations and the cluster approach in five countries: Chad, DRC, Liberia, Somalia and Uganda. These five evaluations and an analysis of their findings and recommendations were presented to UNHCR's Standing Committee in September 2007. They were also shared with OCHA to help it conduct an independent evaluation of the cluster approach.

Recognizing the importance of having skilled staff capable of leading clusters, UNHCR now incorporates more IDP and cluster-related elements in its staff training. The Office is also reinforcing its cooperation with other humanitarian actors working with IDPs. For example, UNHCR's IDP Advisory Team joined the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) to organize a panel discussion on "Responding to IDP situations in non-cluster countries". The panel, which deliberated during UNHCR's 2007 annual consultations with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), aimed to strengthen partnerships in non-cluster operations.

## Mainstreaming

UNHCR will continue to mainstream its work with IDPs in 2008 and beyond. The Office is looking at ways to improve cluster coordination, address critical budget and



Somalia. Collecting water in a camp for internally displaced persons, in Galkayo. In 2007, UNHCR conducted evaluations of its role in IDP operations and the cluster approach in five countries, including Somalia.

UNHCR/B. Bamoun



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IDP camp in Nassiriyah, Iraq.

staffing issues, and fill training and security gaps in operations. In June 2008, UNHCR will submit a report to the Standing Committee on progress made and on what remains to be done to boost its contribution to the inter-agency response to internal displacement.

## IDP Advisory Team

UNHCR's IDP Advisory Team was formed in April 2006, with a senior manager appointed in early 2007 to coordinate IDP and cluster issues and represent UNHCR both internally and externally on IDP matters. In 2007, the team facilitated consultations with ExCom members, engaged in policy development and implementation, coordinated global cluster activities and played an active role in external fora. It also ensured a more coherent and predictable UNHCR engagement in IDP operations worldwide.

Besides leading the five real-time evaluations of key IDP operations, the IDP Advisory Team contributed to the third Annual San Remo course on internal displacement, which targets senior government officials and policy makers. In June 2007, the IDP Advisory Team and the Brookings-Bern Project on internal displacement held a joint seminar at which some 20 experts on displacement issues discussed durable solutions for protracted internal displacement situations. UNHCR also welcomed the secondment of two staff members: one

from OCHA and the other from the office of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons.

## Inter-agency collaboration

In 2007, UNHCR strengthened its capacity to support field IDP operations through global clusters. The global clusters are inter-agency groups at the headquarters level that build overall capacity, set common standards and develop policies and tools to support field operations. Under the cluster approach, UNHCR leads the global protection cluster. It shares leadership of the global camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) cluster with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the global emergency shelter cluster with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

In a country that has suffered a natural disaster, UNHCR, OHCHR and UNICEF consult with the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator to determine which agency is best positioned to lead the protection cluster based on the situation.

UNHCR also contributes to the global water, sanitation and hygiene cluster, as well as to the health, nutrition, education, early recovery, logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters.

## Main achievements of the global clusters in 2007

### Protection cluster

UNHCR leads the global Protection Cluster Working Group (PCWG), and coordinates the work of the cluster in setting standards and policy, building response capacity and providing operational support. The PCWG comprises more than 30 partners, including humanitarian, human rights and development actors as well as NGOs and other international organizations. Established in September 2005 as part of the UN's humanitarian reform effort, and accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator, the PCWG is the main forum at headquarters level for inter-agency collaboration and the coordination of protection activities.

To improve the protection of IDPs and other affected populations in complex emergencies and disaster situations, UNHCR has taken the lead in developing inter-agency tools. A major achievement in this regard was the publication in 2007 of the provisional edition of the *Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons*. The Handbook is the first comprehensive and practical field guide for both UN agencies and NGOs. It covers the assessment of protection risks, planning and response. The provisional edition of the handbook will be field-tested, updated and revised in 2008. The final edition will reflect any evolution in doctrine and practice, and will incorporate lessons learned.

UNHCR coordinated the development of an inter-agency protection assessment framework and helped the IDMC and OCHA develop IDP-profiling guidelines. Through the PCWG, the Office helps to implement the cluster approach and to set up protection coordination mechanisms and country teams in all complex emergencies and disaster situations. In addition to assisting the countries already using the cluster approach, the PCWG has advised on protection coordination and strategy in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan.

In 2007, UNHCR helped the NRC and OCHA to conduct five IDP protection workshops for humanitarian workers and national and local authorities in Côte d'Ivoire, Somalia and Uganda. UNHCR and the NRC also held two additional field workshops in late 2007 to strengthen protection leadership capacity in Chad, Ethiopia, Somalia and Uganda.

Working with the CCCM cluster, the PCWG supported IDP profiling surveys in Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Somalia and Sri Lanka. Furthermore, it helped IDP operations in Iraq, Somalia and Uganda with technical support in

operational data management including geographic information systems (GIS) and profiling. The PCWG is currently developing protection monitoring and reporting guidelines to support operations.

UNHCR collaborates with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) on the Protection Surge Capacity project, which is designed to increase the numbers of protection staff in emergencies. By the end of 2007, the project had deployed 17 experienced protection officers in various complex emergencies, including in the Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Liberia and Somalia. The Surge roster lists 263 individuals representing some 62 nationalities, more than 50 per cent of whom are women. UNHCR also remains an active member of the Steering Committee of the Protection Standby Capacity Project (ProCap), which in 2007 deployed 23 senior protection officers in 14 operations. More than 50 members of standby rosters from partner agencies have also been trained under the scheme.

### Camp coordination and camp management cluster

UNHCR co-leads the global CCCM cluster with IOM. At the field level, UNHCR leads the cluster in conflict situations, while IOM takes charge in the event of a natural disaster. The members of the global CCCM cluster have agreed on activities and priorities for the cluster, which are outlined in its work plan.

The CCCM cluster has been active in Chad, DRC and Uganda, and its concepts are being applied in camps in Somalia, Sri Lanka and the Sudanese region of West Darfur, as well as in collective centres in Georgia. By the end of 2007, more than 200 personnel from different UN agencies, NGOs and national and local authorities had been trained in CCCM principles. To reinforce CCCM capacity in the field, UNHCR has deployed experts in Chad, DRC, Georgia, Somalia and West Darfur. Meanwhile, CCCM global advisers support operations in Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Iraq, Sudan (Darfur) and Uganda.

UNHCR has supported information-management projects in Somalia and Uganda to facilitate the systematic gathering, analysis and dissemination of data. It has provided similar assistance in Chad, Côte d'Ivoire and Iraq. In Uganda, the Office provided agencies involved in camp management with GIS mapping and database support, while in Somalia it concentrated on information management and the tracking of population movements. A regional CCCM officer was deployed in Nairobi to strengthen IDP operations in Somalia and East Africa. Best practices for camp management have been compiled and issued to field operations.



The CCCM cluster has increased awareness of its role at the global and field levels, especially in the delivery of humanitarian assistance in IDP camps. The increased awareness of CCCM concepts and their part in improving the lives of IDPs in camps has prompted more field operations to request support from the global CCCM cluster. To mainstream CCCM in a sustainable manner, the cluster recommended the creation of CCCM and information-management officer posts in a number of field operations. Similar mainstreaming approaches will be encouraged in 2008.

## Emergency shelter cluster

UNHCR and the IFRC co-chair the global emergency shelter cluster. UNHCR leads the cluster in conflict-generated displacement, while the IFRC leads in natural disaster situations. The global Emergency Shelter Cluster Working Group action plan identifies priority areas where services must be improved. In addition to providing overall leadership, UNHCR implements activities directly.

The emergency shelter cluster has been activated in 10 countries: Chad (conflict), DRC (conflict/natural disaster), Kenya (post-elections violence), Lebanon (conflict), Liberia (conflict), Mozambique (natural disaster), Pakistan (natural disaster), Philippines (natural disaster), Somalia (conflict) and Indonesia (natural disaster). In 2007, it devised a toolkit to help country cluster coordinators fulfil their leadership responsibilities. The cluster is also developing a performance-management system to gauge the effectiveness of its operational response.

A number of additional tools, including the *Guidelines for Climatic Variations and Shelter Options for Response in Early Recovery*, are being developed. Furthermore, the cluster has drafted a list of standard shelter-related non-food items (NFIs) required for an emergency response. A major achievement in 2007 was the establishment of stockpiles of shelter-related NFIs to provide assistance to up to 500,000 people. UNHCR has prepared rosters of emergency shelter coordinators and technical specialists who can be mobilized in emergencies.

Since April 2007, UNHCR and the IFRC have jointly led four cluster coordinator training sessions in Bangkok, Dakar, Geneva and Panama; a technical specialist workshop in Geneva; and a training-of-trainers course in Geneva. UNHCR also organized a pilot field training workshop on emergency shelter to assist the operation in Somalia. By December 2007, the global emergency shelter cluster had trained 150 individuals, including participants in cluster coordination and technical specialists, government officials, local authorities and NGO representatives.



Central African Republic. A displaced child seeking shelter from the rain. Some 295,000 persons have been forced out of their homes since 2005, and about 197,000 were still internally displaced in 2007 while thousands fled to Chad, Cameroon or Sudan.

UNHCR/H. Cauk

## Other global clusters

In 2007, UNHCR also contributed to the achievements of the global water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health, nutrition, education, early recovery, logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters. In addition to providing expertise in forced displacement issues, UNHCR helps to mainstream protection into the work of all the clusters.

In 2007, UNHCR provided substantial input for the development of standards and policies for the WASH and health clusters.

It is also the lead actor, in collaboration with WHO, WFP and Save the Children Norway, in the nutrition cluster's revision of the *Selective Feeding Guidelines in Emergencies*, which will be finalised in 2008. Moreover, UNHCR contributed to capacity building by developing training modules, and by participating in the thematic working groups of the nutrition cluster. It also participated in two nutrition-cluster projects.

As a member of the education cluster, UNHCR offers its experience in education in emergencies.

UNHCR contributes to the early recovery cluster with interventions on return, sustainable reintegration and livelihood issues; it also promotes the inclusion of NGOs in early recovery activities. UNHCR has encouraged the early recovery cluster to pay more attention to post-conflict situations and contributed to a framework for assessing protection capacities and identifying protection gaps, titled *Protection of Conflict-induced IDPs: Assessment for Action*.

UNHCR is also an active member of the global emergency telecommunications cluster. In Chad, where UNHCR is the local cluster lead, it provides telecommunication services both for security and operational purposes.

UNHCR has assumed the lead coordinating role for HIV and AIDS and displacement. The move is part of a UNAIDS initiative to assign responsibility to various agencies to address gaps and overlap in work related to HIV and AIDS. The Office seeks to ensure that HIV is considered a cross-cutting issue in all cluster responses. UNHCR is also an active member of the IASC Task Force on HIV, and in this capacity it organized the first global consultation on HIV and IDPs in April 2007. The consultation targeted governments, NGO's, academics and UN agencies. One result of the meeting was the development of HIV and IDP assessment tools. In 2007 UNHCR also organized multi-sectoral and multi-agency assessment missions in Africa and Asia.

## IDP activities in practice

In Uganda, UNHCR has worked through the protection cluster to develop a comprehensive Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Country Team protection strategy. Focused on the right of Ugandan citizens to freedom of movement, the cluster's activities aim to promote the physical, material and psychological welfare of the IDP population. The activities include returnee monitoring, the opening of access roads to new settlements and home-site areas, demining, rehabilitation of water sources, the clearing of huts and filling of latrines in abandoned camps, and the provision of bicycles and communications equipment to the police. Furthermore, the CCCM cluster participated in an information and data-sharing project by providing GIS maps and database assistance to agencies involved in camp management. The CCCM cluster also trained 60 inter-agency field personnel in CCCM concepts.

In Colombia, IDPs often need legal advice on how to benefit from programmes to which they are entitled. One UNHCR programme focuses on the issue of legal aid by engaging final-year law students to provide IDPs with free legal advice. These clinics meet the needs of the displaced population and provide a mechanism to hold public institutions accountable. The nine universities that have established the legal clinics handle thousands of cases every year. Four of the participating universities offer psychological care in addition to their legal advice.

In Georgia, UNHCR focuses on advocacy, durable solutions for displaced communities and small-scale humanitarian interventions. On the recommendation of the Representative of the Secretary-General for the human rights of

internally displaced persons, UNHCR helped the Government of Georgia draft a national IDP strategy, which was adopted in February 2007. The CCCM cluster also supported the deployment of an expert to assist in the management of IDP collective centres.

In Nepal, UNHCR identified information sharing and protection, in the areas of return, as critical to finding solutions for IDPs. Cooperation and dialogue between local authorities, IDPs and communities were considered vital to mutual understanding, reconciliation and a better sense of security, and UNHCR facilitated a series of workshops on these issues. The workshops, conducted in 15 districts covering 20 per cent of the country, were instrumental in promoting reconciliation and dialogue among district-level stakeholders on IDP issues. Task forces established in each of the districts have facilitated the return of IDPs.

In Liberia, where UNHCR leads the protection cluster, the Office chaired the national Protection Core Group (PCG), which included UN agencies, NGOs and government representatives. Five new PCGs were established raising the total number of county PCGs to eleven. The national PCG developed a protection framework focusing on return monitoring, child protection, sexual and gender-based violence, advocacy and legal reform. Crucial to the effectiveness of the protection cluster was a UNHCR-funded network of more than 400 protection monitors. The PCG follows up on the information provided by the monitoring network with appropriate interventions.