EVALUATION OF UNHCR'S LEVEL-3 EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO CYCLONE IDAI

FINAL REPORT
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Conducted by Independent Consultants
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UNHCR Evaluation Service

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We appreciate the time that every single stakeholder has granted us for the interviews, which, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, were only possible to carry out remotely. A special thanks also to UNHCR's Evaluation Service for their continued support and flexibility during this evaluation, which required several in-course adjustments.

We regret not being able to perform field visits, either locally or internationally, and therefore not being able to get first-hand accounts directly from the affected populations. To these unheard voices go our best wishes for a full and dignified return and reintegration process in their communities of origin.

Evaluation information at a glance	
Title of the evaluation:	Evaluation of UNHCR's L3 Response to Cyclone Idai
Time frame covered:	March 2019 to May 2020
Duration:	10 months
Type of evaluation:	Centralized evaluation L3 emergency response
Countries covered:	Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe
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Evaluation Quality Assurance provided by UNHCR Evaluation Service

Executive summary

1 Methodology and approach

In line with UNHCR's emergency and evaluation policies, an evaluation of all level-3 (L3) emergency operations is to be conducted within 18 months or earlier of the response. This evaluation assesses UNHCR's response to Cyclones Idai and Kenneth in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi covering the period from March 2019 to May 2020 to identify lessons that can be extrapolated to other disaster responses and, with a broader perspective, to provide inputs into UNHCR's ongoing reflection about climate change and disaster induced displacement.

The evaluation approach evolved throughout the data collection phase and initial discussions with UNHCR teams. The evaluation has both a summative and a formative component; as part of its formative component, the evaluation concludes with a reflection on UNHCR's strategic role in the context of disasters and climate change, including a focus on policy directions and partnerships, as well as resource mobilization.

The evaluation builds on the conclusions and recommendations from an internal UNHCR lessons-learned workshop in Maputo held in January 2020. Additionally, the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique has provided relevant data about inter-agency coordination and cluster performance, areas that are lightly covered by this evaluation. The audits of UNHCR operations in Mozambique and Zimbabwe carried out by the Internal Audit Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) have also provided a sound operational assessment of the response, mainly in terms of efficiency and risk areas.

A total of 93 key informants were interviewed in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Malawi, the UNHCR Regional office in Pretoria and Headquarters; almost one-third of the interviewees were external stakeholders (other UN agencies, humanitarian organizations and governments). The documentary review consisted of 385 documents. The evaluation looked beyond the response to Idai to understand UNHCR's experience more broadly in responding to disaster displacement related emergencies.

The exceptional situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic caused the suspension of the planned fieldwork and the sole reliance on remote tools for interviews and discussions. In some cases, availability of informants in international organizations and governments was limited. The information about UNHCR's response to Idai made available to the evaluation team (particularly quantitative data about the number of people reached and disaggregation) has been fairly limited and fragmented. These gaps in UNHCR's reporting, although partially attributable to the time elapsing since the response to the evaluation, have significantly limited the reconstruction of the response and a sound analysis of UNHCR's performance, including specific analysis of coverage, effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the application of a gender and equity lens. Although data collected from interviews have partially mitigated the gaps, the quantitative description and analysis of UNHCR's response remains limited.

3 Context

In March and April 2019, southern Africa was hit by two consecutive cyclones (Idai and Kenneth) that affected an estimated 3 million people in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe. In Mozambique, some 1.85 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance; in Malawi, severe floods affected 870,000 people, including causing 87,000 displaced. In addition, some 1,900 people from Mozambique sought refuge in Malawi's Nsanje district. In eastern Zimbabwe, more than 270,000 people were affected by flooding, of whom approximately 51,000 were displaced. Approximately 6,000 refugees and asylum-seekers living in Tongogara Refugee Camp were also severely affected.

4 Key findings

UNHCR's response contributed partially to the goals set out in the HRPs, was more consistent during the emergency phase and became progressively weaker in the recovery phase and phase-out. Overall, UNHCR's role as protection cluster coordinator was irregular, due to gaps and discontinuity between deployments. On the positive side, UNHCR succeeded in stabilising the local protection cluster in Sofala (Mozambique) after initial gaps, and expanded its operational presence for one year, which was coherent with actual needs on the ground and cluster engagements. Other recognized relevant UNHCR contributions include the establishment of protection tools, prioritization of hard-to-reach affected communities, profiling of IDPs, supporting access to legal documentation, and mobilization of technical expertise in multiple sectors (such as protection, shelter, health, information technology).

However, the IAHE report highlights that, with the notable exception of Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), protection had not been sufficiently mainstreamed. Moreover, the lack of clear directives/vision on how to engage and responsibly disengage in disasters, the uncertainty and contradictions about the scope of UNHCR's response to Idai (and Kenneth), the disconnect from broader UN and development contexts, serious challenges in distribution of CRIs, as well as critical resource constraints (financial and human) resulted in a fragmented and irregular delivery of protection and aid to IDPs and cross-border displaced people.

Overall, gaps in UNHCR's response to Idai affected the performance of protection coordination and delivery. Moreover, in the wake of cyclone Kenneth in Cabo Delgado (Mozambique), other humanitarian organizations were establishing a footprint to respond to humanitarian needs in a region affected by unrest and low-intensity violence, while UNHCR was withdrawing its team. This decision led to some reputation risk and was not understood by the humanitarian community - despite the fact that a few months later, UNHCR succeeded in setting up a relevant field presence in Pemba, leading protection efforts and supporting the humanitarian response in the midst of increasing tensions in the region. These events shed light on longstanding contradicting views within UNHCR concerning its engagement in conflict situations affecting refugees vis-à-vis engagement in internal displacement and most especially internal displacement due to disasters; being a provider of last resort and the adaptation of a needs-based approach to supporting IDPs. While the extent of engagement in conflict situations is well understood within UNHCR and among partners, there is need to clarify the organization's role in disaster-displacement in non-conflict situations, both for an internal and external audience.

In terms of UNHCR's policies, the evaluation has identified the perception among staff that the three criteria for engagement in IDP situations are perceived as being excessively open to interpretation and not conducive to support consistent and sound guidance for decision-making in terms of when and how to engage in disaster situations. This evaluation has also found that awareness about the IDP policy among UNHCR staff is still limited, especially among national staff. Overall, the evaluation has identified that there is no unanimous backing for UNHCR's position on climate change and disaster-related displacement, especially in terms of preparedness.

In terms of emergency preparedness, the three Country Operations (COs) did not have the policy guidance, resources and capacities to get involved in risk analysis or contingency planning efforts undertaken by national authorities, UN agencies and other development actors. Overall, UNHCR's involvement in preparedness was minimal; COs were significantly under-resourced and were managing small refugee operations, which left no room for engaging in other areas.

Concerning the integration phase, UNHCR's support to return processes and durable solutions was limited due to both contextual factors and internal shortcomings. On the one hand, pressure from governments to organize rapid return or resettlements for IDPs resulted in inadequate compliance with international standards and hampered UNHCR advocacy efforts. On the other hand, a lack of resources limited UNHCR's contribution to promote comprehensive durable solutions and a responsible disengagement approach to returnees or affected communities.

5 Conclusions

Cyclones Idai and Kenneth were two of the worst storms ever to hit Mozambique and the surrounding region. In the case of UNHCR, they represented the "perfect storm", highlighting long-standing strategic and operational gaps in responses to disasters and related internal displacement in non-conflict situations. UNHCR's mobilization to put protection at the centre of the humanitarian response, to simultaneously coordinate with a large number of actors, and to deliver large-scale aid in three countries and, particularly, the professionalism and commitment of UNHCR staff at the forefront of the response, were commendable and contributed to protecting the rights and alleviating the suffering of those most in need of assistance and protection.

However, the efforts undertaken to provide UNHCR with policies and resources to position itself as a credible and predictable protection agency in response to climate change and disaster contexts were not sufficient to ensure full compliance with key UNHCR principles and humanitarian standards. The magnitude of the disaster overwhelmed the capacities of small UNHCR COs (among the least resourced COs globally) and of the organization as a whole. It also revealed critical internal ambiguities on how to engage in climate change and disaster-related displacement. The evaluation found that there was a certain level of unpredictability surrounding UNHCRs responses to Idai and Kenneth; mainly due to inconsistencies and delays in key decision-making processes, but also due to conflicting opinions across different levels of the organization; the inertia of managing small protracted refugee situations, and the isolation of these operations from national/development partners. These factors largely contributed to an irregular and below-standard response, despite some operational achievements and UNHCR contributions to the humanitarian response.

The evaluation draws five broad conclusions which offer both a strategic reflection on UNHCR's positioning in climate-related disaster displacement, and an operational reflection regarding preparedness and emergency response.

Conclusion 1: UNHCR's response to cyclone Idai revealed a critical "policy-implementation gap" concerning its engagement in climate-related disaster displacement in non-conflict situations. The organization was not able to fully implement its own policies concerning emergency and IDP responses, or the internal guidance documents and international orientations on climate change, disasters or risk reduction.

Conclusion 2: UNHCR's lack of engagement in the response to cyclone Kenneth illustrated the long-standing and unresolved debate on how to intervene in disasters in non-conflict situations. **Not only the contradictions in the engagement to respond to Kenneth but also the shortcomings in the response to Idai impacted on the reputation of the organization as a credible and predictable actor** in situations of natural hazards, disasters, and climate-related internal displacement.

Conclusion 3: UNHCR's overall **performance in the response to Idai and Kenneth was significantly determined by its ambivalence to disaster situations, as well as the inability to mobilize sufficient resources**, including access to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), due to its hesitant and late engagement. UNHCR's performance shows conflicting outcomes. On the one hand, UNHCR's presence contributed to the reinforcement of the protection lens as a key element of the humanitarian response, despite gaps and shortcomings. On the other hand, UNHCR's effectiveness was limited and uneven throughout the three phases of the response (preparedness, response, recovery) and the agency was unable to ensure consistent standards of protection for persons of concern (PoC) throughout the three phases.

Conclusion 4: The limited involvement of COs in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) prior to Idai hampered its ability to participate in key UN decision-making forums when Idai hit. The COs were working on regular refugee programmes, almost in isolation from the broader development context and without stable and well-established relations with the UN system and national actors. Amidst a large-scale emergency, UNHCR struggled to timely articulate its interaction with other agencies and, particularly, to identify new implementing partners to support the operational response on the ground.

Conclusion 5: Idai has revealed the stagnating situation of small protracted refugee operations and the difficulties these face in terms of responding to large onset disasters and contextual changes, particularly in regard to securing adequate resources and limited technical capacity to invest in emergency preparedness.

The evaluation proposes six recommendations below to strengthen UNHCR's policies and positioning in climate-related disaster displacement, as well as its performance and engagement in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

6 Recommendations

6.1 UNHCR policies and positioning on disaster-related displacement

UNHCR's vision and positioning on climate change and disaster-related displacement

Recommendation 1: Integrate existing policies and guidelines[1] containing relevant provisions on the organization's directions and actions in disaster related displacement into guidance on UNHCR's engagement in disasters, clarifying when UNHCR will engage, how (long) it will engage, and what role operations and bureaux will have across the different phases of a disaster response (from preparedness, response, to recovery). Provide clarity on decisions regarding resourcing, external relations, engagement and responsible disengagement

Responsibility: SET in consultation with DESS, DIP, DRS, OSACA

UNHCR planning, budgeting and procedures on climate change and disaster-related displacement

Recommendation 2: Develop regional/country operational action plans linked to the proposed guidance on UNHCR's engagement in disasters and UNHCR's Strategic Framework on Climate Action, which offer a framework for risk assessment, resourcing, monitoring and evaluation, engagement with UNCT/UNHCT and other partners, and implementation modalities for operations in the event of a natural hazard or disaster.

Responsibility: SET (AHCO) in consultation with OSACA, regional bureau, and DSPR

6.2 Participation in UNCT / UNHCT coordination and partnerships

UNHCR's participation in UN country team coordination systems and UNSDCF

Recommendation 3: Reinforce UNHCR's participation in UN country team coordination systems, and take an active role under the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) with the aim of participating in preparedness actions, mainstreaming protection across the humanitarian-development nexus and broadening relations with relevant public bodies (other than refugee agencies) and civil society organizations (CSOs) in selected disaster-prone countries.

Responsibility: SET (AHCO) in consultation with regional bureaux and country representatives

Partnerships with agencies and global initiatives on climate change and disaster-related displacement

Recommendation 4: Reinforce UNHCR's commitment to climate action initiatives and develop further partnerships with agencies and global initiatives on disaster-related displacement, especially in the field of disaster risk reduction, preparedness, anticipatory actions and durable solutions for IDPs.

Responsibility: SET in consultation with OSACA, DESS, DER, and DRS

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[1] The main documents referred to here are: i) Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response, UNHCR/HCP/2017/1/Rev.1, August 2019, ii) Policy on Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement, UNHCR/HCP/2019/1, 18 September 2019, iii) Guidance Package for UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement, Version 1, September 2019, iv) UNHCR Preparedness Package for IDP Emergencies (PPIE), January 2020.

6.3 External relations, resource mobilization and communication

Procedures for resource mobilisation and communications in situations of natural disasters

Recommendation 5: **Develop a consistent narrative to support communication, fundraising and donor-related actions, as part of the strategic reflection about UNHCR's positioning on climate change and disaster-related displacement.** In many cases, investing in the early deployment of communication officers, together with reporting and external relations profiles, may lead to positive returns in terms of funding, especially in highly competitive and crowded humanitarian responses to large-scale disasters.

Responsibility: SET in consultation with DER and regional bureaux

6.4 Capacity building and technical support

Skills development on preparedness, disaster risk reduction and disaster response

Recommendation 6: **Reinforce disaster response capacities through training of staff involved in emergency responses, and upskill national staff to enable them to lead and coordinate preparedness and emergency responses locally.**

Responsibility: DESS in consultation with GLDC

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List of figures and tables

List of acronyms

The report uses in some cases the Portuguese acronym for national institutions plus an English translation of the full name of the institution, to facilitate comprehension for both national readers (not familiarized with English acronyms) and international readers (not familiarized with Portuguese names).

AHC-O	Assistant High Commissioner for Operations (UNHCR)
APA	Advanced Preparedness Actions
AU	African Union
CA	Climate Action
CADRI	Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative
CC	Climate change
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CO	Country office
CRIs	Core relief items
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
DESS	Division of Emergency, Security, and Supply (UNHCR)
DER	Division of External Relations (UNHCR)
DHR	Division of Human Resources (UNHCR)
DIP	Division of International Protection (UNHCR)
DPGCAS	Sofala Provincial Directorate for Gender, Children and Social Affairs
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DREF	Disaster Relief Emergency Fund
DRM	Disaster risk management
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
DRS	Division of Resilience and Solutions (UNHCR)
DRRM	Donors Relations and Resource Mobilization Service
DSPR	Division of Strategic Planning and Results (UNHCR)
EPREP	Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan
ERT	Emergency response team

EWEA	Early Warning Early Action
GCM	Global Compact for Migration
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery
GLDC	Global Learning and Development Centre (UNHCR)
GoM	Government of Mozambique
HALEP	High Alert List for Emergency Preparedness
HCT	Humanitarian country team
HQ	Headquarters
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IAHE	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDMC GRIP	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre - Global Report on Internal Displacement
IDPs	Internally displaced people
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IFPRI :	International Food Policy Research Institute
INAM	Instituto Nacional de Meteorologia (National Meteorology Institute)
INGC	Instituto Nacional de Gestão de Calamidades (National Institute of Disaster Management)
INGD	Instituto Nacional de Gestão de Desastres
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IT	Information technologies
KEQ	Key Evaluation Question
JSLM	Joint Senior Level Mission
MDTF	Multi-donor trust fund
MOZ	Mozambique
MPA	Minimum Preparedness Actions
NAP	National Adaptation Plans
NFI	Non-food Items
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NWOW	New Way of Working
ODA	Official development assistance
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
OR	Operational Reserve
OSACA	Office of the Special Advisor on Climate Action (UNHCR)
PCS	Partnerships and Coordination Service
PDGCA	Provincial Director for Gender, Children and Social Action
PDNA	Post Disaster Needs Assessment
PEPR	Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response
PoC	Persons of concern to UNHCR
PSEA	Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse
RAF	Resource Allocation Framework
RBM	Results-based management
RBSA	Regional Bureau for Southern Africa (UNHCR)
SADC	Southern African Development Community

SF	Strategic Framework
SET	Senior Executive Team (UNHCR)
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SMC	Senior Management Committee (UNHCR)
UN	United Nations
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOSAT/UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
UNSLG	UN Senior Leadership Group on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience
UNSDCF	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit
WIM	Warsaw International Mechanism
WMO	World Meteorological Organisation

1 Evaluation purpose and rationale

1.1 Audiences

The primary audiences for this evaluation are UNHCR's Senior Executive Team (SET); the Division of Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS); the Office of the Special Advisor on Climate Action (OSACA); UNHCR Country Operations and Regional Bureau in regions that are prone to climate shocks; the Division for International Protection (DIP) and its relevant sections on Internal Displacement and Field Protection Services; the Division for Resilience and Solutions (DRS), and the Division for External Relations (DER). UNHCR partners, including government, humanitarian & development actors (including IASC system members and clusters) and donors may serve as a secondary audience.

1.2 Time frame and scope

In line with UNHCR's emergency and evaluation policies, an evaluation of all level-3 (L3) emergency operations is to be conducted within 18 months or earlier of the response. This evaluation assesses UNHCR's response to Cyclones Idai and Kenneth in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi covering the period from March 2019 to May 2020 to identify lessons that can be extrapolated to other responses to natural hazards and disasters, with a broader perspective, to provide inputs into UNHCR's positioning on climate action and disaster induced displacement.

1.3 Methodological approach

The evaluation has combined a mixed-methods approach for data collection and analysis; information has been drawn from primary and secondary data sources, including a desk review of relevant documents, an analysis of available data on UNHCR's response to Idai, semi-structured key informant interviews with humanitarian workers, local responders, government staff, and other relevant stakeholders. In addition, previous reviews and policy briefs about UNHCR's role in disasters and climate change have been used to broaden the base of evidence to support the forward-looking dimension of the evaluation and the strategic reflection on UNHCR's role in climate action and disasters. Two remote validation workshops (with Bureau and CO staff, and with senior management staff at HQ level) have been organised.

The evaluation approach has evolved throughout the data collection phase and during initial discussions with UNHCR teams; as part of its formative component, the evaluation concludes with a reflection on UNHCR's strategic role in the context of disasters and climate action, including a focus on policy directions and partnerships resource mobilization, and capacity building. The HRPs in the three countries have been used as the framework reference to assess UNHCR's performance in the response to the Idai emergency.

The evaluation has built upon the conclusions and recommendations from an internal lessons-learned workshop in Maputo (January 2020), which brought together staff involved in the response from Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, the Regional Bureau in Southern Africa (RBSA) and UNHCR Headquarters. Exceptionally, the lessons-learned workshop replaced the Real-Time Review associated with L3 emergencies and it formed the basis for scoping this external evaluation. The evaluation has also used the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) of the Response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique as a reference; the IAHE evaluation describes in detail the performance of the cluster system (including the protection cluster) and identifies strengths and challenges of relevance to assess UNHCR's performance.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the evaluation team had to suspend all travel and relied solely on remote interviews and discussions.

1.4 Key evaluation questions

The evaluation team made use of an evaluation matrix (see Annex 3) which serves as a framework for the collection and analysis of data – it presents the key evaluation questions (KEQs) and sub-questions, and breaks them down into key areas of focus, sources of information and data collection methods. The evaluation matrix differentiates the summative component and the formative (or forward-looking) component. KEQs and accompanying areas of focus, previously agreed with UNHCR's Evaluation Service and country offices, are summarized in the table below.

The programmatic (summative) level of analysis is structured around a set of KEQs concerning the effectiveness of UNHCR's contribution to the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) objectives and to the protection objectives in particular (KEQ1), as well as complementarity of efforts in each country, particularly in terms of coordination (KEQ2), partnership and support to local capacities (KEQ3). The strategic level (formative) focuses on key risks and opportunities for UNHCR's involvement in situations of climate-related disaster displacement (KEQ4), the analysis of UNHCR as a learning organization in disaster response (KEQ5), as well as the strategic changes needed to respond more effectively in situations of climate-related disasters (KEQ6).

Table 1: Key evaluation questions

Evaluation components	Key evaluation questions	Areas of focus
Summative	1) To what extent was UNHCR able to contribute to the goals set out in the HRP and other relevant policy frameworks, and which factors inhibited or facilitated this process? In particular, how well was UNHCR able to fulfil its protection objectives, and was the organization's role towards IDPs clear?	UNHCR's effective implementation of its mandate and principles and strategic positioning as a credible actor in situations of displacement caused by natural hazards. UNHCR's practical and effective application of policies, standards, procedures and tools in situations of displacement caused by natural hazards (organizational performance in key areas). UNHCR's operational profile, previous country experience and local capacities in each country.
	2) To what extent did the scale-up efforts and coordination mechanisms contribute to a clear distribution of roles / complementarity among humanitarian actors?	Degree of UNHCR's engagement with States. Performance of the IASC coordination mechanisms and role played by UNHCR. UNHCR's protection leadership in situations of natural hazards.
	3) What types of partnerships were established with international and local stakeholders (prior to and during the emergency), and how did these contribute to delivering assistance to affected people? How were local	Positioning and credibility of UNHCR in the humanitarian space to respond to situations of displacement caused by natural hazards.

		capacities supported and developed during the response?	Quality and coherence of partnerships (strategic level) and national / local partners (operational level). Level of integration of UNHCR in local environments (in developmental contexts) and ability to respond to disasters in a coordinated and effective manner.
Formative		4) What are the major threats and opportunities for UNHCR's involvement in situations of natural hazards, and what are the immediate, medium, and long-term gains/risks for the organization?	UNHCR's effective implementation of its mandate in situations of displacement caused by natural hazards and strategic positioning as a credible actor (added value). UNHCR's role as an evolving humanitarian organization able to integrate the complexities of climate change and of the diverse and interrelated sources of hazards (natural, technological, societal).
		5) How can UNHCR leverage strengths and mitigate weaknesses in similar situations (natural hazards) in the future?	UNHCR as a learning organization, capitalizing on previous experience and existing knowledge in climate-related disaster displacement response. UNHCR's effective implementation of its mandate in situations of climate-related disaster displacement and strategic positioning as a credible actor (internal capacities assessment, including funding).
		6) What changes need to take place in order for UNHCR to respond more effectively in situations of climate-related disaster displacement, and what implications will these changes have on the following: a) strategic policy directions b) resource mobilization and allocation c) partnerships and coordination d) technical support and communication.	UNHCR's effective implementation of its mandate and principles, and strategic positioning as a credible actor in situations of climate-related disaster displacement. UNHCR's practical and effective application of policies, standards, procedures and tools in situations of natural hazards (organizational performance in key areas). Effectiveness of the organizational support from regional and HQ levels to field operations. UNHCR's fundraising and communications approach to mobilize funds and get support for situations of climate-related disaster displacement. Development of UNHCR partnerships.

The evaluation has addressed all the evaluation questions, although this was to varying degrees to delimit the scope of the analysis (for example, the analysis of technical support provided to the response focused on resource mobilisation, communications, distribution and preparedness, but did not include other areas such as health, water or shelter). In other cases, topics sufficiently covered by the Maputo workshop, the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation or the audits of UNHCR operations in Mozambique and Zimbabwe carried out by the Internal Audit Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) have been lightly addressed (for instance, SWOT analysis) and priority has been given to other areas of exploration (such as strategic positioning on climate-related disasters).

Additional perspectives and points of reflection have been added to the evaluation's focus. Although the evaluation focused on the coherence of UNHCR's response to Cyclone Idai, the analysis has also considered the coherence and rationale behind the internal decision-making process to not respond to Cyclone Kenneth a few weeks later.

Figure 1: The displacement continuum[2]
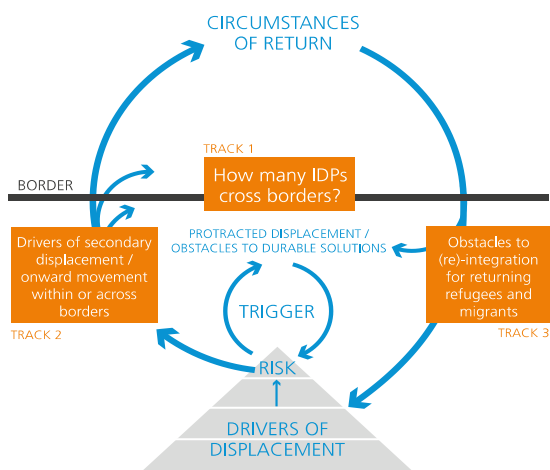
The evaluation considered the displacement continuum as a comprehensive approach to assess how the humanitarian response has adapted (or has to adapt) to the different stages along the continuum. The difference between voluntary and forced population movements in the context of climate change-related events can be difficult to distinguish, although in large scale disasters people are often forced to flee their homes with little notice in response to the immediate threat.[3,4]

The evaluation has placed the protection of IDPs as one of the key elements of analysis. Differentiating disaster-related IDPs from conflict IDPs carries the risk of overlooking protection risks and issues; experience and evidence systematically show that people uprooted by disasters due to hazards require not only humanitarian assistance but also comprehensive protection interventions.

The breadth and complexity of humanitarian emergencies caused by natural hazards (which frequently are associated with climate change dynamics), combined with the constraints of human, financial and material resources confronted by UNHCR are at the origin of key organizational debates around the feasibility of such responses. A comprehensive approach to disaster-related displacement encompasses not only emergency preparedness but also risk prevention, sustainable environmental management, planned relocations, or disaster response, among other strategies.

1.5 Data collection and analysis

Data collection methods for this evaluation include a documentary review (around 385 documents, of which 156 are internal UNHCR documents and 220 are external sources) and semi-structured key informant interviews (93 remote interviews of which 29 per cent were with external stakeholders). Triangulation of evidence was done continuously throughout the data collection and analysis process. The validation process included a debriefing workshop with country teams and with key stakeholders in UNHCR Geneva, various consultations with RBSA, as well as in-country government officials and UNHCR partners. For the forward-looking component, the consulting team organized a

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[2] IDMC (2017) "The displacement continuum: Research agenda and call for partners", November 2017, www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/20171113-idmc-intro-cross-border-thematic-series_1.pdf
[3] Kalin, W. (2015) "The Nansen Initiative, Discussion Paper on the Relationship between Climate Change and Human Mobility", April 2015.
[4] Displacement tends to emphasize "push" factors to leave and migration emphasizes "pull" factors at the intended destination, while each is a mixture of both. Put another way, displacement is a more reactive measure of last resort or a survival response to severe and immediate threats. Movements at either end of the continuum may put vulnerable people in a more precarious situation than if they had stayed in their place of origin, if they are not sufficiently protected and supported. Well-informed, prepared and managed movements, however, enable people to adapt to worsening conditions and save lives.

strategic workshop with UNHCR stakeholders, which included DESS, the Division of International Protection (DIP), emergency response teams (ERTs), and the Office of the Special Advisor on Climate Action (OSACA).

1.6 Limitations

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about numerous limitations, from delays in data collection, to the impossibility of doing fieldwork and of observing and listening to the voices of persons of concern (PoC) to UNHCR. It also limited access to and the availability of various implementing partners and government counterparts in the three countries. All interviews were conducted remotely, with overall very good participation from UNHCR staff and country partners.

The number of key informants in other UN agencies and humanitarian organizations at HQ level has been scant, and were generally not available or approachable. In addition to the pandemic, the long period between the cyclone and the evaluation also limited people's availability and readiness to participate in interviews.

The information made available to the evaluation team about UNHCR's response (particularly quantitative data about the number of people reached or households assisted, disaggregation by age, gender and vulnerabilities, resource mobilisation, among other relevant parameters) have been fairly limited and fragmented. These gaps in UNHCR's reporting, although partially attributable to the time elapsing since the response to the evaluation, have significantly limited the reconstruction of the response and a sound analysis of UNHCR's performance, including specific analysis of coverage, effectiveness or efficiency, as well as the application of a gender and equity lens. Although data collected from interviews have partially mitigated the gaps, the quantitative description and analysis of UNHCR's response remains limited.

The evaluation was not able to assess the extent that good practices or lessons learned from previous responses to disasters were applied to the Idai response, because internal reports about these specific operations have not been made available. However, the evaluation has conducted a documentary review of five evaluations concerning UNHCR's disaster responses, and of several research papers and policy briefs about climate change and disaster response from 2010 to 2019 (see annex II). This retrospective analysis has been crucial to understand the evolution of UNHCR's positioning on disaster response during the past decade and to identify a certain number of recommendations emanating from previous evaluations that have not been applied to Idai. Moreover, the documentary review has identified that many of the challenges and debates about UNHCR's role in disasters, discussed with internal and external informants during the interviews, had remained unaddressed for years and were part of the discussions during the Maputo workshop. In addition, the evaluation has had the opportunity to interview ERT members with previous experiences in disaster response; albeit in a small number, these informants have complemented data from the documentary review and allowed for triangulation of information.

This evaluation has only looked at one operational response to disaster contexts (Idai), thus it misses a broader overview that would have benefited the analysis and the overall recommendations. Nevertheless, the findings and lessons from this exercise remain a valid point of entry to inform future responses in situations of climate-related disaster displacement.

2 Context

In March and April 2019, southern Africa was hit by two consecutive cyclones (Idai and Kenneth) that affected an estimated 3 million people in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe. Tropical Cyclone Idai made landfall over Mozambique's city of Beira in Sofala province on 14 March, producing torrential rains and strong winds that severely affected Manica, Sofala, Tete and Zambezia provinces, where some 1.85 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance.

Cyclone Idai continued across land as a tropical storm, causing severe floods in southern Malawi's Chichawa, Phalombe and Zomba districts, where some 870,000 people were affected, including 87,000 displacements. Some 1,900 people from Mozambique sought refuge in Malawi's Nsanje district. The heavy rains that fell in the country damaged infrastructure, including houses, roads, bridges, and water well and irrigation systems. Most of the displaced settled in displacement sites such as schools, churches, community buildings and other temporary shelters.

In eastern Zimbabwe, more than 270,000 people were affected by flooding in Chimanimani and Chipinge districts, of whom approximately 51,000 were displaced. Approximately 6,000 refugees and asylum-seekers living in Tongogara Refugee Camp were also severely affected as flooding destroyed latrines, boreholes and shelters. Damage to infrastructure especially major roads and bridges as well as dwellings and public buildings were significant. The situation in Zimbabwe was further exacerbated by widespread food insecurity caused by poor crop production (2018–2019) and the country's ongoing economic crisis.[5]

Figure 2: Areas affected by Cyclone Idai (Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Malawi) and Cyclone Kenneth (Mozambique)
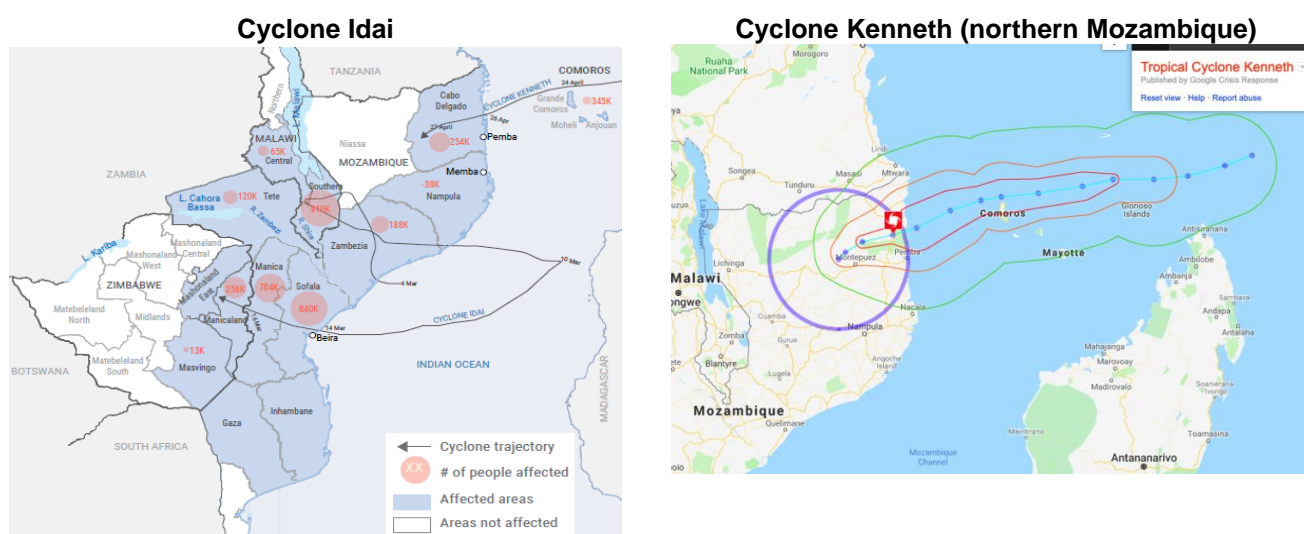
Source: OCHA. Southern Africa: Cyclone Idai Snapshot (as of 26 March 2019) and Google Crisis Response (25 April 2019)

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[5] For more detailed information about the impact of the cyclones and the humanitarian response see, for example, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA): www.unocha.org/southern-and-eastern-africa-rosea/cyclones-idai-and-kenneth

On 25 April, tropical cyclone Kenneth made landfall in Cabo Delgado province, northern Mozambique. The death toll from the impact of Cyclone Kenneth was 45 people. Nearly 45,000 houses were either partially or totally destroyed and about 68,330 people (13,666 households) were targeted for resettlement. More than 20,720 displaced people were accommodated in 30 sites. Social service infrastructure was hard-hit, with at least 193 classrooms destroyed or damaged, 14 health facilities impacted and some 31,256 hectares of crops affected[6]. In May 2019, the Mozambique HRP was revised to include the response to cyclone Kenneth with an Appeal for US$104 Million in addition to the ongoing drought and cyclone Idai responses. Malawi and Zimbabwe were not affected by Cyclone Kenneth.

In Mozambique, the combined impacts of Cyclone Idai and Kenneth exacerbated existing vulnerability in the provinces that were most affected, namely Sofala, Zambezia, Manica and Cabo Delgado. Estimates combining exposure and population data in areas affected by the cyclones suggest that about 60% of the affected were poor and, according to World Bank estimates[7], levels of poverty and vulnerability were likely to increase in affected areas. The Government of Mozambique activated mechanisms to respond to the emergency of both cyclones with an extensive support of donors. Following the landfall of Cyclone Idai, the government launched a major rescue operation while providing humanitarian aid to affected populations and on March 19, the government declared a State of National Emergency. The response was led by the Mozambique Emergency Management Agency (INGC), which worked closely with the United Nations Organization for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the UN clusters. On April 24, before the landfall of cyclone Kenneth, the government declared red alert in the Northern region, which triggered additional allocation of funds and resources from the government and partners. Humanitarian action scaled up rapidly, with over 200 organizations joining the response and 1,000 aid workers deployed to the affected areas. The post-disaster response was carried out by the National Institute for Disaster Management (INGC), with support from the UN system and multi and bilateral organizations. According to the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique (July 2020), the humanitarian response benefited from a robust partnership between the international agencies involved and the Government of Mozambique. Joint preparedness by the international agencies and INGC helped ensure that the immediate humanitarian needs were accurately anticipated. The initial assistance provided was relatively timely, despite delays in reaching many affected communities due to the weather conditions, the scale of needs, and difficulties accessing some of the most affected areas

In Zimbabwe, a standing Cabinet committee under the stewardship of the Minister for Local Government was tasked with overseeing the Government's response efforts and coordinating with the UN system through the office of the Resident Coordinator. In support of the Government of Zimbabwe's response, 80 organizations – including 72 NGOs and 8 UN agencies – were implementing activities in affected areas (provinces of Manicaland, Masvingo, Midlands and Mashonaland). Recovery and resilience building needs of the cyclone-affected communities were identified through the Zimbabwe Recovery and Resilience Framework (ZRRF) developed by the Government with technical support from the World Bank, UN and EU. In Malawi, the Government led response through the Department of Disaster Management Affairs, with support from humanitarian partners,

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[6] Source: National Disaster Management Institute (INGC)
[7] The World Bank (2019) Mozambique: Cyclone Idai & Kenneth Emergency Recovery and Resilience Project (P171040). Project Information Document (PID)

including NGOs, the UN System and donors. Following initial district reports, the Government of Malawi and humanitarian actors supported the distribution of food, NFIs and water treatment chemicals to displaced populations.

To support the emergency response, the UN launched a flash appeal after Idai and Kenneth of US$282 and US$103.7 million, respectively, which were only partly funded.

For the recovery, the UN Economic Commission for Africa estimated that US$4 billion were needed to help Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe recover from the devastating effects of the Cyclones that hit the three countries. Of the $4bn, Mozambique, which suffered the most from the two cyclones, needed $3.2 billion for its reconstruction efforts while Malawi required $370 million and Zimbabwe between $600 and $700 million. Mozambique was affected by the two cyclones while Zimbabwe and Malawi suffered the brunt of Idai.

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3 Overview of the UNHCRs emergency response

As part of the initial response, UNHCR's deployed ERT to the three affected countries and airlifted some 240 MT of shelter and relief items from global stockpiles to assist some 30,000 most vulnerable cyclone survivors.

In Mozambique, UNHCR's response focused on providing shelter and core relief items (CRIs) to some 3,000 families displaced and/or affected by floods, as well as co-leading the Protection Cluster, coordinating appropriate referral and response mechanisms for individual protection cases, and training partners on issues related to child protection and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). While the Maratane Refugee Camp was not affected, as part of the collective UN system response to Cyclones Idai, UNHCR distributed CRIs to some 10,000 people, conducted protection monitoring activities, and relocated affected people to temporary settlements.

In Zimbabwe, UNHCR focused on assisting refugees in Tongogara refugee camp, located in Chipinge district, and directed a majority of its resources towards this response. Additional resources were dedicated to IDP responses and cluster coordination elsewhere in the country. UNHCR continued to undertake protection mainstreaming and PSEA training to partner organizations, as well as the construction of latrines and water infrastructure in Tongogara refugee camp. UNHCR together with UNICEF prioritized the issuance of civil registration documentation to Zimbabweans to ensure continued access to basic social services for people displaced by floods. In consultation with the office of the Registrar general (RG), UNHCR worked on funding mobile registration facilities in Chimanimani and Chipinge districts. There were concerns about the lack of a sustainable approach to displacements and returns, and UNHCR advocated for clarity on mid to long-term housing plans by the Government, in order to help IDPs make informed decisions about their future. Overall, UNHCR's provided assistance and protection to some 283,000 people in need (of whom an estimated 13,000 were refugees).

In Malawi, UNHCR worked with other UN agencies, INGOs, and local NGOs supporting the Malawi Government. UNHCR co-led the protection cluster with the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare for a 3-month period. As a protection partner, UNHCR worked together with UNFPA on SGBV and UNICEF on Child Protection and implemented SGBV trainings and child protection awareness campaigns in cyclone affected areas. In June 2019, the Government of Malawi ordered the closure of all IDP camps, which prompted UNHCR and implementing partner Plan International to focus on registration and the distribution of return packages consisting of CRIs. Overall, UNHCR together with partners responded to the needs of some 870,000 people affected by floods, of whom 94,090 were internally displaced from their homes. In Nsanje district, some 4,500 households (out of 13,500 affected households) were Mozambicans.[8]

An overview of UNHCR's role and objectives in relation to the three countries' HRPs can be found in Table 2.[9]

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[8] For more information about UNHCR's programmatic response, see UNHCR operational reports: https://data2.unhcr.org/es/documents/details/70588
[9] Ibid.

Table 2: HRP objectives and UNHCR's role

HRP objectives/activities	Mozambique	Zimbabwe[10]	Malawi
Protection Cluster lead	Yes, co-lead with DPGCAS (Provincial Directorate for Gender, Children and Social Affairs)	No: split UNHCR leads only the refugee response strategy	Yes – co-lead with Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW)
Child protection lead	Yes	No: Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (Child Welfare and Child Protection Services) plus UNICEF	Yes Subcluster lead: UNICEF
GBV lead	Yes	No: Ministry of Women's Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development plus UNFPA	Yes Subcluster lead: UNFPA
Number of people targeted	2 million people in need 1.7 million people targeted	21,000 people in need 14,000 people targeted	840,330 in need

HR Emergency deployment

In addition to the regular staff in COs, emergency staff was deployed to the three countries, both from the ROSA as well as from DESS, HQs and other COs. The evaluation has consolidated the overview below, but it should be noted that different sources of information pointed at different figures of HR deployment. Hence, the data needs to be looked at with caution.

Country	Emergency Staffing ROSA	Emergency staffing DESS, HQ and other COs[11] (confirmed)
Malawi	0	8
Mozambique	6	25
Zimbabwe	2	15
Total	**8**	**48**

Budget expenditure

OL budgets for the three operations for Cyclone Idai in 2019 and 2020 (US$)			
Operation	**2019**	**2020**	**Total**
Malawi	2,118,980	0	2,118,980
Mozambique	2,717,920	67,824	2,785,744
Zimbabwe	4,343,659	0	4,343,659
Total	**9,180,559**	**67,824**	**9,248,383**

Source: ARBAS

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[10] Zimbabwe, Humanitarian Appeal Revision, February 2019–April 2020

[11]

OPS Expenditure (cumulative years) US$	
Malawi	1,386,054
Mozambique	2,617,508
Zimbabwe	3,652,060
Total	**5,038,114**

By comparing the two tables, the gap between OL budget and OPS expenditure is evident, pointing to an underfunding of the response. On a more general note, the evaluation found that data currently at disposal is largely inconsistent. Currently, data at UNHCR is held across multiple divisions, sections and at varying organisational levels (HQ, regional and country)[12]. Data provided by Headquarters and Country Offices to the Idai Evaluation often does not coincide. These include data of deployed staff, financial data and PoCs. Data pertaining to the delivery of assistance and protection is not disaggregated, which in turn, does not allow the evaluation to perform a gendered analysis of the response, nor does it allow for the identification of gaps in the response to vulnerable groups.

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[12] UNHCR, Evaluation of UNHCR's Data Use and Information Management Approaches, November 2019.

4 Evaluation findings

4.1 Contribution to HRP goals and other relevant policy frameworks

UNHCR's response contributed partially to the goals set out in the HRPs, was more consistent during the emergency phase and became progressively weaker in the recovery phase and phase-out. Overall, UNHCR role as protection cluster coordinator was irregular, due to gaps and discontinuity between deployments. On the positive side, UNHCR succeeded in stabilising the local protection cluster in Sofala (Mozambique) after initial gaps, and expanded operational presence for one year, which was coherent with actual needs on the ground and cluster engagements. Other recognized relevant UNHCR contributions include the establishment of protection tools, prioritization of hard-to-reach affected communities, profiling of IDPs, supporting access to legal documentation, and mobilization of technical expertise in multiple sectors (such as protection, shelter, health, information technology). However, the IAHE report highlights that, with the notable exception of PSEA, protection had not been sufficiently mainstreamed. Moreover, the lack of clear directives/vision on how to engage and responsibly disengage in disasters, the uncertainty and contradictions about the scope of UNHCR's response to Idai (and Kenneth), the disconnect from broader UN and development contexts, serious challenges in the distribution of CRIs, as well as critical resource constraints (financial and human) resulted in a fragmented and irregular delivery of protection and aid to IDPs and cross-border displaced people.

4.1.1 HRPs goals

In line with the three HRPs, UNHCR provided humanitarian aid, contributing to alleviating suffering and protecting lives, and worked to protect the rights of affected communities by carrying out beneficiary profiling, needs assessments, monitoring, advocacy, capacity-building, and direct protection delivery activities. UNHCR's response covered immediate and acute needs during the emergency phase and, to a certain extent, the recovery phase, but in only a limited way addressed livelihood restoration and resilience strengthening; these were part of HRP goals in the three countries.

In terms of geographical scope, UNHCR's response is perceived to have been more oriented towards existing refugee camps (in Malawi and Zimbabwe) and larger makeshift settlements for families displaced by Idai (in Mozambique), but did not sufficiently cover the needs in other communities or sites. The destruction of infrastructures was a clear obstacle during the weeks following Idai but in Mozambique, some informants consider that the largest and more structured IDP settlements received more support than smaller settlements from humanitarian organizations in general, including UNHCR. In Zimbabwe, priority was given to Tongogara camp and the surrounding area. In Malawi, UNHCR's response targeted the four most affected districts, but limited transportation and resources made it difficult to ensure geographic coverage. Although a consistent analysis of coverage has not been carried out, anecdotal evidence suggests that area-based approaches[13] probably could have been better integrated into the response.

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[13] Policy on UNHCR's engagement in situations of internal displacement. UNHCR/HCP/2019/1

In terms of funding, despite the importance that was in theory granted to protection as a central component of the HRP, the Protection Cluster was not matched with an adequate budget. The amount allocated to the Protection Cluster (Idai and Kenneth) represented around 4.6 per cent[14] of the total funding for the response. National Protection Cluster budgets in the three countries remained significantly underfunded during all phases.

Mozambique

Prior to Idai, the CO had limited involvement in the Protection Working Group or the Inter Agency Coordination Group due to its limited capacities; in fact, UNHCR had handed over the Chair of the Protection Working Group after the departure of a P2 Associate Protection Officer several years before, leaving the CO without dedicated protection staff. When Idai hit Mozambique, UNHCR had to discuss with the UNFPA Representative that UNHCR would again Co-Chair what became the Protection Cluster for the response to Idai. A few weeks later, UNHCR took over the coordination of the Protection Cluster, with UNFPA coordinating the SGBV sub-cluster and UNICEF coordinating the child-protection sub-cluster. In Beira, the local protection cluster was co-chaired with the Provincial Directorate for Social Action (DPGCAS).

When cyclone Kenneth struck northern Mozambique on 23 April 2019, the CO in coordination with the RBSA sent a UNHCR team (Associate Protection Officer, Protection Associate and a driver) from Nampula field office to Pemba to support the UN system response and take on the local protection cluster lead in Cabo Delgado Province. However, following HQs decision (at Assistant High Commissioner for Operations - AHCO - level) not to engage in the response to Kenneth, the team was withdrawn after two weeks.

The analysis conducted by the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE)[15] of the response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique measured the achievement of the international response against HRP protection targets as "Medium-Low" (30 - 49%). The IAHE evaluation states that it proved challenging to measure results against the overall target listed in the HRP given the relatively broad scope of interventions falling under protection and the rapidly evolving needs and operating context. It is worth noting that the L3 emergency activation (such as was the case in Mozambique, but not in Zimbabwe and Malawi)[16] requires an immediate deployment of appropriate coordination capacity, including qualified Cluster Coordinators.[17] Unfortunately, because of deployment shortcomings and limited capacities at the CO level, this objective was not achieved during the IDAI response. In Mozambique a protection coordinator was deployed in Beira, but UNHCR was perceived as rather weak at capital level due to limited staffing and the issue of double-hatting.

It was often not evident in reports if protection, along with the resources invested in protection-related activities was mainstreamed (…) The IAHE found that protection was seen as important by humanitarian agencies, however, with the notable exception of Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), protection had not been

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[14] OCHA (2019) "2018–2020 Mozambique Humanitarian Response Plan, November 2018 – May 2020", (revised following Cyclones Idai and Kenneth, May 2019).
[15] "Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique". Final Draft Report #2. May 2020

[16] IASC System-wide response activations and deactivations. Available at : https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-transformative-agenda/iasc-system-wide-response-activations-and-deactivations
[17] INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE REFERENCE DOCUMENT - Protocol 1. Humanitarian System-Wide Scale-Up Activation: Definition and Procedures, November 2018. Available at: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-11/Protocol%201.%20Humanitarian%20System-Wide%20Scale-Up%20Activation-%20Definition%20and%20Procedures%2C%202018.pdf

sufficiently mainstreamed. UNHCR, as Protection Cluster Coordinator, led efforts to embed response targets within clusters by developing strategies along with protection mainstreaming checklists. Attempts were made to map the extent to which protection standards were applied but, despite these efforts, application was patchy and reporting by other clusters tended to be sector-specific and often didn't adequately capture protection outputs and outcomes.[18] Specific Protection Cluster shortcomings are detailed in the IAHE report.

External stakeholders interviewed were of the opinion that UNHCR ensured its role in the protection of IDPs within the largest resettlement camps. UNHCR's experience in protection was recognized and referred to as essential in coordinating other actors, despite reports of some difficulties in implementing plans and providing concrete actions. UNHCR maintained a continued presence in Sofala province in accordance with actual needs on the ground, and ensured the Protection Cluster co-leadership with the Sofala Provincial Directorate for Gender, Children and Social Affairs (DPGCAS). UNHCR continued protection mainstreaming activities, community-based protection activities and training on protection for clusters, subclusters, working groups, networks, national authorities and protection partners. The protection monitoring activities, despite some gaps, provided a good synopsis of population vulnerabilities to help informed decision-making.[19]

UNHCR was able to identify vulnerable groups within the camps with the assistance of the DPGCAS and community volunteers. The DPGCAS worked with limited resources and staff who were not well prepared. Stakeholders pointed out that there was limited integration with community-based leaders and with local civil society groups in many areas. Close work between UNHCR and DPGCAS has been recognized, but local organizations believe that given the scope of work and the number of communities at risk, the DPGCAS should have sought the collaboration of local stakeholders, which did not always take place. The local political context, particularly different political alliances, seemed to hinder the integration and collaboration between DPGCAS and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

UNHCR field staff confirmed the handover to DPGCAS before disengagement. However, there is a perception that those who were left in charge of engaging with the community once UNHCR had disengaged were unprepared. Overall, the organizations concerned with issues regarding a lack of integration between local stakeholders throughout the process believe that this in itself could have led to certain vulnerable or at-risk people being missed or their needs not being taken into consideration, in particular in the first months of the assistance.

Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, UNHCR was designated as co-lead of the Protection Cluster, since UNFPA refrained from taking on the coordination role in order to focus solely on SGBV protection. UNICEF focused on child protection. UNHCR is perceived to have been mainly responsible for the assistance to refugees in the Tongogara camp, where participatory assessments, surveys and verification exercises to identify vulnerable refugees and their needs were carried out. Several reports highlight that relevant and persistent protection gaps in Tongogara camp were exacerbated by the impact of Idai.

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[18] This finding was not unique for this response. Studies have shown that protection outcomes are difficult to demonstrate for short-term interventions.
[19] UNHCR Response Capacity for Cyclone Idai and Kenneth in Mozambique, "Lessons-Learned Workshop", 23–24 January 2020, presentation.

Overall, in Zimbabwe, UNHCR was able to contribute to the HRP to some extent. UNHCR was one of the agencies offering a full basket of assistance to the people living in Tongogara. Despite the movement difficulties, delivery of CRIs was nonetheless timely. However, UNHCR was restricted in terms of staffing, especially outside the Tongogara camp. Some informants expressed shortcomings in responding to protection needs, given that UNHCR only managed to deploy one senior protection officer as part of the emergency response team dispatched to the country, and did not have sufficient resources to maintain dual fronts (the Tongogara response and the cluster lead), because of under-staffing and distances to cover. Delays in identifying and flagging protection concerns for particularly vulnerable individuals have been raised. Despite the shortcomings, UNHCR was able to successfully coordinate SGBV and child protection interventions, as well as the provision of CRIs and tents. At the same time, UNHCR trained its partner (GOAL in Chipinge district) on PSEA and SGBV, and mainstreamed these issues in their distribution of non-food items (NFIs). Through GOAL, UNHCR provided CRIs for 10,000 individuals in the districts of Chipinge and Chimanimani. UNHCR also offered advisory services to the Government of Zimbabwe about the protection principles regarding the relocation of IDPs and ensured that those who required counselling (both IDPs and refugees) were referred to relevant service providers and to various government departments, making sure that people were issued with documentation, and thus helping to prevent statelessness.

Malawi

In Malawi, UNHCR co-led the Protection Cluster since April 2019 together with the Ministry of Gender and Child Welfare. It is recognized that UNHCR played an important role in responding to the needs of IDPs and cross-border Mozambicans. UNHCR's initial response was led by national staff, while UNICEF led the Protection Cluster, given that the country office (CO) lacked the capacities to do so, and the ERT (including a Senior Emergency and Protection Cluster Coordinator) arrived in early April. UNHCR carried out profiling exercises to help identify the most vulnerable groups, and vulnerability issues were further discussed at meetings at national, regional and local cluster levels. Information was provided by field reports, reports from protection partners, and findings from the Cluster Protection Monitoring Exercise. UNHCR informants mentioned that the agency's staff led weekly meetings where information was gathered on protection concerns and gaps and challenges in managing the response. Also at the meetings, solutions for better programming were identified and shared, and UNHCR led on key aspects of implementation planning.

Distribution and logistics

The timeline in Figure 3 summarizes the distribution of CRIs in the three countries. In Mozambique, the first CRI batch (representing the 33 per cent of total UNHCR CRIs) was distributed in the first three months following Idai. The second batch arrived in Beira in August, represented 67 per cent of UNHCR CRIs, and was distributed in one month, but it landed approximately five months after the cyclone. The distribution of CRIs in Malawi and Zimbabwe took just a few weeks because, in this case, the volume of CRIs was more reduced than in Mozambique, and affected areas were more accessible. In the case of Malawi, national authorities supported the distribution of CRIs.

Figure 3: Timeline of CRI distribution (Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe)
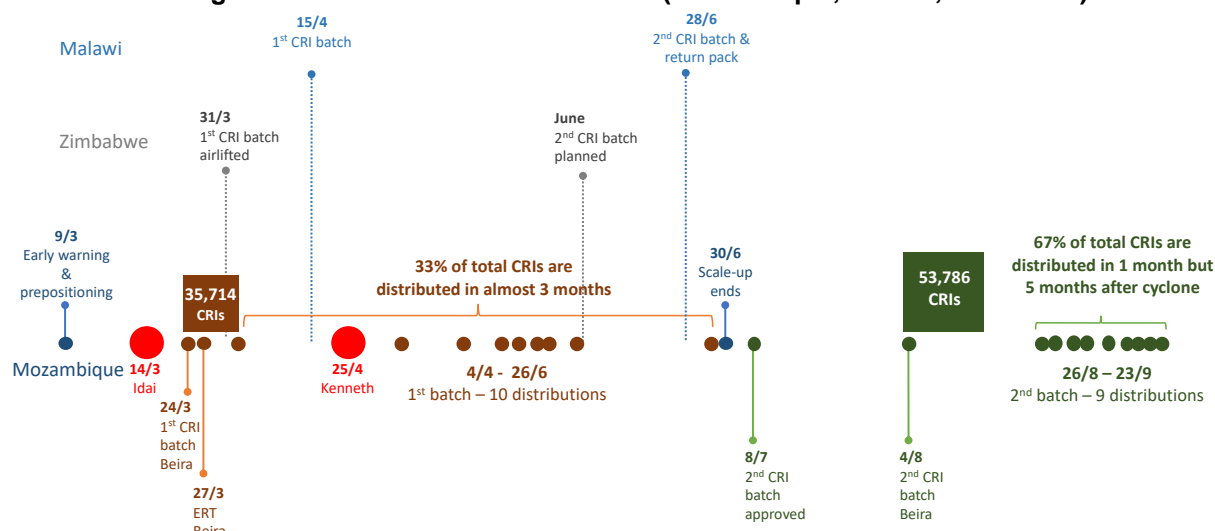
Overall, the evaluation notes problematic issues with regards to distribution on the ground. In Mozambique the first batch of CRIs was shipped to Maputo instead of Beira airport using a commercial charter (Ethiopian Airlines). While this decision was based on internal assessments regarding the most suitable airport to receive the cargo; additional costs were incurred as fines for late clearance from Maputo, while the airlifted CRIs arrived in the country before storage and distribution arrangements were established. Once in Maputo, the items then needed to be shipped onwards to Beira causing further delays. Shipping to Maputo also limited visibility of UNHCR CRIs, since larger shipments from other agencies arrived at Beira airport where media attention was concentrated. In contrast, the airline off-loading equipment donated by the UK Government to support the international response was destined for Beira and humanitarian supplies began to be distributed in the affected communities. The second batch of CRIs (received in August 2019) was transported by road from Nairobi at a fraction of the cost.[20]

4.1.2 Whole-of-UNHCR response

UNHCR activated its internal L3 emergency procedures for the organization's response in the three countries, following the IASC Humanitarian System-Wide Scale-Up activation on 22 March. The first ERT arrived in Mozambique on 28 March and UNHCR airlifted tons of core relief items from regional stockpiles in Nairobi and Dubai to support the emergency response. UNHCR's reaction was consistent with IASC engagements. The decision to act on a "no regret" basis prevailed over internal debates[21] about whether and how to engage and the need for more operational guidance on how to engage in climate-related disaster displacement.

A joint senior level mission (including the DESS Director, the Head of PCS – DER and the Deputy Regional Representative from RBSA) to Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi was conducted in April 2019. The recommendations suggested a one-year involvement in Mozambique, with a light footprint, focused on protection

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[20] Key informant interviews and OIOS audit.

[21] "Debates" refers to internal diverging views (particularly clear in the case of Kenneth, affecting all levels of the organization) about the justification and scope of the engagement in disasters in general and in the response to Idai in particular. The evaluation draws parallels between the lack of clarity on the scope of engagement (and resourcing) and delays in decision-making as well as inconsistent decisions that ultimately led to a lack of predictability. For example, the open-and-shut or light footprint approach decided by the SET was not fully understood or applied consistently across the response.

coordination and localization, as well as a limited six-month response in Zimbabwe. The JSLM recognised that the recommendation for Mozambique was against usual UNHCR practice in L3 situations but, given the importance of the scale-up, it was perceived as a necessary posture to consolidate UNHCR's position as a climate catastrophe responder.

The consistency of the response began to weaken at different levels of the organization following the L3 declaration – there was uncertainty about the duration of engagement, delays concerning budget allocation, mis-communication between field offices and COs, as well as between HQ units, and multiple reporting lines between field teams, COs, the regional office and headquarters. The RBSA initially established weekly meetings with the three COs to monitor and support the response, which became bi-weekly once the critical phase of the response ended. Despite efforts to keep regular communication, reporting lines from field teams, COs, RBSA and HQs were difficult to maintain since many decisions had to be made at field level.

In particular, the way in which the reaction to Kenneth (Mozambique) was articulated is an example of the gaps among decision-making levels. The CO and the RBSA agreed on deploying a protection officer to Pemba, based on ground knowledge, as a response to the impact of Cyclone Kenneth and the sociopolitical complexities in Cabo Delgado. Protection and humanitarian needs were clear. UNHCR started working to set up a local protection subcluster and coordinated with other actors but, a few days later, the field team was withdrawn as a result of a decision made at HQ. The lack of a clear vision on UNHCR's engagement in disaster situations, the weak analysis of humanitarian and protection challenges in Cabo Delgado and the uncertainty about funding explain, partly, the decision to not to engage in Kenneth. This decision, however, was a missed window of opportunity to proactively lead protection and reinforce a humanitarian space in what had been the most unstable region of Mozambique since 2017. It would have consolidated UNHCR's clear positioning as a major organization capable of confronting multiple hazards in that unstable context. Moreover, UNHCR's decision had two worrying consequences:

i)   It disregarded the needs of communities who were affected not only by the cyclone but also by internal tensions and local conflict (a situation much closer to UNHCR's mandate).

ii) It sent a disturbing signal to the humanitarian community and national actors. The decision to withdraw the field team in Pemba and not to intervene in Kenneth was interpreted as if the situation in Cabo Delgado was not critical enough in terms of humanitarian and protection needs to justify UNHCR's presence and its strong international protection leadership.

Records of email correspondence and internal reports bear witness to the internal contradictions, delays and difficulties of acting as a whole.[22] In fact, in certain critical moments, these internal discordances resulted in UNHCR being seen to be not speaking with one voice.

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[22] Although the "whole-of-UNHCR" approach and the pivotal role of country operations were defined in the new Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response (PEPR) 2019 version (validated after Idai), the accountabilities defined in the 2015 Policy on Emergency Response Activation, Leadership and Accountabilities similarly determined the roles and responsibilities of the different managerial levels in emergency responses.
In the 2019 policy, the whole-of-UNHCR approach and the pivotal role of country operations are defined as follows: "Emergencies call for a 'whole of UNHCR' approach in which roles, resources and capacities within the Organization are directed as one to ensure a timely and effective response. UNHCR country operations have a pivotal and fundamental role in this respect, with Regional Bureaux, Divisions and other headquarters entities engaged to capacitate and empower them, facilitating and reinforcing field delivery in line with applicable frameworks and standards".

4.1.3 Application of key UNHCR policies

The 2015 version of the Policy on Emergency Response Activation, Leadership and Accountabilities (reviewed in 2017) was in force at the time when Cyclones Idai and Kenneth hit the region. The 2019 review was in progress, but it was only validated by the end of the year. The 2017 version was mainly oriented to emergency responses in conflict and refugee situations, and did not explicitly mention disaster-related displacement, although a broad interpretation of its purpose and scope would enable any kind of humanitarian emergency to be encompassed.[23]

UNHCR's L3 emergency declaration was coherent with the IASC Humanitarian System-Wide Scale-Up activation but the 2015 Policy on Emergency Response Activation, Leadership and Accountabilities UNHCR and the 2017 Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response seems to have been taken into consideration only partially in assessing the scale of the emergency. The need for urgent decisions on UNHCR's engagement, the magnitude of the disaster, the lack of involvement in preparedness at country level, and the difficulties in getting reliable data about the damage on the ground – all these factors explain why it was difficult to make a sound analysis and apply internal criteria for engagement. Table 3 broadly shows the extent to which UNHCR's internal considerations in determining the scale of the emergency were followed in the decision-making process.

Table 3: Assessment of the application of UNHCR policy considerations to determine the scale of the emergency for Idai (2017 version -Policy on Emergency Response Activation, Leadership and Accountabilities)

2017 version - Policy Considerations to assess scale of emergency	Assessment of the application of UNHCR's policy considerations	Comments
Impact on affected populations	Medium	Data about the number of persons affected, geographical distribution, gender, age, and specific needs were scarce during the decision-making process, due to a collapse in communications, although the first aerial assessments were available on 18 March 2019 (IFRC).
Complexity	High	Knowledge about the operational context, actors, logistical constraints, geography and access, protection risks, and so on, was available at CO and HQ level.
UNHCR capacities	Medium	The three COs were among the least resourced globally and, therefore, lacked the capacity to respond or even support a L3 response. Relying primarily on ERTs to coordinate clusters, lead protection and support aid delivery at such a large scale in three countries was risky. Mapping of COs and regional existing capacities was not available.
Host government capacity, policies and attitudes	Low	Knowledge about governments' capacities, response plans and emergency coordination mechanisms for disaster situations was not available. The COs were not involved in preparedness activities.
Operational capacity of partners	Low	Knowledge about partners' capacities, response plans and emergency coordination mechanisms for disaster situations was not available. The COs were not involved in preparedness activities.
Reputational risk	Medium	UNHCR's decision in Idai showed the shouldering of responsibilities in line with IASC commitments, local partners and PoC. However, the decision to engage in Idai seems not to have sufficiently considered eventual risks derived from the magnitude of the disaster or the inability to grant an appropriate level of operational engagement. The decision not to engage in Kenneth, based essentially on financial constraints and a lack of clarity about

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[23] "The policy applies in all UNHCR operations at risk of a humanitarian emergency, or in which such an emergency is taking place. UNHCR defines a humanitarian emergency as any situation in which the life, rights or well-being of refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR will be threatened unless immediate and appropriate action is taken; and which demands an extraordinary response and exceptional measures because current UNHCR capacities at country and regional level are insufficient." 2015 Policy on Emergency Response Activation, Leadership and Accountabilities

		engagement in natural hazards, was not coherent with some UNHCR core principles, and failed to anticipate the impact on UNHCR's credibility as a reliable actor in disaster responses.

The 2016 Operational Guidelines for UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement defined the criteria for intervening in such situations. Similarly to the 2017 Policy on Emergency response, the operational guidelines were mainly oriented towards conflict or violence-related displacement.[24] The only mention of engagement in natural hazard situations refers to consultations and agreements between UNHCR, OHCHR and UNICEF about the role to be played by UNHCR on the ground, based on country capacities. Despite the conflict-oriented approach of the 2016 IDP Guidelines, the principles and certain orientations could also be applicable to internal displacement caused by natural hazards and, therefore, to Cyclone Idai.

On climate change and disaster-related displacement, UNHCR has elaborated at least eight research documents or guidance notes from 2015 to 2018, which indicate the importance attached to these topics internally. Some of these documents were elaborated to support multi-agency global advocacy efforts[25] or to substantiate the statements of the High Commissioner.[26] A major achievement was the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) in 2018, which effectively acknowledges and addresses the reality of increasing displacement in the context of disasters, environmental degradation and climate change, and provides a basis for measures to tackle the many challenges arising in this area. In 2017, UNHCR's Strategic Directions 2017–2021 introduced three engagement criteria to support operationalization on the ground in situations of disaster-related displacement,[27] which are also reflected in the 2019 version of the Policy on UNHCR's engagement in situations of internal displacement and guidance documents[28] as follows:

> "In IDP contexts, UNHCR will lead (co-lead with the Government or involve an international NGO as co-chair, depending on in-country arrangements) the protection cluster when there is sufficient UNHCR in-country presence, a government request, and agreement with UNICEF and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to do so."

The evaluation has identified the perception among staff that internal documents about climate change and disasters are scattered and require harmonization and clarification. Of particular relevance are the three criteria for engagement in IDP situations, which are perceived as being excessively open to interpretation and not conducive to support consistent and sound guidance for decision-making in terms of when and how to engage in disaster situations. Firstly, the meaning of "in-country presence" is ambiguous and is not backed by a systematic assessment of resourcing, coverage, or capacity. Second, governments declared national states of emergency (according to their respective national legal frameworks) shortly after Cyclone Idai's landfall and broadly requested international support. Concerning the third criteria, UNHCR had to discuss and reach agreements with UNICEF and UNFPA on an ad-hoc

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[24] The 2019 revision of the IDP Policy was also in process at the time of Idai and was validated by the end of the year.

[25] The Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage associated with climate change impacts (2018) Recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement linked to the adverse effects of climate change (COP24). Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD)

[26] Goodwin-Gill, G.S. and McAdam, J. (2017) "UNHCR, climate change, disasters and displacement."

[27] UNHCR (2017) Strategic Directions 2017–2021: "as part of a broader inter-agency response (…) contribute to any inter-agency response to emergencies resulting from natural hazards, with a particular focus on providing protection leadership, where the three criteria of field presence, a government request and interagency agreement are met".

[28] Guidance package for UNHCR's engagement in situations of internal displacement, and Initiative on internal displacement 2020–2021.

basis to take over the protection cluster role in countries where the existing CO protection capacities where limited (or absent). In this context, the JSLM recommended that UNHCR AHC-O reached out to UNFPA Deputy Executive Director, to clarify global arrangements for Protection Cluster coordination and UNHCR's commitment to fulfil its role in disaster scenarios.

Overall, the evaluation has identified that there is no unanimous backing for UNHCR's position on climate change and disaster-related displacement, especially in terms of preparedness. This evaluation has also found that awareness about the IDP policy among UNHCR staff is still limited, especially among national staff. For example, in the midst of the emergency, discussions took place in Malawi regarding which status should be granted to cross-border displaced Mozambicans, and who was responsible for the registration of IDPs.

A light review of UNHCR tools on emergency preparedness and response shows that they have been essentially conceived for conflict situations that potentially result in refugees or IDPs fleeing from violence or unrest. Risk analysis, minimum preparedness actions, scenario-based contingency planning or data to be monitored through the High Alert List for Emergency Preparedness (HALEP) are oriented to monitor security situations and prepare country operations for humanitarian emergencies as a result of sociopolitical tensions and violence, but they are not fully adapted for responses to natural hazards. In 2019, Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe were not recorded in the HALEP "ongoing and potential situations" for follow up list.

In terms of budgeting, UNHCR's budget structure reflects a significantly different approach for refugees and IDPs (including disaster situations). While core funding is allocated to refugee situations (pillar 1), IDPs (pillar 4) are funded through specific appeals or complementary (project) funding. The Idai emergency revealed internal difficulties related to adequately funding the response. Although an Operational Reserve (OR) transfer amounting to $7.4 million was made available quickly to operations to start responding, it took several weeks for the first Budget Committee memo (showing the comprehensive needs for the crisis) to reach the Assistant High Commissioner for Operations (AHC-O). In addition, the memo failed to be approved by the AHC-O due to disagreements over what should be the overall allocation. Lastly, there was some confusion on whether the memo needed to integrate the initial OR allocation. Budget uncertainty and discussions severely impacted the predictability and credibility of UNHCR, as also happened in other previous UNHCR responses to disasters.[29]

4.1.4 Application of relevant international orientations

Emergency preparedness

The critical importance of investing in emergency preparedness and resilience to mitigate and reduce the humanitarian consequences of natural hazards, including displacement, is reflected in a broad list of international frameworks, declarations and guidance documents. UN bodies[30] and many global initiatives[31] support investments in disaster risk reduction, preparedness and mitigation, and also generate new knowledge to better understand the

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[29] For example, responses to the Philippines Hurricanes (2009), and the Haiti Earthquake (2010). See: Deschamp, B. et al. (2010) *Earth, wind and fire. A review of UNHCR's role in recent natural disasters.*

[30] United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), IASC.

[31] For example: The Nansen Initiative; Agenda for the protection of cross-border displaced persons in the context of disasters and climate change; Sendai Framework; Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI); SDGs; Agenda for Humanity; Platform on Disaster Displacement; GCR..

interactions between climate change, hazards and displacement. UNHCR has proactively and largely been involved in many of these initiatives and has integrated emergency preparedness as an essential component of its policies and, in many cases, of its operations.

In the three countries, disaster risk assessments, vulnerability analysis, or risk reduction actions carried out by national disaster bodies and development actors (notably the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) had been taking place for many years.[32] In Mozambique, the National Meteorology Institute (Instituto Nacional de Meteorologia, INAM) and the National Institute of Disaster Management (Instituto Nacional de Gestão de Calamidades, INGC) issued alerts and disseminated warnings about Idai and Kenneth. Several days in advance, the location of landfall and expected windspeeds were known, although the flooding was far more severe than anticipated. Some communities were on alert, and agencies started pre-positioning and anticipating the response; the IFRC launched a DREF[33] appeal on 14 March to mobilize the international community and donors, just before disaster struck.

Despite a long history of natural hazards in the region (essentially floods, cyclones and droughts in Mozambique,[34] Malawi[35] and Zimbabwe[36]), the three COs did not have the policy guidance, resources and capacities to get involved in risk analysis, preparedness and contingency planning efforts undertaken by national authorities, UN agencies and other development actors. Overall, UNHCR's involvement in preparedness in the three affected countries was minimal. COs were under-resourced and were managing small refugee operations, which left no room for engaging in other areas. Significantly, the Mozambique CO was not even participating in immediate mitigation and pre-positioning actions that started being implemented by national authorities a few days before Idai hit Beira, or in the initial UN meetings to coordinate the inter-agency response and allocate the CERF distribution by sectors. UNHCR's presence in the three countries and in the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) was limited to taking on a protection coordination role should a disaster occur. This situation highlights a clear limitation when it comes to immediate response to disaster needs, including sudden-onset internal displacement.

In Zimbabwe, UNHCR had emergency preparedness plans in place for the Tongogara camp, which is often affected by heavy rains and flooding. However, the plan focused more on measures to be taken in the event of a sudden influx of asylum-seekers rather than on natural hazards. The CO did not have a national-level emergency preparedness plan and several internal interviewees identified this area as a key persistent need. The focus on the protracted Tongogara camp operation and lack of resources impeded the CO's engagement in other initiatives. In Malawi, the response approach for Idai had to be developed from scratch and this may have arisen from the fact that the CO did not foresee itself responding to a disaster.

Durable solutions

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[32] World Bank, IFPRI, GFDRR "Economic Vulnerability and Disaster Risk Assessment in Malawi and Mozambique Measuring Economic Risks of Droughts and Floods").
INGD, UNDP (2010) "Disaster Risk Assessment in Mozambique. A Comprehensive Country Situation Analysis", https://www.zw.undp.org/content/zimbabwe/en/home/climate-and-disaster-resilience.html
[33] The Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) was established by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to provide immediate financial support to National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, enabling them to carry out their unique role as first responders after a disaster.
[34] See: http://floodlist.com/tag/mozambique
[35] See: http://floodlist.com/?s=malawi&submit
[36] See: http://floodlist.com/?s=zimbabwe&submit=

Overall, UNHCR's support during the recovery and integration phases, in particular to return processes and durable solutions, was limited due to both contextual factors and internal shortcomings. On the one hand, pressure from governments to organize rapid return or resettlements for IDPs resulted in inadequate compliance with international standards and hampered UNHCR advocacy efforts. UNHCR and the HCT advocacy efforts essentially succeeded in slightly delaying the return or relocation of IDPs. On the other hand, a lack of resources limited UNHCR's contribution (for example, in terms of technical assistance, advocacy) to promote comprehensive durable solutions and a responsible disengagement approach to returnees or affected communities. Expectations and standards regarding durable solutions, including integration, are often long-term and require resource investment, which results in tensions with UNHCR's time-limited positioning in this field.

In Mozambique, the Protection Cluster in Sofala developed a strategic direction document premised on the need for a responsible disengagement towards the deactivation of the Protection Cluster. The strategic direction equally recognized the need for both adjusting the Protection Cluster's initial objectives and taking into consideration the integration of IDPs in the new communities where they were resettled or relocated. The integration of both the IDPs and their host communities required a full transition of various sector interventions to the authorities (protection, WASH, education, health, shelter), which had previously been provided by the humanitarian community. The focus, therefore, was on the empowerment and capacity-building of local authorities in protection-related coordination, and on identifying challenges for the integration of IDPs in their new communities, as well as returns.[37] UNHCR reinforced the protection monitoring system of DGPGAS in Beira and put in place community-based protection mechanisms which were operational as long as UNHCR was present in the area; the evaluation has not been able to assess the extent to which these protection mechanisms remain operational after the closure of UNHCR's operation in Beira. UNHCR worked with communities within the camps by providing livelihood incentives such as agricultural supplies to enable agriculture production despite numerous constraints. Communities in the camps were taught principles and techniques to construct resilient housing, and women (particularly those at risk of sexual violence) were presented with some support to help them cope with the emergency. Nevertheless, it was difficult to provide consistent medium- or long-term durable solutions and the Maputo workshop concluded that return and relocation exercises did not sufficiently meet standards of safe, voluntary and dignified movements of people.

In addition, the Mozambique IAHE mentions that one of the challenges in collectively meeting the needs of affected communities who were trying to recover from the effects of the cyclone was that all three HRP revisions covering the Idai response had short planning horizons.[38] Apart from the lack of incentives for longer-term programming, limitations imposed by the Government of Mozambique (GoM) on cash-based interventions meant that affected communities mainly depended on the assistance that agencies chose to provide. Additionally, donors were mainly focused on funding longer-term recovery programmes led by the GoM's recovery mechanism, which was planned to launch in 2020.[39] Evaluations and internal reviews by UN agencies conducted during the latter half of 2019 confirmed there were still important gaps between humanitarian and recovery interventions.

In Zimbabwe, the Tongogara camp was stablished in 1984 to host refugees from Mozambique who were fleeing from the war between the government and the Mozambican National Resistance Movement (RENAMO). At present, most

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[37] Sofala Protection Cluster Stock-taking, March to December 2019
[38] The August 2019 version covered the period until May 2020.
[39] "Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique". Final Draft Report #2; May 2020

of the people housed in the Tongogara camp come from the Democratic Republic of Congo and, to a lesser extent, Burundi, Rwanda and other countries of the region. The camp area falls under an agro-ecological zone that normally experiences low amount of rainfall. It is mostly a dry, hot and dusty area for the better part of the year. It is accessible during dry periods; however, access becomes difficult during rains and floods and the camp has been regularly affected by heavy rains and climate events. In 2014, a UNHCR and WFP Joint Assessment Mission to the camp recommended to revise the prevention and response plans to emergencies (in particularly floods and fires). However, the scarcity of funds allocated to the Tongogara camp (and Zimbabwe operation in general) have hampered to invest in upgrading housing conditions and camp facilities, which exacerbated the impact of the cyclone. In terms of protection, resilience and durable solutions, the Tongogara camp lacked a coherent and clearly defined medium- to long-term strategy. Resettlement has been the key durable solution managed by UNHCR for many years and concern has been expressed among government circles and staff that this solution could be a pull-factor for secondary population movements in the region. The CO continues to enhance the strategic use of resettlement to promote increased community protection and self-reliance.[40] Rwandans affected by cessation have mainly shunned voluntary repatriation. Local integration has also been elusive, as the authorities have not been in favour of it and are yet to provide detailed guidance to Rwandans affected by cessation on the procedures and processes to follow. In general, interviewees mentioned that there is a critical need to provide more durable housing for the communities involved and to improve livelihood opportunities and the overall strategy for the camp.

In Malawi, UNHCR closed its emergency operation once the government deactivated the emergency and it was barely involved in the recovery phase. During the recovery phase, UNHCR mainly supplied return packages for cross-border Mozambicans (in similar terms to return packages for IDPs). Concern has been expressed about the difficulties in coordinating the return of Mozambicans between the two COs. It should be mentioned that the government closed temporary IDP settlements without proper communication to humanitarian actors, limiting the ability of UNHCR and other agencies to follow up on returnees.

4.1.5 External funding and communication

UNHCR raised a total of $5,604,652 for the Idai response out of a total requirement of $11,268,685. The bulk of the money came from three governments (the United States, Norway, Spain) and 25 private donors. The resources received through the three CERF appeals amounted to just $647,949, accounting for barely 0.5 per cent of the total CERF. UNHCR was one of the least-funded agencies, and the budgets allocated to the Protection Cluster in the HRPs in the three countries were very small, despite protection having been recognized as a central element of the response. Figure 4 shows the low level of funding allocated to UNHCR, compared to the rest of UN agencies.

Figure 4: CERF distribution by UN agencies

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[40] UNHCR (2019)"Shelter Strategy for Tongogara Refugee Camp 2019–2021"

A number of factors explain the low level of external funding but, once again, the lack of clarity on whether and to what degree UNHCR wanted to engage in a climate-related disaster emergency was critical. Time was lost in coming to a decision on whether to engage, rather than engaging early on with counterparts on the ground and mobilizing communication staff to the area. UNHCR's hesitation led to missed funding opportunities.
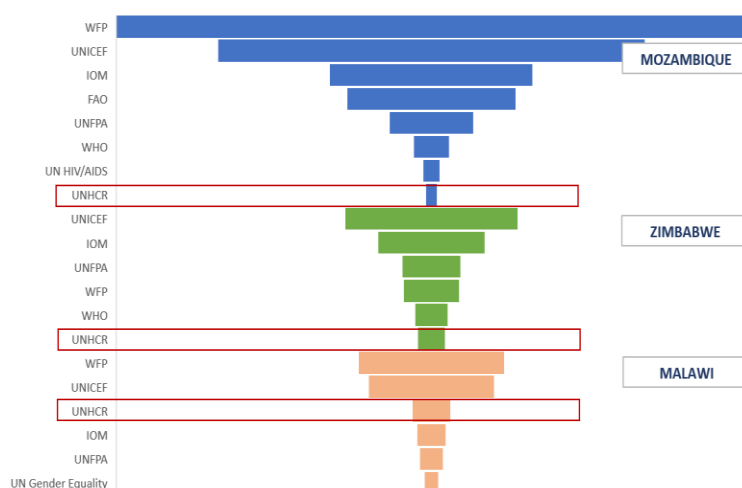
The confusion about the engagement in Idai and Kenneth also resulted in a lack of information about the budget requested by UNHCR for the response, and prevented the Donor Relations and Resource Mobilization Service (DRRM) from actively requesting funding from its donors. It also prevented the organization from issuing fundraising documents.[41] In addition, neither UNHCR nor the cluster regularly disseminated fundraising documents to the outside world. Not the UNCT, the humanitarian coordinator, or the regional bureaux/HQ in Geneva were able to secure more funding for the COs. It is likely that more direct fundraising with local partners and the private sector would have proved beneficial.[42]

Key informants noted that resource mobilization and reporting profiles were deployed too late (two weeks later) and that not enough positions were covered. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), for example, succeeded in having an impressive media footprint and resource mobilization thanks to early action (with teams on the ground before Idai hit), a media-trained operations manager, and coordinated media and social media support at global level.[43] In such a competitive "cluster environment", where all UN agencies compete for funding and media attention, late deployment becomes a missed opportunity for forming relationships with journalists, quenching their thirst for information and becoming the go-to agency.

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[41] For a detailed analysis about UNHCR budget decision-making and procedures affecting external funding, see the internal document: "DRRM inputs for Lessons Learnt on Resource Mobilization for the Idai Cyclone", January 2020.
[42] UNHCR's fundraising review for the response.
[43] IFRC (2019) "Real-Time Evaluation Mozambique: Tropical Cyclones Idai and Kenneth", August 2019.

4.1.6 Regionalization

Although it is too early to assess the changes induced by UNHCR's regionalization and decentralization process (launched in late 2019), interviewees perceive that this will help with the strategic positioning of the organization's response to climate-related disasters in the future, in that it will bring operations and decision-making closer to the field. In turn, this change will increase the opportunity for regional bureaux and COs to be more effectively prepared for emergencies while being able to gather better, real-time information on the ground, thanks to improved networks with locally based stakeholders such as governments, civil society, international NGOs, other UN agencies and donors. Better information, as well as the possibility of pre-positioning stocks at regional level, should build the capacity to react swiftly to emergencies[44]. From a financial perspective, the new Resource Allocation Framework (RAF) (2019) allows bureaux to allocate up to US$5 million per emergency, facilitating timely access to the internal budget for emergency responses.

A number of factors may hinder this potential, particularly in view of the new role that bureaux and COs are set to play. Regionalization risks creating regional bubbles where information is not flowing easily, particularly from HQ to COs. This issue underlines the challenge of coherence in disaster response across different regions while UNHCR's positioning remains unclear: as long as regional adaptation is required and desirable, the need for consistency with policies and procedures is likely to come up. In particular, more than one informant mentioned that policies set key principles, and then the task at regional and country level is how to put those policies to work.

4.2 Coordination mechanisms and complementarity

The scale-up protocol in the response to Idai was effective in conferring global legitimacy to UNHCR as the lead agency for protection and in facilitating the hand-over and coordination with UNICEF and UNFPA sub clusters, although this change in roles was not fully understood by non-UN organizations, nor was it well communicated. ERT members performed the general protection coordination role as best as they could, in an under-resourced response to a large-scale disaster and in the context of massive international mobilization. Global legitimacy does not automatically grant local legitimacy, given that other agencies had been leading protection issues for years and were better positioned and integrated into local contexts. In order to be effective, legitimacy has to go hand-in-hand with consistent engagement and operational capacity and, in the response to Idai, UNHCR's "open and shut" approach, combined with some gaps in capacity, hindered the proper exercise of the protection leadership role in the clusters. Moreover, the IASC cluster system and the centrality of protection in humanitarian interventions, especially in development contexts, are not necessarily familiar to international and national organizations, which are used to working under the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and longer-term programming.

The activation of IASC protocols in all three countries was effective for putting in place the cluster system to support government-led responses and to determine the roles to be played by the different UN agencies and humanitarian actors. As part of its engagements with the Global Protection Cluster, UNHCR assumed the role of general Protection Cluster co-lead in the three countries, closely coordinating with UNICEF (child protection subcluster) and UNFPA (SGBV subcluster). The process of assuming the cluster coordination role entailed conversations with UN

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[44] The evaluation takes note however, of UNHCRs Supply Management System (SMS) recommendation not to have a regional stockpile in the Regional Bureau for Southern Africa.

coordination teams, UNICEF and UNFPA, which had been leading protection issues prior to Idai and had a stronger presence and visibility. There were some moments of confusion among non-UN organizations during the hand-over to and from UNHCR, once the cluster was deactivated.

However, in general, the set-up of three agencies working complementarily in different areas of protection was effective. The fact that UNICEF and UNFPA programmes were development-oriented, and field teams were not experienced in emergency response, facilitated the path for UNHCR assuming the co-lead. In general, UNSDCF programmes in the three countries were not prepared to respond to a cyclone of this magnitude (even in Mozambique, a disaster-prone country).

UNHCR senior protection officers, deployed from HQ as part of the ERTs, took on the role of cluster coordination given that the COs lacked the capacities on the ground. Other major agencies also deployed international staff to support the humanitarian response[45] and, under these circumstances, UNHCR's expertise in large-scale emergencies and displacement was perceived as a positive contribution integrated into the broader UN response. Despite discontinuity and gaps, UNHCR was able to bring in multidisciplinary teams, including senior protection and programme officers with vast experience in emergency responses. In Mozambique, UNHCR deployed about 30 staff, which was approximately the same as IOM and low in comparison to 168 individuals deployed by UNICEF.

During the emergency phase, daily and weekly cluster meetings at central and local levels were the main coordination mechanism among actors, including national authorities. ERT members made great efforts to ensure effective coordination of the Protection Cluster at central and local levels, while supporting implementation of protection activities, managing logistics, procurement, reporting and administrative issues related to the emergency operation. The commitment and professionalism of UNHCR staff have been recognized by many actors in the three countries.

The performance of UNHCR's cluster coordination was affected by internal and external factors. Internally, several shortcomings hindered the effectiveness of UNHCR's coordination role. First, the "open and shut" approach[46] was a last-minute decision[47] and resulted in operational overreaction (for instance, UNHCR was the only agency applying the L3 declaration to Malawi), unpredictability (short-term engagements renewed on the go, lack of a clear budget) and lack of clarity on the ground (such as regarding scope of UNHCR involvement, time frames, establishment of partnership agreements, position vis-à-vis national actors and agencies).

Second, UNHCR made an important effort to mobilize senior staff to be deployed as soon as possible; the first ERT members arrived at Beira on 27 March and the Protection Cluster coordination in Maputo was effective from the beginning of April. Although the time of staff deployment is similar to the timing of other UN agencies,[48] other

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[45] UNICEF deployed a total of 168 individuals from outside the COs under various surge mechanisms. IOM deployed 30 staff from its global roster, including experts on shelter, camp management, health, protection, WASH and early recovery to Mozambique.
[46] The "open and shut" approach was initially meant to maximize resources for the emergency period (mobilizing ERTs and CRIs) and to shut down after the deactivation of the emergency.
[47] Warnings about Idai were available from 10 March (see: https://www.gdacs.org/media.aspx?eventid=1000552&episodeid=24&eventtype=TC); and the first estimates on population exposure to the cyclone from 12 March (see: https://unitar.org/maps/map/2866). Media were following the cyclone's path and broadcasting online (for example: https://www.news24.com/news24/africa/news/cyclone-warning-floods-kill-10-in-mozambique-as-cyclone-idai-lashes-heavy-rains-20190311). HQ's decision to respond to the IASC L3 declaration and respond to Idai was made once Idai had struck Beira.
[48] In Mozambique, 49 UNICEF surge staff were deployed within the first three weeks.

international organizations were already on the ground before Idai hit Mozambique.[49] This delay, combined with the limited involvement of COs in regular UNSDCF coordination mechanisms and programmes, had critical consequences because it prevented UNHCR from participating in UN discussions about CERF allocation among sectors and getting proper funding. In Zimbabwe and Malawi, UNFPA and UNICEF were respectively leading the protection clusters because of UNHCR's absence at the onset of the cyclone.

Third, UNHCR's reliance on international staff also resulted in a high rotation of ERT members, discontinuity and gaps in coordination roles, "silo" interventions, disconnection between field teams and COs, and limited knowledge of, and interaction with, the local context, especially local organizations. Frequent changes in UNHCR coordination were reported to have led to inconsistent coordination between organizations and some fragmentation in the approach. In Mozambique, some informants connected the problems concerning the integration of community-based groups and local partners to rotations in UNHCR's leadership. The scarce involvement of COs and national staff in the emergency response, coupled with limited UNHCR relations with local actors, resulted in a missed opportunity to support local capacities, build ownership and ensure continuity.

Fourth, a lack of human resources also resulted in ERT members assuming double or triple roles, a blurring of functions, an inability to perform properly, and duty of care issues. Some ERT members were unfamiliar with coordination responsibilities in a disaster response context. It is worth mentioning that the 2017 Evaluation of UNHCR's Leadership of the Global Protection Cluster and Field Protection Clusters found that there have been challenges in recruiting the right people with the right skills at the right time to work as Protection Cluster coordinators.[50] For instance, in Mozambique, the inability to speak Portuguese of the first UNHCR's cluster coordinators (as it was the also case with other agencies[51]) seriously hindered communication with local actors during the initial moments of the emergency phase. The arrival to Beira of Portuguese-speaking UNHCR's ERT members, albeit late, significantly changed the quality of UNHCR's interaction with local actors.

A number of external factors also impeded the proper undertaking of the coordination functions. Not all the humanitarian organizations shared the same protection approach or were willing to consistently integrate protection into their interventions. Although UNHCR was not present during CERF discussions, funding was not properly allocated to the Protection Cluster, and there were concerns about transparency in the distribution of the budget among agencies. Protection issues and responsibilities were scattered among different ministries.

In Mozambique, the IAHE of the response to Cyclone Idai concludes that the overall coordination of the response was of high quality, and cluster coordination performance was variable, influenced by the profiles of cluster coordinators, high turnover of surge staff, funding availability and information management capacities: "The Protection Cluster was among those that struggled to provide sufficient support to its members, partly because it was the only cluster that did not deploy dedicated field-based cluster coordination surge".[52] UNHCR's internal review (Maputo workshop, January 2020) and this evaluation have also documented that UNHCR protection coordinators

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[49] IFRC Secretariat took early action, deploying some key profiles before the landfall of Cyclone Idai (14 March). IFRC teams arrived in Beira on 17 March. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) teams arrived on 18 March.
[50] ITAD (2017) "Evaluation of UNHCR's Leadership of the Global Protection Cluster and Field Protection Clusters: 2014-2016".
[51] IAHE evalution
[52] This finding was not unique for this response. Studies have shown that protection outcomes are difficult to demonstrate for short-term interventions.

had to perform several functions at once, which resulted in inefficiencies, and staff rotation led to gaps and discontinuity.

One of the main challenges in the overall response to Idai, beyond the usual challenges in massive humanitarian responses, has been the complementarity between humanitarian organizations and development actors. At the outset, the shift from UNSDCF sectors to a cluster system and, in some cases, completely changing mindsets, strategies and structures to react to an emergency, was challenging for some development organizations. Protection issues were unfamiliar to some officers (UN and governments), with the potential of creating frictions between development organizations and national counterparts, eventually affecting stable relations, which are essential for development programming. Some protection issues (such as SGBV, rights of minorities and foreigners as asylum-seekers) might be sensitive to address in certain sociopolitical contexts and can affect the acceptance of organizations reporting abuses. Although no documentation is available, some informants have reported that human rights issues and concerns about the misuse of aid were difficult to address even within UN teams.

4.3 Partnerships and support to local capacities

UNHCR, in coordination with the HCT, succeeded in establishing effective relations with governments (at central and local levels), supporting national responses and aid distribution efforts, raising awareness and strengthening local capacities to address protection issues mainly during the emergency phase. However, promoting State responsibility to resolve internal displacement and contribute to durable solutions was challenging due to political and contextual factors. Previous limited UNHCR interaction with local actors and delayed decisions hampered the identification and establishment of effective partnerships with local organizations in Mozambique in the midst of a massive mobilization for the emergency response. Local implementing partners were able to switch from regular programming to emergency response, helped essentially by profiling and CRI distribution, but their inexperience in response to disasters resulted in inefficiencies.

UNHCR strategic documents define a clear framework on partnerships.[53] The orientations of the 77th UNHCR Executive Committee on strategic partnerships and coordination (February 2020)[54] addressing internal displacement partnerships are of particular interest. In practice, during the Idai response, the lack of clarity on the overall climate change and disaster-related displacement strategy, and on whether it would be a short emergency response or a longer-term intervention, resulted in "piecemeal partnerships".[55] Idai exacerbated the previous weak interaction of UNHCR with other actors (outside the scope of refugee and asylum questions), and its limited integration in national contexts.

When it comes to responding to disasters, one key point that emerges from Idai is the need for UNHCR to engage with a broader range of partners, including local governments, other UN agencies and civil society in general, and in emergency preparedness activities and exercises in particular. Moreover, the articulation of the humanitarian-development nexus, clearly established in UN frameworks, is especially important in disaster-prone areas, but it was

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[53] UNHCR Strategic Directions 2017–2021; GCR; 2019 Policy on internal displacement.
[54] https://www.unhcr.org/77th-meeting-of-the-standing-committee.html
[55] Notes from Maputo workshop, 23.and 24 January 2020

weakly structured in the three countries prior to the impact of Idai. Only in the recovery phase have development actors made sure that risk management or risk mitigation activities would be factored into disaster recovery through multi-year financing, beyond short-term humanitarian funding.[56]

Internal UNHCR reflections have already highlighted the paramount importance of protection needs becoming an integral part of UNSDCF assessments and preparedness activities[57,58,59] as a way of reinforcing the humanitarian-development nexus. The 2019 IDP policy (UNHCR) also mentions the importance of partnerships to secure the inclusion of IDPs throughout the displacement continuum in existing national systems and services. An ongoing think piece commissioned by UNHCR's Evaluation Service[60] is currently exploring and documenting learning from UNHCR's engagement in humanitarian-development cooperation through four case studies.[61]

4.3.1 National actors and state responsibility

National counterparts for UNHCR regular operations in the three countries were essentially the ministries in charge of managing asylum and refugee issues[62] (for example, legal and policy frameworks, asylum space, registration and Refugee Status Determination, detention, local integration). Other ministries (like Health, Education, Welfare) were regularly involved in actions to improve access to national basic services for refugees, enhance living conditions in camps or reinforce local integration of PoC. COs' limited resources and regular programming were oriented to camp management, protection delivery and advocacy with central and local authorities, which did not justify or facilitate the establishment of broader relations with other public departments. In Mozambique, UNHCR had supported previous emergency responses to disasters (such as the 2015 floods) but these short-term operations did not result in the establishment of formal and stable collaborations with national disaster management bodies or in the participation of the CO in preparedness actions.

The role of Protection Cluster co-lead assumed by UNHCR required immediate and intense interaction – in coordination with the HCTs – with national bodies in charge of the response and involved in protection issues.[63] The three countries had dedicated disaster management bodies and contingency plans, which had been supported by UN and development actors for many years prior to Idai. In the case of the Idai response, national authorities made

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[56] See: UNDP, https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/news-centre/speeches/2019/cyclone-idai-in-mozambique--malawi-and-zimbabwe-.html; ILO, https://www.ilo.org/africa/media-centre/pr/WCMS_737397/lang--en/index.htm; UNICEF, https://www.unicef.org/zimbabwe/stories/zimbabwes-multi-layered-humanitarian-emergency; and Reliefweb, https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/world-bank-supports-recovery-efforts-cyclone-affected-people-zimbabwe

[57] Deschamp, B. et al. (2010) *Earth, wind and fire. A review of UNHCR's role in recent natural disasters.*.

[58] Entwistle, H. (2013) "The world turned upside down: a review of protection risks and UNHCR's role in natural hazards".

[59] UNHCR Maputo workshop January 2020

[60] UNHCR's "Engagement in Humanitarian-Development Cooperation". Think piece on Research Phase 1 (November 2018 – June 2019), October 2019

[61] Preliminary findings from the think piece suggest:
- UNHCR has considerably increased its engagement in humanitarian-development cooperation.
- The predominant narrative within UNHCR centres on being a "facilitator" and a "catalyst" for other actors.
- UNHCR is not always able to meet the demands of development actors – for instance, for data and operational protection advice.
- Despite indications of positive effects, current experience also suggests that the potential of UNHCR's engagement in humanitarian-development cooperation is less transformational than may have been expected.

[62] Mozambique: National Refugee Support Institute (INAR), Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Malawi: Ministry of Homeland Security. Zimbabwe: Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, Zimbabwe Refugee Committee, Registrar General

[63] Malawi: Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (Protection Cluster co-lead) plus Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DODMA) - National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Committee. Zimbabwe: Emergency Committee, headed by the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing plus Department of Social Welfare. Mozambique: National Disaster Management Agency (INGC) plus Provincial Directorate for Social Action (DPGCAS) in Beira (Co-chair Protection Cluster).

timely and consistent decisions to prepare, coordinate and manage the response, and national capacities (including military and police bodies) were extensively mobilized in a context of limited means.

Under these circumstances, UNHCR succeeded in effectively dealing with public departments with which no previous cooperation existed and which, in some cases, had a blurred understanding of the concept of protection and its effective application in responses to internal displacement. To add complexity, there was no focal ministry for protection, and protection issues had to be dealt with among several public bodies. In general, and despite some gaps, UNHCR's partnership "along the way" with national bodies during the emergency phase was effective in supporting the distribution of CRIs, registration of IDPs, access to civil documentation, profiling of affected populations and identification of specific needs. UNHCR also produced regular data about protection needs and monitoring, which was used by partners on the ground.

The principle of State responsibility regarding the protection of IDPs (and cross-border Mozambicans) was present in the overall UNHCR response and was part of its advocacy and capacity-building activities. However, political and contextual challenges hampered UNHCR and HCT efforts to contribute to a response by the public administrations which was fully aligned with international principles and standards. The three governments deactivated the emergency phase too early, when important humanitarian needs remained unaddressed, and pushed for return or relocation under unsatisfactory conditions. The pressure to organize elections in Mozambique and Malawi, the governments' rush to get recovery funds as soon as possible[64,65] and signs of partisan distribution of aid in Zimbabwe[66] affected the humanitarian response.

During the recovery phase, UNHCR disengagement was mainly based on the assumptions of governments having supported the return or relocation of IDPs, as part of State responsibility, and development actors being involved in rebuilding affected areas and working to provide new opportunities for affected communities. Unfortunately, both assumptions were only partially correct. National initiatives to support recovery efforts were launched by governments between July and September 2019 and received support from development actors.[67] Although there is evidence in Mozambique[68] of government and international community efforts to "build back better",[69] the reality on the ground showed a large volume of neglected humanitarian needs,[70] and critical gaps in the transition from humanitarian to

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[64] Donors pledged $1.2 billion for reconstruction in Mozambique after cyclones (see: https://reliefweb.int/report/mozambique/donors-pledge-usd-12-billion-reconstruction-mozambique-after-cyclones). The UN launched an emergency humanitarian appeal of $282 million, which remained deeply underfunded. During the donors' conference, the Government of Mozambique called for $3.2 billion in funding for post-cyclone reconstruction.

[65] Zimbabwe Idai Recovery Project and Post Cyclone Idai Emergency Recovery and Resilience Project (see: https://www.unops.org/news-and-stories/news/cyclone-idai-recovery-projects-launched-in-zimbabwe).

[66] Preliminary observations of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Ms Hilal Elver, on her official visit to Zimbabwe on November 18 – 28, 2019.

[67] The Government of Mozambique officially deactivated the national emergency for Cyclone Idai on 14 May, 2019 and an International Pledging Conference to secure support for reconstruction was held on 31 May. In Malawi, emergency clusters were deactivated on 30 June in the context of the government's launch of the Return and Relocation Strategy and Post Disaster Needs Assessment. In Zimbabwe, clusters were requested to submit early recovery plans feeding into the Early Recovery Working Group in July 2019 and, in September, two major recovery projects were launched by the government, with the support of the African Development Bank, the World Bank and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

[68] "Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique". Final Draft Report #2. May 2020

[69] Ibid.: "Around 20 % of those households who had moved to resettlement sites or were living in Manhica province thought their living circumstances had improved in comparison to before the cyclone."

[70] Ibid.: "The survey found that a majority of households (ranging between 50-67%) felt that their living circumstances had worsened since the cyclone with higher percentages of women and those households who had been displaced and returned to their places of origin."

recovery interventions. Humanitarian organizations have reported that return and relocation processes were not principled population movements.[71]

One year later (March 2020), humanitarian organizations launched renewed calls for action and support, highlighting critical unaddressed needs in Mozambique.[72] On 13 March 2020, UNHCR broadcasted through corporate videos that more than 93,000 people were living in resettlement sites and additional support was still needed.[73] Paradoxically, UNHCR's Idai operation in Mozambique was in closing mode, in an approach hardly consistent with a sound interpretation of UNHCR's principle of responsible disengagement.[74] For example, the UNHCR hand-over to PDGCAS in Beira was done with the modest implication of local actors, knowing that PDGCAS did not always connect well with local partners. The evaluation has not been able to collect data about the extent to which PDGCAS is fulfilling its protection oversight and coordination role after UNHCR's disengagement. UNHCR Idai operations in Malawi and Mozambique were cut short after the official deactivation of the emergency phase.

4.3.2 Capacity-building

In Mozambique, UNHCR's decision to extend its operation to May 2020, although made on an ad hoc basis, was coherent with the humanitarian situation, the Protection Cluster strategy, and expectations of national actors. The continuity of UNHCR's support contributed to some extent to mainstreaming protection across phases (emergency and recovery) and to reinforcing capacity-strengthening activities initiated during the emergency phase. UNHCR developed relevant protection tools and organized training for national partners (civil servants, security forces, local NGOs, and implementing partners).

In the three countries, training during the emergency contributed to capacity-building of regional governments and some local partners, and enabled them to respond more appropriately to protection issues, in order to improve the service to victims of SGBV and other risks. UNHCR showed its expertise and sufficient capacity to train local and implementing partners' staff. However, the evaluation has not been able to collect evidence of the extent to which local protection mechanisms (through local authorities or communities) were able to continue working after UNHCR's disengagement.

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[71] The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, launched in 1998, for example, state that IDPs should be allowed "to return voluntarily, in safety and with dignity, to their homes or places of habitual residence". The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2)

[72] For example, see: https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/one-year-after-cyclone-idai-25-million-people-mozambique-remain-need-humanitarian; https://reliefweb.int/report/mozambique/one-year-after-cyclone-idai-millions-still-need-assistance; https://reliefweb.int/report/mozambique/cyclone-idai-one-year-later-and-thousands-remain-need-support; https://www.unocha.org/southern-and-eastern-africa-rosea/zimbabwe; https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-tropical-cyclone-idai-response-baseline-assessment-round-4-manicaland-and

[73] One year on, people displaced by Cyclone Idai still struggle to rebuild and recover. See UNHCR video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmRkIHEzwfo; https://www.facebook.com/australia4unhcr/videos/its-been-one-year-since-cyclone-idai-wreaked-havoc-through-mozambique-zimbabwe-a/1492209997595871

[74] UNHCR (2016) "Operational Guidelines for UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement": "Disengagement would, ideally, be linked to the realization of solutions and the ability of IDPs to access and enjoy their full rights as citizens. Such a benchmark, however, demands a longer-term commitment that may be difficult for UNHCR to guarantee. UNHCR should thus aim to disengage from IDP situations once other actors, ideally national, can meaningfully take over. This in turn requires UNHCR and its partners to invest in developing national capacity for IDP protection, assistance and solutions." See also: UNHCR (2019) Guidance Package for UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement, chapter on "Considerations for UNHCR's responsible disengagement in situations of internal displacement".

4.3.3 Implementing partners

UNHCR's implementing partners in the three countries facilitated the operational response, essentially in terms of rapid assessments, CRI distribution and protection monitoring. In Malawi and Zimbabwe, UNHCR relied on existing implementing partners to support refuge-oriented projects (such as for livelihoods, education) in camps and surrounding areas. Partnership agreements were modified to switch from regular programming to emergency response, which helped in saving time that would have been wasted in engaging new implementing partners. Given that UNHCR's emergency response focused mainly on camp sites (despite efforts, limited resources hampered UNHCR's capacity to reach and assist affected communities in other areas), implementing partners with experience in the area were able to adapt their operating ways to the emergency situation, with some limitations. The partnership agreement with the implementing partner in Zimbabwe was terminated after the emergency.

In Mozambique, UNHCR had to identify and reach an agreement with new implementing partners to support the delivery of aid and protection amid the worst disaster in decades, which proved to be extremely challenging. In addition to the inherent complexities of such an emergency (urgency to respond to massive critical humanitarian needs, national and international mobilization), UNHCR hesitations about the engagement, budget allocation and internal bureaucracy resulted in delayed agreements and inefficient distribution of aid.

4.3.4 Private sector

As regards partnerships with the private sector, the response to Idai offers examples of operational synergies between humanitarian organizations and private companies. During the emergency response, it was in fact the private sector that helped to keep the ports and airports open; this included in particular helicopter operators (tour companies, former Zimbabwean farmers, large oil and gas companies).[75] Relevant UNHCRs partnerships with the private sector during the response to Idai have not been identified. However, car rental companies hired by UNHCR remedied the critical shortage of vehicles during the emergency response, contributing to mobilizing ERTs and UNHCR staff and facilitating transportation of goods and items.

4.4 Disaster induced displacement - beyond the Idai response

4.4.1 Major threats to and opportunities for UNHCR involvement in situations of climate-related disaster displacement

The following table summarizes potential threats and opportunities for UNHCR involvement in situations of climate-related disaster displacement. The analysis is based on learnings from Idai, interviews with a few members of UNHCR staff with experience in disaster response other than Idai and a documentary review of international frameworks and publications on displacement in the context of climate-related disasters (please refer to Annex 7 for completeness).

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[75] Deffor, S. (2019) "Reflections on the humanitarian response to Cyclone Idai". Humanitarian, Logistics Cluster, https://www.humanitarianlogistics.org/reflections-on-the-humanitarian-response-to-cyclone-idai

Threats	Opportunities
▪ Complexity, multi-causality and diversity in situations of displacement caused by climate and natural hazards may pose a risk of **diversion from UNHCR's mandate and may produce disparate responses**	▪ The progressive establishment of **UN initiatives and mechanisms to promote and coordinate inter-agency actions on climate change, DRR and disaster-related displacement** allows UNHCR to remain at the forefront of international discussions.
▪ **Multiple hazards** (natural, biological, technological) might interact in different settings simultaneously, making humanitarian responses challenging and outstripping the capacities of governments and a single organization.	▪ **Climate change and disasters are increasingly receiving political and financial attention** worldwide and there is room to explore further UNHCR partnerships and fundraising actions
▪ The constant increase in the number of IDPs as a result of disasters may put UNHCR under **additional strain and create operational dilemmas**, especially considering the chronic underfunding of UNHCR (and UN appeals).	▪ Climate change and disasters also generate **public attention** and could help with strengthening UNHCR visibility.
▪ Humanitarian responses to large-scale disasters are often immense and IDP protection is the primary responsibility of States, which may raise concerns about overlap, efficiency, added value, or the prioritization of **protection aligned with international standards**	▪ **National (climate change) adaptation plans** (NAPs), GCR national action plans, and the agenda for the protection of cross-border displaced persons in the context of disasters (Nansen Initiative / PDD), among others, can serve as entry points for UNHCR's support to States in addressing the issue of human mobility in the context of climate change
▪ **Responsible disengagement in disaster situations should enable progress towards durable solutions** through early cooperation with development actors, as part of response preparedness, early recovery objectives and integrating risk reduction throughout the response. These areas would significantly broaden UNHCRs scope of action.	▪ **Previous collaborations between UN agencies and international financial institutions** offer positive examples of working together and represents an opportunity to reinforce the humanitarian-development nexus, as an essential approach to comprehensively addressing climate change and disaster-related displacement.

4.4.2 UNHCR's added value in disaster situations

UNHCR's vast experience in providing international protection to refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs establishes the organization's added value in climate change and disaster-related displacement contexts. Several UNHCR documents highlight a specific set of domains, where UNHCR's expertise and mandate represent added value with

regard to disaster-related displacement responses.[76] Table 4 shows those domains consistently recognized or identified by informants as key contributions of UNHCR's response to Idai.

Table 4: Specific UNHCR protection domains recognized by informants during the Idai response

Legal support and normative development	Development of guidance for national actors to better protect the rights of people displaced in the context of disasters and climate change
Policies and plans	Advocacy for disaster displacement protection in national planning
Operational practice	Protection activities in areas of expertise as a relevant contribution to the inter-agency protection response in support of national governments (forced displacement, legal aid, documentation, identification of vulnerable groups, response to SGBV, ensuring access to aid, and participatory assessments)
	Cluster Lead for Protection, cluster coordination and mainstreaming of protection across clusters
	Profiling and registering of IDPs
	Emergency response staff deployments and multidisciplinary teams
	Support and coordination with governments during the emergency phase
Capacity-building	Training of local actors on PSEA, SGBV, age gender and diversity mainstreaming (AGDM), fraud and corruption, Kampala convention and other related topics
	Elaboration of protection strategies, monitoring plans and tools, SOPs
	Set-up of protection case management and referral mechanisms

4.4.3 Organizational learning from disaster responses

Recommendations emanating from previous reviews of UNHCR responses to disaster situations in the past decade, which were addressing similar questions to those covered in this evaluation[77] – such as UNHCR positioning in disasters, operational challenges and access to emergency funding – have not been followed or consistently applied in the response to Idai.

From 1999 to 2016, UNHCR engaged in at least 43 disaster-related operations, including assistance and protection both to nationals and to UNHCR PoC who were displaced or affected by disasters. The 43 cases include disaster IDPs, and two cases where UNHCR was involved in disaster-related cross-border displacement (Somalia to Kenya; Haiti to Dominican Republic).[78] Overall, there was a great amount of experience prior to Idai, on which UNHCR could

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[76] Goodwin-Gill, G.S. and McAdam, J. (2017) "UNHCR, climate change, disasters and displacement"; Deschamp, B. (2010) *Earth, wind and fire. A review of UNHCR's role in recent natural hazards;* UNHCR (2015) "Mapping of UNHCR Activities Climate Change and Disaster Displacement"; Entwistle, H. (2013) "The world turned upside down. A review of protection risks and UNHCR's role in natural hazards".

[77] Deschamps (2010) op. cit.: it included key recommendations, for example: being prepared for the alarming frequency of sudden-onset natural hazards; a clear call for an enhancement of emergency response capacity in ND response; the need to address the financial resourcing; a need for realistic time frames and exit strategies and the imperative to make the UNHCR role more predictable as the Protection lead at country-level in natural hazards (including: Protection needs to become integral part of UNDAC assessments). UNHCR Bureau for the Americas Representatives Meeting: Summary of the Discussion, 14– 18 February 2011: "The most effective way of acting in displacement situations caused by natural hazards is ensuring preparedness, including capacitating the authorities to intervene with protection sensitive emergency responses." Entwistle (2013) op. cit.: this suggested:
  ▪ "Clarify the Office's position in relation to disaster risk reduction and contingency planning as protection activities and join inter-agency efforts accordingly."
  ▪ Initiate discussions with OCHA's Civil Military-Coordination Unit to address protection issues associated with national militaries' engagement in disaster response.
  ▪ When present in a disaster-prone country, establish relationships with national Disaster Management Teams. At the level of the UN, participate in contingency planning processes to ensure protection issues are mainstreamed."
[78] Table of UNHCR operations in disaster situations (1999–2019)

have capitalized. Furthermore, from 2010 to 2019, UNHCR conducted at least 3 reviews, 2 mapping exercises to assess past responses to disasters, and 10 research pieces to clarify UNHCRs role on climate change and disaster-related displacement (see Annex 2). It is also noteworthy that the 2010 review of UNHCR's role in natural hazards already analysed five different scenarios of operational involvement, an approach also adopted in 2020 in the drafting of the document about Options for UNHCR's Engagement in Disasters.[79] Most of these reviews show that while UNHCR has been engaged with displacement in the context of climate change and disasters, both normatively (through the development of law and policy, for example, by leading the Nansen Initiative) and operationally (through protection and assistance in the field), this still needs to be institutionalized and mainstreamed.

UNHCR has encountered challenges in capitalizing on internal reflections regarding disaster response and cluster leadership and on its operational research production on protection in the context of climate change and disaster-related displacement during the past decade. This has resulted in what could be called a "knowledge paradox", showing that UNHCR has been able to apply only a limited number of the recommendations emanating from previous reviews and analysis about UNHCR's role in disasters conducted from 2010 to 2017. UNHCR has generated new knowledge and been able to lead global debates and clear the way for integrating climate change, disasters and displacement into the humanitarian agenda, but it has not been able to take ownership of its internal knowledge and reflections and turn them into predictable and consistent operations.

To some extent, the analysis of UNHCR's performance in Idai, the documentary review and the information collected during the interviews with internal informants point out that UNHCR has been unable to become a "learning organisation" from its responses to disasters. By way of example, the review of protection risks and UNHCR's role in natural disasters carried out by an external consultant in 2013 came to similar conclusions and recommendations to those identified in this evaluation seven years later, as follows:

- Clarify the Office's position in relation to disaster risk reduction and contingency planning as protection activities and join inter-agency efforts accordingly.
- Adapt existing protection in natural disaster training for UNHCR staff members, ensuring it includes disaster risk reduction and contingency planning as protection activities.
- Support UNDAC global and regional training initiatives.
- Review UNHCR policies on urban displacement, durable solutions, populations of concern, and assistance to host communities in light of protection risks in disaster response contexts.
- Continue to conduct inter-agency protection in natural disaster training courses, and further support protection mainstreaming within disaster response tools and guidance.
- Initiate discussions with OCHA to incorporate protection issues within UNDAC assessments, tools and training programmes.
- Further engage with IFRC to discuss the role of protection in disaster response efforts.

Furthermore, it is particularly relevant to note the Review of UNHCR's use of the CERF in 2014, which already highlighted the need to create an enabling environment for leveraging CERF funding for protection. Some of the major difficulties experienced during the Idai response included a scarcity of funding and UNHCR's weak position in

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[79] Special Advisor on Climate Action/ UNHCR (2020) "Options for UNHCR's Engagement in Disasters", 19 February 2020.

negotiating the distribution of CERF and the allocation of the Protection Cluster budget. This situation was compounded by overstretched operations in the region.

Important learning from the operational strengths in the response to Idai, to be considered for the future, includes the necessity for adapting UNHCR's protection expertise to situations of disaster-related displacement and leveraging its geographical and field presence, which was limited in the three countries affected by Idai. In terms of complementarity, Idai has shown that UNHCR has specific expertise that can be of benefit to other stakeholders. Regarding weaknesses, the isolation from broader national and development contexts, especially in terms of DRR and preparedness, and the high dependency on deployed international staff are critical factors that will have to be mitigated to gain effectiveness in future responses[80].

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[80] See UNHCR Maputo workshop conclusions for a comprehensive analysis of strengths and weaknesses during the response to Cyclone Idai.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Overall statement

Cyclones Idai and Kenneth were two of the worst storms ever to hit Mozambique and the surrounding region. In the case of UNHCR, they represented the "perfect storm", highlighting long-standing strategic and operational gaps in responses to disasters and related internal displacement in non-conflict situations. UNHCR's mobilization to put protection at the centre of the humanitarian response, to simultaneously coordinate with a large number of actors, and to deliver large-scale aid in three countries, and, particularly, the professionalism and commitment of UNHCR staff at the forefront of the response, were commendable and contributed to protecting the rights and alleviating the suffering of those most in need of assistance and protection. The expertise of the ERTs deployed and the support provided by CO staff were crucial in responding to the IASC Humanitarian System-Wide Scale-Up activation and addressing critical humanitarian needs.

From 2007 to the present, UNHCR has played a leading role in global forums and debates about the extremely complex and multidimensional interactions among the issues of conflict, violence, climate change, disasters, vulnerability, poverty, rule of law, forced displacement and protection needs. The High Commissioner's statements to the Executive Committee, the launch of the Nansen Initiative and the Platform on Disaster Displacement, the engagement in the UNFCCC and the collaborations with UNDRR and UNSLG all illustrate UNHCR's commitment to leading and making protection and humanitarian strategies evolve in a rapidly changing world. The organization has regularly produced sound and rigorous research papers, policies on protection, forced displacement and climate change to generate evidence and substantiate the decision-making and strategic positioning of UNHCR in facing these global challenges. Nevertheless, over the past 10 years, several reviews, mappings and evaluations of UNHCR interventions in disaster situations have addressed similar questions as those addressed in this evaluation - yet, their recommendations have been only partially implemented.

Furthermore, the efforts undertaken to provide UNHCR with policies and resources to position itself as a credible and predictable protection agency in response to climate change and disaster contexts were not sufficient to ensure full compliance with key UNHCR principles and humanitarian standards.[81] The magnitude of the disaster overwhelmed the capacities of small UNHCR COs (among the least resourced COs globally) and of the organization as a whole. It also revealed critical internal ambiguities on how to engage in climate change and disaster-related displacement. The evaluation found that there was a certain level of unpredictability surrounding UNHCRs response to Idai and Kenneth; mainly due to inconsistencies and delays in key decision-making processes, but also due to conflicting opinions across different levels of the organization; the inertia of managing small protracted refugee situations, and the isolation of these operations from national/development partners. These factors largely contributed to an irregular and below-standard response, despite some operational achievements and UNHCR contributions to the humanitarian response.

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[81] UNHCR (2015, 2019) Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response; Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement and Guidance Package; Sphere standards (see Malawi Protection cluster lessons learned); UNHCR Phase-out Malawi.

A clear international mandate, global humanitarian knowledge and presence, vast field experience and strategic leadership have placed UNHCR in a strong position to be a reference in the diverse landscape of climate change and disaster-related displacement. Nevertheless, the strategic debate and UNHCR's vision regarding these questions have not equally saturated all levels of the organization. The evaluation has perceived the existence of internal competing views about UNHCR's positioning on climate change and disasters, with powerful arguments both for and against enhanced engagement. The coexistence of two "schools of thought" – the debate between the "old UNHCR" versus the "new UNHCR", or between "core mandate" versus "new global challenges"[82] – has frequently arisen in interviews with staff. A reductionist interpretation of UNHCR's engagement in the Idai and Kenneth responses would conclude that the shortcomings in protection and humanitarian response are essentially the result of those different views existing in the organization. Significant efforts seem to be needed to gain internal awareness, understanding and support for strategies and policies concerning climate change and disaster-related displacement.

Moreover, the debate between the "old" and the "new", "core mandate" and "new challenges" is a false one. The approaches are not opposing but complementary, and it is by balancing both views that UNHCR is likely to be able to leave behind the ideological debate and move forward. The numbers clearly show that refugees and asylum-seekers escaping from violence, conflict and prosecution are growing exponentially, needs are increasing, and the fulfilment of UNHCR's "classical" mandate becomes more complex ("old school"). Some of the most acute humanitarian crises are protracted situations with persistent, large-scale political, financial and operational implications that will require renewed efforts and massive mobilization at some point in the future. Changes in the crises of Syria, Venezuela or Myanmar, for instance, and eventual opportunities for stabilization or even return, will put UNHCR at the centre of global geopolitics and will require full commitment. UNHCR's work is vital, and no other organization can do the same job, preventing victims of persecution and violence from being neglected by States or the international community.

In parallel, there is sound evidence of climate change as an increasing driver of forced displacement globally and of emerging related challenges which require a renewed UNHCR vision and different ways of addressing the protection needs of affected populations ("new school"). In this context, the evaluation of UNHCR L3 response to Cyclone Idai contributes to a strategic reflection with far-reaching implications that affect UNHCR's central elements of engagement in disaster-related (internal) displacement, operational approaches, tools, resourcing, staffing, and its relations with the broader international community and member States. Even more important, the way in which UNHCR decides to strategize and articulate its mandate to address climate change and disaster-related displacement in non-conflict situations may have a profound impact on the persons in need of international protection.

The internal reflection around the response to Idai should be a turning point to: i) better define UNHCR's positioning and strategic partnerships to confront climate challenges that overwhelm the capacities of governments and a single organization and that therefore require concerted action; ii) refine strategies and policies on climate change and disaster-related displacement; iii) reinforce the adherence at all levels of the organization to strategic objectives; and, iv) implement consistent and predictable responses to disasters.

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[82] Core-mandate referring to classical refugee emergencies in conflict situations vis-à-vis new global challenges caused by climate shocks, natural hazards, and other factors leading to forced (internal) displacement. These put increasing pressure on UNHCR to adopt a needs-based approach and act as a provider of last resort to both IDPs and refugees.

5.2 Key conclusions

Conclusion 1: UNHCR's response to cyclone Idai revealed a critical "policy-implementation gap" concerning its engagement in climate-related disaster displacement in non-conflict situations. The organization was not able to fully implement its own policies concerning emergency and IDP responses, or the internal guidance documents and international orientations on climate change, disasters or risk reduction. An ineffective application of the whole-of-UNHCR principle, low dissemination and awareness about policies at different levels of the organization, internal competing views about UNHCR's mandate and positioning in disasters, lack of specific tools and capabilities to respond to disasters and bureaucracy are some of the key factors explaining the dichotomy between strategic directions, ambitions and the reality on the ground in the case of the Idai response. In terms of prevention and root causes, international guidance (such as the GCR, Sendai Framework, UNFCCC Task Force on Displacement, Platform on Disaster Displacement) was not integrated into COs' programming. In terms of durable solutions, the application of international standards was weak (for example, the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons[83]). This critical gap is not only the result of under-resourced COs in "closing mode" being unable to engage in DRR or strengthening of national capacities. It is mainly a reflection of the significant challenges of putting into practice the vast implications of addressing climate and disaster-related displacement consistently and moving from "what to do" to "how to do it".

Conclusion 2: UNHCR's lack of engagement in the response to cyclone Kenneth illustrates the long-standing and unresolved debate on how to intervene in disasters in non-conflict situations. Not only the contradictions in the engagement to respond to Kenneth but also the shortcomings in the response to Idai impacted on the reputation of the organization as a credible and predictable actor in situations of natural hazards, disasters, and climate-related (internal) displacement. As described in previous chapters, gaps in UNHCR's response to Idai affected the performance of the protection cluster and protection mainstreaming. Moreover, in the wake of cyclone Kenneth in Cabo Delgado (Mozambique), other humanitarian organizations were establishing a footprint to respond to humanitarian needs in a region affected by unrest and low-intensity violence, while UNHCR was withdrawing its team. This decision led to some reputation risk and was not understood by the humanitarian community - despite the fact that a few months later, UNHCR succeeded in setting up a relevant field presence in Pemba, leading protection efforts and supporting the humanitarian response in the midst of increasing tensions in the region. These events shed light on longstanding contradicting views within UNHCR concerning its engagement in conflict situations affecting refugees vis-à-vis engagement in internal displacement and most especially internal displacement due to disasters; being a provider of last resort and the adaptation of a needs-based approach to supporting IDPs. While the extent of engagement in conflict situations is well understood within UNHCR and among partners, there is need to clarify the organization's role in disaster-displacement in non-conflict situations, both for an internal and external audience.

Conclusion 3: UNHCR's overall performance in the response to Idai and Kenneth was significantly determined by its ambivalence to disaster situations, as well as the inability to mobilize sufficient resources, including access to CERF, due to its hesitant and late engagement. UNHCR's response to Cyclone Idai was relatively aligned with the engagement criteria defined in the existing Policy on UNHCR's engagement in situations

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[83] IASC. Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

of internal displacement and was consistent with the magnitude of a disaster to which the organisation was obliged to respond. However, UNHCR's performance shows conflicting outcomes. On the one hand, UNHCR's presence contributed to the reinforcement of the protection lens as a key element of the humanitarian response, despite gaps and shortcomings. On the other hand, UNHCR effectiveness was limited and uneven throughout the three phases of the response (preparedness, response, recovery) and the agency was unable to ensure consistent standards of protection for persons of concern (PoC). Overall, UNHCR response to Idai was perceived as reactive and lacking sound direction. In terms of resourcing, funding and staff were at odds with the magnitude of the crisis, and delayed decisions negatively affected fundraising prospects and the consistency of UNHCR's response.

Conclusion 4: The limited involvement of COs in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) prior to Idai hampered its ability to participate in key UN decision-making forums when Idai hit. The COs were working on regular refugee programmes, almost in isolation from the broader development context and without stable and well-established relations with the UN system and national actors. Amidst a large-scale emergency, UNHCR struggled to timely articulate its interaction with other agencies and, particularly, to identify new implementing partners to support the operational response on the ground. Overall, Idai and Kenneth revealed the challenges for small COs in switching from regular and development-oriented programming to emergency responses. With a global perspective, UNHCR engagement in international initiatives and platforms on disaster-induced displacement, DRR or preparedness should have a local translation at COs level.

Conclusion 5: Idai has revealed the stagnating situation of small protracted refugee operations and the difficulties these face in terms of responding to large onset disasters and contextual changes, particularly in regard to securing adequate resources and limited technical capacity to invest in emergency preparedness. The refugee camps in the three countries were established more than 20 years ago,[84] and are still highly dependent on humanitarian aid; protection and living conditions in the camps were below standard and have not been significantly improved in years. Some recommendations from previous assessments have been barely implemented due to limited means. In Tongogara camp, for example, better shelter and housing conditions could have reduced the impact of Idai on households. The Cyclone Idai response was a missed opportunity to improve conditions in long-established camps regarding shelter and WASH. In Mozambique, instability and local tensions in Cabo Delgado began in 2017 and cyclone Kenneth should have deserved greater attention, despite restrictions to accessing the area.

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[84] Tongogara Refugee Camp (Zimbabwe) was first established in 1984 and reopened in 1994. Maratane refugee camp (Mozambique) was established in 2001. Dzaleka Refugee Camp (Malawi) was established in 1994.

6 Recommendations

6.1 UNHCR policies and positioning on disaster-related displacement

UNHCR's L3 emergency declaration is aligned with the Inter-Agency Steering Committee (IASC) Humanitarian System-Wide Scale-Up efforts, but the UNHCR Policy on Emergency Response Activation, Leadership and Accountabilities (2015) and UNHCR's 2017 Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response seem to have been taken into consideration only partially in assessing the scale of the Idai emergency. Moreover, the evaluation has identified the perception among staff that internal documents about climate change and disasters are scattered and require harmonization and clarification. In this context, the following recommendation is geared towards gaining clarity on UNHCRs role and position regarding climate-related disaster displacement with a focus on policies and accompanying guidance documents.

UNHCR's vision and positioning on climate change and disaster-related displacement	
Recommendation 1:	**Integrate existing policies and guidelines[85] containing relevant provisions on the organization's directions and actions in disaster related displacement into guidance on UNHCR's engagement in disasters, clarifying when UNHCR will engage, how (long) it will engage, and what role operations and bureaux will have across the different phases of a disaster response (from preparedness, response, to recovery). Provide clarity on decisions regarding resourcing, external relations, engagement and responsible disengagement.**
Action points	**1.1 Develop further the criteria to engage and disengage in disaster situations and bring decision-making closer to the ground.** A more precise definition of the criteria to engage and disengage, integrating operational considerations, would set the basis to prioritize emergency responses in contexts where UNHCR can make a clear difference in protection and aid delivery. As far as the scope of the engagement in IDP situations is determined at senior management level, the predictability and timeliness of the decision-making process should be clarified. Under the regionalization process, the definition of common operational criteria to intervene in disaster situations becomes even more important in order to ensure organizational coherence across regions and country operations, which are exposed to different intensities and diversities of natural hazards and local circumstances. The operational responses and solutions to the risks and impacts of climate, natural hazards and environmental degradation as drivers of vulnerability and displacement, including among already displaced populations and their hosts, as set out under UNHCR's Strategic Framework for Climate Action and the IDP policy - provide a good basis on which to continue discussions about engagement modalities and UNHCR's role in disaster situations.
	1.2 Define specific approaches and engagement modalities for the areas of action arising from a comprehensive approach to climate change and disaster-related displacement (as part of the elaboration of the new UNHCR Strategic Framework on Climate Action). The elaboration of the framework should be in the form of developing context-specific regional plans of action and context-specific approaches, which should fit into the wider UNCT DRR objectives, which in turn should fit into national adaptation plans
	1.3 Analyse the feasibility and desirability for UNHCR to adopt a "multi-hazards" approach (natural, biological, technological hazards), or an integrated risk approach, that includes risks related to climate impacts, natural hazards and environmental degradation, so as to prepare the organization to respond efficiently to more intense, more frequent, more diverse and simultaneously interacting hazards.
	1.4 Take into consideration the effects of both slow (extensive) and sudden (intensive) onset hazardous events and processes of environmental degradation to support an integrated understanding and response to their impacts on vulnerability, population movements and related protection concerns. More research is needed to better understand the complex interactions between climate variability and population movements, as part of a comprehensive and forward-looking approach to climate change action

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[85] The main documents referred to here are: i) Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response, UNHCR/HCP/2017/1/Rev.1, August 2019, ii) Policy on Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement, UNHCR/HCP/2019/1, 18 September 2019, iii) Guidance Package for UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement, Version 1, September 2019, iv) UNHCR Preparedness Package for IDP Emergencies (PPIE), January 2020.

	(e.g. the pilot inter-agency project that OSACA is leading on behalf of the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) for the Sahel).
	1.5 Analyse the underlying causes that prevent UNHCR from learning from the knowledge generated through operational experience, evaluation and research on climate change, disasters and displacement. Additional efforts should be envisaged in order to promote, incentivize and facilitate the sharing and access to institutional knowledge and its application, based on the results of the evaluation on use and management of UNHCR data.
	1.6 Disseminate at all organizational levels key policy documents concerning climate change and disaster-related displacement, attendant Guidance Packages[86] and action plans. Particularly in emergencies, preparation is key, as this makes it possible to develop automatism in order to act swiftly and in a timely manner when needed. Internal support and high levels of staff adherence are essential elements to make the organization evolve, promote change and deliver consistent results.
Responsibility	SET in consultation with DESS, DIP, DRS, OSACA
Time frame	12 months

Policies and plans need to be budgeted, resourced and monitored to quantify and realize the financial and operational implications of their implementation, to assume organizational and individual responsibilities and to be accountable to internal and external stakeholders. The magnitude of both climate change challenges and displacement deserve a profound analysis to balance policies and ambitions with UNHCR's constantly limited resources. The following recommendation is geared towards bridging the policy-implementation gap, by focusing on planning, budgeting and implementation procedures at the regional and country level.

UNHCR planning, budgeting and procedures on climate change and disaster-related displacement	
Recommendation 2:	**Develop regional/country operational action plans linked to the proposed guidance on UNHCRs engagement in disasters and UNHCRs Strategic Framework on Climate Action, which offer a framework for risk assessment, resourcing, monitoring and evaluation, engagement with UNCT/UNHCT and other partners, and implementation modalities for operations in the event of a natural hazard or disaster.**
Action points	**2.1 Ensure budgets and resources for responding to climate change and disaster-related displacement are regularly allocated,** and clarify request and decision-making processes concerning resource allocation.
	2.2 Develop a results-monitoring framework to accompany the actions/objectives envisaged in the new UNHCR Strategic Framework on Climate Action[87], this should complement the forthcoming UNHCR Results Based Management system and Indicator framework. Work with broader UN-wide early warning systems including those put in place by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and the African Union (AU) Climate Early Warning System (among others)
	2.3 Integrate disaster risk reduction and preparedness as part of CO and regional bureaux multi-year planning and budgeting exercises and define operational criteria to identify and prioritize countries where preparedness efforts and advocacy might be focused. DRR and preparedness activities at regional and CO level should be done in partnership with specialized agencies and government. Disaster prone countries need to prioritize part of their Operational Reserve (OR) for these activities. In line with international guidelines (for example, IASC Common Framework for Preparedness, Sendai Framework, Words into Action guidelines on disaster displacement) and internal UNHCR guidance documents (such as PPIE, UNHCR Displacement and Disaster Risk Reduction, PEPR, GCR). Regional planning should tailor organizational directions to regional and national realities, balancing organizational coherence with local needs and capacities. Response preparedness should also be done

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[86] A good example of guidelines for the organization to be better prepared for crises and to respond according to the most recent IDP policy is the Guidance Package for UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement. In addition, UNHCR has made significant progress under Pillar I, developing a *Legal Considerations Paper Regarding Claims for International Protection made in the context of climate change and disasters* and a legal analysis of *Refugee Law in a Time of Climate Change, Disaster and Conflict*.

[87] Resilience being the common objectives of DRR and climate change adaptation; early warning and early action are part of preparedness; disaster response and recovery are connected to durable or sustainable solutions for IDPs, refugees and vulnerable communities in areas of origin, refuge and resettlement.

	with solutions in mind – that is, analysis of risk in potential areas of origin/return, refuge/local integration, settlement/relocation to support safe, informed and dignified options.
	2.4 Review general UNHCR SOPs on logistics in emergency responses and prepare national operational logistics contingency plans, which should be regularly updated and checked, to ensure effective and timely response by country offices to sudden-onset emergencies. National plans should take into consideration national capacities and be prepared in coordination with national disaster management bodies, other humanitarian organizations and development actors.
	2.5 Review UNHCR's administrative procedures about management of core relief items (CRI), particularly records of CRI distribution to beneficiaries, agreements with implementing partners, in coordination with the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and key donors.[88]
Responsibility	SET (AHCO) in consultation with OSACA, regional bureau, and DSPR
Time frame	12 months

6.2 Participation in UNCT / UNHCT coordination and partnerships

International and national organizations used to working under the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and on long-term programming in development contexts are not necessarily familiar with the IASC cluster system and the centrality of protection in humanitarian interventions. The scale-up protocol in the response to Idai was effective in conferring global legitimacy to UNHCR as the lead agency for protection within the cluster system, although this change in roles was not fully understood by non-UN organizations in all cases, nor was it well communicated.

UNHCR's participation in UN country team coordination systems and UNSDCF	
Recommendation 3:	**Reinforce UNHCR's participation in UN country team coordination systems, and take an active role under the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) with the aim of participating in preparedness actions, mainstreaming protection across the humanitarian-development nexus and broadening relations with relevant public bodies (other than refugee agencies) and civil society organizations (CSOs) in selected disaster-prone countries.**
Action points	**3.1 Develop a strategy for enhanced engagement of UNHCR with governments, local organisations and UN agencies to facilitate advocating for mainstreaming of protection for Persons of Concern in preparedness and disaster situations**, including advocating for the inclusion of displacement provisions (and protection) in national DRR laws and strategies (e.g. Words into Action Guidelines on disaster displacement). Strengthened relations may contribute to making clearer Protection Cluster leadership or co-leadership roles from the onset; working relationships with other UN agencies and government would be smoother; and uncertainties on specific roles and responsibilities would be reduced.
	3.2 Intensify involvement in UNSDCF to benefit from the opportunities to participate in multi-agency and multi-year programming of relevance for UNHCR operations aligned with the upcoming new results-based management (RBM) System and roll-out of UNHCR's multi-year, multi-partner (MYMP) strategies 2020/2021).
Responsibility	SET (AHCO) in consultation with regional bureaux and country representatives
Time frame	12 months

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[88] See OIOS audit reports of the operations in Zimbabwe and Mozambique for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Climate change and disasters are vast fields of intervention, from both a humanitarian and a development perspective, that involve a broad spectrum of expertise, skills and approaches and, therefore, require pooling efforts and capacities. As part of its partnership development efforts, UNHCR's engagement strategy should be informed by the many ongoing inter-agency and multi-stakeholder initiatives in relation to DRR, climate change and resilience (e.g. Platform on Disaster Displacement, the UNFCCC, and the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda).

Partnerships with agencies and global initiatives on climate change and disaster-related displacement	
Recommendation 4:	**Reinforce UNHCRs commitment to climate action initiatives and develop further partnerships with agencies and global initiatives on disaster-related displacement, especially in the field of disaster risk reduction, preparedness, anticipatory actions and durable solutions for IDPs.**
Action points	**4.1 In addition to enhanced advocacy in the UNFCCC Task Force on Displacement, as well as the recent MoU with the platform on Disaster Displacement in support of the Nansen Initiative UNHCR should strengthen the partnership with key stakeholders convened under the Platform on Disaster Displacement in disaster-related internal displacement (both in emergency responses and durable solutions).** Furthermore, ongoing and planned efforts by UNHCR in climate action need to be communicated clearly to its staff as well as Member States in the United Nations Economic and Social Council.
	4.2 Optimize existing synergies and collaborations in emergency responses, preparedness, anticipatory actions, and durable solutions with other UN agencies (e.g. IOM, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNOSAT/UNITAR), Global Flood Partnership, and through the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) partnership).
Responsibility	SET in consultation with OSACA, DESS, DER, and DRS
Time frame	12 months

6.3 External relations, resource mobilisation and communication

UNHCR was one of the least-funded agencies through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) mechanism, and the budgets allocated to the Protection Cluster in the HRPs in the three countries were small, despite protection having been recognized as a central element of the response. Time was lost in coming to a decision on whether to engage, rather than engaging early on with counterparts on the ground and mobilizing resource and communication staff to the area.

Procedures for resource mobilisation and communications in situations of natural disasters	
Recommendation 5:	**Develop a consistent narrative to support communication, fundraising and donor-related actions, as part of the strategic reflection about UNHCR's positioning on climate change and disaster-related displacement.** In many cases, investing in the early deployment of communication officers, together with reporting and external relations profiles, may lead to positive returns in terms of funding, especially in highly competitive and crowded humanitarian responses to large-scale disasters.
Action points	**5.1 Clarify the role and contributions of UNHCR in disaster-related displacement to facilitate better access to CERF.**
	5.2 Make use of early warning systems in predicting the intensity and the affected geographical areas, to deploy communication/PI profiles, and external relations staff in a timely manner and gain a favourable position through early reporting to media, donors and external audiences.
	5.3 Integrate "communication for disasters" as part of regular trainings for ERTs, Emergency Coordinators and/or Communication/PI officers. In addition, support staff on the ground with a minimum communication package for disasters.

	5.4 Apply UNHCR's recommendations about resource mobilization for engagement in situations of internal displacement, including government, pooled and development funding. In this sense, a broader involvement of country offices in UNCT and UNSDCF actions, and liaison with non-humanitarian actors (e.g. foundations, private sector, development donors) can create new opportunities for larger and more diversified funding. Develop guidance and standard operating procedures (SOPs) for fundraising in disaster situations, which includes a clear overview of responsibilities at country, regional and headquarter levels.
Responsibility	SET in consultation with DER and regional bureaux
Time frame	12 months

6.4 Capacity building and technical support

Although UNHCR made an important effort to mobilize senior staff to be deployed as soon as possible, the first ERT members arrived with a certain delay to the field. Additionally, UNHCR's reliance on international staff resulted in a high rotation of ERT members, discontinuity and gaps in coordination roles. The lack of human resources also resulted in ERT members assuming double or triple roles, a blurring of functions, an inability to perform properly and limited knowledge of, and interaction with, the local context. Although COs had responded, in a reactive manner, to previous disaster situations over the past decade, they did not have the financial capacity and technical expertise to invest in emergency preparedness, even in a region that has traditionally been exposed to natural hazards.

Skilled national staff could play a greater role, contributing to gains in timeliness, effectiveness and efficiency, better knowledge of the local context, communication and coordination with public bodies and national organizations, continuity among the different phases of the response, and finally, reducing dependence on international staff. In order to successfully implement the new guidance on UNHCRs engagement in disaster response, staff involved in preparedness and emergency response will also need to be trained and brought up to speed on the new guidance.

Skills development on preparedness, disaster risk reduction and disaster response	
Recommendation 6:	**Reinforce disaster response capacities through training of staff involved in emergency responses, and upskill national staff to enable them to lead and coordinate preparedness and emergency responses locally.**
Action points	**6.1 Organize training on inter-agency policies and procedures, (e.g. United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) methodology), HCT and cluster system functioning, Disaster Risk Management, and preparedness and emergency response in disaster situations** for UNHCR staff at all levels, especially in development contexts and disaster-prone areas. Integrate these topics as part of the induction training at country level.

6.2 Organise a training programme on the updated UNHCR policy for engagement in disaster-related displacement (since the roll-out of the new guidance will need to be accompanied by training and adequate dissemination of the guidance). The training programme should target all levels of the organisation (HQ, ROs and COs, including national staff).

6.3 Ensure that the surge support to L3 scale up activation responses is adequate and meets requirements for dedicated cluster coordination. |
| **Responsibility** | DESS in consultation with GLDC |
| **Time frame** | 12 months |

ANNEXES

A1 UNHCR research and knowledge generation on climate change, disasters and forced displacement

A2 Relevant publications and evidence about climate change and displacement for the Idai evaluation

A3 Evaluation matrix

A4 Data collection tools

A5 External organizations interviewed

A6 Threats, Challenges, and opportunities for UNHCR's involvement in situations of climate-related disaster displacement