



SUMMARY

3rd Steering Group Meeting

Collecting, analysing and using data on internal displacement

Monday 4 March 2019, 15:00-17:00

IOM, Geneva

Participants

Meeting participants were as follows: Austria, Colombia, Denmark, Ethiopia, Germany, Honduras, Nigeria, Norway, Switzerland, Ukraine, United States of America, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, UNHCR, OCHA, IOM, UNDP, World Bank, Danish Refugee Council, Norwegian Refugee Council, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Joint IDP Profiling Service, Interaction, International Federation of the Red Cross and International Committee of the Red Cross. Afghanistan, Sweden and the Platform on Disaster Displacement sent apologies they were unable to attend.

Introduction

This third meeting of the GP20 Steering Group was focused on the collection, analysis and use of data related to internal displacement. Improving the quality and use of data collected is one of the key objectives of the [GP20 Plan of Action](#). The aim of the meeting was to give the floor to governments that have taken important steps to collect, analyse and use data on internal displacement in order to learn from their experiences, including progress and challenges. The meeting was also an opportunity to identify possibilities to work together on internal displacement data and discuss linkages to IDP participation, protracted displacement, durable solutions and laws and policies on internal displacement.

The number of actors collecting and producing data on internal displacement, as well as the type of data available, have recently increased. This does not always correlate with high quality data or the data being appropriately used. As Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs highlighted in her opening statement, there still remains a need to shift from gathering data on IDPs to gathering data on IDP *situations*. Since displacement does not occur in a vacuum, it is important to take into account the full context and make policy relevant analyses. There is a disconnect between data producers and policy makers and for this purpose, information needs and data collection and analysis capacities of national and local authorities need to be assessed and addressed. In this light, the Special Rapporteur specifically welcomed the work of the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics.

Nigeria's approach to collection, analysis and use of data on internal displacement

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) coordinates the response to internal displacement at the national, state and local levels, including interaction with emergency agencies and civil society organizations at all levels. Displacement is a recurring phenomenon in Nigeria and NEMA recognizes three broad causes of displacement: insurgency, floods and communal clashes. As of October 2018, there were 2,026,602 people internally displaced by conflict, while another 722,000 had been displaced by floods. In 2012, unprecedented floods displaced 2 million people in Nigeria.

NEMA categorizes IDP settlements into two types: a) formal camps which are government sponsored and b) informal camps and settlements, including with host communities. Taking a sectoral approach to analysing the displacement situation (e.g. WASH, shelter, food etc.) as adapted from the National Contingency Plan, NEMA has been collecting data through IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM). Different data sources are being combined, including from the State Emergency Management Agency, primary data collection, camp profiling, local informants and biometric registration in some IDP camps following the 2018 floods. Attempts have been made to differentiate between populations in need and affected populations as these are two distinct categories with different needs.

NEMA described some of the protection issues facing IDPs that also present challenges for data collection. These include unaccompanied children, community stigmatization of IDPs, access to populations in insecure areas as well as multiple movements, especially among populations that have returned and then are displaced once again. Multiple displacements can likewise lead to double counting whereas lack of access and reliance on key informants can result in unreliable estimates – all of which contribute to a potentially inaccurate estimate of the number of IDPs. Fatigue with data collection through assessments is also a growing issue, especially when the populations being assessed are not having their needs met.

Most of NEMA's data collection is currently restricted to the north east of the country. As such, the current scale of internal displacement may be larger than that captured by the DTM. At the same time, the conflict in the north east is becoming protracted. Questions are now being asked as to whether NEMA should explore options for IDPs to resettle inside the country. NEMA is also starting to understand the need to gather data in relation to socioeconomic needs since IDPs rely on local services (e.g. education). Livelihood opportunities need to be supported and expanded.

Ethiopia's approach to collection, analysis and use of data on internal displacement

The number of IDPs in Ethiopia has increased from around 326,000 in 2016 to 2.8 million in 2019. Based on the past three years of internal displacement trends analysis, conflict is the primary driver of internal displacement followed by disasters such as drought and floods. The root causes of much of the communal violence in Ethiopia are linked to competition over natural resources, mainly arable land, grazing land and water. Climate change may also be a factor. The majority of IDPs live in host communities though some are in collective sites.

Data on internal displacement is collected through the National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC), using different tools to assess the immediate needs of IDPs and their mobility. These include IOM's DTM, seasonal needs assessments, a rapid response assessment tool for sudden onset disasters, and damage and loss assessments for recovery and reconstruction. These tools are used by multi-agency teams at the federal and regional levels who have identified food, health, shelter, non-food items, water, sanitation and hygiene, education and protection as the main needs of IDPs. The data collected is intended to serve a range of partners, including the Government of Ethiopian, local and international organizations as well as donors.

The NDRMC also engages with IOM's DTM to track and monitor displacement and population mobility. The aim is to collect and disseminate data and information that is complete, accurate and timely. Bi-monthly reports are published on the current state of internal displacement. The NDRMC uses primary and secondary data through both quantitative and qualitative methods such as key informant interviews, focus group discussions and direct observation at site level.

The achievements of the NDRMC include improved working relations between the country's regions and line ministries as a result of aligning processes and activities, building trust and promoting transparency. Collaboration with partners has also reportedly improved. Government and partners wish to facilitate durable solutions for IDPs, which will require improved capacity, funding and quality data. The Government also wishes to expand the DTM to include registration of IDPs and improve interoperability of data collected on internal displacement with other systems.

Similar to Nigeria, the NDRMC described challenges to data collection such as assessment fatigue among displacement-affected communities, lack of physical access to some areas, time constraints, the geographic scale of displacement, multiple names of sites and balancing the expectations of the humanitarian community with the requirements of the Government. Maintaining data quality is also a challenge, especially given that key informant interviews and focus group discussions are less accurate for producing quantitative data than other methods such as censuses.

Honduras' registration of abandoned properties

In recent years, Honduras has seen a growth in forced internal and external displacement caused by violence and crime in the country. According to a profiling study conducted by the Government of Honduras in 2014 (with support from UNHCR and JIPS), following its acknowledgment of the phenomenon in 2013, it was estimated that the 20 targeted municipalities were home to around 174,000 internally displaced persons. It is hoped that the draft law for the prevention, protection and assistance of internally displaced people will be adopted in 2019.

The Cadastral Committee activated in 2018 and integrated by the Property Institute, the National Agrarian Institute, the Forestal Conservation Institute and the National Association of Municipalities of Honduras focuses on the lack protection of peoples' rights over properties and the subsequent desertion of these properties as a result of displacement. Based on this, the Committee has identified two main areas of work – a) the need for institutional capacity building, including on the rights of people over their property, b) development and implementation of an information system on abandoned properties, c) the implementation of a unique form to request protection of abandoned property, and d) the approval of the protocol for the protection of abandoned property.

Government authorities in Honduras have engaged in an exchange on the above-mentioned areas of work with the Government of Colombia. Additionally, support from UNHCR and Caritas International has allowed data collection efforts to commence in 292 communities that are at high risk of displacement. Efforts are now being made to triangulate this information. Nearly 5000 abandoned properties that could be linked to violence have been identified by the Property Institute. Within the 2019 agreement between UNHCR and the Property Institute, a process of verification in coordination with parish committees will take place. Pilot phases of data collection have been conducted using a national form that will soon be validated.

Efforts are also being made to work with the judiciary branch to foster sensitivity around internal displacement issues, especially with a view to the commitments made by Honduras for the Global Compact on Refugees (MIRPS), which includes a commitment on creating a registration system for abandoned property. Priorities for 2019-2020 include: a) continued capacity building for officers that work in the area of abandoned properties, b) approval of a unique form for the registration/protection of abandoned property, c) triangulation of available information of identified properties (Caritas and UNHCR) as well as the 5000 from the Property Institute, d) pilot of the module for registration. The ongoing Government-led nationwide profiling is also expected to inform priorities of the Government in 2019 and beyond (results expected in May 2019).

Ukraine's approach, challenges and next steps on IDP statistics

From 2014 to January 2019, the government registered 1.3 million people as IDPs in Ukraine. However, OCHA estimates the number of IDPs to be 800,000. Ukraine has a legal framework, several laws and regulations that ensure the rights and obligations of IDPs, including on registration and de-registration of IDPs in the IDP register of the Ministry of Social Policy (MSP). It has also participated in the [Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics](#) (EGRIS) since 2016, which has shaped its approach to IDP data.

Challenges with the registry include de-registration of IDPs and the voluntariness of registration, both of which lead to a potentially inaccurate total IDP figure. IOM estimates that five per cent of IDPs choose not to register, possibly due to stigma or because they do not need assistance. The current software for managing data on IDPs is also outdated.

Ukraine is working to update the software and to revise the register to identify non-IDPs, returnees and double counting. There is a dialogue between the MSP and the State Statistics Service of Ukraine (SSSU) on cooperation to improve the IDP register. The SSSU is also working to establish a temporary working group with MSP, Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and international organizations such as IOM and UNICEF to strengthen the scope and quality of statistics and data on IDPs in Ukraine. This work is inspired by the work of EGRIS and is a clear example of country members taking initiative to implement the international recommendations on IDP statistics currently under development.

Discussion

Hard to reach areas: Limited access to IDPs because of insecurity and physical geography is a challenge for data collection in both Nigeria and Ethiopia. In Nigeria, military convoys accompany statistics' teams but when there was a level red emergency, certain areas were avoided altogether. In Ethiopia, secondary data was used for areas that are hard to reach.

IDP political participation: Nigeria's Electoral Commission has put in place provisions that allow for IDPs to exercise their voting rights.

Durable solutions: While there is a growing need in Nigeria and Ethiopia for data to inform future planning and decision-making, particularly in relation to durable solutions planning, the immediate priority remains gathering data to inform humanitarian interventions. Given the often-made assumption that displacement situations will be short-term, and despite the evidence to the contrary, this means that data systems established also prioritize short-term information needs and it can be difficult to transition into systems and approaches that properly inform longer-term interventions and durable solutions.

Coordination: Data and information on internal displacement is often collected by multiple actors, which can give rise to competition as well as lack of clarity on the similarities and differences of datasets. Coordination arrangements among the various actors is thus critical to producing quality data in an efficient way as well as in generating a shared understanding of the scope and scale of internal displacement in a country.

Data linkages: In Nigeria, there is room for improvement on linking data on internal displacement to data on local service provision, e.g. the capacity of schools and teachers in areas receiving IDPs to accommodate internally displaced children. These datasets of the needs of IDPs on one hand and the resources available in receiving communities on the other, are not currently speaking to each other.

Institutional capacity: The quality of data collection will depend on the capacity of national institutional structures in place, which often times need to be reinforced, including with support from development actors and financial institutions such as the World Bank. National response capacity can be enhanced through joined up efforts by humanitarian and development actors (e.g. similar to what is being pursued now for refugees)

Recognizing displacement: Data is key to understanding the enormity and complexity of internal displacement, informing our responses and driving policy change. But the phenomenon of internal displacement first needs to be acknowledged and investments need to be made upfront in collecting reliable data – which is not always the case. This gives rise to a “chicken-egg” dilemma, whereby there is a need for data to establish that the problem exists, but an acknowledgement of the problem is required to allocate appropriate resources for data collection.

Conclusion and next meeting

The co-chairs proposed the next GP20 Steering Group meeting focus on addressing protracted displacement while fostering durable solutions. It will be important to tie the discussion on internal displacement data at this meeting to the next one to assess what data is required for securing durable solutions to internal displacement. The issue of solutions is not new and more long term approaches need to be adopted including thinking of internal displacement situations as a whole to assess the impact on all related sectors of society.