

Agenda 2030: what ambition for IDPs?

Summary

In September 2015, the world came together to agree an ambitious, wide-ranging agenda to deliver development for all segments of society by the year 2030. A year later, the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) explicitly committed to reduce internal displacement in a safe and dignified manner by 50% by 2030.

Such commitments are timely. The number of people living in internal displacement (IDPs) has more than doubled in the last twenty years. People fleeing conflict typically find themselves living in displacement for an average of 17 years. Such trends imply a massive failure to address internal displacement by the concerned states and the international community, and it is increasingly clear that internal displacement cannot be resolved by humanitarian response alone.

Instead, humanitarian efforts must be matched by sustained investments by states and development actors to resolve the underlying causes of internal displacement, be they conflict-related, hazard-related disasters such as earthquakes and flooding, large-scale development projects or extreme poverty.

Agenda 2030's 17 Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs) are a once-in-a-generation opportunity for IDPs to regain basic human rights: their homes, a livelihood, security and justice, and the ability to make decisions about their future and to feed, clothe and educate their children. Indeed, without including IDPs, many of the SDGs are impossible to achieve.

As part of a series of briefings on internal displacement, this paper will argue that with adequate political leadership, Agenda 2030 is an

opportunity to address the wide-ranging consequences of internal displacement while easing the pressure on an overstretched humanitarian system. But for this to happen, the needs of internally displaced people must be made far more explicit throughout the 2030 agenda.

Christian Aid is dedicated to GP20, the global campaign on internal displacement, led by States with UN agencies and NGOs, which calls for the prevention of further forcible displacement, strengthened protection, and durable solutions that support the choice of people internally displaced. In support of this, Christian Aid is calling for global political leadership to put internal displacement squarely on the Development Agenda. Christian Aid is also calling on all development and humanitarian partners to ensure that humanitarian response, and also development aid, delivers for IDPs.

Introduction

As citizens, IDPs have equal rights to participate in and benefit from national development processes, and states have a duty to ensure this is the case, without discrimination.² The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (GPID) and the Framework for National Responsibility³ offer normative guidance to help them do so throughout 'phases' of internal displacement, not only in 'peak' crises.⁴

Yet, to date, IDPs have been consistently excluded from development strategies. A 2004 UNHCR study with the World Bank found that, 'less than half of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers ... for IDP countries factor in the IDPs in the poverty profiles or strategies for poverty reduction.'⁵ Ten years later, in 2014, the European Commission highlighted that: 'While ... IDPs frequently benefit from humanitarian assistance, they are often excluded from

programmes and activities carried out by development actors, with the result that their developmental needs may be neglected and efforts to achieve sustainable solutions receive inadequate attention...'

The consequences of this exclusion are clear: 40 million people are currently internally displaced after fleeing conflict.⁶ Some 80% of them have been displaced for years.⁷ On average, 25 million people are forced to flee natural disasters every year. The overwhelming majority of IDPs are found in low and lower-middle income countries, and are usually living in poverty. In conflict contexts, figures are rising steadily with a 40% increase from 2011 to 2017 alone. Meanwhile, annual 'new' displacement has almost trebled since 2010, from 3 to over 8 million people displaced every year, placing greater strain than ever on the humanitarian system.

"...We pledge that no one will be left behind. Recognizing that the dignity of the human person is fundamental, we wish to see the Goals and targets met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society. And we will endeavor to reach the furthest behind first."

Paragraph 4 of the Agenda 2030 Declaration

No one left behind?

Both Agenda 2030 and the WHS committed to the principle of leaving no-one behind.^{8,9}

Of 851 individual and joint commitments to 'Leave No One Behind' at the WHS, 347 relate specifically to reducing and addressing displacement. Significant IDP-focused commitments at the Summit include new policies and approaches, integration of IDPs in national development plans, access to education, the development and implementation of regional frameworks, such as those pioneered by the African Kampala Convention, and improved data collection.

Taken together, the global and political ambition demonstrated at the WHS, and under Agenda 2030, represent an encouraging commitment to genuinely address the various causes of forced displacement while responding to its wide-ranging consequences. It also reflects the growing consensus that internal displacement is a development challenge at least equal to the humanitarian challenge.

Yet, although just months later in September 2016 an international refugee summit initiated the process behind the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), IDPs have slid from the agenda, or are a side note.

Similarly, as states implement Agenda 2030, IDPs are not referenced under any individual development goal – including Goal 13 on climate change, and Goal 16 on peace and security, two key drivers of forced displacement.¹⁰

IDPs, or even more broadly, people living in forced displacement, are not reflected as a specific group and a search for 'internal displacement' or 'IDP' returns less than twenty documents and statements across the entire Agenda 2030 database (at time of writing). Following the 2016 High Level Political Forum review – ironically focusing on the theme 'Leave No One Behind' – neither the report nor the draft Ministerial Statement contain a single reference to internal displacement or IDPs, despite a direct reference to refugees amongst vulnerable groups.¹¹

At country levels, a similar pattern emerges. Analysis of Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) that aim to assess progress against goals at country levels indicates that, even in countries with chronic internal displacement, IDPs continue to be excluded from development analysis and planning processes. Where IDPs are referenced at all, they are primarily categorised under the 'humanitarian

caseload', which tends not to be targeted under national development programming but 'outsourced' to international humanitarian budgets and actors.

Nigeria's VNR includes under targets and disaggregated data for Goal 1, no poverty, the number of people missing, injured, relocated or evacuated due to disasters per 100,000 people. This indicator is classified into three parts, namely: i) deaths (ii) missing people (iii) affected by way of injury, relocation or evacuation.

It should be noted, however, that displacement as a consequence of conflict is not reflected, and no other goal references IDPs within dedicated targets or data. Goal 16, peace and justice, refers to funding initiatives to provide immediate (i.e. humanitarian) support to IDPs and IDP camps as an emergency measure.

Afghanistan has invested in a dedicated IDP policy, and considerable effort has been made to respond to the country's chronic challenge of internal displacement. Yet, the VNR submitted as part of the national adaptation of Agenda 2030 in July 2017 includes just two references to IDPs or internal displacement, even within the poverty analysis where the social protection priorities list a) disabled, b) martyred families, c) pensioners and d) vulnerable families with children under the age of 10.

The same document cites over 2.9 million people living in displacement. The related 2017-2021 National Peace and Development Framework, a five-year strategic development plan within the framework of the SDGs, references IDPs only as a 'vital part of the national development strategy', failing to identify any specific targets for IDPs either alone or under the subsequent development priorities outlined.

Uganda's July 2016 VNR and Report on Readiness for Implementation of Agenda 2030 – also themed 'Leave No One Behind' – includes not a single reference to IDPs as a target group. Within a mapping of national development and SDG indicators, IDPs feature just once in relation to provision of water infrastructure. Despite Uganda's positive examples of responding to massive internal displacement and refugee flows in recent years, some 30,000 IDPs are still registered in formal camps, and an unknown number are living in urban centres and with rural hosts.¹²

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with a displaced population of 4.5 million,¹³ and where adaptation and national SDG roll out has yet to take place, a 2012 Rio+20 report

'The average person fleeing conflict will spend a staggering 17 years living in displacement'

The forgotten millions

OCHA, 2015

against sustainable development mentioned IDPs only as a side note to wider political and economic challenges to development. This is despite well-documented direct links between the DRC's natural resource economy, conflict and the forced displacement of its people.¹⁴

Perhaps even more telling is the fact that more than half of the ten countries currently home to the highest number of IDPs – some 20 million people collectively – have not yet submitted any preparatory analysis in support of SDG roll out at all. This means that in Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Ukraine and Yemen, prospects for long-term support to IDPs remain completely out of reach.

Agenda 2030 can still deliver for internally displaced people...

Although IDPs are not explicitly targeted under the 17 goals, progress towards almost all of them could impact positively on people living in displacement. Below we illustrate how key goals can be made relevant to people living in internal displacement.¹⁵

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Perhaps most relevant of all is the goal to end poverty. Over 80% of IDPs are living in low and lower-middle income countries. Within these, IDPs are often among the poorest groups of society, and have lost most if not all of their human and financial capital as a result of their displacement.

Contexts of chronic and repeated displacement suggest the impacts of losing social and community support networks in particular can be cumulative, with people losing the will to do anything more than just survive. The social, political and economic exclusion that typically follows displacement means the poverty experienced by IDPs is often greater and longer-lasting than the poverty experienced by others.

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Closely linked to issues of poverty and aid dependency, IDPs are often at risk of high levels of food insecurity, able to neither produce food nor purchase it. Over time, food insecurity can in fact worsen as humanitarian resources dwindle, yet IDPs remain living in limbo – the effects of which can often extend to host communities who themselves may be coping with poverty and food insecurity.

By understanding and reflecting the need for IDPs to regain access to land, livestock and

employment as part and parcel of national strategies to end hunger and achieve food security, goal 2 can ensure IDPs are supported in critical steps towards durable solutions.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Women are disproportionately affected by displacement. They account for around half of all IDPs, with children making up a further 40%.¹⁶ All too often they are subjected to heightened levels of violence, including sexual violence, within their so-called refuge. Yet women typically take on family and community leadership roles in displacement. Women IDPs are also entitled to gender equality, but their particular circumstances require additional consideration to ensure their diverse concerns are fully reflected.

Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Loss of land and economic assets, loss of documentation including work records or residency papers, and loss of social networks as a result of displacement, all contribute to make IDPs less likely to obtain employment or sustain a livelihood. Prejudice and being 'foreign' can form additional barriers, with women especially challenged due to insecurity and childcare issues.

Goal 10: Reduce inequalities within and among countries

IDPs frequently belong to minority ethnic, religious or national groups which can be a basis for marginalisation and exclusion in times of peace and stability, and may actively contribute to violence and their displacement.

States must be held accountable for ensuring respect for the principle of equal rights and with it, the social, political and economic inclusion of all citizens. This is key both to preventing displacement in the first place and to achieving durable solutions following displacement.

Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

The vast majority of internally displaced persons today are found outside camps – living with host families or extended family, informal gatherings or in urban centres. In response, humanitarians have prioritised targeting and assistance in urban contexts over recent years but face multiple challenges.

Urban planning and development policies that explicitly acknowledge the economic and security challenges facing IDPs

'If left unaddressed, protracted displacement generates further marginalisation, inequality, fragility, vulnerability and erodes people's resilience. This poses a serious impediment to... sustainable development both for the displaced persons and host communities.'

Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Chaloka Beyani, April 2015

could dramatically improve responses to internal displacement and help reach durable solutions.

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

With an average of 25 million people displaced by natural disasters every year, investing in preparedness, early warning and early action systems, and disaster risk reduction is critical to preparing for, preventing and responding to internal displacement due to climate change.

Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

The growing numbers of people living in protracted internal displacement are reflective of continued exclusion and instability, often against a backdrop of weak rule of law and ineffective or corrupt justice mechanisms. Failing to provide legal redress for violations of individual human rights – which may result in reparations – prolongs displacement and a sense of disenfranchisement amongst IDPs.

This, in turn, impedes peace processes and paths towards durable solutions. Building strong, effective rule of law and accompanying institutions is core to preventing and responding to internal displacement.

...but only with genuine political will

Turning this into reality requires one crucial ingredient: national and international political will, and the World Humanitarian Summit saw an expression of this. Collective commitments to change the way aid actors do business emphasised the importance of, among other things: support to local and national response; greatly improving participation of those receiving assistance; improving needs assessments and analysis including through data collection; overcoming the humanitarian-development divide.

But these commitments were for the most part limited to the humanitarian sphere. To succeed, internal displacement must also be prioritised within the global and national development agendas. Through the SDG roll out, governments must identify their own national targets based on the country circumstances that reflect the challenges of internal displacement. This requires comprehensive analysis of IDPs'

distinct needs, along with specific targets embedded within the various goals.

For this to happen, improving data collection before, during and following internal displacement is crucial to ensure adequate analysis of IDP needs, and effective monitoring of responses. The extent to which people have truly found solutions can only be ascertained through good data.

National leadership and political prioritisation should be accompanied by the creation of appropriate laws and policies along with concrete investments in effective governance structures to apply such policies.¹⁷ The Kampala Convention is an example of a comprehensive legal framework to guide prevention, response and resolution of internal displacement that states should seek to either operationalise or replicate as relevant. Local civil society and IDPs themselves play critical roles in advocating for the development, and the subsequent upholding, of such frameworks.

Indeed, local aid actors are key to making this shift happen. Another core commitment under the WHS, 'localisation' aims to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance and protection through national and local leadership of humanitarian response while developing local capacity. A humanitarian priority, it is a long-term venture, and equally applicable to development programming with clear development outcomes in and of itself.

It makes sense for organisations like Christian Aid to support and strengthen local and national organisations, including public service providers, that are already able – or have the potential – to work with communities, and for international donors to prioritise funding to such structures. This includes Grand Bargain signatories reaching the target of 25% funding to national and local organisations by 2020.

The participation of IDPs themselves, particularly women, is imperative if they are to shape their own futures and hold duty bearers accountable. Local responses driven by communities often build 'layers' of response, and are less affected by the humanitarian and development 'silos' of international aid.

Paragraph 23 of the Agenda 2030 Declaration:

'Those whose needs are reflected in the Agenda include all children, youth, persons with disabilities (of whom more than 80% live in poverty), people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees and internally displaced persons and migrants.'

‘Discussions on human mobility have yielded progress on refugees and migrants, and reporting on commitments made at the Summit predominantly focused on refugees. Meanwhile internal displacement continues to rise each year... With internally displaced people accounting for two-thirds of all forcibly displaced people, the political, humanitarian and development agendas must prioritise this issue.’

OCHA, First Annual Synthesis Report on Progress since WHS, November 2017

Recommendations

While some states have actively sought to establish national laws and policies to include IDPs, the vast majority have not. Implementing these recommendations should not be aspirational, but should be seen as action long overdue.

In support of GP20, the new global campaign on internal displacement led by states with UN agencies and with dedicated support from Christian Aid and other NGOs, Christian Aid is calling for states, donors and international organisations to concretely bridge the gap for IDPs and ensure they are genuinely brought into the ambitious 2030 agenda by:

- 1. supporting the UN Secretary-General to commission a high-level expert report on the situation of IDPs which will help to exchange good state practice among states, and build recommendations and standards to advance the implementation of commitments**
- 2. following this up by considering its recommendations and making proposals to implement these within an independent Commission or alternative**
- 3. ensuring the UN General Assembly debates these proposals and discusses concrete processes to support interested states, donors and international organisations.**

To affected states

Leadership

1. Review global Agenda 2030 targets to ensure dedicated IDP data are reflected, and then in national goals.
2. Ensure that IDPs are fully included as target populations and partners in policies, programmes and national action plans to implement the post-2015 sustainable development goals.
3. Approach prevention and resolution of internal displacement as an investment in development and conflict prevention.
4. Prioritise livelihoods and access to market approaches to assist IDPs in (re-)entry to the labour market.

Policy and resourcing

5. Ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place for full participation of internally displaced people in development processes. Such processes should also allow for accountability directly to IDPs.

6. Establish and invest in sufficient capacity for disaggregated data collection on, and profiling and needs assessments of, IDPs before, during and after displacement.
7. Develop comprehensive national legal frameworks and policies on internal displacement, based on international law, such as is demonstrated by the Kampala Convention.
8. Make adequate budgetary provisions and ensure sufficient human resource capacity in all relevant ministries and local authorities to implement such legal frameworks and policies.

To donors and international organisations

Leadership

9. Review global Agenda 2030 targets to ensure dedicated IDP data are reflected within SDG Target 17.18, ‘to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics.’
10. Humanitarian and development actors should systematically analyse and plan together internal displacement responses, and identify mechanisms to promote integrated approaches from the early stages of displacement.
11. Follow through on the WHS and Grand Bargain commitment to increase collaborative multi-year humanitarian funding and planning, which activates the humanitarian-development nexus.

Law, policy and data

12. Ensure that disaggregated IDP data is reflected as a distinct part seuc-group within Target 10.7, to ‘facilitate orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies’
13. International and regional development actors, development donors and others should ensure that IDPs are targeted and subsequently monitored as a specific group within policies, strategies and funding decisions that support durable solutions and national SDGs.
14. The Kampala Convention provides legally binding standards and guidance on IDP treatment and development assistance. Other regional bodies should seek to develop such IDP frameworks.

Endnotes

- 1 The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are: Goal 1: No Poverty; Goal 2: Zero Hunger; Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being for people; Goal 4: Quality Education; Goal 5: Gender Equality; Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation; Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy; Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities; Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production; Goal 13: Climate Change; Goal 14: Life Below Water; Goal 15: Life on Land; Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; Goal 17: Global partnership for sustainable development.
- 2 Underlining the moral imperative to address poverty and promote human dignity, the 1945 UN Charter legally commits all states to ensuring higher standards of living, economic and social progress and development. The 1986 UN Declaration on the Right to Development declares: 'States have the ... duty to formulate appropriate national development policies that aim at the constant improvement of the well-being of ... all individuals, on the basis of ... active, free and meaningful participation in development.'
- 3 See www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/04_national_responsibility_framework_Eng.pdf
- 4 'The Principles identify the rights and guarantees relevant to the protection of the internally displaced in all phases of displacement. They provide protection against arbitrary displacement, offer a basis for protection and assistance during displacement, and set forth guarantees for safe return, resettlement and reintegration. Although they do not constitute a binding instrument, these Principles reflect and are consistent with international human rights and humanitarian law and analogous refugee law.' Introductory Note to the GPs, Francis Deng. See www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/GPEnglish.pdf
- 5 *Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers – A Displacement Perspective*, UNHCR, October 2004
- 6 *Global Report on Internal Displacement*, IDMC, 2017
- 7 *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons*, A/HRC/29/34, Chaloka Beyani, OHCHR, 2015
- 8 The WHS commitment to 'Leave No One Behind' mirrored the 2030 Agenda Declaration which 'pledge(s) to leave no one behind' and states that: 'People who are vulnerable must be empowered. Those whose needs are reflected in the Agenda include all children, youth, persons with disabilities (of whom more than 80% live in poverty), people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees and internally displaced persons and migrants.'
- 9 Agenda 2030 Declaration – see <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>
- 10 This had been highlighted by various actors before the conclusion and agreement of the overall Goals, Targets and Declaration. As highlighted by the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs in an April 2015 report arguing for distinct IDP targets and analysis within the SDGs, a December 2014 synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 sustainable development 'agenda' referred to 'gap issues', specifically citing internal displacement. This was after a July 2014 summit where over 20 States argued for a dedicated IDP/refugee target under Goal 16. No such target was retained in the final versions.
- 11 *High-level political forum on sustainable development report*, Economic and Social Council, July 2016
- 12 A lack of data since UNHCR handed over data collection to national authorities means the extent to which IDPs have genuinely found solutions is unclear.
- 13 OCHA, April 2018
14. www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/conflict-minerals/conflict-minerals-eastern-congo/
15. See the comprehensive April 2015 report by the Special Rapporteur on IDPs to the Human Rights Council which provides an excellent overview of the human rights of IDPs in the context of a post-2015 development agenda.
16. Data from IDMC, UNICEF, UNHCR
17. *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for internally Displaced persons*, Inter-Agency Standing Committee, April 2010

A FAIR deal for IDPs

Christian Aid is calling for all countries to ensure a FAIR deal for IDPs: one that is funded, ambitious, inclusive and respects international law.

Funded for the long-term rather than on a short-term appeal basis.

Ambitious moving beyond commitments at summits to action that matches the scale of the problem.

Inclusive protection for all people on the move, especially those currently left behind such as the stateless and people who have been trafficked.

Respects international law which protects all civilians – it is rights-based, respecting the fundamental human rights of IDPs, and during war it ensures all civilians are protected by international humanitarian law especially when governments suspend rights. The UN Summit must kick start a process for all states to integrate the GPID into national laws and policies, which if respected would ensure protection and assistance for IDPs, and help to stop them being discriminated against.



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Christian Aid is a Christian organisation that insists the world can and must be swiftly changed to one where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty.

We work globally for profound change that eradicates the causes of poverty, striving to achieve equality, dignity and freedom for all, regardless of faith or nationality. We are part of a wider movement for social justice.

We provide urgent, practical and effective assistance where need is great, tackling the effects of poverty as well as its root causes.

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