

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT UPDATE

Period covered: 1 September - 10 October 2016

This update presents key internal displacement developments and policy updates



HIGHLIGHTS

Instances of internal displacement caused by conflict, violence, and disasters between 1 September - 10 October

CONFLICT & VIOLENCE

- 📍 DRC (199k)
- 📍 Iraq (150k)
- 📍 Syria (140k)
- 📍 South Sudan (30k)

DISASTERS

- 📍 Typhoon Meranti & Typhoon Megi – China (1.27M)
- 📍 Typhoon Lionrock – Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (100k)
- 📍 Hurricane Matthew – Haiti (61.5k) & USA (Florida, Georgia and South Carolina - 13.4k)

AMERICAS

Regional impacts of Hurricane Matthew

📍	AFFECTED AREAS	Bahamas, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Turks and Caicos Islands, USA
⚡	CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT	Hurricane Matthew
👤	FIGURES	At least 75,000 new displacements (reported 61,537 in Haiti and 13,438 in USA)

CONTEXT

Haiti: Over 3-5 October, Hurricane Matthew, a Category 5 storm, has triggered the largest humanitarian disaster in the country since the January 2010 earthquake ([OCHA, 9 October](#)). In coastal areas of the south, some 95 per cent of homes, infrastructure and crops have been lost ([WFP, 8 October](#)). As of 8 October, 336 deaths were reported by the government ([OCHA, 9 October](#)) but the toll was reported two days later to have risen to 1,000 ([Reuters, 10 October](#)).


Considering the scale of destruction and the number of people in urgent need, displacement figures are likely to be very high. Following government evacuation orders, 61,537 people were staying in 191 temporary shelters as of 9 October ([OCHA, 9 October](#)).

Haiti is still recovering from the 2010 earthquake, with 14,593 internally displaced households or 55,107 people still living in IDP camps and makeshift shelters in the capital ([IOM DTM](#), September 2016).


USA: On 6 October, a state of immediate emergency was declared for Florida, South Carolina and parts of North Carolina and Georgia. The latest death toll for all four states stood at 19 ([CNBC](#), 10 October). As of 9 October, 13,438 evacuees were taking refuge in 247 collective shelters throughout the four states ([Pan American Health Organization](#), 09 October).

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

China


 **AFFECTED AREAS** Fujian, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Shanghai, Zhejiang provinces

 **CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT** Typhoon Meranti


 **FIGURES** 618,000 new displacements

 **CONTEXT**

Typhoon Meranti – the strongest recorded worldwide this year – made landfall in southeast China on 15 September. Meranti has been described as the strongest typhoon to hit Fujian province since the founding of Communist China in 1949 ([Ministry of Civil Affairs](#), 18 September, [Al Jazeera](#), 15 September). The typhoon caused 29 deaths, the evacuation of 618,000 people, more than 7,300 collapsed houses, various degrees of damage to 61,000 homes, and a direct economic loss of 15.48 billion yuan ([Ministry of Civil Affairs](#), 19 September).


 **AFFECTED AREAS** Fujian, Jiangxi, Zhejiang provinces

 **CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT** Typhoon Megi


 **FIGURES** 656,000 new displacements

 **CONTEXT**

Typhoon Megi, the 17th typhoon to strike China this year, made landfall in Fujian on 28 September. As of 30 September, it had claimed 10 lives in Fujian and Zhejiang provinces with 29 people still reported missing. More than 1,200 houses collapsed and 656,000 people were evacuated ([Ministry of Civil Affairs](#), 30 September).

 **AFFECTED AREA** Pingtang County in Guizhou Province


 **CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT** Construction of a five hundred metre Aperture Spherical Telescope (FAST)

 **FIGURES** 8,000 displaced as of September 2016

CONTEXT

By the end of September, an estimated 8,000 people were displaced by Chinese authorities to make way for FAST, now the world's largest radio telescope ([Xinhua](#), 4 July; [Daily Mail](#), 8 September; [Xinhua](#), 25 September). The original plan forecast the displacement and resettlement of more than 9,000 people living in Pingtang and Luodian Counties ([Xinhua](#), 16 February; [The New York Times](#), 16 February). The mega-structure took five years to complete. Residents within eight kilometres of the site have been forced to relocate since 2009 ([Daily Mail](#), 8 September; [The New York Times](#), 16 February; [The Guardian](#), 16 February). The government reports that more than 600 apartments were built for some of those displaced in two new settlements about 10 kilometres from their original homes, and that displaced people will be compensated with cash or new housing and offered jobs in tourism and support services related to the telescope.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)

 **AFFECTED AREAS** North Hamgyong Province (Hoeryong city, Kyonghung County, Kyongwon County, Musan County, Onsong County and Yonsa County)

 **CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT** Floods / Typhoon Lionrock


 **FIGURES** 100,000 new displacements

 **CONTEXT**

From 29 August to 31 August, heavy rains brought on by Typhoon Lionrock lashed North Hamgyong Province. More than 300mm of rain were reported in just two days, causing flooding of the Tumen River and its branches in the region around the Chinese-North Korean border ([ReliefWeb](#), 3 September). The government said 133 people were killed and another 395 missing as a result of the floods. More than 35,500 houses were damaged – 69 per cent of them completely destroyed – and a further 8,700 buildings, including schools and public buildings damaged ([OCHA](#), 11 September).

Based on official figures and assessment findings, at least 140,000 people are in urgent need of assistance. Of those, more than 100,000 people are estimated to have been internally displaced ([OCHA](#), 11 September).

Philippines

 **AFFECTED AREAS** Batanes, Cagayan, and Ilocos Norte provinces

 **CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT** Typhoon Meranti





 **FIGURES** At least 10,000 new displacements

 **CONTEXT**

Tropical Storm Meranti (local name, Ferdie) intensified into a typhoon on 11 September within the Philippine Area of

Responsibility, resulting in the displacement of 10,214 people, 151 of whom had taken refuge in evacuation centres as of 17 September ([Philippines' National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, 17 September](#)).





Taiwan

 AFFECTED AREAS	Eastern and central parts of Taiwan
 CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT	Typhoon Megi
 FIGURES	11,000 new displacements
 CONTEXT	

Typhoon Megi killed four people and injured more than a hundred others on 27 September. More than 11,000 people evacuated their homes and nearly 3,000 were in shelters, according to the Central Emergency Operation Centre. At least two million households lost power and more than 35,000 homes were without water ([Channel News Asia, 27 September](#)).





MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

Iraq

 AFFECTED AREAS	Mosul and Kurdistan Region of Iraq
 CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT	Conflict
 FIGURES	150,000 new displacements
 CONTEXT	

As a government military offensive to retake Mosul from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) continues to gather momentum, at least 150,000 more people have already fled Shirqat and Al Qayyarah, located near Mosul, in recent weeks. UNHCR estimates that between one to 1.5 million people could become displaced as the offensive to retake the city advances. Past experiences from Fallujah, Ramadi and other major towns, as well as reports from the population, indicate that, in reality, safe routes out of Mosul do not exist ([Al Jazeera, 29 September](#), [Humanitarian Response, 20 July](#)).

Syrian Arab Republic

 AFFECTED AREAS	Aleppo and Hama
 CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT	Conflict
 FIGURES	140,000 new displacements in Hama; 275,000 people besieged in eastern Aleppo
 CONTEXT	

Large numbers of people were displaced in the first week of September following heavy clashes between government and

opposition forces in Hama Governorate. Around 100,000 fled from northern rural parts of the region towards Hama city and neighbouring villages. Approximately 40,000 fled to neighbouring Idlib Governorate. The displaced are staying in temporary shelters such as schools and mosques. An unconfirmed number of IDPs have no shelter at all. Since mid-September, only sporadic clashes in Hama have been reported ([OCHA, 6 September](#); [UNHCR, 7 September](#); [ISW, 23 September](#)).

Airstrikes, including “bunker busting” bombs, and ground attacks intensified across Syria following a collapse of a one-week cessation of hostilities. In eastern Aleppo, some 275,000 people were living under siege, under constant threat of attack and in urgent need of protection and life-saving assistance. It is difficult to estimate the number of IDPs in the besieged areas. Countless homes have been destroyed, rendering people displaced but unable to flee the city. The east Aleppo siege brings the number of besieged people in Syria to 861,200. Humanitarian actors have had no access to east Aleppo since 7 July, and a humanitarian convoy suffered a devastating attack on 19 September ([OCHA, 29 September](#)).

SOUTH ASIAN REGION

Afghanistan

 AFFECTED AREAS	Northern provinces of Kunduz, Takhar, Baghlan, and Badakhstan
 CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT	Conflict
 FIGURES	9,000 people new displacements
 CONTEXT	




In September 2016, more than 9,000 people were newly displaced as the conflict in Afghanistan escalated (IDMC calculation based on [OCHA situation report](#)). Most IDPs are sheltering in the northern provinces of Kunduz, Takhar, Baghlan, and Badakhstan.

The UN Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien, called on the international community to urgently scale up support to more than a million people expected to be displaced internally and across Afghan borders by the end of the year as the conflict continues to intensify. Of this figure, some [400,000 people are expected](#) to be internally displaced, with the northern, southern and eastern regions of the country receiving the highest numbers ([OCHA Humanitarian Response, 7 September](#); [OCHA, 7 September](#)).

On 5 October, the European Union and Afghanistan announced they have reached an agreement to return home Afghan migrants whose asylum applications have been rejected in Europe. This latest EU measure to mitigate the arrival of the many asylum seekers who have arrived in Europe since early 2015 is likely to increase the number of IDPs in a country where more than 1.2 million already exist. In addition, more than three million Afghan refugees living in Iran and Pakistan are also in danger of being deported back to Afghanistan and becoming IDPs again ([The Guardian, 3 October](#), [Al Jazeera, 5 October](#)).

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA




Central African Republic (CAR)

 AFFECTED AREAS	Kaga Bandoro, Kouango, Bouar, Bocaranga, Kouï
 CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT	Conflict
 FIGURES	8,800 new displacements

CONTEXT

Numerous clashes causing casualties and new population displacements have been reported across the Central African Republic ([ECHO Daily Flash, 29 September](#)). OCHA in CAR reported 4,000 people displaced near Kaga Bandoro and new displacements in Bouar ([RFI, 24 September](#)). On 10 September, clashes around Kouango (Ouaka Prefecture) killed 19 civilians. Thirteen villages were burnt down and an estimated 3,500 people were displaced. Since 16 September, violence between Peuhls and Anti Balaka groups in the area around Bocaranga and Kouï (Ouham Pendé prefecture) has caused at least ten deaths and the new displacement of 1,300 people ([ECHO, 29 September](#)).

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

 AFFECTED AREAS	South Lubero, North Kivu, Rutshuru Territory, Tanganyika Province
 CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT	Conflict and inter-communal violence
 FIGURES	At least 199,000 new displacements





CONTEXT

Clashes in early September between armed groups in South Lubero, North Kivu, forced more than 6,000 people to flee their homes during the first week of September. Operations are under way to assist about 50,000 IDPs living in the region. In neighbouring Rutshuru Territory, a gradual return of IDPs was reported following the deployment of troops there. A local NGO estimated 16,000 IDPs will soon return to the region. More than 187,000 people have been displaced in Beni Territory (Nord-Kivu) since a surge in suspected Allied Democratic Forces activity began in August ([OCHA, 8 September](#), [OCHA, 29 September](#)).

In the south-west province of Tanganyika, there were reports of more than 2,000 people fleeing inter-communal violence between pygmy and Bantu groups that erupted in early September. Nearly 450 households were reported to be sheltering in churches and host families in neighboring Kabalo locality ([Radio Okapi, 13 September](#)).

More than 10,000 people in Dimbelenge (Kasai-Central) have been displaced since 27 September, due to clashes between security forces and militia loyal to tribal leader Kamwina Nsapu ([Radio Okapi, 3 October](#)).




Nigeria

 AFFECTED AREAS	Northeastern states of Borno, Adamawa, Yobe and Gombe
 CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT	Conflict
 FIGURES	911,000 IDP returns
 CONTEXT	

According to IOM's August DTM, nearly 911,000 displaced people have returned to their areas of origin in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states. The government-facilitated voluntary return of displaced populations is gaining momentum, with thousands of people returning to their homes in the newly liberated areas. However, the scale of damage in the areas of return is immense and new humanitarian challenges are emerging. UNHCR reports that returning families face a precarious security situation, food shortages, economic disruption, and limited access to food, water and sanitation, shelter and health services. There are also reports of landmines and improvised explosive devices in the areas of return ([IOM, 6 September](#)).





These return movements are taking place against the backdrop of critical levels of malnutrition and food insecurity across the north-east. The Famine Early Warning Systems (FEWS) Network for Nigeria reported a critical food security situation across the three northeastern states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe. While the current humanitarian response covers all four northeastern states, access to large territories in Borno State remains very limited. This, together with low funding, has left humanitarian actors hard-pressed to meet minimum standards ([IOM, 24 September](#)). As of 15 August, a total of 2,093,030 IDPs were identified in Adamawa, Bauchi, Benue, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Yobe, Nasarawa, Plateau, Kaduna, Kano, Zamfara states and Abuja Federal Capital Territory ([IOM, 6 September](#)).

South Sudan

 AFFECTED AREA	Yei
 CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT	Conflict
 FIGURES	At least 30,000 new displacements 100,000 people besieged in Yei
 CONTEXT	





UNHCR is increasingly concerned for the safety and well-being of some 100,000 people trapped in Yei, South Sudan, a town in Central Equatoria State, about 150 kilometres south-west of Juba. According to the town church, more than 30,000 people have been displaced into Yei from surrounding areas, following deadly attacks on civilians and looting of private property on 11 and 13 September ([UNHCR, 30 September](#)). These IDPs joined several thousand others displaced from nearby Lainya County since mid-July, and up to 60,000 town residents who remain in Yei with no means to leave and who are now in as much need as those displaced by the conflict. This is the first time that the population in Yei, primarily farmers living on commercial and subsistence agriculture, has become a direct target of violence, on suspicion of their belonging to opposition groups ([UNHCR, 30 September](#)).

Sudan

 AFFECTED AREA	Western Jebel Marra locality in Central Darfur State
 CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT	Conflict
 FIGURES	5,500 to 12,500 new displacements
 CONTEXT	

Up to 12,500 new people fleeing from Western Jebel Marra locality are estimated to have arrived in the Nertiti North IDP camp in recent weeks, according to humanitarian organisations and community leaders in the camp. This new displacement, including large numbers mainly of women and children, follows reported hostilities between government forces and the Sudan Liberation Army – Abdul Wahid (SLA-AW) in parts of Western Jebel Marra locality controlled by SLA-AW.

Tanzania

 AFFECTED AREAS	Bukoba township and surrounding villages in north-west Tanzania counties remain inaccessible
 CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT	Earthquake
 FIGURES	At least 10,000 new displacements
 CONTEXT	

A shallow 5.9 magnitude earthquake hit north-west Tanzania on 10 September, about 44 km from Bukoba town located on the western shore of Lake Victoria. Five districts in the Kagera region were affected. It is estimated that 2,072 houses were destroyed and 14,595 severely damaged. Assessments found a need for temporary shelter, including 4,000 tents ([UN resident Coordinator, 22 September](#)). Local communities were overwhelmed by the number of affected families needing assistance. Most of the affected population were unwilling to leave their damaged or destroyed houses and stayed nearby in open areas, with friends and families or in sections of the house still habitable ([IFRC, 20 September](#)).

POLICY DEVELOPMENTS AND RELATED INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT NEWS

UN Summit on refugees and migrants (19 September 2016)

On 19 September, the UN General Assembly hosted a high-level summit to address large movements of refugees and migrants, with the aim of bringing countries together behind a more humane and coordinated approach to this issue. It was the first time the General Assembly had called for a summit

at the Heads of State and Government level to consider this specific matter. For some, this was a historic opportunity to come up with a blueprint for a better international response. However, internal displacement was a glaring omission from the resulting New York Declaration which made only a one-line reference to this growing worldwide phenomenon.

IDMC joined other humanitarian voices in reacting to the scant attention devoted to internal displacement at the summit in an opinion piece by IDMC Director Alexandra Bilak, [Missing the heart of the problem: Why ignoring internal displacement undermines the purpose of the UN summit on migrants and refugees](#). Similar concerns were expressed in a [joint open letter](#) by UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O'Brien, UN development agency (UNDP) chief Helen Clark, International Rescue Committee CEO David Miliband, NRC Secretary-General Jan Egeland and Chaloka Beyani, the former Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons. The open letter called for “better ways to prevent internal displacement and support the invisible majority of displaced people”.

New Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons

At the 33rd meeting of the Human Rights Council on 30 September, Cecilia Jimenez-Damari was appointed as the new Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons. IDMC [welcomes](#) the wealth of experience and expertise on human rights and internal displacement that Cecilia Jimenez-Damari brings to the mandate and looks forward to working with her again in this new capacity. Amongst her other previous positions, she worked for five years at IDMC as a Senior Legal Advisor and Training Officer. She will take up her new post in November.

Country visits of UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs

During his final weeks as UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons Chaloka Beyani visited Serbia and Kosovo ([OHCHR, 7 September](#)), Ukraine ([OHCHR, 9 September](#)) and Georgia ([OHCHR, 22 September](#)). In all four countries, Beyani noted progress on legal and policy frameworks for IDP protection. He also remarked on improved living conditions of IDPs in Georgia ([Agenda.ge, 26 September](#)). While commending Ukraine for establishing a new ministry on internal displacement, he also expressed concern that secondary displacement and unsafe spontaneous returns in the country resulted from the majority of IDPs being unable to receive their social benefits and pensions ([UN News Centre, 9 September](#)). In Serbia and Kosovo, he noted progress on housing, land and property as well as documentation issues for IDPs, but also the squalid conditions in which many IDPs continue to live, the need to verify IDP numbers and needs and to establish a process for reconciliation and healing ([OHCHR, 16 September](#)).

Colombia peace agreement rejected

The peace agreement signed in September between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (known by the Spanish acronym FARC) and the Santos administration was rejected in a referendum on 2 October. This leaves uncertain the fate of the accord aimed at ending a 52-year conflict responsible for more than 260,000 deaths and the internal displacement of over six million people.

The Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) kicks off

With a view to ensuring implementation of the Nansen Initiative's universally endorsed protection agenda for people displaced across borders as a result of disasters and climate change, the first meeting of the PDD's steering group of member states took place in September, chaired by Germany and Bangladesh. The PDD's work plan was on the agenda and a draft will be further discussed at a first meeting of its advisory committee on 13 and 14 November, in which IDMC will participate. Achim Steiner, formerly executive director of the United Nations Environment Programme, has been appointed Special Envoy for the PDD. On 5 October, the PDD was further introduced at a side event to the 67th UNHCR Executive Committee meeting in Geneva.

International Criminal Court to work on land grabbing

The International Criminal Court (ICC)'s latest case selection and prioritisation policy paper broadens the scope of the court's remit to include "illegal exploitation of natural resources, arms trafficking, human trafficking, terrorism, financial crimes, land grabbing or the destruction of the environment" ([ICC, 15 September](#)). No new rights or crimes are created by this shift and it seems the court's role in these cases would be to assist states in prosecution according to national law ([The Washington Post, 16 September](#)). On the surface, this expansion of focus by the ICC may have potential to address the adverse consequences of displacement due to land grabs and other causes. However, an accurate assessment of this potential requires a thorough review of the policy paper and its associated documents, including the Rome Statute.

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