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SOMALIA

Solutions for IDPs revealed as key for future peace and stability in Somalia

Somalia has witnessed over two decades of conflict, violence, human rights violations and natural disasters, all of which have triggered repeated waves of displacement. Although the first half of 2013 saw less new displacement than in previous years, there are still an estimated 1.1 million Somalis who are internally displaced. Most IDPs continue to live in dire conditions in protracted displacement, and prospects for durable solutions remain distant for many of them.



Internally displaced mother and child walk through the tents of the Mohamed Moge IDP settlement in Somaliland. Photo: IDMC/M. Caterina, June 2013

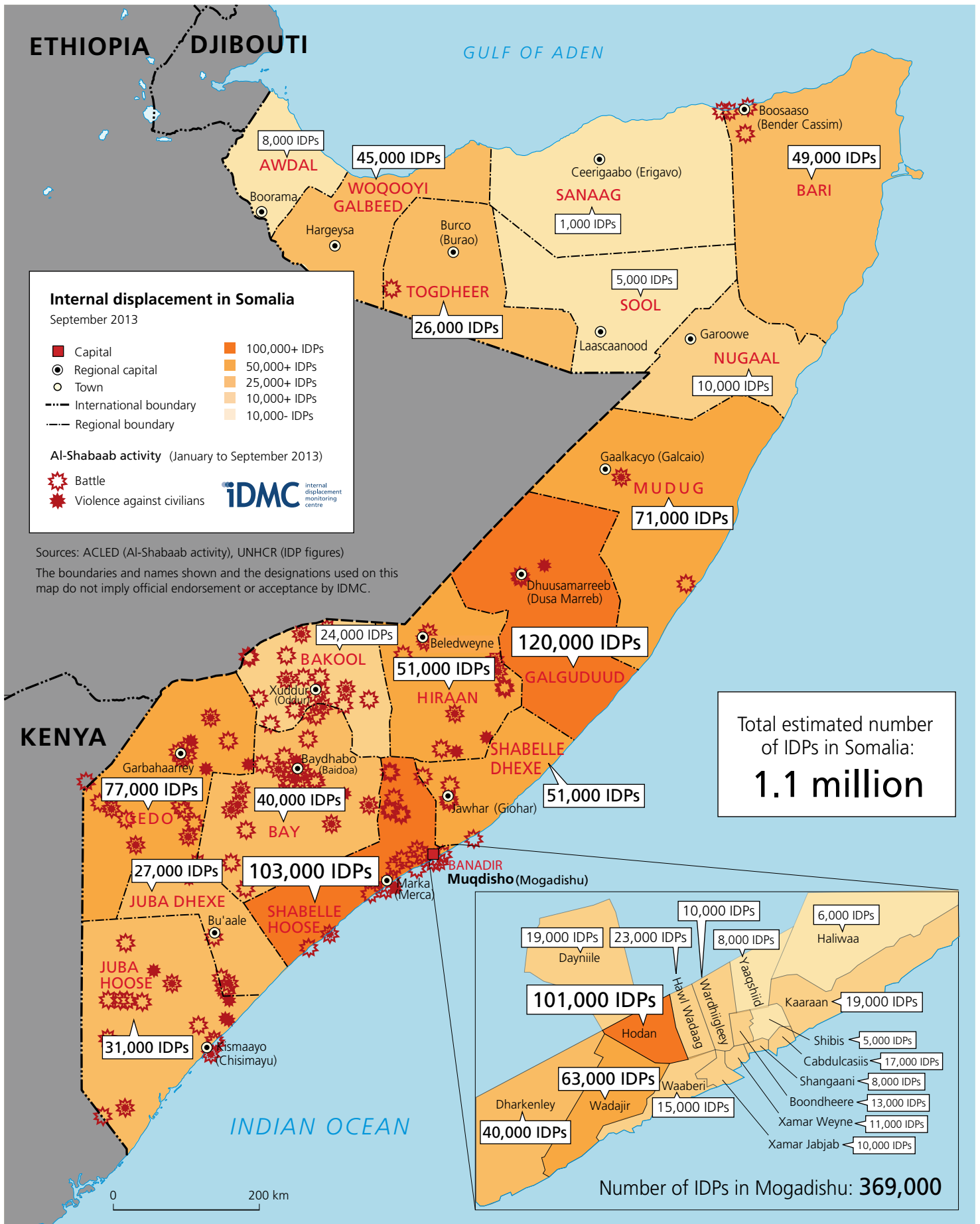
Since its establishment in August 2012, the new National Federal Government of Somalia has sought to promote peace, good governance and improve relations with parts of the country which have been seeking degrees of autonomy. However, the federal structure remains weak and potential for further instability remains. The Islamic militia Al-Shabaab, despite being ousted from some areas it controlled for years, remains a major threat to peace and security.

IDPs continue facing risks to their lives, safety, security and dignity. They are disproportionately at risk of gross abuses of human rights, especially women and unaccompanied children. Sexual and gender-based violence is widespread, even in areas of Somalia enjoying relative security. Many IDPs from minority clans suffer pervasive discrimination since they often lack vital clan protection and connections.

Although in recent seasons rainfall has improved and humanitarian actors have managed to reach many previously inaccessible areas, internally displaced people remain particularly affected by food insecurity, with many above the emergency threshold for malnutrition.

IDPs' living conditions in most settlements are dire. In many cities increased security, an improving economy and urban migration have led to an increase in forced evictions and relocations of IDPs.

Somalia has ratified the African Union (AU) Convention for the Protection and Assistance to IDPs but its ratification instrument has not yet been deposited with the AU. In March 2013, the federal government



Source: IDMC
More maps are available at www.internal-displacement.org/maps

took the commendable decision to develop a national policy on internal displacement. There have been similar policy initiatives in both Puntland and Somaliland. Despite such developments, implementing these policy frameworks will remain particularly challenging due to weak state capacity and scarcity of resources.

Solutions for internally displaced persons are critical to support stabilisation and peace consolidation efforts in Somalia. If IDPs are to achieve sustainable durable solutions, humanitarian, development, peace building and human rights actors – from the government, diaspora, civil society, the private sector and the international community – must work in concert.

Background and causes of displacement

Displacement induced by conflict, violence and human rights violations

For decades Somalia has experienced widespread conflict, violence, human rights abuses and natural disasters. These have sparked repeated waves of large- and small-scale internal displacement. A multitude of actors, including clan-based and political militias and external military forces, have used forced displacement as a method of warfare in order to obtain and exert control ([IPS](#), May 2013; [ACLEL](#), April 2013). There have been recurrent seizures of land, particularly as armed members of dominant clans have unlawfully and violently appropriated land owned or leased by members of rival clans in violation of any previous lease agreements ([Displacement Solutions](#), 2008).

In the northern autonomous region of Puntland and in the de facto independent, but internationally unrecognised, Somaliland conflict has been mainly due to communal violence. The ongoing dispute between Somaliland and Puntland concerning the status of the Sool and Sanaag regions represents another source of violence and con-

tinues to limit access ([OCHA](#), 15 July 2013; [ACLEL](#), April 2013).

The Somali clan system shapes social, political and economic life and is fundamental to understanding many aspects of contemporary Somali society, including displacement. Extended family and clan affiliation is an essential source of protection and social assistance. Where possible, people have tended to flee to areas where they could enjoy social acceptance and support to build new livelihoods ([Lindley](#), 2013). However, most of those from minority groups usually lack such vital clan protection and connections. They are thus acutely vulnerable to discrimination and abuse in places of settlement. Especially susceptible are vulnerable women and children, especially those who are non-accompanied ([UNDP](#), September 2012). This creates communal divisions, marginalisation and increased vulnerabilities.

Transition towards peace and unity?

In August 2012, Somalia's first formal parliament in more than 20 years was sworn in, ending a transition process which began with the 2004 launch of the UN-backed Transitional Federal Government (TFG). The new National Federal Government of Somalia, like the TFG, seeks to facilitate peace and build democratic institutions ([UNSG](#), 31 May 2013). It has made significant efforts to improve strained relations especially with the leaders of Puntland and Somaliland. Dialogue has resumed and cooperation agreements signed. In August 2013, it reached an interim agreement with the leaders of Jubaland, settling the dispute between the Federal Government and the authorities of the resource-rich southern region who were pushing for greater autonomy ([ACLEL](#), 18 September 2013; [UNSG](#), 31 May 2013; [The Economist](#), 6 July 2013). However, the new government will continue to face significant challenges as it seeks to consolidate Somalia's federal structure in the face of ongoing pressures for regional autonomy. Potential for future clashes remains.

Security also remains a challenge.

Notwithstanding its recent military losses, the Islamic militia Al-Shabaab continues to be a major obstacle to peace and security (UNSCC, 12 July 2013). The group has expanded to the south and northeast and regularly launches terrorist attacks particularly in Mogadishu (Reuters, 19 June 2013). Conflict and displacement in the Jubaland region has remained widespread, particularly around the former Al-Shabaab stronghold of Kismayo (ACLED, July 2013; OCHA, 15 July 2013). Further threats to stability and peace include remaining pirate networks and warlords benefitting from impunity. The UN has warned that the foreign exploitation of Somalia's oil and gas reserves could also fuel conflict (UNSCC, 12 July 2013).

For more information on the background to conflict and displacement in Somalia, please refer to the [previous overview](#).

Displacement induced by natural hazard-related disasters

Recurrent natural disasters are another major cause of displacement in Somalia, often exacerbating the vulnerability of populations already displaced and/or affected by conflict or violence. They can trigger further displacement. Due to high dependence on pastoralism and agriculture, Somalia is highly vulnerable to extreme weather events and climate change.

In 2011 and 2012, conflict combined with the most severe drought in years to trigger a famine which led to the deaths of an estimated 260,000 Somalis and caused further displacement (OCHA, 1 June 2013). IDPs were particularly affected and two of the areas in which famine was declared, Afgoye and Mogadishu, already had Somalia's largest IDP populations. IDPs did not have access to food because assistance could not reach them due to insecurity, and was either diverted by armed actors or was unaffordable. The drought triggered massive price hikes, especially of live-

stock and livestock products, making them well beyond the reach of vulnerable populations, particularly IDPs (Reuters, 17 September 2011; FSNAU, 13 September 2011; IRIN, 2011).

Most IDPs continue to be extremely vulnerable to any shocks or stresses and have low levels of resilience (IRIN, August 2013). Some regions are faced both with drought and frequent flooding (OCHA, June 2013), particularly depending on seasonal patterns and, to a lesser extent, tropical storms in coastal areas (FAO, October 2012). The rainy seasons, *gu* and *deyr*, usually occur between April-June and October-December.

Recent seasons of average to above average rainfall, combined with low food prices and sustained levels of humanitarian response, have reduced the number of people in crisis to the lowest levels since famine was declared in 2011 (FSNAU, September 2013). However, in 2013 around 50,000 people were internally displaced due to floods linked to intense *gu* rains, particularly in Middle and Lower Shabelle (EC, May 2013).

Internal displacement data

As of September 2013 an estimated 1.1 million Somalis remain internally displaced and faced with a range of food security and protection risks. About 893,000 IDPs live in south-central Somalia (an estimated 369,000 IDPs in settlements in and around Mogadishu), 129,000 in Puntland and 84,000 in Somaliland – including those displaced in the regions of Sool and Sanaag (UNHCR, 22 August 2013). The total estimated IDP population is less than in 2007-2012 during which time the IDP population fluctuated around 1.4-1.5 million. Emerging pockets of stability in southern Somalia have both reduced new incidents of displacement and improved ability to collect and verify displacement data. The first half of 2013 saw less new displacement than the same period in 2012. However, over 36,000 people were newly

displaced between January and August and the security situation remains volatile ([UNHCR](#), 26 August 2013; [OCHA](#), 15 August 2013).

A substantial number of IDP households are female-headed – as many as 70-80 per cent in Galkayo in Puntland (interviews with UNHCR Galkayo Staff, June 2013). Internally displaced children make up nearly 60 per cent of the total IDP population ([UNICEF](#), January 2013).

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and its partners have collected population movement information since 2006 through a Population Movement Tracking (PMT) system. The Protection Monitoring Network (PMN) has recorded protection violations affecting civilians. In 2013, UNHCR reviewed the two systems and decided to merge them to improve effectiveness. Thus a Protection and Return Monitoring Network was created in July, focusing on UNHCR's persons of concern and monitoring areas with high potential for return of refugees and IDPs (Somalia Protection Cluster, 24 April 2013; IDMC interviews, July 2013).

There are considerable caveats to be kept in mind regarding the estimation of IDP figures in Somalia. Estimates are static, while the context is often rapidly changing in a society whose populations are traditionally highly mobile. Distinguishing between different categories of people – such as IDPs, the urban poor, economic migrants, returned refugees, IDP returnees and pastoralists who have moved into urban centres following loss of livestock – can be challenging, if not impossible. Furthermore, enumerators' direct access to displaced populations is often constrained. The perceived connection between recorded numbers of people in need and the likelihood and required amount of assistance also affects the accuracy of data gathering ([NRC/UNHABITAT/UNHCR](#), 2008; Shelter Cluster, July 2013 - on file with IDMC). The high number of assessments and surveys undertaken by agencies has created a

degree of assessment fatigue. Humanitarians have often collected information for limited purposes, used different methodologies and not consistently shared information. As a result, updated and comprehensive information on IDPs, even in areas such as Somaliland and Puntland where access has improved, is still lacking.

Protection issues

Threats to physical security and integrity

IDPs in Somalia face risks to their lives, safety, security and dignity due to dire living conditions, ongoing violence and conflict. Fighting has continued near IDP settlements, some of which have reportedly been attacked. Unexploded ordinance continues to kill and maim. Arbitrary arrests, detentions and forced relocations of IDPs have been reported in IDP settlements ([OCHA](#), 24 June 2013).

Social discrimination and pervasive gender inequality are major challenges. Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is widespread even in areas where there is relative peace ([UNDP](#), 28 September 2012). Internally displaced women and girls – particularly from minority clans – are among the most affected. The UN has reported there were 1,700 cases of rape in IDP camps in Mogadishu in 2012, but actual numbers are thought to be higher due to significant under-reporting ([UNGA](#), 14 March 2013). Reports that perpetrators include members of organised armed groups and Somali security forces cannot be readily verified ([AI](#), 30 August 2013; [IRIN](#), 13 May 2013; [UNGA](#), 14 March 2013; [HRW](#), March 2013).

IDPs, especially women and girls, are particularly exposed to sexual violence when leaving settlements to collect firewood, fetch water or use latrines which are often shared with men, far away and badly lit. They are also at risk within settlement due to the makeshift nature of shelters, insufficient lighting and ease of entry for armed men ([Protection Cluster of Somaliland](#), November

2012; [UNHCR](#), 28 August 2013; NRC, March 2013; Somalia Protection Cluster, 24 April 2013 - on file with IDMC). Other forms of SGBV include domestic violence, often exacerbated by stress, loss of livelihoods and changes in gender roles related to displacement. The resort to 'survival sex' to gain access to food and other essential goods and harmful traditional practices such as forced and early marriage increase in situations of forced displacement ([OCHA](#), 15 August 2013; [Puntland Protection Cluster](#), 23 January 2012; [Protection Cluster of Somaliland](#), November 2012; [GRT](#), November 2011).

Internally displaced children are particularly vulnerable to all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation. Children as young as nine are still frequently recruited to serve as combatants ([UNICEF](#), January 2013). Family separation during displacement leaves many children having to fend for themselves in child-headed households ([UNICEF](#), 28 August 2013; Somalia Protection Cluster, 24 April 2013 - on file with IDMC). Unaccompanied children as well as child-headed households are especially at risk of exploitation, human rights violations and becoming street children ([Save the Children](#), March 2013).

Dire housing conditions

While some IDPs are hosted by family members or are able to rent rooms in permanent buildings, most settle informally in and around urban centres. They sometimes live on municipal land or in abandoned government buildings. More frequently, they settle on urban fringes on land either privately owned or the traditional domain of clans who demand payment ([Lindley](#), 17 April 2013). Settlements are often overcrowded, with limited or no access to electricity. In many cases, shelters are in urgent need of improvement or replacement to be made secure ([OCHA](#), 6 May 2013; [OCHA/UNHCR](#), March-April 2011; NRC, March and May 2013; Shelter Cluster, July 2013 - on file with IDMC). Huts (*buuls*) are often made of highly flammable materials such as sticks, rags and cartons.

Fires in IDP settlements are common, particularly in Puntland ([OCHA/UNHCR](#), March-April 2011; [OCHA/UNHCR](#), December 2010 - on file with IDMC). Typically resulting from open cooking fires, risks increase during dry windy periods in June-September. In June 2013, fires in Bossaso and Garowe killed four children and affected over 6,200 IDPs ([OCHA](#), 15 July 2013).

Poor access to nutrition, food, water, sanitation and health

Despite recent good rains and humanitarian assistance now reaching more areas malnutrition rates remain among the world's highest, with over one million Somalis remaining food insecure ([OCHA](#), 15 August 2013; [IRIN](#), 22 May 2013). IDPs are particularly affected, with many above the emergency threshold for malnutrition. The problem is nationwide but there are marked geographical differences. In August 2013, the nutrition situation for IDPs in Hargeisa in Somaliland was reported to have deteriorated. Sustained levels of malnutrition were also recorded in Bossaso, Galkayo and Garowe in Puntland and in Doble, Kismayo and Mogadishu in south-central Somalia ([FSNAU](#), September 2013; [OCHA](#), 15 August 2013; [UN Radio](#), 7 August 2013).

Water, sanitation and waste disposal challenges are severe ([FSNAU](#), March 2013). IDPs have insufficient water storage and collection facilities and water sources are often stagnant, polluted or contaminated by flash floods. Fetching water is burdensome, IDP women and children often being forced to walk long distances and to queue for hours. In some cases, those who own the land on which IDP settlements are sited oppose construction of permanent water and sanitation facilities in order not to encourage long-term settlement (IDMC interviews, June 2013). Lack of waste disposal systems also contributes to generally poor hygiene, as does a general lack of awareness of health risks and the interrelation of hygiene and diseases. IDP settlements are all at high risk of outbreaks of diseases such as cholera, diarrhea

and malaria ([OCHA](#), 25 June 2013; NRC, November 2011 and February, March and May 2013 - on file with IDMC). In IDP settlements lack of access to safe drinking water and poor sanitation contribute to the high rates of disease and mortality ([OCHA](#), 19 July 2013). Incidence of waterborne diseases rises after rains.

The vast majority of Somalis including IDPs have very limited or no access to health facilities and their health status is alarming. Somalia has one of the highest maternal and child mortality rates in the world ([WHO](#), 29 August 2013). In 2010 one in 14 pregnancies ended with the mother dying often due to lack of trained midwives. An ongoing government programme is seeking to improve reproductive health services ([WHO](#), 13 May 2013). Shortage of health facilities often forces IDPs to walk for weeks to reach hospitals which usually lack equipment and drugs. IDPs are generally unable to afford private health care, which may be the main care available as in Puntland ([OCHA/UNHCR](#), March – April 2011; NRC, November 2011 - on file with IDMC).

A polio outbreak in Mogadishu in May 2013 added to the existing health challenges. Mass vaccination campaigns have not achieved complete coverage due to insecurity and restricted humanitarian access. There was a high risk that the outbreak would spread to polio-free areas given the large-scale population movements due to conflict and seasonal patterns ([OCHA](#), 15 July 2013; [OCHA](#), 16 June 2013; [AllAfrica](#), 7 June 2013). In August, the high levels of violence in Somalia led Médecins Sans Frontières to decide to pull out of the country. This will particularly impact IDPs in some of the most inaccessible areas where MSF used to operate ([MSF](#), 14 August 2013).

Education

Conflict and instability have had direct effects on children's physical, mental and emotional development, severely affecting the already weak Somali education system ([OCHA/UNHCR](#), March-

April 2011; NRC, December 2012 and March 2013; OCHA, September 2012 - on file with IDMC). The destruction of buildings and teaching materials and interruptions to schooling due to prolonged displacement and armed conflict have meant that enrolment rates are among the world's lowest: barely 22 per cent of all primary school-aged children are in school in south-central Somalia ([Education Cluster](#), June 2012). The Somali authorities launched a campaign (the Go 2 School initiative) to improve access ([UNICEF](#), 6 September 2013). IDP children, particularly girls, are less likely to attend school than other Somalis but there are geographical differences in their degree of exclusion ([Smith](#), Eds., 2012). In some instances, displacement has had a positive effect on IDP children as they have moved from rural areas with few education facilities to urban centres with comparatively more schooling opportunities ([Smith](#), Eds., 2012).

Poverty constrains access to education as parents are unable to afford tuition fees. Even when free primary education is available (as in Somaliland since 2011), parents still struggle to pay for incidental expenses ([Moyi](#), 2012; IDMC, May and June 2013 - on file with IDMC). In addition, there are insufficient schools and adequately trained teachers ([OCHA/UNHCR](#), March-April 2011; NRC, March 2013 - on file with IDMC). Another considerable barrier is general lack of safety and security for both children and teachers, as schools have frequently been targeted ([UNESCO](#), March 2011).

Dropout rates among displaced youth are particularly high due to frequent voluntary or forced movement, early marriage of girls and parental pressures to earn income ([Smith](#), Eds., 2012; NRC, July 2012 and May 2013 - on file with IDMC).

Livelihoods and employment

Most Somalis survive at basic subsistence levels. Many IDPs depend on small businesses, petty trade, sale of firewood and other goods, daily casual labour, domestic work, begging and remit-

tances. These meager income sources often fail to cover basic daily needs of IDP households, including food ([OCHA](#), 19 July 2013; NRC, 19–22 June and December 2012 and March 2013 - on file with IDMC). Almost a quarter of IDPs in Mogadishu (23 per cent) rely on humanitarian aid as their main source of income ([FSNAU, WFP and Fewsnet](#), 19 July 2012).

IDPs belonging to minority groups are particularly disadvantaged. They are often without extended family support and remittance income from the diaspora. Lacking connections, they may be blocked from access to trading and other employment opportunities by locally dominant clans. They often face exclusion, exploitation and abuse, such as the denial of payment for work they have done (IDMC interviews, June 2013; [Somalia Protection Cluster](#), 2 July 2012). In many cases, the long distances and insecurity in moving between IDP settlements and local markets further hinders IDPs' ability to establish sustainable income-generating activities.

Unemployment remains a serious challenge for all Somalis. In a country where 73 per cent are below the age of 30, 67 per cent of Somalis aged 14-29 are unemployed, one of the highest rates in the world ([UNDP](#), 28 September 2012). Their lack of education, skills and livelihood opportunities frustrates marginalised young people and may encourage many towards radicalisation or membership of criminal and other armed groups. Internally displaced youth and refugee returnee youth are considered among the most marginalised and at-risk groups in Somalia ([UNDP](#), 28 September 2012).

Female IDPs often provide most of the labour required for family survival despite their poorer education, lower skills and high vulnerability to gender discrimination and exploitation. Children also often contribute to household income ([Somalia Child Protection Working Group](#), July 2013; [Somaliland Protection Cluster](#), November 2012; NRC, December 2012 and March 2013 - on file with IDMC).

Even skilled IDPs can be vulnerable as they find their abilities of little use in places of displacement. Displaced populations from rural areas in south-central Somalia find their agriculture and livestock skills unwanted in urban places of displacement.

If IDPs are to be integrated, the needs of unskilled women, children and youth must be addressed. Comprehensive vocational training programmes should include life, vocational and technical skills suited to current and future market needs ([UNDP](#), 28 September 2012).

Justice

Three systems of law coexist in Somalia: secular, *sharia* and customary (*xeer*). *Xeer* and *sharia* laws are particularly predominant in rural areas where access to the formal system is extremely limited. There are marked regional differences. Lack of harmonisation in the way the different systems interact, address crimes and resolve litigation prevents consistent and transparent delivery of justice ([UNDP](#), 28 September 2012).

Customary law based on negotiation among clan elders is often only accessible for members of the dominant local clan, thus disadvantaging IDPs from minority groups ([Lindley](#), 17 April 2013; [Protection Cluster of Somaliland](#), November 2012; NRC, 19–22 June 2012 - on file with IDMC). IDPs lack awareness of legal rights and the means to afford justice-related costs. Somalia's patriarchal culture shapes application of legal systems (especially *sharia* and *xeer*), leading to gross gender discrimination and denial of woman's rights to justice, including land and inheritance entitlements ([UNDP](#), 28 September 2012).

Abuses against IDPs have taken place in a general context of impunity for violations of international human rights and humanitarian law ([HRW](#), March 2013). Many internally displaced women and girls continue to be victims of (sometimes repeated and systematic) acts of sexual violence. Perpetrators remain unpunished. Fearful of stig-

matisation, imprisonment, forced marriage to the perpetrator or retaliation, women often prefer to not report abuses. The government has taken steps to highlight problems yet sexual violence continues to be under-reported and impunity is widespread ([UNSG](#), 31 May 2013; [UNSG](#), 14 March 2013; [Protection Cluster of Somaliland](#), November 2012; [UNICEF](#), 2 March 2012).

Housing, land and property

Housing, land and property (HLP) challenges are particularly exacerbated by lack of a written land law or policy and weak technical capacity in land management. Illegal land expropriations are rampant in both rural and urban areas. Many land grabbers have presented themselves to IDPs in areas of displacement as legitimate landowners, often using forged documents to coerce IDPs into paying them.

The return of thousands of Somali refugees, IDPs and members of the diaspora has also led to an increase of disputes over land ownership. Solutions are made problematic by illegal ways they have been dealt with over the past two decades ([Sabahi](#), January 2013). Internally displaced women are especially vulnerable to HLP rights abuses and are at particular disadvantaged by traditional and *sharia* land use practices. As a general rule, women are prohibited from owning, renting or inheriting land or any property in their names. In most communities married daughters are not entitled to inherit land from their fathers and if they do receive markedly smaller portions than male kin ([Displacement Solutions](#), 2008).

Increased security, an improving economy and urban migration have resulted in increased pressure over urban land, leading to more forced evictions and relocations of IDPs in cities such as Mogadishu, Hargeisa and Bossaso. IDPs have been evicted by authorities from public buildings or land, or by private landowners now able to more

IDPs' relocation in Mogadishu

In January 2013, citing security concerns and desire to improve humanitarian delivery, the government announced a six-stage plan to relocate hundreds of thousands IDPs currently living in settlements in and around Mogadishu to areas outside the city by 20 August 2013. The relocation, to be implemented in cooperation with humanitarian agencies (OCHA, 8 February 2013; IDP Relocation Task Force, March 2013), offers potential benefits for IDPs and could improve their living conditions and pave the way for durable solutions. However, there are risks in disrupting IDPs' existing livelihoods. There are also concerns about the safety of relocation sites, their temporary nature and the need for long-term solutions going beyond relocation (NGO Statement, 27 June 2013; OCHA, 18 April 2013). Humanitarians have consistently called on the government to ensure that resettlement sites meet established humanitarian and security standards. They should provide adequate shelter, food and livelihood opportunities. The relocation exercise should be carried out in ways respecting the dignity and needs of the most vulnerable IDPs (AI, September 2013).

As of September 2013 the relocation process was on hold due to the deteriorating security situation. Some aspects of the plan, such as the demining of Daynille relocation area, have been completed but others have not. For example, the authorities have not yet established a permanent police presence in Daynille. The government and humanitarian agencies are discussing how to move forward. It was agreed that agencies could continue to assist the needs of IDPs who were forced to move out of some settlements to areas between KM 7 and 13 along the road from Mogadishu to Afgoye (OCHA, 15 August and 16 June 2013; IDMC interviews, September 2013).

lucratively use their land. IDPs are often given little notice and no alternatives. In the first eight months of 2013, over 11,300 people were reportedly evicted ([UNHCR](#), 29 August 2013).

Humanitarians acknowledge the need for reconstruction and development in Somalia but advocate for evictions and relocations to take place according to internationally acceptable standards. In order to increase land tenure security for IDPs aid agencies have sought to put long-term land tenure agreements at the core of their shelter and infrastructure plans. They are working in coordination with authorities responsible for providing land for sustainable settlement ([Shelter and NFI Clusters](#), April 2012; IDMC interviews, June 2013).

Prospects for durable solutions

The situation in Somalia differs from one location to another. In Somaliland and Puntland there is relative stability but, many areas of south-central Somalia remain volatile with limited humanitarian access and continued population displacement. Most IDPs continue to live in dire conditions in protracted displacement, and prospects for durable solutions remain distant for many of them.

Patterns of internal displacement in Somalia are diverse: short- and long-term, single or multiple events, protracted or newly emerging, in both rural and urban areas. This diversity needs to be reflected in the way durable solutions are pursued and supported (Schrepfer, 18 May 2013 - on file with IDMC). Support to establish sustainable livelihoods for IDPs is particularly important, and must be context specific. There is a need for a multi-disciplinary approach by humanitarian, development, human rights and peace building actors in order to create conditions for durable solutions. Peace building activities are essential as internal displacement is not only a consequence of conflict, but it is part of it. Displacement impacts on how the conflict unfolds and leads to new forms of social and political interconnections. Solutions for IDPs therefore are critical for stabilisation and peace consolidation in Somalia ([Lindley](#), April 2013; Schrepfer, 18 May 2013 - on file with IDMC).

Durable solutions for Somali IDPs are sought predominantly through return or local integration. In parts of Puntland and Somaliland that are relatively stable, local authorities have worked with international agencies to support local integration projects by facilitating access to land and/or by improving living conditions. In south-central Somalia, improvements in the security situation of certain areas since early 2012 have led to increased interest in return. In 2013, an estimated 16,000 IDPs had reportedly returned by the end of August ([UNHCR](#), 26 August 2013). Of these, about 5,500 IDPs returned spontaneously to their habitual place of residence, while humanitarian actors assisted over 10,000 to return to villages of origin mainly in the Bay and Shabelle regions, or within Mogadishu ([UNHCR](#), 26 August 2013). Humanitarian actors assist the voluntary, safe and sustainable return of displaced people through the Return Consortium, a multi-agency initiative to facilitate spontaneous returns.

Questions remain around the sustainability of returns. In many areas, security is still a challenge and limited services and disrupted livelihoods are major obstacles to the sustainability of returns. The recovery of land, livestock and other property for returning IDPs is problematic and can trigger further clan conflict. Competition over scarce resources and limited access to services and employment opportunities may lead to new tensions, especially if returns were to occur on a large scale ([DRC](#), 8 July 2013). Conditions are therefore not yet conducive to wide-scale returns of IDPs particularly in areas where security is still fragile and livelihood options are limited. This is also true for refugee returns, since refugees often find themselves in IDP-like situations upon return ([OCHA](#), 15 July).

National and international responses

National response

The Provisional Constitution of the Federal Republic of Somalia, promulgated in August 2012 and currently under review, provides protection to IDPs as to all other citizens of Somalia. It sets out the rights and freedoms that all Somalis shall enjoy without discrimination. In September 2012, the President issued a Six Pillars Policy, setting out priorities to alleviate the suffering of Somalis and create effective state institutions. Pillar 3 explicitly pledges to plan and achieve the reintegration of refugees and IDPs in their homelands, therefore acknowledging the need for durable solutions to promote peace building, social reconciliation and national reconstruction (Schrepfer, 18 May 2013 - on file with IDMC). Other pillars (dealing with the rule of law, good governance, economic recovery and service delivery) contain elements conducive to durable solutions for IDPs and therefore have a protective value for IDPs and their fragile future.

In March 2013 the government took the commendable decision to develop a national policy on internal displacement. This includes a specific strategy to address displacement in Mogadishu. An inclusive and consultative process started as part of developing the policy (IDMC, baseline consultations for a policy on internal displacement in Somalia, May 2013). Somalia ratified the AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa in 2011 but its ratification instrument has not yet been deposited with the AU.

There have been similar policy initiatives in both Puntland and Somaliland. A policy framework on internal displacement was adopted by the Puntland authorities in November 2012, and awareness raising activities around it are ongoing. In Somaliland a draft IDP policy has existed since 2006 and it is currently under review.

Welcome though these initiatives are, their finalisation and implementation is imperiled by weak governance, limited human and financial resources, and lack of access to certain areas. It is thus essential that the authorities work with civil society (including the diaspora and private sector philanthropists) and the international community to assist and protect IDPs and create conditions conducive to durable solutions.

It is important to recognise that significant assistance to IDPs has also been provided by Somali host communities which, despite being impoverished, have not only tolerated but helped large numbers of displaced people. The traditional and Islamic principles relating to the treatment of guests and the vulnerable, and the socio-cultural ideology of *Somalinimo*, or “Somaliness”, have inspired acts of humanity towards fellow Somalis which transcend clan and other social divides ([Lindley](#), April 2013; [IDMC/NRC/RSC/NUPI](#), 7 November 2011).

International response

Somalia is still one of the most challenging security environments for the delivery of aid. Fighting, insecurity and deliberate obstruction by some parties to the conflict continue to restrict IDPs’ access to assistance and protection and endanger the safety of humanitarian workers ([ACAPS](#), July 2013). Since early 2012 gradual improvements in security have allowed aid workers to scale up their presence on the ground and reach more people in need. However, the security situation remains extremely volatile, especially in parts of south-central Somalia ([OCHA](#), 15 August 2013). Between June and August 2013 security remained perilous in and around Mogadishu as a series of deadly attacks by armed militias – including against the UN compound in June – demonstrated ([OCHA](#), 15 July 2013). Humanitarian access has remained difficult in certain areas of northern Somalia such as the eastern Sanaag region where, activities are usually conducted by local partners in ways which minimise the risk of politicising assistance ([OCHA](#), 16 June 2013).

The diversion of aid by different parties has further weakened humanitarian response efforts. Clan dynamics and discrimination have played a major role together with the presence of actors who exercise control over virtually everything in IDP camps across Somalia. Though these 'gatekeepers' sometimes belong to the displaced community, more frequently they are landowners or businesspeople connected to local powerbrokers (HRW, March 2013; RI, November 2012). Abuses such as the deliberate restriction of movement of IDPs and other forms of repression are widely reported.

International agencies generally consider IDPs as being in particular need and thus target them for assistance. However, in order to avoid friction with local communities or to overcome difficulties in distinguishing IDPs from other groups of vulnerable people (particularly in urban settings), they have used area- or community-based approaches to humanitarian assistance (IDMC interviews, June 2013). An unintended consequence is that IDPs and other Somalis have been drawn to such areas to benefit from aid distribution, even when it is low-scale and sporadic (Lindley, April 2013).

Since 2006 humanitarian response in Somalia has been implemented through the cluster approach. Despite difficulties, this has allowed for invaluable interventions in the areas of food, shelter, water, sanitation, education, health and protection (OCHA, 19 July 2013). The integration of all UN agencies into the newly established UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) is scheduled for completion by January 2014. This presents new challenges for humanitarians. The UN Security Council decided to establish UNSOM for an initial period of one year in order to provide technical and policy support to the central government (UNSC, 2 May 2013). However this process, together with the effects of counter-terrorism laws on humanitarian assistance, has created concerns about a potential compromise of humanitarian work. There is risk of blurring of lines between humani-

tarian objectives and political and military agendas, thus putting humanitarian staff at increased risk (NRC/OCHA, July 2013; IRIN, 10 May 2013).

Funding

In December 2012, humanitarian partners launched the first Consolidated Humanitarian Appeal (CAP) covering three years instead of one, in an effort to target immediate humanitarian needs while enhancing resilience and addressing the protracted nature of the crisis. This longer time-frame should also allow for greater continuity and sustainability in programming. However, by mid-year Somalia had only received one third of the requested \$1.15 billion through the CAP (OCHA, 19 July 2013). Despite the allocation of \$20 million to vital humanitarian operations by the [Central Emergency Response Fund](#) in July the funding shortfall has led to a reprioritisation of activities, investing little in basic services and resilience programmes (OCHA, 15 July 2013). In addition, some humanitarian actors in Somaliland and Puntland have raised concerns about perceived lack of donor interest in addressing protracted situations in these regions (IDMC interviews, June 2013).

In May 2013, seeking a common basis for the international community and Somalia to jointly work towards peace, security and development, the Somali President launched a [New Deal Process](#) (EC, 30 July 2013). In September, the Federal Government and the European Union co-hosted a conference in Brussels to determine and endorse key priorities for reconstruction. International leaders pledged €1.8 billion to Somalia as part of a three-year plan to rebuild the country (EU Observer, 17 September 2013).

Civil society actors had raised concerns that the process may have been too rushed, lacked sufficient engagement of civil society and regional authorities and risked being primarily driven by donors (NGO Consortium, 27 August 2013 - on file with IDMC).

About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) is a world leader in the monitoring and analysis of the causes, effects and responses to internal displacement. IDMC advocates for better responses to the needs of the millions of people worldwide who are displaced within their own countries as a consequence of conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations, and natural or man-made disasters. It is also at the forefront of efforts to promote greater respect for the basic rights of internally displaced people (IDPs). IDMC is part of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

What we do:

- Promote appropriate responses to internal displacement through targeted advocacy
- Provide timely, accessible and relevant information on internal displacement worldwide
- Develop research and analysis to help shape policies and practices that have positive outcomes for IDPs
- Provide training and support to country-based policy-makers and practitioners with a responsibility to protect IDPs

Who do we target?

IDMC is best placed to effect positive change for IDPs through advocacy to influence the decisions and practices of duty bearers and all those with a responsibility or capacity to promote or fulfil the rights of IDPs.

How do we operate?

As information on internal displacement is often controversial and politically sensitive, IDMC must continue to operate and be seen to operate as an independent and effective global monitor of this widespread phenomenon.

IDMC has become an indispensable resource for anyone seeking impartial data and analysis on internal displacement, independent of political or operational considerations. www.internal-displacement.org

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