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The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education

Education and Displacement: Assessing Conditions for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons affected by Conflict

Elizabeth Ferris and Rebecca Winthrop

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**Education and Displacement:
Assessing Conditions for Refugees and Internally Displaced
Persons affected by Conflict**

Background Paper for the Global Monitoring Report

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Elizabeth Ferris and Rebecca Winthrop¹
The Brookings Institution

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1. Overview of displacement and conflict

Conflicts force people to leave their homes. Indeed, one of the measures of the severity of a conflict – in addition to casualties and duration – is the extent to which people have been displaced from their communities. In a recent survey by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) of 8 conflict-affected countries, 56 percent of people affected by conflict had been displaced and in some conflicts the percentages were far higher, nearly 80 percent in Afghanistan and nearly 90 percent in Liberia.² In fact when people living in countries with conflict were asked about their greatest fears, fear of displacement was among their top three concerns – after losing a loved one and economic hardship – but above death, physical injury and sexual and gender-based violence.³

As Table 1 below indicates, poor conflict-affected countries tend to have large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and, in at least some cases, large numbers of refugees. But the figures should be treated with caution; in some cases, such as Angola and Sierra Leone, governments simply decided that there are no longer IDPs, even if in fact many of those displaced by the conflicts have yet to find durable solutions. It is important to note that displacement is not confined to poor conflict-affected states, but it is also a characteristic of some middle income countries, some of which have stable governments, such as Georgia, Colombia, Azerbaijan, Syria and Turkey. In fact, less than half of the countries with either significant IDP or refugee populations are low-income. Of the twenty countries with significant IDP populations only nine were considered low-income by the World Bank in 2008. Similarly, only seven of the top twenty countries with refugee populations outside their borders were listed as low-income.

Additionally, a focus on displacement casts the net further afield than the conflict-affected countries listed in UNESCO's 2010 GMR, which are all in Africa and Asia.⁴ The list of countries with significant numbers of internally displaced persons includes protracted displacement situations in Latin America, the Middle East, and Europe. The list of countries from which refugees flee from a well-founded fear of persecution also underscores the diversity of countries experiencing some form of conflict. For example, India and China, often referred to as emerging global powers in the international media, rarely have their on-going, low-level conflicts discussed, although the impacts are certainly very serious for the individuals and communities affected.

² IPSOS/ICRC, *Summary Report: Afghanistan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Haiti, Lebanon, Liberia and the Philippines – Opinion Survey and In-Depth Research*, ICRC: Geneva, 2009.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ GMR 2010 list of conflict-affected poor countries included those that experienced armed conflict resulting in at least twenty-five battle-related deaths per year over at least three years between 1999 and 2007 or more than 1,000 battle-related deaths in at least one year during the same period. Of these, only countries categorized as least developed countries by the United Nations or low-income countries by the World Bank in 2007 were included.

Table 1: Countries affected by displacement and conflict⁵

Top Countries Experiencing Conflict and Displacement⁶	Internally Displaced Persons	Refugees⁷
Afghanistan	300,000 ⁸	2.8 million
Azerbaijan	573,000-603,000	16,000
Bangladesh	60,000-500,000	10,000
Burundi	100,000	281,600
Central African Republic	160,000	120,100
Chad	168,467	55,100
China	0	175,200
Colombia	3.3 – 4.9 million	373,500
Côte d’Ivoire	Undetermined	22,200
D.R. Congo	2.1 million	368,000
Eritrea	10,000	186,000
Ethiopia	200,000-400,000	63,900
Guinea-Bissau	0	1,100
India	At least 500,000	19,600
Iraq	2.8 million	1,873,500
Georgia	247,000-249,000	7,600
Lebanon	90,000-390,000	13,000
Liberia	Undetermined	75,200
Myanmar (Burma)	At least 470,000	184,300
Nepal	50,000-70,000	4,200
Occupied Palestinian Territory ⁹	129,000-149,000	5 million
Pakistan	1.25 million	32,400
Philippines	125,000 - 188,000	1,300
Rwanda	Undetermined	72,500
Serbia	230,000 (in Serbia); 19,700 (in Kosovo)	185,000
Somalia	1.3 million	559,000
Sri Lanka	380,000	137,700
Sudan	4.9 million	397,000
Syrian Arab Republic	430,000	15,200
Turkey	954,000 - 1,200,000	214,400
Uganda	437,000	7,500
Vietnam	0	328,200
Zimbabwe	570,000 - 1,000,000	16,800

⁵ IDP figures are from UN and government sources as cited by IDMC (www.internal-displacement.org) in 2009 and refugee figures are from UNHCR (www.unhcr.org) in 2009. UNHCR is also the source for countries listed as having 0 IDPs (China, Guinea-Bissau and Vietnam) (www.unhcr.org).

⁶ This is a composite list of countries made up of three separate country lists: 1) IDMC list of top 20 countries with IDPs displaced by conflict; 2) UNHCR list of top 20 countries of origin for refugees; and 3) GMR 2010 list of conflict-affected poor countries, which are **listed in bold**.

⁷ Originating from the country as of January 2009 according to UNHCR (rounded to nearest hundred). Persons recognized as refugees under the 1951 UN Convention/1967 Protocol, the 1969 OAU Convention, in accordance with the UNHCR Statute, persons granted a complementary form of protection and those granted temporary protection. It also includes persons in a refugee-like situation whose status has not yet been verified. www.unhcr.org.

⁸ From the UN Secretary General, as per his March 2010 report to the UN Security Council, *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security*, S/2010/127, p. 11.

⁹ Includes 340,000 Palestinian refugees under the UNHCR mandate and the 4.7 million Palestine refugees under the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, or UNRWA.

Causes of displacement in conflict contexts

Flight or displacement is a time-tested coping strategy for escaping the effects of conflict. When people do not feel safe in their communities and when other coping strategies (such as hiding or negotiating with warring groups) do not work, they flee.¹⁰ There are three basic ways in which conflicts displace people. First, civilians may be ‘caught in the crossfire’ of disputes between insurgent groups and government forces (or sometimes conflicts between insurgent groups.) They may flee their communities once the bombs start to fall or armed groups attack their village. Or they may flee in anticipation of such conflicts. Thus in May 2009, 2 million Pakistanis fled the NWFP area of Pakistan where the government carried out a major counter-insurgency campaign against the Taliban. Some of them left in anticipation of the attack, some were told to leave, and some did not leave until the attacks began.

A second way in which conflicts displace people is when displacement is an explicit strategy or objective of an armed group. Sometimes individuals are singled out for persecution, as when Afro-Colombian leaders are assassinated, leaving other leaders no choice but to leave their communities or face likely death. Sometimes particular professions are targeted by insurgent groups or armed forces, such as when Iraqi physicians and academics were singled out for attack by militant groups.¹¹ Sometimes insurgent groups seek to de-populate an area so that they can carry out illicit activities, as in Colombia where civilians are often displaced by *narcotraficantes*. Sometimes the displacement of particular ethnic or sectarian groups is the end objective of insurgents or governments. Thus in Iraq, sectarian violence had an explicit objective of forcing people to leave their homes; this sectarian cleansing, reminiscent of the ethnic cleansing in the Balkans a decade earlier, was a goal of the insurgents – not an unintended by-product of the conflict.

And finally, people leave conflict areas because of the disruption of economic and social life. Conflicts wreak havoc with markets, supply lines, and infrastructure. People lose their jobs, are afraid to work in their fields, and cannot send their children to schools – as a result of the conflict. Thus they move to areas where they feel that they can survive. In fact, economic and political motivations for flight are often mixed. When sectarian conflict in Iraq intensified after the 2006 bombing of the al-Askari mosque, over a million Iraqis left their communities. Most said they left because they were afraid, but a significant number said they left because they could no longer get health care or because their businesses were no longer viable.

Legal norms for IDPs and refugees

Most people who are displaced by conflict remain within the borders of their own countries. They are IDPs and globally number about 26 million. Some manage to cross an international border and are determined, under international law, to be refugees. There are about 14 million recognized refugees in the world, nearly 5 million of whom are Palestinian refugees registered with the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the remaining 10 million who come under the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). An estimated 50 percent of the 26 million people internally displaced by armed conflicts are children and youth under the age of 18.¹²

¹⁰ Casey A. Barrs, “Preparedness Support: Helping Brace Beneficiaries, Local Staff and Partners for Violence,” paper presented at the 2009 Refugee Studies Centre Conference on Protection, 2009.

¹¹ Institute of International Education, Scholar Rescue in the Modern World, April 15, 2009. Burnham, G.M., et al., “Doctors leaving 12 tertiary hospitals in Iraq, 2004–2007,” *Social Science & Medicine* (2009), doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2009.05.021.

¹² Women’s Refugee Commission, *Global Survey on Education in Emergencies*, New York: Women’s Refugee Commission, 2004.

A refugee is defined in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees as a person who, “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.”¹³ The 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol provide a strong legal framework for protecting and assisting refugees; there are now 144 States Parties to the Convention and 147 States Parties to one or both instruments.¹⁴ In addition, a UN agency, UNHCR, was created in 1951 with a mandate to protect and assist refugees. Refugee protection and assistance has never been perfect and refugee advocates are concerned about the erosion of refugee protection. Refugees have recourse to a range of important protections and support: an internationally-accepted definition of a refugee, a convention which sets out the rights of refugees and the responsibilities of host governments, and a UN agency with an annual budget of \$2 billion charged with protecting and assisting them. Governments, academics and the international community have more than 50 years worth of experience in working with refugees, including hundreds of national laws and policies, legal jurisprudence and judicial precedents, and UNHCR ExCom Conclusions.

In contrast to refugees, currently there is no legally binding instrument upholding the specific rights of internally displaced persons. Rather, the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* were presented to the UN in 1998 and endorsed by the General Assembly in the 2005 World Summit Outcome document.¹⁵ These *Guiding Principles* reflect and are consistent with existing international human rights law and international humanitarian law and restate in greater detail existing guarantees which apply particularly to IDPs. But the *Guiding Principles* are not an international convention or treaty or a legally binding instrument. There are occasionally calls to develop an international convention on IDPs, but this would be a time-consuming process and prospects for success are uncertain. However, once it is ratified by fifteen states of the African Union, the *African Union Convention on the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons*, which is based on the *Guiding Principles*, will enter into force as a legally binding instrument. This Convention was adopted by African heads of state and government at a Special Summit in Kampala, Uganda on October 22-23, 2009. The Kampala Convention, as it is known, is significant, as it is the first instrument intended to legally bind an entire region on matters related to preventing situations of mass displacement and to resolving the vulnerabilities and needs of those who have been displaced, including by establishing a legal framework for cooperation among stakeholders.

IDPs are defined in the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as:

persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.¹⁶

This is a descriptive definition rather than a legal one. A person either is or is not displaced; there is no process prescribed in the *Guiding Principles* to determine whether someone meets agreed criteria.

The definition of IDPs is quite different in content than the definition of a refugee; it specifically refers to ‘persons’ or ‘groups of persons’ unlike the definition of refugee, which focuses exclusively on individuals. The causes of displacement are broader, including those forced to leave their communities because of natural or human-made disaster as well as those who flee in order to avoid

¹³ 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Art. 1 A.2.

¹⁴ The 1967 Protocol removes the geographical focus on Europe and the time limitation of those displaced prior to 1951 contained within the 1951 Convention to make it a universal and timeless instrument.

¹⁵ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 60/1 2005 World Summit Outcome, 24 October 2005, A/RES/60/1, p. 29.

¹⁶ United Nations, *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, 1998, www.brookings.edu/idp.

the effects of armed conflict. Thus a person fleeing Port-au-Prince because of the devastation of the January 2010 earthquake is an IDP if he or she moves elsewhere within the country. But if the same individual, fleeing the same earthquake-caused devastation, flees to another country, he or she is not a refugee under the 1951 Convention. Similarly a person forced to leave his or her community because of a large-scale development project, such as dam construction, is an IDP under the definition in the *Guiding Principles*, but is not a refugee under the 1951 Convention.

The responsibility for protecting and assisting IDPs lies with national authorities, which is obviously problematic in cases where national authorities have contributed to the displacement. In sum, in comparison with refugees, IDPs – although numbering far more than refugees – have a descriptive rather than a legal definition, have no binding international convention, and have no dedicated UN agency charged with their protection and assistance. Furthermore, as international recognition of the particular needs of IDPs dates back only 10 or 20 years, there is much less academic scholarship, legal jurisprudence, or international awareness of IDPs compared to that for refugees.

The term ‘refugee’ is used to refer to those who have been determined to be refugees by national authorities or by UNHCR in line with the definition spelled out in the 1951 Convention. But the term is also used to refer to those who have fled into another country because of persecution, but who are not formally recognized as refugees by the host government. This includes those who are in the process of seeking asylum – or formal recognition as refugees. In most developed countries, there are good estimates of the number of people seeking asylum. Thus in 2009, UNCHR statistics indicated that 369,000 claims were registered for asylum in Europe, the U.S. and Canada.¹⁷ But these numbers do not capture the total number of people who have fled to those countries in search of safety. In some countries, such as the US, many people with legitimate claims of persecution, do not formally apply for asylum because acceptance rates are very low and they fear deportation if their asylum application is rejected. Rather they remain in the country as undocumented migrants, with the resulting vulnerability of this status, and do not show up in the number of asylum-seekers. In some cases, people whose claims for asylum have been rejected – and thus they are not technically refugees – are allowed to remain in the country for humanitarian reasons or simply because the host government recognizes that it is too dangerous to return them to their country of origin or because the country of origin refuses to accept them. In still other cases, people are given some temporary status which allows them to remain the country for a finite period, such as temporary protected status in the US or temporary leave to remain in the UK.

The 1951 Convention contains provisions for ending refugee status when conditions in the country of origin change. This cessation clause, as it is called, is generally applied after the conditions upon which refugee status was granted fundamentally change in the country from which refugees have fled. This was the case, for example, for Chilean refugees. While Chileans who had fled persecution in large numbers in the 1980s as a result of authoritarian rule were recognized as refugees, with the consolidation of democracy in Chile, UNHCR determined that they were no longer in need of protection and invoked the cessation clause for them.

In other cases, the governments have not signed the 1951 Convention and are not legally obligated to recognize people seeking safety in their countries as refugees. In some cases, such as Jordan and Syria, many Iraqis are allowed to stay in the countries as ‘visitors’ or ‘guests’ or with another status. In fact, many of the countries hosting large numbers of refugees are not signatories to the Convention and while host governments may allow them to stay, their legal status is uncertain and they may be labeled with different names. Thus, governments of countries such as Thailand, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan may call people arriving in their territories ‘externally displaced’ or simply ‘economic migrants.’

¹⁷ Out of 377,200 total claims for 2009 recorded in 44 countries analyzed in the report: UNHCR, *Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries 2009: Statistical Overview of Asylum Applications Lodged in Europe and Selected Non-European Countries*, 23 March 2010. See pp. 4-12. People from nearly 190 different countries or territories filed at least one asylum claim in 2009 in one of the 44 countries.

In still other cases, governments restrict who can apply for asylum. Thus, the government of Turkey, which has signed the 1951 Convention but not the 1967 Protocol, applies a geographical exclusion for asylum-seekers coming from regions other than Europe. In other words, if you are a European applying for refugee status in Turkey, your claim will be considered. But if you are a Somali or an Afghan, you will not be allowed to apply. In still other cases, there are restrictions on where a person can apply for asylum. Thus, a person applying for asylum in France who has passed through another EU country, may not be allowed to apply for asylum in France, but rather returned to the country through which he or she transited – even if that country is much less likely to make a favorable decision on that particular asylum claim. This is presently a major issue in Greece – a country through which many asylum-seekers try to pass but which has a very low approval rate, at 0.05 percent of some 20,000 claims in 2008.¹⁸

In some countries, such as Kenya, the government may recognize people as refugees as long as they remain within designated camps. But if they move to cities (and many do when conditions in the camps are inadequate), they are not recognized as refugees, but are treated as undocumented migrants.

Patterns of displacement

Although the typical images of refugees and IDPs are of people living in sprawling camps, the reality is that most of those displaced – either as refugees or IDPs – do not live in camps, but live among communities.¹⁹ UNHCR estimates that globally, one third of the world's refugees live in camps, although that figure rises to about 70 percent in sub-Saharan Africa.²⁰ Similarly, although there are large camps for IDPs in some areas, such as Darfur and Sri Lanka, most of the world's IDPs live among local communities.²¹ Increasingly, a number of non-camp refugees reside, with varying degrees of legality, in cities. In Kenya, for example, there are four refugee camps housing hundreds of thousands of refugees: an overcrowded refugee complex of three Dadaab camps to the north east in Garissa, hosting 264,000 refugees, nearly all from Somalia; and Kakuma camp in the north west with some 50,000 refugees from Sudan and Ethiopia, and including Somalis who UNHCR moved there from overcrowded Dadaab camps.²² There are also over 34,200 registered refugees who live illegally and in extreme hardship in Nairobi, out of an estimated population of 200,000 urban refugees in Kenya according to UNHCR.²³

¹⁸ Approval rates for 2006 and 2007 were 0.6 percent and 1.2 percent, respectively, and there was a back-log of some 30,000 cases according to Human Rights Watch (2008). Greece has come under international criticism for its asylum and related procedures, such as detention, which fail to meet EU standards. For approval rates and additional information, see Human Rights Watch, *Stuck in a Revolving Door Iraqis and Other Asylum Seekers and Migrants at the Greece/Turkey: Entrance to the European Union*, November 2008; Bill Frelick, "Greece's Refugee Problem," 31 July 2009, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/07/31/greeces-refugee-problem>. Of the 44 countries analyzed by UNHCR, asylum claims were lowest in Greece in 2009. See UNHCR, *Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries 2009: Statistical Overview of Asylum Applications Lodged in Europe and Selected Non-European Countries*, 23 March 2010, pp. 5 and 7.

¹⁹ UNHCR, *Challenges for Persons of Concern to UNHCR in Urban Settings 26 November 2009*, High Commissioner's Dialogue, 4 December 2009. Marion Couldrey and Maurice Herson, eds., *Forced Migration Review, 'Adapting to urban displacement,' Issue 34*, Oxford: University of Oxford, February 2010.

²⁰ UNHCR, *2008 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons*, 16 June 2009

²¹ See ICRC, *Internal Displacement in Armed Conflict: Facing Up to the Challenges*, ICRC: Geneva, November 2009.

²² UNHCR, "UNHCR relocates first Somali refugees from Dadaab to Kakuma," <http://www.unhcr.org/4a8aa04d5.html>. UNOCHA, "22 January- 8 March 2010 Kenya Humanitarian Update," Volume 58, <http://ochaonline.un.org/kenya/Reports/UNOCHAHumanitarianUpdates/tabid/4283/language/en-US/Default.aspx>. UNHCR, "2010 UNHCR country operations profile – Kenya," <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e483a16>.

²³ UNHCR, *Refugee Education in Urban Settings Case Studies from Nairobi – Kampala – Amman – Damascus*, December 2009.

There are a variety of living arrangements for those living outside of camps. Whereas some live with relatives and friends, others rent homes in communities populated by other migrants or build homes in shantytowns on the margins of large cities. Some occupy public or abandoned buildings. Much less is known about the needs and coping strategies of refugees and IDPs living outside of camps than of those who are concentrated and identified as refugees or IDPs in camps.²⁴ Protecting and assisting IDPs and refugees who do not live in camp settings is particularly difficult as it is often hard to identify the populations of concern (and frequently these groups do not want to be identified).

Camp settings provide their own challenges in protection and assistance, particularly when camps set up to meet emergency needs end up serving as settlements for years, or in the case of Palestinian refugees, for generations.²⁵ Protracted displacement of both refugees and IDPs is unfortunately the norm, as the average length of displacement for a refugee is 17 years.²⁶ While less is known about protracted internal displacement, there are many cases – the Balkans, Georgia, Sri Lanka, Uganda, and Colombia – where displacement has lasted for many years. Some of the problems associated with camp populations include lack of security (from both armed groups and common criminals), increased levels of domestic and community violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, and dependency on international assistance.²⁷ Often camps are constructed as temporary responses to an immediate emergency, but decisions that are made in the heat of the moment can end up lasting for years – or even decades. Thus decisions about where to place latrines can affect the security of women long after the immediate emergency has passed.

Conditions in displacement

It is difficult to generalize about the conditions facing IDPs and refugees, but both groups have needs and vulnerabilities resulting from their displacement and conflicts and displacement tend to heighten existing vulnerabilities. These include:

- Trauma, loss, and fear;
- Separation from family members, social networks and communities;
- Lack of shelter or problems related to camps;
- Loss of land and property;
- Lack of access to employment;
- Discrimination, stigmatization and sometimes criminalization because of their displacement;
- Lack of personal documents which often restricts access to services, such as healthcare and education;
- Lack of political rights
- Vulnerability to recruitment from armed groups.

²⁴ Karen Jacobsen, “Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Urban Areas: A Livelihoods Perspective,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 2006 19/3: 273-286. Karen Jacobsen and Loren Landau, ‘Recommendations for Urban Refugee Policy’, *Forced Migration Review*, no. 23, Oxford University: Oxford, 2005. UNHCR policy on refugee protection and solutions in urban areas September 2009. Jeff Crisp et al., *Surviving in the city: A review of UNHCR’s operation for Iraqi refugees in urban areas of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria*, UNHCR, July 2009.

²⁵ See for example, USCRI, “Warehousing Refugees: A Denial of Rights, a Waste of Humanity,” *World Refugee Report 2004*, p. 47.

²⁶ An increase from 9 years in 1993 to 17 years in 2003, as cited in UNHCR, Executive Committee of the High Commissioner’s Programme (ExCom), “Protracted Refugee Situations”, Standing Committee, 30th Meeting, UN Doc. EC/54/SC/CRP.14, 10 June 2004, p. 1, <http://www.unhcr.org/excom/EXCOM/40c982172.pdf>. The number is based on refugee populations of 25,000 persons or more who have been in exile for at least five years in developing countries, and excludes Palestinian refugees who fall under the mandate of UNRWA. It is important to note that this is an average figure derived from looking at protracted refugee situations where reasonably reliable data exist. It was also calculated at one particular point in time and may or may not still be valid.

²⁷ USCRI, “Warehousing Refugees: A Denial of Rights, a Waste of Humanity,” *ibid*.

It is also important to stress that displacement affects communities beyond the individuals who are themselves displaced. Although receiving little attention from either academic researchers or policy-makers, these displacement-affected communities (DACs) are significantly impacted. For example, the communities from which people were displaced may suffer economic, social and political consequences with the departure of specific groups. Thus Christians in the Middle East have long complained that when Christians leave the region, those that remain behind become more vulnerable. In the Middle East and elsewhere, the departure of educated professionals has consequences on the communities they leave behind.²⁸ The communities hosting refugees and IDPs, particularly when the numbers are large, clearly experience economic, social and political consequences for doing so. Sometimes this is positive as when the establishment of a camp provides health or education services to the local community – services which may not have been available in the past. But often it has a negative result as community and public services are strained. Governments of countries hosting large numbers of refugees may fear that they will cause political problems, stir up ethnic grievances, and cause long-term economic and environmental damage. Malawi, which hosted a million Mozambican refugees for a decade, found that the constant need for firewood in refugee camps left the countryside almost completely de-forested.²⁹

Finally, the communities to which refugees and IDPs return represent a third type of displacement-affected community. While returning refugees often feel that they suffered in exile and expect to be welcomed back to their communities, those who stayed behind may feel that the refugees were away from the country during the hard times. This tension is usually heightened when accompanied by a perception of preferential treatment for returning refugees. The Rwandan government, for example, was quite bitter about the fact that international assistance was provided to refugees returning from then-Zaire while those who had stayed behind received very little aid.³⁰ In the case of IDPs, the pressure on municipal governments increases when large numbers of IDPs return to their communities and need housing, schools, and access to services. These returns are rarely accompanied by sufficient increases from central budgets to meet the needs of the returnees and thus can generate tensions between groups. Thus in Colombia, municipal authorities were forced to choose between complying with their mandate to support returning IDPs and their mandates to support persons with disabilities and the extremely poor.³¹

Durable solutions

For refugees, three durable solutions are recognized: voluntary repatriation to their country of origin, local integration in the host country where they are currently living, or resettlement to a third country. Voluntary repatriation is considered the preferred solution, but this depends on changes in the country of origin and ultimately an end to the conflict which displaced people in the first place. Local integration is not used very often as countries hosting significant numbers of refugees often fear the impact of allowing large numbers of people to join the labor force and/or the political consequences of accepting people from a neighboring country.³² Resettlement to third countries numbered about 120,000 in 2008, up from nearly 100,000 in 2007, with the vast majority going to the US.³³ The number and nationality of refugees eligible for resettlement varies considerably and is often shaped by

²⁸ Joseph Sassoon, *Iraqi Refugees: The New Crisis in the Middle-East*, London: I. B. Tauris & Company, Limited, January 2009.

²⁹ Ian Smith, "An Environmental Argument Against Mozambican Refugee Camps in Malawi," *Refuge*, Vol. 13, No. 6 (October 1993), pp. 7-12. Violet Bonga, "Refugees as a Development Resource: The case of the Mozambican refugees in Malawi," *Refuge*, Vol. 13, No. 6 (October 1993), pp. 13-15.

³⁰ Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda*. London: Picador, 2000.

³¹ The Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, *Protecting the Displaced in Colombia: The Role of Municipal Authorities, Summary Report, Bogotá, Colombia, 14 November 2008*, July 2009.

³² Alexandra Fielden, "Local integration: an under-reported solution to protracted refugee situations," Research Paper No. 158, UNHCR, June 2008.

³³ See UNHCR website on resettlement: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4a16b1676.html>

political concerns and national constituency pressure. In any event, resettlement to third countries is a possible solution for only a small fraction of the world's refugees.

For IDPs, the solutions sound similar: return to the community of origin, local integration in the area to which they have been displaced, or settlement in another part of the country. But there are some important differences and perhaps surprising interrelationships. It is national authorities who are responsible for supporting solutions for IDPs while in the case of refugees, UNHCR often plays a key role. A refugee stops being a refugee when he or she returns to the country of origin. Thus an Afghan refugee who voluntarily returns to Afghanistan is no longer a refugee, even if he or she now becomes an IDP because return to the country is possible, but not to the community of origin. Thus if the Afghan refugee returns to Kabul (and many do), he is no longer a refugee, but becomes an IDP. Determining when internal displacement ends is more difficult and the international community has recently developed indicators which will enable an assessment to be made that determines when formerly displaced persons no longer have specific needs related to their displacement.³⁴

Similarities and differences between IDPs and refugees

This brief overview was intended to provide an introduction into displacement – both internal and external – in terms of its causes, patterns, conditions, and solutions. There are many similarities between refugees and IDPs – the sense of loss and trauma, the difficulties in starting a new life far from one's roots, the feelings of uncertainty about the future and the difficulties in coming up with solutions which will not only end displacement but which can be sustained. Returning people to areas where conflict is on-going is usually not a sustainable solution. But as we have discussed, there are important differences between refugees and IDPs (see Table 2). Generalizations are always dangerous, but IDPs are usually more vulnerable, less visible, and less protected than refugees. There is less international attention devoted to IDPs than to refugees – perhaps because by definition people who cross an international border are a subject of international concern. Increasing awareness of the plight of IDPs has resulted in new initiatives to address their needs – most notably in the doctrine on the Responsibility to Protect, but also in the reform efforts of the international humanitarian system, launched in 2005.³⁵ The idea behind the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) concept is that the international community has a duty to protect people from war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and genocide when their governments are unable or unwilling to do so. Emerging in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide, the concept was elaborated in the Canadian-led International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty and endorsed by the World Summit in 2005. The doctrine spells out the international community's responsibility to prevent such mass atrocities and to respond and rebuild in case they do occur. While emphasizing that the responsibility to protect is first and foremost a national responsibility, R2P outlines a series of political, economic, diplomatic and military actions that can be taken to prevent widespread suffering from mass atrocities.

³⁴ *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*, The Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, March 2010, available: http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2010/0305_internal_displacement.aspx.

³⁵ On IDPs and humanitarian reform, see for example "Humanitarian Reform: Fulfilling Its Promise?" *Forced Migration Review*, Issue 29, December 2007. Humanitarian Policy Group, *Lost in translation. Managing coordination and leadership reform in the humanitarian system*, Humanitarian Policy Group Policy Brief 27, London: Overseas Development Institute, July 2007. Roberta Cohen, "Reconciling Responsibility to Protect with IDP Protection," *Global Responsibility to Protect*, vol. 2, numbers 1-2, February 2010.

Table 2: Comparison of Refugees and IDPs

Areas of Comparison	Refugees	IDPs
Global Number	14 million	26 million (conflict-affected)
Legal basis	1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol	1998 Guiding Principles
Primary responsibility	Host governments UNHCR	National Authorities
Institutions providing protection	Host governments UNHCR	National Authorities
Regional instruments	OAU 1969, Acuerdo de Cartagena 1984	AU Convention, 2009
Durable solutions	Voluntary repatriation Local integration Resettlement to a third country	Return Local integration Settlement in a different part of the country

II. Refugee and IDP Education in Conflict Contexts

Globally, there are more than 40 million refugees and IDPs forcibly displaced by armed conflict. There are at least 27 million children and youth who are affected by armed conflict and who lack access to formal education, 90 percent of whom are IDPs.³⁶ Their ability to access a range of quality educational opportunities varies widely but it is important to underline that in many cases we simply do not have the data which would enable meaningful comparisons between displaced and conflict-affected groups.

Conflict affects all children, whether or not they are displaced. Schools are often destroyed, teachers and educational personnel are often unavailable, shortages of teaching materials occur and insecurity limits the possibility of students to attend classes. Sometimes children who have not been displaced are more vulnerable to ongoing violence.

From existing data, we are able however to outline a number of factors which determine whether the displaced can access education during their displacement, including the status of being a refugee or IDP and associated policies of relevant government or UN agencies, gender, and residence in urban or camp-based settings. In general there is a much larger number of international multi-lateral organizations dedicated to refugee rather than IDP education. However refugees often face a host of hurdles, such as language of instruction and certification of learning, that are more difficult to overcome than those faced by IDPs. Despite this there are a number of common conditions faced, especially when considering education of displaced children and youth, such as the importance of education in supporting psychosocial adjustment to new settings, and ensuring long-term economic advancement of displaced communities. In this section, we review laws and policies, the scope and scale of refugee education issues, major UN actors tasked particularly with refugee education, and the range of issues and conditions facing education attainment of displaced populations.

Laws and Policies on IDP and Refugee Education

As the *Guiding Principles* affirm, it is the responsibility of the national authorities to assist and protect IDP children and youth. Principle 23 affirms the right of IDPs to receive an education, “which shall be

³⁶ Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children, *Global Survey on Education in Emergencies*, 2004, New York, cited in United Nations General Assembly, *Right to education in emergency situations: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Vernor Muñoz*, A/HRC/8/10, May 2008, p. 10.

free and compulsory at the primary level” with efforts made to ensure full and equal participation of women and girls. With respect to post-primary education, Principle 23 also states that education and training programs should be made available to IDPs, in particular adolescents and women, “as soon as conditions permit.”³⁷ While there are at least 50 countries with internally displaced persons, only 18 have referenced IDP children, either directly or indirectly, in national laws and policies.³⁸ In some cases, there are only general references to protecting orphans (e.g. Guatemala’s Agreement on Resettlement of the Population Groups Uprooted by the Armed Conflict) while in other cases much more detail is provided.

A select review of countries that do reference IDP children in their policies illustrates the great variation from country to country of the scope, scale and types of issues the policies prioritize. For example, Iraq’s National Policy on Displacement (July 2008) emphasizes the right of IDP children to education and provides for acceptance of students’ and teachers’ certificates earned abroad. Uganda’s National Policy for IDPs (2004) not only highlights the right of displaced children to “the same access to education as children elsewhere in Uganda, but provides for the adoption of ‘affirmative action’ programs to assist and encourage the participation of IDPs in education. Sierra Leone’s Resettlement strategy (revised October 2001) and its National Recovery Strategy for Newly Accessible Areas (May 2002) outlines the rapid response education program for refugee and IDP children out of school, developed by the Norwegian Refugee Council, UNICEF and the Ministry of Education and Sports. In Angola, the Council of Ministers Decree No. 79/02 (2002) includes various provisions to ensure that children are enrolled in school and provided with materials. The government of Sri Lanka and the UN developed a Joint Strategy to Meet the Immediate Needs of Returned Internally Displaced Persons in 2002-2003 which includes nutrition education programs for children, emergency education kits and uniforms for an estimated 150,000 expected IDP returnee children; and expedited education and readmission programs for dropouts. Nepal’s National Policy on IDPs, 2063 (2007) calls for special attention to displaced children, including provision of free primary education. Georgia Decree #47 on Approving of the State Strategy for IDPs (2007) calls for improving access of children to social services, especially health care and education. In Turkey, the Van Provincial Action Plan for Responding to IDP Needs (2006) includes a host of provisions for IDP children and young people, including expansion of vocational training programs, and provision of free, hot lunches in urban area schools to increase IDP child enrollment and attendance.³⁹

Of the 10 countries with the largest IDP populations,⁴⁰ only 3 have drafted laws or policies about IDP children or youth: Colombia, Iraq, and Turkey, none of which is included in the GMR listing of 20 conflict-affected poor countries. But even where there are strong laws and policies on the books, there is almost always a gap between the legal framework and the implementation on the ground. This may be due to the fact that conflict and displacement are on-going or to the lack of political will of the government or to lack of capacity or even knowledge of the law by local officials.

Host governments bear the prime responsibility for protecting refugees. The 147 countries (approximately three-quarters of the world’s states) that have acceded to either the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or the 1967 Protocol (or both) are compelled to carry out their

³⁷ United Nations, *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, 1998, www.brookings.edu/idp.

³⁸ See Elizabeth G. Ferris, “Protecting the Rights of Internally Displaced Children,” in *Children and Migration: At the Crossroads of Resiliency and Vulnerability*, Elzbieta Gozdziaik and Marisa Ensor, eds. Palgrave, 2010, *forthcoming*. For greater detail on the specific laws and policies, see *Protecting Internally Displaced Persons: A Manual for Law and Policymakers*, Washington, DC: Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, 2008.

³⁹ Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, *Protecting Internally Displaced Persons: A Manual for Law and Policymakers*, October 2008. Walter Kälin et al., eds., *Incorporating the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement into Domestic Law: Issues and Challenges*, Studies in Transnational Legal Policy, no. 41, American Society of International Law and the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement (Brookings Institution): Washington, DC, 2010.

⁴⁰ Sudan, Colombia, Iraq, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Pakistan, Turkey, Zimbabwe, Azerbaijan, and India.

provisions, which include a refugee's right to education.⁴¹ Refugees should be accorded the same treatment as residents of hosting nations with respect to primary education, as well as treatment "as favourable as possible...with respect to education other than elementary education,"⁴² How host countries carry out their obligations, if indeed they do, varies country by country. Both government policies and civil society attitudes may emanate from a host country's own experience with displacement. In Uganda, where UNHCR assists with the hosting of 142,297 refugees from 24 countries, refugees live in open settlements with access to land for both residential and agricultural purposes. Since many of the countries neighboring Uganda had refugee situations of their own at one point, a sense of mutual understanding has developed. Social services established for the refugees, including schools and health centers, are accessible by host community members, while national public services such as education are also accessible to refugees.⁴³ Jordan, on the other hand, although not a signatory to the Convention or Protocol, has a long history of hosting refugees from neighboring countries, particular Palestinians. Although Iraqi refugees now make up nine percent of the Jordanian population, Jordan has not formally recognized the Iraqis as refugees; instead it officially refers to them as "guests." The Iraqi refugees have put a substantial strain on the socio-economic conditions in the country but without official legal status or access to livelihoods, there is little they can do to contribute to their adopted communities. Many Iraqis in Jordan are facing dire conditions given their inability to access labor markets and the depletion of their savings. Initially, Jordan did not support any sustainable education access for Iraqi children – either through separate educational programs or through integration into Jordanian schools. Allowing enrollment of Iraqi refugee children into Jordanian schools took considerable time and insistence from the international community.⁴⁴

The United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) entered into force in September 1990 and has been ratified by 193 countries. Because the CRC sets out the "rights" of children, the prohibition against discrimination in Article 2 means that whatever benefits a State provides to its own child citizens must be afforded to all children within its territory. Furthermore, several articles specifically address children's right to education, as well as humanitarian assistance when seeking refugee status. Article 22 states that children who are refugees shall be ensured their human rights through protection and humanitarian assistance. Articles 28 and 29 articulate the right to education for all children, implicitly including refugees and internally displaced persons. Finally, Articles 38 and 39, as well as the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, address the issue of child soldiers and the promotion of both physical and psychological recovery and social integration of children affected by armed conflicts. In addition to the national government signatories, multilateral organizations, such as UNICEF, UNHCR, and UNESCO, are guided by the principles of the CRC.

It is clear, however, that refugees and IDPs' right to and need of education is broader than primary schooling. As part of the UN's *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*,

⁴¹ Article 22 of the 1951 Convention states that "the Contracting States shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education. The Contracting States shall accord to refugees treatment as favourable as possible, and, in any event, not less favourable than that accorded to aliens generally in the same circumstances, with respect to education other than elementary education and, in particular, as regards access to studies, the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, the remission of fees and charges and the award of scholarships." This article is undertaken within Article 1 of the 1967 Protocol, which states that "the States Parties to the present Protocol undertake to apply articles 2 to 34 inclusive of the Convention to refugees as hereinafter defined."

⁴² *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, Article. 22.2.

⁴³ UNHCR, 2009. *Refugee Education in Urban Settings*. Geneva: UNHCR.

⁴⁴ Jordan issued a royal decree in 2007 allowing Iraqi refugees' access to public schools there regardless of their legal status. On the efforts of UN agencies and donors to improve access to education in Jordan for Iraqi refugees, see for example, Nicholas Seeley, "In Jordan, aid for Iraqi refugees is often redirected," *Christian Science Monitor*, 3 July 2008, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2008/0703/p04s02-wome.html>. See also UNHCR, "Education helps young refugees in Jordan cope with exile and the past," 23 December 2009, <http://www.unhcr.org/4b194a289.html>.

countries that are party to the Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education and that in order to fully realize this right, “secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational secondary education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education” and “higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education.”⁴⁵

Refugee and IDP Education: The Numbers

It is well documented that for children and youth living in conflict-affected countries, their ability to access quality educational services is much lower than their peers in other comparable contexts.⁴⁶ Just examining the number of children not enrolled in primary school in conflict-affected poor countries, as defined by GMR 2010, illustrates the challenges for educational attainment in these contexts. The large majority of conflict-affected poor countries have over one-third of children who are not accessing education. In some countries, such as Somalia, Chad, and Eritrea, a minority of children are actually able to enroll in primary school. This is an important starting point when analyzing schooling patterns for displaced communities. Many of the out-of-school children in these contexts may well be internally displaced. However, for refugees, especially those living in camps, they may actually have a higher probability of accessing education once they have fled their country.

Data that would enable comparisons between internally displaced children and children affected by conflict who have not been displaced are simply unavailable. Detailed country-level data on education access for IDPs is scarce. The Women’s Refugee Commission’s 2004 report *Global Survey on Education in Emergencies* used 2002 data for ten countries, and estimated that of the 3.5 million school-age refugees and IDPs in those countries, 1.8 million were in school and 1.7 million were out of school. The *Survey* notes that at least 27 million refugee and IDP children and youth not in school in those countries – the majority of them (90 percent) IDPs – representing 70 percent of the world’s refugee and IDP population. The *Global Survey* estimated that of the 52 million non-refugee children affected by conflict, which includes but is not limited to IDPs, 24-26 million were in school and 25-28 million were out of school.⁴⁷ However, that study has not been updated nor has its methodology been replicated. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) found that there were twelve countries where the majority of internally displaced children had no access to education during the 2008 school-year: Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iraq, Nepal, Nigeria, Philippines, Senegal, Somalia, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.⁴⁸

These data, however, reveal little about the extent to which displaced children access education. In some countries, such as Colombia and Sudan, displacement affects a significant percentage of the population, while in others, such as Bangladesh, IDPs as a percentage of total population is low. The paucity of data on IDPs’ access to education makes it impossible to draw comparisons between displaced children and children affected by conflict who have not been displaced. For example, in the case of Afghanistan, estimates of the number of IDPs are incomplete and unreliable. Large parts of the country are inaccessible to international monitors, patterns of displacement are complex as different waves of displacement have occurred over many years, and current migratory patterns are volatile. When local governments do attempt to estimate the number of IDPs in their territories, they each use different criteria, which make comparisons difficult.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ United Nations, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, 1976

⁴⁶ UNESCO *Education for All Global Monitoring Report. Reaching the Marginalized*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

⁴⁷ Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children [later renamed Women’s Refugee Commission], *Global Survey on Education in Emergencies*, February 2004, pp. iii and 9-10.

⁴⁸ IDMC, *Internal Displacement: Global Overview of Trends and Developments in 2008*, p. 18.

⁴⁹ Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement and The Liaison Office, *Beyond the Blanket: Towards More Effective Protection for Internally Displaced Persons in Southern Afghanistan*, Washington, DC: Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, May 2010.

Looking at the countries with the highest number of conflict-related IDPs, the total percentage of primary-aged children out of school, both displaced and non-displaced students, reveals wide disparities and the range of contexts in which conflict-affected IDPs find themselves (see Table 3). Indeed, by no means does the presence of conflict and IDPs guarantee that large portions of the school-aged population will not access school. In some countries, including Azerbaijan, India, and Sri Lanka, enrollment rates are high and IDP children are likely to be in school. Yet there are, of course, other countries where years of conflict have decimated the education system and IDP children likely have substantial difficulties enrolling, such as in Somalia, D.R. Congo, and Sudan.

Table 3: Out-of-School Children in Countries with Significant Conflict-Affected IDPs

Top 20 Countries with IDPs Displaced by Conflict	Estimated Number of IDPs	Primary school-age population (country-specific age range, but generally 6-11) (UNESCO, Data are from 2006-7)	Estimate of school-age IDPs (using average of 1/3 displaced persons are of school-age)	Number of primary-aged children out of school (UNESCO, 2009; UNICEF Child Info)	% of children out of school
Afghanistan	240,000	4,600,000	80,000	1,816,000	39%
Azerbaijan	537,000-603,000	443,000	179,000-201,000	20,000	5%
Bangladesh	60,000-500,000	17,842,000	20,000-167,000	1,837,000	10%
Colombia	3,304,000-4,916,000	4,554,000	1,101,000-1,639,000	413,000	9%
D.R. Congo	2,100,000	10,383,000	700,000	5,203,000	50%
Ethiopia	200,000-400,000	13,415,000	67,000-133,000	3,721,000	28%
Georgia	248,000	325,000	82,667	18,000	6%
India	500,000	124,425,000	166,667	7,142,000	6%
Iraq	2,764,000	4,612,000	921,333	508,000	11%
Lebanon	90,000-390,000	472,000	30,000-130,000	74,000	16%
Myanmar (Burma)	470,000	not available	156,667	not available	
Pakistan	1,250,000	19,534,000	416,667	6,821,000	35%
Philippines	125,000-188,000	12,017,000	42,000-63,000	1,003,000	8%
Somalia	1,300,000	1,581,000	433,333	1,280,000	81%
Sri Lanka	380,000	1,484,000	126,667	51,000	3%
Sudan	4,900,000	5,966,000	1,633,333	2,798,000	47%
Syrian Arab Rep.	433,000	1,830,000	144,333	n/a	
Turkey	954,000-1,200,000	8,399,000	318,000-400,000	643,000	8%
Uganda	437,000	6,489,000	145,667	341,000	5%
Zimbabwe	570,000-1,000,000	2,396,000	171,000-333,000	281,000	12%

Global data for refugee education are certainly better than for IDP education, but by no means perfect. UNHCR estimated that in 2007 there were approximately 2.6 million school-age refugee children. Globally, about two-thirds of these refugee children were enrolled in either primary or secondary school. In the 132 refugee camps for which UNHCR had data – which is not all of the camps under their authority – 37 percent of primary school-age girls and 24 percent of their male counterparts were out of school. Looking at educational access within individual refugee camps, UNHCR found that in 2008 only 29 percent of the camps had all of their refugee children enrolled in primary school, an additional 24 percent of the camps had at least 70 percent of their children enrolled, and 47 percent of the camps had fewer than 70 percent enrolled.

In the 87 urban areas for which UNHCR had data, 37 percent of refugee children were not accessing education, as compared to 63 percent of all primary school-age children in the area. In 92 refugee camps, 73 percent of adolescent girls and 66 percent of adolescent boys were out of school. However, these data need to be treated with caution as data are collected only for registered refugees and it is likely that those who are not registered are less likely to attend school as they may have arrived in the country by illegal means and/or fear identifying themselves to authorities. Moreover, UNHCR does not have data for all urban areas (and it may well be that children in those areas for which data are not available are less likely to attend school.⁵⁰) Only 6 percent of the refugee camps had all children

⁵⁰ For example, it is reasonable to assume that governments are less likely to share such information with UNHCR when refugees' access to education is limited or when enrolment rates cast the host governments in a negative light.

enrolled in secondary school. Furthermore, enrollment of refugee youth in non-formal education and vocational training was below 10 percent worldwide.⁵¹ Although collection of data is understandably difficult, the available data would be more useful if there were an indication of the proportion of refugees for which data are available. For example, it is not possible to tell from published reports whether the 92 camps for which UNHCR has data represent most camps or a small percentage of them – or whether data tend to come from camps with large numbers of refugees or smaller settlements. Overall, however, it appears that girls, youth, and urban refugees were less likely than their male, younger, camp-based peers to access quality learning opportunities.

It is interesting to note that the likelihood of children accessing education as refugees could either increase or decrease, depending on the context. In a country like Somalia, where virtually all children are out of school, Somali refugee children, especially if they reside in refugee camps – in Kenya for example – are much more likely to enroll in school than the peers they left behind. However, for children leaving countries with fairly good access to schooling, it is likely that, certainly for a period of time, their ability to access schooling will decrease as a refugee.

While national level data are quite useful in comparing sub-sets of countries and identifying, on average, the educational conditions of refugee and IDP children, they mask a host of educational dynamics within countries. At the sub-national level, investigation into individual countries with conflict-affected IDPs or refugees outside their borders reveals a much more complex picture. The following vignettes are provided to illustrate the different factors that may impact access to and quality of schooling:

- **Internal conflict impacts educational access differently within countries.** In the Democratic Republic of Congo, conflicts throughout 2008 disrupted education for many children in North Kivu, where nearly one million people were displaced.⁵² While the national enrollment level is 52 percent, in North Kivu, only 34 percent of children have access to a basic education.⁵³ The new Deprivation and Marginalization in Education database shows that the percentage of citizens in extreme education poverty⁵⁴ in North Kivu is 32 percent, more than double the national average. In Somalia, the escalating conflict in the South Central Zone in 2009 has worsened access to education, where enrollment rates were 22 percent, according to UNICEF’s 2006/7 Primary Education Survey. The Education Cluster in Somalia has noted particular concern for the 524,000 IDPs living in the Afgooee corridor, as well as the increasing number of IDPs in settlements in Galgadud and Mudug.⁵⁵
- **Displacement can increase access to education:** In Chad, available data from several departments where a total of 185,000 IDPs reside show that between 61 and 67 percent of the school-aged IDP children were not enrolled in school in August 2008 and 90 percent of the population in this region suffer from extreme education poverty.⁵⁶ However, this enrollment rate actually demonstrates a decrease in the out-of-school population from 89 percent a year earlier. For many of these internally displaced children, there was no school in their village of origin either, so moving into UNICEF-managed displacement camps have actually

⁵¹ UNHCR, 2009. *Education Strategy 2010-2010*. Geneva: UNHCR.

⁵² OCHA, *Humanitarian Action Plan 2009: Democratic Republic of Congo*, p. xi.

⁵³ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Escalating displacement in North Kivu despite ceasefire agreement. A profile of the internal displacement situation*. Geneva: Norwegian Refugee Council, 30 September 2008.

⁵⁴ UNESCO defines “education poverty” as fewer than four years of schooling and “extreme education poverty” as fewer than 2 years of education.

⁵⁵ Somalia CAP 2010, Cluster Response – EDUCATION, updated 23 September 2009, available at <http://ochaonline.un.org/OchaLinkClick.aspx?link=ocha&docId=1121401>

⁵⁶ From UN OCHA, as reported in Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, “Overview of education situation for IDP children, August 2008,” Geneva: Norwegian Refugee Council; and UNESCO *Education for All Global Monitoring Report. Reaching the Marginalized*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

increased their opportunity to access formal education.⁵⁷ Similarly, in Afghanistan, displacement increased girls' enrollment when internally displaced families moved to escape the insurgency from rural areas to provincial capitals, where girls have more opportunities to access schools.⁵⁸ The various experiences of displaced Liberians represent issues that arise with cross-border work. Throughout the conflict, Liberians who became refugees in neighboring countries were generally afforded a better basic education than Liberians who were internally displaced within Liberia or who were never displaced at all.⁵⁹ In Lebanon, displaced students had the higher levels of enrollment, particularly in post-primary education, while their peers who returned to their homes had the lowest enrollment rate.⁶⁰

- **Schools can be co-opted for other uses during displacement.** Due to typically being located in central villages, schools are often well-positioned to be used for other purposes during times of conflict. In some cases, they may be occupied by armed forces, while in other cases they may be used as temporary shelters for displaced people. In Pakistan, the practice of using schools to house displaced persons deprived both host community and displaced community children of their access to education (See Pakistan case study). At the start of the August 2008 conflict in the Philippines, many of the displaced persons were housed in schoolrooms that had been designated as Evacuation Centers, severely restricting their educational use.⁶¹
- **Ethnic and linguistic differences impact access and quality during displacement.** Displaced children who are ethnic minorities and may have differing mother tongues face difficulties with learning. The Global Survey reported that the Burmese government implemented an official curriculum that forces all students to study in Burmese.⁶² The Human Rights Education Institute of Burma reports that just over half all of children living in Myanmar complete their primary education, while the enrollment rates are much lower in the conflict-affected areas of the country, with only about ten percent of school-age children enrolled in school.⁶³ In Iraq, IDP families in Ninewa province reported that language differences and the lack of Arabic-language schools, were the main barrier for both boys and girls and partial reasons for low enrollment rates, at 45.8 and 31.7 percent respectively. In the Philippines, for the majority-Muslim and displacement-affected areas of Mindanao, conflict and displacement have been the main factors affecting education, resulting in lower enrollment and literacy rates and higher drop-out rates as compared to the rest of the country.⁶⁴

Refugee and IDP Education: Mapping United Nations Actors

Refugees, unlike IDPs, as explained above, have a whole range of UN organizations specifically mandated to assist them. There are, however, a number of UN agencies and one multilateral “cluster” who are tasked with assisting in educating children and with assisting in humanitarian crises, which includes addressing the needs of IDPs. The international organizations that support education are:

⁵⁷ From a Jesuit Refugee Service report from 18 June 2008, as reported in Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, “Overview of education situation for IDP children, August 2008,” Geneva: Norwegian Refugee Council.

⁵⁸ IDMC, *Internal Displacement: Global Overview of Trends and Developments in 2008*, p. 56.

⁵⁹ Kirk, J. and Winthrop, R. (2009). From schools started under the mango trees: certification for refugee students in the International Rescue Committee Guinea education program. *Certification Counts: Recognizing the learning attainments of displaced and refugee students*. Paris: UNESCO, IIEP.

⁶⁰ Consultation and Research Institute, November 2008.

⁶¹ [IASC Country Team in the Philippines, Initial Needs Assessment Mission to Mindanao, 4-5 and 7-10 September 2008](#), p. 13

⁶² *Global Survey*, p. 21.

⁶³ The Human Rights Education Institute of Burma, November 2008.

⁶⁴ [World Bank, “The impact of armed conflict on male youth in Mindanao, Philippines,”](#) July 2006, pg. 4.

- United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), which focuses on the education of children below the age of 18 and assists IDPs and refugee children;
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which primarily focuses on education for refugees and returning refugees;
- United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which addresses a wide spectrum of education needs for one specific population; and
- United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which is technically the lead UN agency for education and focuses on education across the lifespan;

As part of the recent United Nations reforms on humanitarian policy, the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) established a 'cluster approach' to improve the predictability and quality of humanitarian response around core sectors such as health, education, and protection. The IASC Education Cluster is co-led globally by UNICEF and Save the Children. As of April 2010, 38 of the 42 countries implementing the Cluster approach for coordinating humanitarian assistance have established Education Clusters, 32 of which are active (six are now dormant). As part of the IASC Needs Assessment Task Force, the Global Education Cluster has developed a set of education needs assessment indicators that would contribute to establishing predictable, core sets of data needed to support operations and decision-making in humanitarian emergencies. The top ten draft indicators proposed by the Education Cluster tracked number and percentage of children and youth not in school or its non-formal equivalent (both because of and prior to an emergency); the condition of existing schools (destroyed, potentially usable, and safe); availability of temporary facilities; number of schools days affected by the emergency; availability of life skills-based education on crises and/or psychosocial support; availability of educators; availability of education administrators; participation of community in education decisions; and the perceptions of safety around school. The cluster’s work has done a great deal in ensuring education stays on the agenda in humanitarian response and that the work of various actors is coordinated on the ground. There is some confusion, however, as to which UN agencies within the cluster (UNHCR or UNICEF) are primarily responsible for IDPs.

Originally UNICEF was established to provide humanitarian assistance to children after World War II. UNICEF’s mission continues to be providing life-saving assistance, including health, nutrition, water, sanitation, protection, and education, to children affected by disasters, both natural and human-made. It is mandated by the UN General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. UNICEF holds that the survival, protection and development of children are universal development imperatives that are integral to human progress. In its operating approach to humanitarian responses, UNICEF ensures that education is considered throughout the process, including assessing programmatic needs in education within the first 3 days of an emergency and initiating the resumption of schooling and other learning opportunities within the first six to eight weeks.⁶⁵ For 2009, 21% (\$629 million) of the \$2.943 billion budgeted for programs was directed toward the focus areas titled “basic education and gender parity,” which includes support of national capacity to improve school readiness, to reduce gender disparities in education, and to improve educational quality and school retention, completion, and achievement. Of that, \$112.5 million, just under 20%, was allocated for restoring education after emergencies and in post-crisis recovery situations.⁶⁶ As stated above, UNICEF is the lead or co-lead of the Education Cluster in the 38 education cluster countries, working with Save the Children,

⁶⁵ Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (UNICEF, 2005), accessed at http://www.unicef.org/emerg/index_commitments.html

⁶⁶ “Annual report of the Executive Director: progress and achievements in 2009 and report on the in-depth review of the medium-term strategic plan 2006-2013,” United Nations Children’s Fund Executive Board, Annual session 2010, forthcoming June 2010.

national Ministries of Education, Plan International, and ActionAid. UNICEF has an extensive presence in countries around the world and is one of the most important actors supporting education for IDPs, as well as providing a range of supports such as educational materials for refugees.

UNHCR is mandated to lead and co-ordinate international action to protect the rights and well-being of refugees and stateless people by ensuring that everyone can exercise the right to find safe refuge in a host country and then have the opportunity to either return home voluntarily, integrate in the host country, or resettle in a third country. With host countries maintaining primary responsibility for refugees on their soil, UNHCR was established to look after the interests of refugees, intervening if necessary to ensure that refugees are granted asylum and helping governments to find “permanent solutions” for refugees.

With respect to education, UNHCR seeks to ensure the right to education for “people of concern to UNHCR,” which includes refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons, internally displaced and returnees. UNHCR recognizes that education for refugees and internally displaced persons is a basic right that is essential for “restoring hope and dignity” to forcibly displaced people.⁶⁷ However, UNHCR education staff themselves emphasize the division of labor among UN agencies, clearly stating that UNHCR is primarily responsible for education for refugees, and not for IDPs, which is under the purview of UNICEF and Save the Children through the UN Cluster approach. In part this stems from the fact that its systematic involvement with IDPs dates back only a few years. However, it is also impacted by the limited support that UNHCR as a whole provides to the education sector. For 2008, the global education budget of 2008 was US\$80.1 million, (comprised of an approved budget of US\$36.8 million and an additional US\$43.2 million acquired through special appeals and earmarks), which together represents 8% of UNHCR’s total budget. In 2009, the Executive Committee approved a budget of \$21 million for education activities. However, according to UNHCR’s Comprehensive Needs Assessment for 2010, US\$146 million is needed to cover the relevant education needs. This lack of funding means that there are only a few education specialists in the entire organization, with country education programming often being managed by generalists or specialists in other areas such as protection.⁶⁸

For refugees, UNHCR is committed to providing a continuum of services in education, from the onset of an emergency through local settlement, integration, and repatriation. UNHCR expands its reach in education through strategic partnerships with the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Global Education Cluster, and the government of Germany to offer scholarships for higher education to refugees in their host countries. Although UNHCR staff are in approximately 120 countries around the world, through 2012, UNHCR has prioritized operations for concentrated and comprehensive education support in 11 countries: Algeria, Bangladesh, Chad, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Sudan, Syria, Turkey, and Yemen. UNHCR’s Executive Committee (ExCom), which is currently made up of 78 member countries, meets annually and advises on international protection policy. These ExCom Conclusions are considered international refugee soft law and have included the reaffirmation of states’ obligation or responsibility to accord protection and a basic standard of treatment of refugees and have *recommended* that States and other stakeholders work to “improve primary education for refugees, achieve gender parity in education, and secure funding, including through the private sector, to expand secondary, vocational and tertiary education opportunities for refugees, especially adolescents.”⁶⁹

UNRWA is a relief and human development agency established after the Arab-Israeli War in 1948 to provide education, health care, social services, shelter, micro-credit loans and emergency aid to

⁶⁷ UNHCR, “Education: A Basic Right for a Better Future,” <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cda.html>.

⁶⁸ UNHCR, 2009. *Education Strategy 2010-2010*. Geneva: UNHCR.

⁶⁹ A Thematic Compilation of Executive Committee Conclusions, (2004). No. 100 (LV) “International Cooperation and Burden and Responsibility Sharing in Mass Influx Situations.”

Palestine refugees⁷⁰ living in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip.⁷¹ UNRWA operates nearly 700 schools in the Gaza Strip that follow the host country curriculum and enroll close to 500,000 students, half of whom are girls. UNRWA's education program is its largest; for 2008-2009, the education program accounted for just over half (\$565 million) of the Agency's regular (non-emergency appeal) budget of \$1.1 billion. The education program employs 21,000 staff, which is two-thirds of its total staff.⁷² All registered refugee children have access to a free basic education through age 15, though not all refugee children attend UNRWA schools since children in Jordan and Syria have full access to government schools as well. In Lebanon, UNRWA also provides secondary education. The average cost per student is \$670 at the elementary level and \$870 at the preparatory level.⁷³ In addition, UNRWA's vocational and educational science training courses, which have graduated some 83,000 men and women since 1954, trained over 7,000 refugees in 2008/2009.⁷⁴ UNRWA has also offered university scholarships, numbering 360 across the five fields over the 2006/2007 school year.

UNESCO, although it is the lead UN agency on education, plays a more limited role in the education of refugees and IDPs than its other UN counterparts. About 65 % of UNESCO's overall budget is allocated among its five main program areas (education, natural sciences, social & human sciences, culture, and communications & information). Of that \$412 million for programming across the five areas, \$219 million is for education. According to its 2010-2011 Programme and Budget, one of the four "Main Line Actions" is to support governments to plan and manage their education sectors through strengthening national capacity to prepare, implement, and manager sector-wide education plans and inclusive policies, including for post-conflict and post-disaster situations.⁷⁵ While UNESCO does have a growing role and interest in supporting education in post-conflict and post-disaster settings, there is no explicit documentation on how much of the education budget supports education in situations of displacement. With a division focused specifically on education in post-conflict settings within UNESCO, as well as an important initiative leading research and training on this issue with its related institute, IIEP, UNESCO contributes to the global knowledge, technical assistance, and in some cases country specific support for refugee and IDP education. In 2008, the Education in Post-conflict and Post-disaster settings section provided technical support to country offices working with Ministries of Education, many of which grapple with IDP and refugee issues, in China, Cuba, Haiti, Iraq, Lebanon, Myanmar, Nepal, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Pakistan, Sudan, Syria, and Zimbabwe.

Refugee and IDP education: Assessing the Barriers

There are a number of particular barriers that complicate and hinder continuous access to high quality and relevant education for refugee and IDP populations. These are often experienced differently depending on patterns of displacement. As might be expected, education is less likely to be available in the emergency phase of displacement as international and national actors focus on security and on provision of basic necessities of life. As time goes on and displacement becomes protracted, more attention is devoted to education – though rarely sufficient to meet the needs and expectations of the refugees and IDPs. The availability of education depends on government policies, either of host governments in the case of refugees or national governments in the case of IDPs. When governments are involved in the conflict, such as Sudan or DRC, education usually is a subordinate priority to

⁷⁰ UNRWA developed and utilizes a working definition of "refugee," those who had lived in the British Mandate of Palestine for at least two years before fleeing and must have lost both their home and livelihood as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, or be the descendant of someone who had.

⁷¹ 4.7 million Palestine refugees in UNRWA's five fields of operations – Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem – are eligible for UNRWA services.

⁷² UNRWA, "Education," November 2008, <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/201001194717.pdf>.

⁷³ Across the Agency's five fields of operation, though with significantly higher costs in Lebanon. UNRWA, "UNRWA in Figures," June 2009, <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/uif-june09.pdf>.

⁷⁴ As of June 2009. UNRWA, "UNRWA in Figures," *ibid.*; UNRWA, "Technical vocational education and training," <http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=91>

⁷⁵ UNESCO, "35 C/5 Approved – Programme and Budget, 2010-2011," Paris: UNESCO, 2010.

waging the conflict itself. Host governments may be reluctant to open their educational facilities to refugees, either because of a shortage of resources or because of a concern that by making life too comfortable for refugees, they may decide to stay longer. It makes a difference whether displaced populations are living among communities or in camps where international actors generally find it easier to start their own educational programs than when they must negotiate access with local authorities. However, there are some issues, such as certification of learning attainment, translating education into livelihoods, and gender dynamics, that are cut across camp and non-camp contexts.

Refugees and IDPs living in communities

There are some common obstacles to accessing education for both refugees and IDPs living outside of camps, including the fact that children may need to work to earn money to support the family or may need to care for siblings so that the mother can work. While extended family may have played this role of child-caring back home, in displacement, the nuclear family often needs to provide these services, which means an additional burden on children. Even when the child doesn't have to work, school fees may make education financially out of reach to displaced children. Because of the conflict which displaced them, children have usually lost time in school and may find it difficult to catch up or may be embarrassed to be far older than other students in their classes. They may perceive stigma or discrimination because they come from elsewhere. There may also be concerns about the safety of children attending schools in unfamiliar settings. This seems particularly to apply to girls as most teachers are men and parents may fear sexual exploitation by male teachers from different countries or regions.⁷⁶

A major obstacle facing refugees living in communities is that the governments of host countries may not allow refugees to attend public schools, particularly beyond primary education. As mentioned in the above section on laws and policies on IDP and refugee education, the 1951 Convention states that hosting nations should accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nations with respect to primary education, as well as treatment "as favourable as possible...with respect to education other than elementary education," wording that essentially leaves the provision of post-primary education (as well as early childhood development) at the discretion of the host country.⁷⁷

Thus, enforceable regulatory frameworks and legal provisions to govern the admission of refugee children into school, particularly post-primary education, are largely missing. Moreover, as opposed to refugee camp situations that are established to deal with the displaced population, urban areas are less prepared to deal with the additional influx of students, particularly in education systems that may already be overstretched and be suffering from a lack of space and poor infrastructure. UNHCR estimates that only 11% of the urban areas hosting refugees have youth programs and that the problem is global, with urban refugees in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East facing similar constraints in accessing education.⁷⁸ The situation is even more dire for higher education where many governments prohibit refugees from attending national universities, although trends may be slowly changing. For example, Kenya's 2006 Refugee Act allows refugees to enroll in higher education without specific student passes, but this change has not been fully understood by all school and university administrators. Sometimes UNHCR is able to negotiate access to primary and secondary schools with the host government, in effect promising additional financial support to the schools in return for access. Thus in Syria, UNHCR negotiated long and hard with the Syrian government to persuade them to open primary schools to Iraqi refugee children. Access to education is particularly difficult for urban refugees living without refugee – or other legal – status in urban areas in host countries.

⁷⁶ Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, *Global Survey on Education in Emergencies*, New York: Women's Commission, 2004, p. iv.

⁷⁷ *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, Article. 22.2.

⁷⁸ UNHCR, 2009. *Refugee Education in Urban Settings*. Geneva: UNHCR.

Families living illegally in host countries may be afraid to register their children in school because of fear that they will draw attention to themselves and be identified and deported.⁷⁹

Refugees and IDPs in camp settings

For refugee children and young people living in camps, a different set of factors often comes into play. Barbara Harrell-Bond reports that “the single most common cause of school absenteeism is the need to be present at food distributions to secure and transport the family’s ration.”⁸⁰

Financial shortages on the part of UNHCR and competing priorities, means that educational programs are often not funded. Sometimes UNHCR is forced to choose between providing medical care or education. Sometimes this is because donor agencies do not see education as ‘life-saving’ assistance and are limited in their mandates from supporting education. Too often in recent years, UNHCR has had to cut educational programs mid-year, leaving students and its implementing partners in the lurch. The bulk of UNHCR funding for education is for primary school education.

Funding of education in emergencies is a major obstacle to education of both refugee and IDP children. Analysis of the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAPs) over the past decade shows that education tends to be one of the least funded sectors in humanitarian appeals, especially in contrast to food assistance and shelter as well as, often, health.⁸¹ However, improvements within the UN system – such as the creation of an Education Cluster described above – and related advocacy efforts have helped lead to an increasing recognition of the importance of funding education projects in CAPs. As a result, the amount of humanitarian aid for education has nearly doubled since 2006 alone, reaching nearly \$450 million as of the CAP revisions in July 2009 according to UNICEF.⁸² There are sometimes exceptions to the low funding for education, such as the 2009 UN appeals for Afghanistan, which was 159 percent covered⁸³ and for the Central African Republic which was 75 percent covered.⁸⁴ The geo-political interests of large donor countries, which supply much of the funding to the CAP, is often thought to account for why some appeals get fully or over-funded and others struggle to reach their goals.

In addition to the financial difficulties, there are often difficulties in finding qualified teachers to provide education for refugee children, classrooms are often overcrowded, and there are challenges around curriculum and language of instruction. In some cases, questions about the language of instruction can determine patterns of refugee movements. Thus in the mid-1990s, many Liberian refugees chose to go to Sierra Leone (even though it too was experiencing a serious conflict) because it was an English-speaking country rather than Guinea or Côte d’Ivoire where French was the language of instruction. UNHCR’s policy is to plan education ‘for repatriation’ which means that refugees should study the curriculum of their own country in their own language, but even when this takes place, there are sometimes problems with both its administration and recognition by the government of the host country.⁸⁵ A shortage of textbooks, learning materials, and basic supplies is unfortunately common. Facilities are frequently over-crowded and lack basic sanitation.

⁷⁹ This was the case in Syria for some Iraqi families with expired visas, which UNHCR posits was in part to blame for the 32% decline in refugee school enrollment between the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years. See UNHCR, *Refugee Education in Urban Settings Case Studies from Nairobi – Kampala – Amman – Damascus*, December 2009, p. 27.

⁸⁰ Barbara Harrell-Bond, "Are Refugee Camps Good for Children?" *New Issues in Refugee Research*. UNHCR. August 2000, www.unhcr.org/3ae6a0c64.html.

⁸¹ See OCHA’s “Trends Analysis” between 1999 and 2010: http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/by_sector.asp

⁸² UNICEF (on behalf of the Education Cluster), *Appeal Funding Review: Snapshot for Education*, examines funding trends for education between 2006 and mid-2009.

⁸³ As of 5 May 2010. UNOCHA Financial Tracking Service, *Consolidated Appeal: Afghanistan Humanitarian Action Plan 2009*, http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/reports/daily/ocha_R32sum_A853_1005051039.pdf.

⁸⁴ As of 5 May 2010. UNOCHA Financial Tracking Service, *Consolidated Appeal: Central African Republic 2009*, http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/reports/daily/ocha_R32sum_A833_1005051039.pdf.

⁸⁵ *Global Survey*, p. 21.

In the Maratane Refugee Camp in Mozambique, which houses refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi, ethnic tensions often come to the fore between refugee children. “Bullying, taunts, insults and physical assaults are frequent occurrences for Rwandan and Burundian boys and girls. This phenomenon spills over into the camp’s schools, where Congolese teachers and pupils were reported to beat and insult the other children”⁸⁶ Teachers have also been known to discriminate against certain groups in camp schools. In Dukwi Refugee Camp in Botswana, those who were able to attend school reported problems once they arrived, including “frequent beatings by the primary school teacher.”⁸⁷ Although education is often presented as a form of protection for refugee and IDP children, it is important to note that schools are not always safe spaces for children, as evidenced in the examples above.

Documentation, Recognition, and Certification of Student Learning during Displacement

Beyond ensuring access to education, those involved in providing displaced and refugee children with education need to ensure that their learning attainments are validated. Official recognition of learning attainment, conducted through certification and validation, is a central, yet still largely overlooked, component of education for displaced children and youth. Recognition and certification is essential at the end of a schooling cycle (completion of primary or secondary) but is also important for mid-cycle transfers, especially those that occur mid-year, so that a displaced student in the middle of Grade 4 is not forced to return to Grade 1 when he/she enrolls in a new school. The longer-term impacts of education in times of crisis, especially in relation to restoring a sense of normalcy and working toward employment opportunities, are largely compromised when educational attainment is not formally recognized.

Recognition of a certificate or similar documentation can be hindered by both technical issues (including differing validation processes across borders and the loss or destruction of such documents during displacement) and political issues (relating to national sovereignty and corruption). A reliable system of accreditation of education may also be related to the international commitment to ensure “durable solutions” for displaced persons, whether it is through voluntary repatriation, local integration into the host community, or resettlement to a third country: “Any formal proof or documentation of achievement must have validity beyond its particular system, otherwise children’s ability to use their education as human capital in the marketplace, or to add to it through further study, is obstructed.”⁸⁸ This section draws heavily upon the findings of the multilateral research partnership led by IIEP-UNESCO, which recognized that the issue of certification of refugee and IDP learning had been a policy and research gap. Their important study, *Certification Counts*, is one of the most comprehensive and in-depth consideration of the issues.⁸⁹

While IDP children, as nationals or legal residents of the country in which they are displaced, are legally entitled to exercise the rights of all citizens, in practice, governments often make it difficult for them to do so. In some countries, such as Iraq, provincial governments limit the movement of IDPs into their territories, creating de facto borders. Similarly, the Iraq case study demonstrates how a lack of clarity around procedures for accepting refugee children without documentation into the Jordanian schools. In other countries, local governments may simply not have the resources to provide support to large numbers of displaced children arriving in their municipalities, as in Colombia.⁹⁰ And

⁸⁶ UNHCR, *Through the Eyes of a Child: Refugee Children speak about Violence*, Geneva: UNHCR, 2008, p. 16. <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=47c804682&query=through%20the%20eyes%20of%20a%20child>

⁸⁷ UNHCR, “Findings of the Participatory Assessment with Children in Dukwi Refugee Camp in Botswana,” December 2005, <http://www.unhcr.org/44c8ba082.html>

⁸⁸ Kirk, J. (ed.) *Certification Counts: Recognizing the learning attainments of displaced and refugee students*. Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning, 2009, p. 60.

⁸⁹ See Kirk, J., *ibid.*

⁹⁰ See Ana María Ibáñez and Andrea Velásquez, “Public Policies to Assist Internally Displaced Persons: The Role of Municipal Authorities,” The Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement: Washington, DC,

documentation is a major obstacle. Thus in Nepal, children need school-leaving certificates in order to transfer to another school, but most IDPs lack the necessary documentation.⁹¹ Although Colombian law requires schools to accept displaced students (see Colombia case study), relatively few governments have adopted policies to address these issues.

The issue of the official recognition of student learning during displacement is especially important for refugee education. What should refugee children learn – their home country history and language or that of the country in which they are staying? This question is often answered in part by the policies of the host country government and has important implications for long-term recognition of student learning. Iran, for example, had a policy of integration for the large Afghan refugee population and so children and youth were educated in the Iranian education system. Guinea, on the other hand, had a policy of separation, so Liberian refugee children lived in camps and were educated in separate refugee schools.⁹² Broadly, there are three basic approaches to what curriculum should be used for the formal schooling of refugee children and youth. First, the home-country curriculum can be carried over for use in the refugee context; second, the curriculum of the host-country can be adopted and children can be educated in either separate schools or integrated into the host-country education system; and third, a hybrid curriculum that “faces both ways” and typically addresses disparate language issues between the home and host countries and may contain elements of both countries’ curricula can be developed.⁹³

There are several key factors that can affect curriculum choice and the certification process. First, the relationship between the host country and the home country with respect to language, ethnicity, and national identity is often closely related to what type of curriculum is developed and how/if previous and current educational attainment is recognized. The closer the social and cultural ties are between the two countries, the easier the certification process. In cases where these differences are significant, the process to develop an appropriate education system for refugees becomes much more complex. The size and make-up of the refugee population and the length of displacement also impact the development of a suitable education program. In the case of Guinea, which was hosting English-speaking Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees, the local francophone education system would not meet the students’ needs. A double-shift system that made the schooling facilities available to the refugees and a new curriculum that took both home-country curricula into account were established. However, the key part is the recognition of this schooling by the relevant authorities. For some Sierra Leonean refugee children and youth who returned to their country after the war was over, the Ministry of Education did not recognize the education they had received in the refugee camps. Stories of returnee students in secondary school being sent back to the first grade when they returned home because their refugee learning was not recognized highlights the importance of this issue. Guidance for UNHCR education programs states the agency’s commitment to seeking formal certification for students in its refugee programs through coordination at the local, national, regional, and global levels to certify studies, citing that “it is wasteful if education and training does not result in documented, officially recognized certificates.”⁹⁴

Establishing formal agreements among stakeholders and developing clear policies on certification prior to or earlier on in an emergency are essential to not losing unnecessary educational attainment. The case of Liberian refugees in Guinea throughout the 1990s and 2000s provides an illustrative example, where initial efforts to have Liberian refugee students sit for their West African Examinations Council (WAEC) exams while in Guinea were thwarted by President Charles Taylor

December 2008. See also: The Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, *Protecting the Displaced in Colombia: The Role of Municipal Authorities, Summary Report, Bogotá, Colombia, 14 November 2008*, July 2009.

⁹¹ Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Walter Kälin, E/CN.4/2006/71/Add.2, 7 January 2006, p. 16.

⁹² See Kirk, J. (ed.) *ibid.*

⁹³ See Kirk, J. (ed.) *ibid.*

⁹⁴ UNCHR, 2003. Education field guidelines. Geneva: UNHCR, p. 10.

and ensuring civil unrest, resulting in the cross-border exams being suspended for several years. Efforts to restore the regional exams were greatly helped by engaging the Guinean Ministry of Education, who then engaged the Ministry of Education in Liberia, as well as UNHCR and implementing partner IRC, in a series of high-level meetings that resulted in reinstating the WAEC Liberia exams in Guinea later that year.⁹⁵ It is also important to empower refugee communities and use local needs and context in developing certification processes. In 2000, displaced Chechens in Ingushetia were instrumental to the establishment of an emergency education program, contributing human capacity in the form of trained and licensed teachers with knowledge of the relevant curriculum, as well as youth leaders who served as classroom assistants and student tutors.⁹⁶ Finally, the promotion of flexible pathways to educational attainment are necessary to address the disparate backgrounds, current conditions, and uncertain futures of displaced communities.

Youth and Adults: Education and Livelihoods

The 1951 Convention establishes that refugees have the same rights as non-refugee nationals from foreign countries with respect to the right to engage in wage-earning employment. Parties to the Convention are instructed to give “sympathetic consideration to assimilating the rights of all refugees with regard to wage-earning employment to those of nationals.”⁹⁷ Yet, given the low levels of refugee youth enrolled in secondary schools and non-formal education and vocational training, the ability to exercise one’s right to work can be severely compromised by a lack of educational or vocational training opportunities. Especially difficult for some refugees are the limitations on access to markets and employment that can hamper their ability to translate even the best training into economic activity. For IDPs, there is usually no legal impediment to employment as they are living in their country of nationality, but the fact is that conflicts destroy livelihoods and disrupt economies, and this is often especially felt by displaced and host communities.

Access to economic opportunities for youth and adults can play a part in addressing other concerns, including the illegal recruitment of youth by combatant forces and the reintegration of adult demobilized combatants. Developing economic opportunities for displaced persons in the communities into which they have settled relies upon offering relevant skills training, apprenticeship and job placement programs, and seed grants for starting up income-generation projects. The Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC) has completed a full review of livelihoods development in contexts of displacement. After two and half years of research and ten assessments of a range of contexts, WRC concludes that there is a major gap in services for displaced communities that support livelihood development. They argue that a systematic approach to livelihood development, one that includes robust and relevant technical and vocational skills development for youth, is imperative to empower displaced communities and counter aid-dependency.⁹⁸

Depending on the context, educational interventions that are immediately relevant to market demands may or may not even be feasible. If displaced populations are living among communities and have the freedom to travel and access markets, there are often many types of creative educational interventions that can and should be done to assist with livelihoods development. However, if the opposite is true, displaced communities live in closed camps and the only market is the camp

⁹⁵ International Rescue Committee, “From schools started under the mango trees: certification for refugee students in the International Rescue Committee Guinea education programme,” in *Certification Counts: Recognizing the learning attainments of displaced and refugee students*. Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning, 2009.

⁹⁶ International Rescue Committee, Northern Caucasus, “Internally displaced students from Chechnya in Ingushetia,” in *Certification Counts: Recognizing the learning attainments of displaced and refugee students*. Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning, 2009.

⁹⁷ 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Article 17.1.

⁹⁸ Women’s Refugee Commission, *Building Livelihoods*, accessed April 3, 2010 at <http://womensrefugeecommission.org/protection/livelihoods>

operations themselves, then there are limited opportunities for immediate benefits and often training will focus on the possible skills needed once the displaced return home.

UNHCR formal and informal skills training programs for Burundi youth refugees in Tanzania, for example, were focused on the concept of “education for repatriation,” aiming to extend the skills of youth that would be most useful upon their return to their home country. An evaluation found that the range of training activities within the programs were determined to have potential for the variety of skills that would be needed in the physical reconstruction of Burundi following a peaceful transition. However, the limitations of the program in the immediate term were the market constraints that would be increasingly evident in the case of a protracted displacement.⁹⁹

Studies of youth Sahrawi refugees in Algeria and Afghan refugees in Iran demonstrated the value of using participatory research to identify the priorities for refugee youth and for encouraging a sense of ownership and agency for these youth. The research showed that both formal and non-formal education and vocational training opportunities for these youth was used as a tool in nation-building by shaping individual identities and collective memory and developing ideas around citizenship.¹⁰⁰

Beyond access to education or vocational training, for refugees living within camps, the opportunity for employment depends on the characteristic of the refugee camp, in particular, the size, location, and openness of the camp. Several typologies have been developed to describe the spectrum of experiences within camps and relationships with the outside world, including the levels of spatial and economic integration of refugees and the local population.¹⁰¹ Decisions about whether camps are “open” or “closed” can be influenced by a number of factors, including camp managers wanting to preserve the safety of the refugees from outside threats and host governments interested in protecting the economic activity and security of its own citizens from the refugees. Closed camps completely separate the existence of refugees and locals, barring refugees from going outside the camp and strictly limiting access into the camp, both of which create a more aid-dependent, less economically-independent situation.

Refugees who reside in “open camps” may have a range of experiences that include freedom of movement in and out of the camp and situations where they can engage in a range of economic activities. In camps, generally only limited income-generating programs are permitted, while self-settled refugees will tend to be more integrated into the local economy, whether it is sanctioned by government policy or not. The population size and density of camps can also determine the economic activity available; while large camps may offer a broader marketplace, camps can also suffer from severe over-crowding, which may hinder economic opportunities for individuals. A refugee camp’s proximity to local towns or villages will also impact the economic activity within even an open camp. All of these characteristics influence the ability to which refugees can access employment opportunities, either within or outside the camp. In general, large open camps offer the most opportunity to find income-generating activities, both in the community established within the camp or utilizing neighboring population centers. On the other hand, small closed camps typically offer few economic activity opportunities within the camp given their small size while also denying access to possibilities outside the camp.

In many developing countries, refugees are not allowed to work legally in the countries in which they live, even when the host governments are signatories to the 1951 Convention. In a few cases, refugees are allowed to work in some jobs, but not others. Thus, in Lebanon, Palestinians are enjoined from working in 72 professions in order to protect the Lebanese labor market. This gives

⁹⁹ Erik Lyby, “Vocational Training for Refugees: A Case Study from Tanzania,” in *Learning for a Future: Refugee Education in Developing Countries*, Geneva: UNHCR, 2002, p217-259.

¹⁰⁰ Refugee Studies Centre, *Children and Adolescents in Sahrawi and Afghan Refugee Households: Living with the Effects of Prolonged Armed Conflict and Forced Migration*, Oxford: University of Oxford, July 2005.

¹⁰¹ Hoerz, T., “Refugees and host environments: a review of current and related literature,” *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*, 1995.

rise to the frustrating situation where a Palestinian is permitted to study and graduate from medical school – but not to work as a doctor. Often for refugees, education is tied to prospects for employment when they return home.¹⁰²

One of the best examples of the way this has been carried out is the Organization for Eelam Refugee Rehabilitation's (OfERR) work with Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu, India. OfERR staff have studied both the labor market and future human resource needs in Sri Lanka and developed a list of professional degrees which will be needed in the country. OfERR then negotiated with the government of India to set aside a certain number of slots in Indian universities for refugees in those fields. While the students still must compete for entrance with Indian students, the effort is made to ensure that the limited university education possibilities open to refugees will in fact meet the country's future employment needs.¹⁰³

Gender Dynamics

In many, perhaps most, countries in conflict, families place a higher premium on educating boys than on educating girls. Even when they are willing to send their daughters to school, sometimes security concerns lead parents to decide to keep them home. But there are other factors as well that limit the ability of girls to attend schools.

Lower enrollment and attendance rates for girls can be impacted by both supply and demand factors. In situations of displacement, as with non-displacement situations, proximity of schools, the quality of schooling facilities (including water and separate toilets,) and the availability of female teachers impact whether girls participate. Additionally, given their changed circumstances, families may choose to not send their girls to school for reasons of poverty and opportunity costs, security, and cultural norms. Examples where girls had equal (or even greater) access to education but registered lower enrollment rates are included in the Sudan case study.

For refugees and IDPs, children are sometimes seen as a source of income to support the family. Girls participate in transactional sex to secure income or various necessities for their families. A United Nations study of refugee camps in West Africa found that parents “often knew that their daughters were involved in sexually exploitative relationships, but felt that they did not have alternatives, as they were not otherwise able to provide for them. In many instances, parents were instrumental in pushing their daughters into such relationships”¹⁰⁴ Other families “are driven to do anything that promotes their daughters as desirable and marriageable and enhances their value”¹⁰⁵ in hopes of marrying their daughters off as a means of income and survival for their entire family. In other situations, foster parents will use a child as a source of income for the family. “Wealthy men offer between 20 and 100 cattle to a family in exchange for a girl of marrying age. Amid the deprivations of life in the camp this offer is hard to resist, especially when the girl is a foster child. The welfare of the bride becomes a much lower priority.”¹⁰⁶ Certainly this pressure to provide needed income for the family reduces the possibilities for girls to attend school.

At the same time, educational opportunities for refugee girls may be greater than for girls who remain within their countries. Afghan refugee girls, for example, had much greater access to education in Iran and Pakistan than in Afghanistan. Afghan girls who remained in Afghanistan under the Taliban

¹⁰² This was the subject of a recent discussion at a refugee camp in Lebanon, organized by the association for Palestinian refugees, Raje, and the Danish Refugee Council – see “Palestinian youths get chance to air frustrations,” *Daily Star*, 19 March 2010,
http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=1&categ_id=1&article_id=112902#ixzz0kvE8OdEu.

¹⁰³ <http://www.oferr.org/content.php?id=234>

¹⁰⁴ Women's Refugee Commission, “Refugee Girls: The Invisible Faces of War,” 2009, p. 18.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁰⁶ London, Charles. *One Day the Soldiers Came: Voices of Children in War*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2007. Print.

had a much harder time accessing education than their refugee peers who lived in camps. In Iran, Afghan refugee girls and women were able to attend universities – something which would not have been possible for them to do if they had not been refugees.

Refugee and IDP Education: Highlighting some of the Benefits

There are innumerable benefits to ensuring refugee and IDP access to relevant, safe and high quality education. In a world where the average length of stay in refugee contexts is 17 years, generations literally are born and grow up as refugees. Any long-term durable solution for refugee communities is greatly benefited by educational investments. In conflict contexts especially, where many refugee communities repatriate after wars are over, refugee communities provide essential human capital to rebuilding nations and forging lasting peace. In many cases of protracted displacement, if education had not been provided, the future generations of leaders would not be prepared to contribute constructively.

In Afghanistan, for example, extensive refugee education programs in Pakistan educated thousands of students, including girls. These programs provided primary, secondary and to some post-secondary education, housed universities in exile, and enabled many to learn English. In addition to Afghanistan's future president, Hamid Karzai, famously teaching English in refugee education programs, many students and educators took on important leadership roles at all levels in rebuilding post-conflict Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban.¹⁰⁷ Returning refugee women, who had benefited from refugee education and training programs, were especially in great demand during the early period of post-conflict reconstruction for government, UN, and NGO service. Indeed, if it had not been for these women, there would have been very few women with the requisite skills required, given the Taliban's devastating educational policies towards women and girls.¹⁰⁸

Likewise, in West Africa, for close to two decades refugee education programs in Guinea supported extensive student and teacher education programming for Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees. While records are patchy, some estimate that there were several thousand refugee teachers who were trained during this period.¹⁰⁹ In post-conflict Sierra Leone and Liberia, reconstituting a teaching force was one of the biggest challenges to rebuilding their education systems. Teacher shortages after the war were especially acute and in this context returning refugee teachers provided a much needed boost to education system recovery. One study in Liberia and Sierra Leone traced 640 returned refugee teachers several years after the wars were over and found that two-thirds were still working in the teaching profession.¹¹⁰ Indeed, the benefits of investing in refugee education extend far beyond the time of displacement and in some contexts clearly directly contribute to post-conflict stabilization and recovery.

Education, if it is safe and of high quality, can also save lives by protecting against exploitation and harm, including abduction, recruitment of children into armed groups and sexual and gender-based violence.

Displacement, Psychosocial Wellbeing, and Education

In addition to the demonstrated benefits education provides with skills development, education can also be extremely important for the psychosocial well-being of displaced children and youth.

¹⁰⁷ Winthrop, R. and Kirk, J. "Moving from Innovation to Policy: IRC's Work in Community-based education in Afghanistan" in Susan Nicolai, ed. *Opportunities for Change: Education Innovation and Reform During and After Conflict*, Paris: IIEP 2009.

¹⁰⁸ Winthrop, R. "Reflections on Working in Post-Conflict Afghanistan: Local versus International Perspectives of Gender Relations," *Women's Studies Quarterly*, Fall/Winter 2003.

¹⁰⁹ Shelpler, S. *Does teacher training for refugees contribute to post-conflict reconstruction of educational systems?: Evidence from West-Africa, 2009*

¹¹⁰ Shepler, *ibid.*

Conflicts not only physically displace people from their communities, but have a profound impact on family and community life which affects children. Conflicts can change family dynamics and children no longer have confidence in the ability of their parents, their extended family or their community to protect them in the future. Displaced children have often witnessed violence against family members or friends and, even after they have physically moved to another location, continue to feel afraid. For example, some 34 percent of Iraqi refugee children surveyed in Jordan reported that they had witnessed violence in Iraq and nearly 40 percent said they had lost someone close due to violence.¹¹¹ To make matters worse, Jordan lacks the professionals who are integral to catering to the psychosocial needs of these children.¹¹²

Family separation is common when people are displaced. Parents may send their children outside of the country to protect them. Thus, in Sri Lanka, many parents of young Tamil men scraped together the funds necessary for their flight to distant countries, preferring to send them off alone rather than run the risk of their recruitment by either the government or the insurgents. Sometimes the father of a family may flee first, as the result of individual persecution or a desire to check things out in a potential place of exile. Sometimes in the heat of a conflict, parents become separated from their children and families take different routes, ending up in different camps or cities and uncertain about where their relatives are or how to contact them.

Displacement usually results in a decline in a family's standard of living. For the minority of the world's refugees and IDPs who live in camp settings, families experience a loss of privacy, their domestic duties change, and there may be restrictions on movement, as well as insufficient access to food, water, and medical care. On the other hand, refugees and displaced persons living in camps will sometimes experience greater access to medical services and more food security as food is regularly distributed by relief agencies. For most refugees and IDPs however, their displacement is characterized by a move from a fairly stable living situation to a much less stable one, where they try to make ends meet in a community where they do not have strong social networks or resources they can draw on to find jobs. For children, this decline in standard of living may be keenly felt when traditional foods are no longer available, when daily routines are drastically altered, or when they have to spend time working in or outside the home to compensate for the changed living conditions.

Supporting the resilience of displaced children and youth, through a range of community-based interventions which includes education, is found to be one of the most effective ways to support young people's psychosocial well-being. This is a recent shift in humanitarian good practice; previously, interventions had focused much more on the trauma associated with displacement and individual-based responses, such as counseling. While appropriate in some instances, research has found that in contexts of large-scale displacement, this trauma-based approach may be culturally inappropriate, may serve to "medicalize" perfectly normal reactions to abnormal situations, and may not actually be feasible (e.g. impossible to provide individual counseling to large populations).¹¹³

Education is often cited as one important way of supporting the psychosocial well-being of children and youth during conflict and displacement. Many argue that education, if it is a safe and quality education – whether in an acute crisis or a chronic refugee context – can promote children's protection and welfare by providing, among other things, structured daily routines where children can play and interact with peers and adults in a positive manner, physically-safe spaces for children to go to every day that keep them out of other potentially harmful situations, and important information about safety and security.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ World Vision. *Trapped! The Disappearing Hopes of Iraqi Refugee Children*, April 2007.

¹¹² World Vision. *ibid.*

¹¹³ Loughry, M., and C. Eyber. *Psychosocial Concepts in Humanitarian Work with Children: A Review of the Concepts and Related Literature*. Washington, DC: National Research Council, 2003.

¹¹⁴ Nicolai, S., & Triplehorn, C. (2003). *The role of education in protecting children in conflict*. London: Overseas Development Institute.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education devoted his 2008 annual report to education in emergencies, in which he emphasized the various benefits of education to children and youth:

Education also provides physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection that can be both lifesaving and life-sustaining. Education offers safe spaces for learning, as well as the ability to identify and provide support for affected individuals, particularly children and adolescents. Education mitigates the psychosocial impact of conflict and disasters by giving a sense of normality, stability, structure and hope during a time of crisis, and provides essential building blocks for social reconstruction and future economic stability.¹¹⁵

Another important way in which education supports the well-being of children and youth is its ability to offer hope for a better future life. Hope can help children rise above the difficulties of displacement in many ways. In one three-country study of conflict-affected children – both refugees and returnees – the importance of learning was determined to be one of the strongest factors in supporting well-being. The daily act of mastering content and more importantly the belief that they were on the right path to a brighter future was central to the benefits of education.¹¹⁶ Thus, the very innovative educational programs developed by OfERR¹¹⁷ provide encouragement for Sri Lankan refugees to pursue their educational objectives from nursery school through university. Students in higher grades are expected to tutor students in lower grades and to help high school students prepare for admission exams to universities. In the more than 100 camps run by OfERR in Tamil Nadu, India, education is the highest priority and evenings in many of the camps center around coaching sessions of students preparing for their classes. These educational programs have been going on since the organization was founded in 1984. Even though it is uncertain whether or when these refugees will be able to return to their community, OfERR leaders, themselves Tamil refugees in India, are determined that the refugees use their experience in exile to prepare for the future.

IV. Global Issues in Depth: Spotlight on Pakistan, Colombia, Sudan, and Iraq

The following case studies on Pakistan, Colombia, Sudan, and Iraq serve to provide a more in-depth look at the context of the conflict in each country, as well as the issues regarding education. Both the individual circumstances around conflict in each country and the educational system that existed prior to the conflict impact how children are able to access their education. However, there are a number of themes that are common across each of the case studies. First, population groups who are often considered marginalized in non-conflict settings, including girls and indigenous groups, are again more likely to be marginalized in their access to education in situations of displacement by conflict. Second, the relationship between conflict-induced displacement and access to education is not unidirectional; displacement can either increase or decrease the opportunity to access education.

Pakistan

Conflict overview

Most displacement in Pakistan is the result of low-level conflict and occasional large-scale fighting between the Pakistani government and militant groups, particularly the Taliban, for control of territory near the Afghan border.¹¹⁸ For example, heavy fighting is estimated to have displaced tens of

¹¹⁵ United Nations General Assembly, *Right to education in emergency situations: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Vernor Muñoz*, A/HRC/8/10, May 2008, p. 10.

¹¹⁶ Winthrop, R. and Kirk, J., “Learning for a Bright Future: Schooling, Armed Conflict, and Children’s Well-being,” *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 52, 2008.

¹¹⁷ <http://www.oferr.org/content.php?id=234>

¹¹⁸ There has also been displacement due to natural disasters, such as periodic flooding, the 2005 Kashmir earthquake, and flooding caused by Cyclone Yemyin in 2007, but this topic (and its interplay with the conflict-affected IDPs) is beyond the scope of this paper.

thousands between 2004 and 2006 in South Waziristan, despite peace deals between the government and Taliban. Most fighting ended in mid-2006 in South Waziristan when the Taliban stopped targeting the army, but those directives were reportedly not circulated in the North.¹¹⁹ The Waziristan Accord was signed in September 2006, ending the fighting in the north and south. But further north, hundreds of thousands were displaced in 2007 due to fighting in Swat in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Some 80,000 were displaced between 2005 and 2007 in Baluchistan, the country's largest province, due to clashes between the government and Baloch tribes, which displaced an estimated 60,000 the following year.¹²⁰ In total there were some 550,000 IDPs before the outbreak of large-scale conflict in May 2009.¹²¹

The largest population movement recorded in Pakistan since its independence in 1947 began in May 2009. In total, an estimated 3 million people were displaced due to fighting between the government and the Taliban in Swat, Buner and Dir districts in NWFP. Some 90% of IDPs were taken in by host families, in accordance with Pashtun tradition. According to UNICEF, the overwhelming majority of IDPs – 80% – were children.¹²² While most of the IDPs from NWFP returned home after the offensive ended in July 2009, nearly 1.5 million of them still remained displaced in nearby provinces in November 2009.¹²³ The situation facing returnees was difficult, with serious security problems, including the presence of landmines.

With the NWFP operation concluded, the government immediately shifted its attention to rooting out Taliban strongholds – and ‘eliminating’ Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud – in South Waziristan Agency in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in July 2009.¹²⁴ By the end of October 2009, around 130,000 had been displaced by the conflict.¹²⁵ As with the previous offensive, the majority sought refuge with host families, fleeing north to Dera Ismail Khan and Tank districts in NWFP.¹²⁶

Access to Education

As might be expected, the conflict and resulting displacement have had a severe impact on children's well-being and access to education. An estimated 60 percent of the 1.3 million IDPs in NWFP and FATA are children, according to UNICEF.¹²⁷ In July 2009, Islamic Relief reported that 70 percent of the displaced children displayed signs of trauma.¹²⁸ Some 600,000 children in three districts of NWFP were reported to have missed one year or more of school.¹²⁹ Schools in the conflict areas were particularly affected, with virtually all of the government schools having been completely destroyed in the Lower Swat and 550 primary and secondary schools in Malakand having been damaged or destroyed.¹³⁰ In FATA, another 137 schools – both boys' and girls' schools, primary, middle, and

¹¹⁹ Ismail Khan, “Forces, militants heading for truce,” *Dawn*, <http://www.dawn.com/2006/06/23/top2.htm>.

¹²⁰ Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), “Timeline on human displacement since 2004,” 5 July 2009, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=85137>.

¹²¹ IDMC, *Pakistan: Millions of IDPs and returnees face continuing crisis: A Profile of the internal displacement situation*, 2 December 2009, p. 16, available at www.internal-displacement.org.

¹²² UNICEF, http://www.unicef.org/pakistan/reallives_5264.htm.

¹²³ IDMC, 2 December 2009, *ibid*.

¹²⁴ BBC, “Pride and hardship of Waziristan displaced,” 15 July 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8152366.stm>.

¹²⁵ USAID, “Pakistan – Complex Emergency, Fact Sheet #1, Fiscal Year 2010,” 23 October 2009, [http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/MUMA-7X53MU-full_report.pdf/\\$File/full_report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/MUMA-7X53MU-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf).

¹²⁶ USAID, *ibid*.

¹²⁷ IRIN, “Pakistan: Education chaos in northern conflict zone,” 21 April 2010, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=88878>.

¹²⁸ According to government statistics as referenced in Islamic Relief Worldwide, “Overcoming trauma,” 10 July 2009, <http://www.islamic-relief.com/Emergencies-And-Appeals/5-58-575-overcoming-trauma.aspx>.

¹²⁹ IDMC, *Pakistan: Millions of IDPs and returnees face continuing crisis*, 2 December 2009, available at www.internal-displacement.org.

¹³⁰ IDMC, *ibid*.

secondary schools – were damaged since the insecurity in the region began in 2008.¹³¹ UNICEF reported in October 2009 that only a third of children in South Waziristan were enrolled in primary school in October; efforts were underway in Tank and DI Khan to provide supplies.¹³² However, due to a large-scale security operation in South Waziristan, the government has terminated NGO-work in the area, further decreasing opportunities for education. Almost 5,000 schools were used to provide shelter to IDPs in host communities, which meant that not only were IDP children deprived of access to education, but so were the children in the communities to which IDPs arrived. Even after they were vacated in late 2009, many schools required rehabilitation to make them usable for the students again.¹³³ However, there are reports of schools having been reopened despite being badly damaged or in ruins, with some children sitting in bombed-out buildings lacking roofs or walls, or outside the school for class. It is often traumatizing for the children to see the damage. According to the Pakistani NGO Khwendo Kor which sets up girls' schools, while parents want their daughters in school, the lack of money in the education sector needs is slowing the pace of restoration thereby hindering their access to education.¹³⁴

Lack of funding is preventing the UN from providing comprehensive educational services to children in camps and in host communities, where resources are already strained. As of April 2010, only the primary schooling of 5,000 children in one camp, Jalozaï, is supported with funding, and that only until the end of the year. UNICEF had only received 6 percent of the \$1.4 million it had requested for camp education as of April 2010, which could lead schools to close by the end of April.¹³⁵

The ongoing security issues in NWFP and FATA have had significant impacts on the lives of Pakistanis living in the region. Girls and boys have been divested of schools and face increasing dangers of abuse and exploitation. Militants have continued to bomb and raze schools, particularly targeting girls' schools. In addition to disrupting girls' education, it has had a particular impact on women teachers, who have been displaced by the violence and are reluctant to return to and work in the affected areas. Without teachers, girls' attendance is significantly impacted.¹³⁶

¹³¹ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), *Pakistan Humanitarian Response Plan 2010*, New York: United Nations, 2010.

¹³² UNICEF, "UNICEF Pakistan responds to new wave of displaced children and families from South Waziristan," 23 October 2009, http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media_51520.html.

¹³³ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Pakistan Humanitarian Response Plan 2010*, New York: United Nations, 2010.

¹³⁴ IRIN, 21 April 2010, *ibid*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Pakistan Humanitarian Response Plan 2010*, New York: United Nations, 2010.

Table 4: Categories of IDP Children with and without access to education, Pakistan¹³⁷

Caseload calculated as of 23 June 2009			
Caseload 1			
Caseload for the Education cluster*	Total	Number of children having access to educational services	
Children (5-11 yrs) in camps	31,925	17,389	54%
Children (12-17 yrs) in camps	22,804	1,841	8%
Children (5-11 yrs) in host communities	297,877	9,253	3%
Children (12-17 yrs) in host communities	212,699	625	0%
Children who remained in conflict areas or unregistered	unverified+	In conflict areas target all children.	
Total Caseload	565,305 +		
<i>*Caseload is calculated on the basis of families data verified by NADRA</i>			
Caseload 2			
Children (5-17 yrs) from host community whose schools have been converted into ID shelters	736,600		
Host community children whose families have depleted their financial resources	Unverifiable +	In hosting communities target all children	
Total Caseloads 1+2	1,301,905 +		

Demonstrating a clear understanding of the particular challenges that displacement has placed on the education sector, OCHA's Pakistan Humanitarian Response Plan 2010 includes a detailed plan for how to use the window of opportunity presented by the conflict's destruction of the education system and the demonstrated will of the government to restore education services to improve access and quality. In particular, the plan includes targeting grade four and five girls who are more likely to drop out with stipends, free teaching and learning materials for affected schools, focusing on increasing the number of female teachers through incentive packages, integrated approach to school improvement with food packages, school safety, and psycho-social support; and the inclusion of peace education, mine risk education, and disaster preparedness training into the curriculum.¹³⁸

Colombia

Conflict overview

The conflict in Colombia has displaced close to three million people over the past two decades¹³⁹ – the second highest number of IDPs in the world after Sudan. A conflict that originated as a struggle

¹³⁷ Estimates. Reproduced from UN Education Cluster Pakistan, *Education strategy document for Conflict affected populations in NWFP/FATA*, Version 5 Aug. 2009, p. 2, available at <http://pakistan.oneresponse.info>.

¹³⁸ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Pakistan Humanitarian Response Plan 2010*, New York: United Nations, 2010.

¹³⁹ There is significant controversy over the number of IDPs. According to government statistics, by mid-2008, 110,000 Colombians had been displaced. According to the main human rights organization in the country, Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento (CODHES) there were 270,675, IDPs. Likewise, CODHES puts the overall figure (for 1995-2006) at 2.9 million IDPs, while the Colombian government asserts that only 1.9 million were displaced during this period. (See Refugees International, "Colombia: Flaws in Registering Displaced People Leads to Denial of Services" April 2007.)This significant difference between the two estimates is in part the result of different methodologies: CODHES for example, counts those who were

between government forces and revolutionary guerrilla groups, such as the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) has become a much more complex web with the rise of armed groups tied to drug cartels, economic interests, and the government. By the late 1990s, large swathes of Colombian territory, over half of the country's total area, were outside of government control. Guerrilla forces, paramilitary groups and *narcotraficantes* held sway and deliberately displaced civilian populations in order to control territory. Small farmers needed to be driven off their land so that coca could be cultivated and later to allow for even more lucrative crops, such as palm oil, to be grown.¹⁴⁰ In spite of the fact that the Colombian government pursued vigorous anti-insurgent campaigns against the guerrillas, it has only been in recent years that it has gained the upper hand. Since the Andrés Pastrana regime (1998-2002), the US government has provided massive economic and military assistance in support of Plan Colombia in an effort to eradicate drug cultivation.

As in many other conflicts, most of those displaced – some 60% – have moved from rural areas to towns and cities, with very few IDPs living in camp settings. Displacement has affected rural and minority groups. Officially, 26 percent of Colombia's 44 million citizens are Afro-Colombian, accounting for around 17% of the total displaced population.¹⁴¹ While some 12 percent of Colombia's displaced population is indigenous, indigenous peoples make up less than 1 percent of the country's population.¹⁴² This trend seems to be increasing. The reason for this is fairly clear: their lands are of strategic interest to Colombia's armed groups or of economic interest for both land developers and *narcotraficantes*. With the large-scale eradication of crops in the easily accessible parts of the country, the drug interests have moved to more difficult and marginal terrain on Colombia's Pacific coast and the dense jungles near the Darien peninsula. These are areas which have traditionally been inhabited by marginalized groups in Colombia – the indigenous and the Afro-Colombians.

The Colombian government, unlike most displacement situations, has a long history of legislative and judicial response to IDPs. The country's 1997 Law on Internal Displacement (Law no. 387) and the many subsequent decisions by the Constitutional Court require the government both to prevent displacement and to ensure the rights of those displaced, including the right to education.¹⁴³ The Court has been very active in promoting the rights of the displaced. In fact, the Court adopted a series of indicators in 2007 that the Civil Society Monitoring Commission used in its national IDP population survey, including two on education. The Court evaluated progress made by the government vis-à-vis IDP children in October 2008, and in terms of education it noted "serious problems in education, especially pertaining to reach and access, permanency, flexibility, and adaptability of the system."¹⁴⁴ For education and other rights, the Court then ordered the government to implement special programs to attend to the protection needs of children, particularly in terms of access to education. Despite these

displaced on multiple occasions separately while government figures do not consider as IDPs those who left their communities because of government action, including actions by military forces or the destruction of crops by spraying (fumigations) which have been an integral part of government policy for many years.

¹⁴⁰ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) and Norwegian Refugee Council, *Resisting Displacement by Combatants and Developers: Humanitarian Zones in North-west Colombia*, (November 2007).

[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2007.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/SSHN-78NECZ-full_report.pdf/\\$File/full_report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2007.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/SSHN-78NECZ-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf)

¹⁴¹ IDMC, *Colombia: New displacement continues, response still ineffective. A profile of the internal displacement situation*, 3 July 2009, pp. 46-47, available at www.internal-displacement.org.

¹⁴² The figure of 1% refers to Colombian communities descending solely from indigenous, Amerindian groups. Additionally, 3% of the population is considered Afro-Amerindian or Black-Amerindian according to the 2008 CIA World Factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/co.html#People>

¹⁴³ See Rodolfo Arango Rivadeneira, ed., *Judicial Protection of Internally Displaced Persons: The Colombian Experience*, The Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement: Washington, November 2009.

Constitutional Court decisions relevant to the rights of displaced children include 'Auto 251' of October, 2008, which recognized the loss of education as one of the risks these children face which the government must redress.

¹⁴⁴ Constitutional Court of Colombia, Auto 251, 6 October 2008.

positive measures, as long as the conflict continues and as people continue to be displaced, solutions are elusive.

Access to Education

One half of the internally displaced population in Colombia is children. In recent years, there has been a marked increase in the Colombian government's funding for IDPs, with most of the increase going to emergency humanitarian assistance, particularly health and education (Table 6).¹⁴⁵ However, even though education is free for IDPs, significant challenges remain. Data on school enrollment of IDPs are difficult to assess, given different reporting periods and methodologies. Since 2008, the Constitutional Court-mandated Civil Society Commission for the Follow-up of Compliance with Decision T-025 of 2004¹⁴⁶ regularly reports to the Court on progress in achieving indicators to measure the effective enjoyment of IDPs' rights, including indicators pertaining to educational access. According to the Commission's most recent report (2009, using 2007 figures), the net enrollment rate for IDPs at the primary level (ages 7-11) and registered with the government was 84.7%, which is slightly below the primary net enrolment rate of 90.3% for 2007 according to UNESCO.¹⁴⁷ In the same report, the Commission also reports on the breakdown by sex of the net enrollment of registered IDPs, using 2008 data: 88.0% for boys and 88.6% for girls at the primary level, and 85.5% and 86.7% respectively for all levels (pre-school, primary, basic secondary and 'media' for ages 16-17).¹⁴⁸ In comparison, the net enrollment figures at the primary level in 2008 were somewhat lower for IDPs who are not registered with the government: 84.8% for boys and 82.7% for girls. Overall net enrollment for non-registered IDPs stood at 77.5% for boys and 81.3% for girls.¹⁴⁹ This data reveal that primary-aged boys and girls who are registered with the government are clearly at an advantage for access to education as compared to their non-registered peers.

It is worth analyzing a bit further the effect of displacement on access to education. Using 2004 data, Ana María Ibáñez found that 52.1% of children between 7 and 11 attended school before being displaced while 81.5% attended school after being displaced.¹⁵⁰ Similarly, a World Bank report citing Ministry of Education figures shows an upward trend between 2004 and 2008 in the accumulative enrolment rates for preschool, primary and secondary levels, noting that the conflict had thereby favored access to education by IDPs.¹⁵¹ The report notes that violence, concentrated in some rural areas, has impacted education. The report cites a study by Barrera and Ibáñez (2004) which had previously had a reverse trend on enrollment rates, which were lower in areas with higher homicide rates. This trend was also found by Sánchez and Díaz (2005) whose analysis revealed that between

¹⁴⁵ The Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, *Protecting the Internally Displaced in Colombia: The Role of Municipal Authorities*, July 2009.

¹⁴⁶ *Comisión de Seguimiento de la Sociedad Civil para el Seguimiento al Cumplimiento de la Sentencia T-025 de 2004* [Comisión de Seguimiento]. In Decision T-025 of 2004 (section 6.3.1), the Court stated that the lack of indicators was one of the factors that had contributed to the 'unconstitutional state of affairs. The Court requested that the indicators be developed by Government, the follow-up Commission, the Procuraduría General de la Nación, the Contraloría General de la República, the Ombudsman and UNHCR. The Court adopted the indicators in 2007.

¹⁴⁷ Comisión de Seguimiento, *El reto ante la tragedia humanitaria del desplazamiento forzado: Superar la exclusión social de la población desplazada*, Volume III, April 2009, p. 49, www.internal-displacement.org/.../VOLUMEN_3_EXCLUSION_SOCIAL.pdf. UNESCO, Institute for Statistics Education Database (ISCED), July 2010, <http://stats.uis.unesco.org>. Note that in contrast to the Commission, UNESCO considers the primary level as between ages 6 and 10.

¹⁴⁸ Comisión de Seguimiento, *El reto ante la tragedia humanitaria del desplazamiento forzado: Superar la exclusión social de la población desplazada*, April 2009, p. 75.

¹⁴⁹ Comisión de Seguimiento, April 2009, p. 75.

¹⁵⁰ Ana María Ibáñez-Londono, *El Desplazamiento Forzoso en Colombia*. Bogota: Universidad de los Andes, 2008, p. 105.

¹⁵¹ World Bank, *La calidad de la educación en Colombia: un análisis y algunas opciones para un programa de política*, February 2008, pp. 25-26, <http://hydra.icfes.gov.co/pisa/Documentos/CalidadDeLaEducacionEnColombia.pdf>

1995 and 2002 primary and secondary enrollment levels increased significantly except in areas with illegal armed groups and that the conflict led to higher drop-out levels, due to factors including forced recruitment and forced displacement.¹⁵² The above figures seem to indicate that at least for registered displaced people, access to primary education improves when they flee, probably because the majority of IDPs are displaced to urban areas and because high levels of violence in their communities of origin decrease enrolment rates.¹⁵³ The increasing IDP enrolment rates may also be the result of increased governmental attention and resources to IDP education. There is also evidence that poorer departments have had lower enrolment rates on average than richer ones.¹⁵⁴

Under Colombian law, schools must accept children in their place of displacement, without requiring proof of previous education. In addition, poor displaced families are exempt from the registration fee and from buying a uniform. But only children whose parents are registered as displaced have access to free schooling.¹⁵⁵ Despite these measures, adolescent IDPs lag behind their non-displaced peers: 51% of registered IDP youth attend secondary school, compared to 63% for non-IDP youth. These figures are in part explained by the fact that the percentage of registered IDPs aged 12 to 15 who are still in primary school, meaning that they started their schooling late, have had to repeat grades, or have had their schooling interrupted, is nearly twice that of those not displaced – 34% and 17.6%, respectively.¹⁵⁶ With respect to those measures that help to retain children and youth in school, in 2008 very few displaced students, just one out of every ten, receive textbooks, supplies, and transportation to attend school. As for access to university education, IDPs are also at a disadvantage: 16.5% of IDP youth access university education, compared to 33% of their non-displaced peers.¹⁵⁷

In the mid-1970s, the *Escuela Nueva* program was started to improve the quality of education for internally displaced and otherwise marginalized children in the rural areas of Colombia. In addition to providing critical education services to hard-to-reach students, *Escuela Nueva* has been touted for the quality of the education it delivers, employing a child-centered, active participation model that empowers students to learn at their own pace and utilize a flexible schedule to meet the needs of dispersed children.

By the end of the 1980s, *Escuela Nueva* was implemented in more than 20,000 rural schools around the country. As of fall 2009, the initiative had reached close to 40,000 students and youth and has improved school retention, academic performance, decreased violence in the classroom, and increased parental involvement. Colombia's "Schools for Forgiveness and Reconciliation" is listed among various best practices of emergency-affected countries as noted by the UN's Special Rapporteur on the right to education.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵² Barrera, F. y A. Ibáñez. 2004. "Does violence reduce investment in education?: a theoretical and empirical approach". Documento CEDE 2004-27 and Sánchez, F. y A. Díaz. 2005. "Los efectos del conflicto armado en el desarrollo social colombiano, 1990-2002". Documento CEDE 2005-58. Universidad de los Andes. Cited in World Bank, February 2008, p. 25.

¹⁵³ Rural to urban displacement is the dominant trend for IDPs (92%), but there is also a pattern of intra-urban displacement (93% of IDPs from urban areas flee to urban areas). See IDMC's summary of the National Planning Department's figures (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 30 June 2008, *Política de Desplazamiento en Colombia*), p. 25 in *Colombia: New displacement continues, response still ineffective - A profile of the internal displacement situation*, 3 July 2009. See also: Sebastián Albuja and Marcela Ceballos, "Urban displacement and migration in Colombia," *Forced Migration Review*, Issue 34, February 2010, pp. 10-11.

¹⁵⁴ World Bank "Colombia decentralization: options and incentives for efficiency. Volumes I and II," Informe No. 39832-CO, 2007. Cited in World Bank, February 2008, p. 25.

¹⁵⁵ UNHCR, "Education for displaced children in Colombia," 14 September 2007, <http://www.unhcr.org/46ef9a9d2.html>

¹⁵⁶ Comisión de Seguimiento, April 2009, pp. 49 and 60.

¹⁵⁷ IDMC, 3 July 2009, pp. 46.

¹⁵⁸ UN Human Rights Council, *Right to education in emergency situations Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education*, Vernor Muñoz, A/HRC/8/10, 20 May 2008, p. 25.

Table 4: IDP school attendance & yearly goals achieved, National Education Ministry, Colombia

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Number of Students	1,476	29,707	120,651	180,126	232,115
Yearly Goal	NA	NA	NA	278,802	240,000
Percentage achieved Yearly Goal	NA	NA	NA	65%	97%

Source: Acción Social, 2007

Displaced Afro-Colombians over the age of 15 have a higher illiteracy rate than the rest of the displaced population (22.4% vs. 20%), compared to literacy rates of 90 percent for the same age group, among the general population.¹⁵⁹ However, there are no gaps in terms of literacy when it comes to indigenous IDPs as compared to the general IDP population.¹⁶⁰

Sudan

Conflict overview

War has occurred almost constantly in Sudan since independence in 1956, causing numerous waves of displacement. The country hosts the largest IDP population in the world: nearly 5 million people are internally displaced due to various conflicts throughout the country – in Darfur, southern Sudan, the Three Areas (a collective term for Abyei, Blue Nile State, and Southern Kordofan) and eastern Sudan. As of January 2009, an estimated 2.7 million people were internally displaced within Darfur, more than 300,000 of whom had being displaced during 2008 alone. Significant external displacement has also occurred: there are some 400,000 Sudanese refugees of concern to UNHCR, including 250,000 Darfurians who live in a dozen refugee camps in neighboring Chad. In addition, the proxy war between Sudan and Chad has led to the internal displacement of nearly 170,000 Chadians in the east of the country.¹⁶¹

Ongoing for seven years, the crisis in Darfur has broken the mold for international conflict management and poses a multitude of dilemmas for politicians, peacemakers and humanitarian practitioners. The sheer magnitude of human deaths, destruction and displacement is in itself staggering: around 300,000 people have died as a result of fighting and/or conflict-induced displacement due to fighting involving the government, its allied militias (*Janjaweed*), the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA).¹⁶² As a result, 2.7 million people – nearly half the population of Darfur – have become IDPs, seeking refuge in major towns, IDP camps and settlements. These camps now span the breadth of the three Darfur states, perhaps forever altering the human geography of western Sudan.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹ Observatory on Racial Discrimination, 31 December 2008, p. 48. General literacy rates: CIA World Factbook Colombia.

¹⁶⁰ Observatory on Racial Discrimination, *ibid*.

¹⁶¹ See “Darfuri refugees exposed to increased attacks if UN withdraws from Chad,” Amnesty International, 11 February 2010, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/darfuri-refugees-exposed-increased-attacks-un-withdraws-from-chad-20100211>, and “Darfur refugees in Chad set to move away from unstable border with Sudan – UN,” UN News Centre, 22 September 2009.

¹⁶² Estimates on the exact number of deaths, both combat and collateral, vary widely between 200,000 and 400,000. See D. Guha-Sapir and O. Degomme, *Darfur: Counting the Deaths. Mortality Estimates from Multiple Survey Data*, May 26, 2005, CRED. See also J. Hagan and A Palloni, “Death in Darfur,” *Science*, 15 September 2006. 313: 5793, pp. 1578079. John Holmes, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, has put the figure at an estimated 300,000. See Reuters, “U.N. says Darfur dead may be 300,000 as Sudan denies,” 22 April 2008, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSN2230854320080422>.

¹⁶³ IDMC, *Sudan: Population Figures and Profile*, November 2007. Available at: www.internal-displacement.org.

In 2006, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNAMID) replaced AMIS (African Union Mission in Sudan), which had been hard-pressed to enforce the Darfur ceasefire given the fragmentation of rebel groups and the continued attacks against civilian populations. Security continued to deteriorate with UNAMID unable to alter the landscape in Darfur. In such an insecure environment, aid workers, civilians, and even UNAMID personnel were exposed to violent attacks, hijackings, and kidnappings. Since 2006, aid agencies and humanitarian staff have had to limit services to areas in Darfur and withdraw their staff due to security issues as the violence in the region shifted from military against military operations to general banditry and criminal activity.¹⁶⁴ Since 2008, Sudan president Omar al-Bashir has expelled many international aid groups from the Darfur region, affecting the well-being, including education, of more than two million people.

Access to Education

The duration of the conflict in Sudan has had devastating effects on the education system, including significant damage to the infrastructure, especially in the South, the displacement and repatriation of the population, and widespread poverty. In an effort to rebuild the system, in 2006 the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology of the Government of Southern Sudan and UNICEF embarked on a Rapid Assessment of Learning Spaces to develop a comprehensive understanding of the educational opportunities available across Southern Sudan. This massive effort at data collection showed a distinct gender disparity in primary education (girls comprised 34 percent of the total number of primary-level students), that 13% of primary school-age students were identified as vulnerable, and that the majority of teachers lacked formal training or adequate educational preparation.¹⁶⁵

In a collaborative effort to address the lack of information about the education system in these situations of displacement, the Women's Refugee Commission and the Population Council conducted a survey of basic educational services and facilities in a randomly-selected sample of IDP communities in North and West Darfur in late 2008. This research illustrated that even within one region, wide disparities in the availability and conditions of basic educational services exist. Among the key findings of the report were that only half of the primary schools provided instruction in all eight grades; all girls and boys had equal access to primary school, but girls' enrollment still lagged in some communities; access to water, sanitation, and feeding programs was low; many schools lacked a sufficient number of teachers, resulting in student-teacher ratios of 50:1 or greater, and half of existing teachers lacked qualifications; and non-formal educational alternatives were scarce. Girls' enrollment as a percentage of total IDP enrollment ranged from as low as 33 percent to a high of 51 percent in the primary schools surveyed, averaging 44 percent, despite the fact that most communities provide equal access to schools (and, in the case of Mornei, girls were favored in their access but only 41 percent of those enrolled were girls).¹⁶⁶

In addition to the vast number of IDPs within Sudan, in 2007, there were an estimated 232,000 Darfuri refugees in twelve camps in eastern Chad. Two-thirds of the refugee population – 153,000 – were under the age of 18 and 76,000 were of primary school age. On average in these camps, 76% of the children were enrolled in primary school. According to anecdotal evidence from UNHCR, a number of children were suffering from psychological problems linked to the conflict and being

¹⁶⁴ See for example, NPR, "Darfur Crime Wave Hinders Aid Efforts," 12 June 2008, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=91414799>. See also, World Food Programme, "Hijackings cut WFP food supplies for Darfur as funding shortfall threatens humanitarian air service," 3 October 2008, <http://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/hijacking-cut-wfp-food-supplies-darfur-funding-shortfall-threatens-humanitarian-air-service>.

¹⁶⁵ Government of Southern Sudan and UNICEF, *Rapid Assessment of Learning Spaces: Southern Sudan*. Juba City: UNICEF Southern Sudan, November 2006.

¹⁶⁶ Cynthia B. Lloyd et al, "Schooling and Conflict in Darfur: A Snapshot of Basic Education Services for Displaced Children," The Population Council, 2010.

displaced and were being excluded from social activities, including school.¹⁶⁷ While girls tended to outnumber boys in the early grades, they were less likely to reach the end of primary school, with girls' enrollment as low as 5 percent in grades 6 through 8 in some camps. Irregular attendance increased with each subsequent grade: over 80% of girls in the last two years of primary did not regularly attending school, citing a heavy load of domestic chores, early marriages, and pregnancies as reasons that affected attendance. Adolescent boys were being exploited for labor in the absence of educational opportunities beyond primary.¹⁶⁸

Iraq

Conflict overview

Displacement, as many authors have noted, has a long history in Iraq.¹⁶⁹ Nearly 5 million Iraqis are estimated to have been displaced, including approximately 2.8 million IDPs displaced before and after the 2003 U.S. invasion and an estimated 2 million refugees in neighboring countries and elsewhere.¹⁷⁰ Together these displaced populations account for some 15 percent of Iraq's population.

The pace of displacement reflects the pattern of the war in Iraq. When violence escalated, more people fled their communities—either because they were directly targeted, were frightened by the generalized violence, or could no longer make a living in their home communities. When there was an expectation that stability would be restored—in the initial months after the March 2003 US invasion, some 325,000 refugees returned to Iraq. Following the escalation of violence, and particularly after the bombing of the al-Askari mosque in Samarra in February 2006, the pace of displacement increased. At the height of the crisis, 60,000 Iraqis were internally displaced every month.¹⁷¹ An estimated 1.5 million IDPs have been displaced since 2006, adding to the 1.2 million already displaced before then.¹⁷²

There have been limited returns since December 2007, largely as a result of improving security. But most of the returns were of people displaced internally—rather than of refugees. And reports are that many of the refugees who did return felt that they made a mistake. Returnees still face security problems and lack access to basic services. Reportedly, some are forced back into displacement.¹⁷³ As of October 2009, the International Organization for Migration had identified 348,660 returnees in Iraq, 94 percent of whom returned from internal displacement.¹⁷⁴ While new displacement has slowed, violence still remains a threat, inter-ethnic and sectarian tensions remain high and property issues and access to basic social services remain problematic.

¹⁶⁷ UNHCR, "Education (Plus) for refugee children from Darfur in Chad," Program proposal for the ninemillion.org campaign, internal document, 2007.

¹⁶⁸ Internal data from UNHCR ninemillion.org for Darfur refugee camps in eastern Chad, Fall 2007.

¹⁶⁹ See, for example, John Fawcett and Victor Tanner, *The Internally Displaced People of Iraq*, Brookings Institution–SAIS Project on Internal Displacement, October 2002.

¹⁷⁰ Recent refugee estimates are as follows: Syria: 1 to 1.2 million (govt.); Jordan: 450-500,000; Lebanon: 50-100,000; Egypt: up to 70,000; Iran: 54,000; Turkey: 11,000; Gulf: 200,000.

¹⁷¹ IOM, "Five years on, more people displaced than ever before," 18 March 2008, <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/SHIG-7CUEAB?OpenDocument>.

¹⁷² UNHCR and IOM, cited in Géraldine Chatelard and Humam Misconi, "Regional perspectives on Iraqi displacement: A research report and discussion paper," in *Resolving Iraqi Displacement: Humanitarian and Development Perspectives*, Washington, DC: Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, February 2010, p. 15. See also IOM, *Emergency Needs Assessment: Four Years of Post-Samarra Displacement in Iraq, 13 April 2010*.

¹⁷³ IOM, *Monitoring and Needs Assessments—Assessments of Iraqi Return*, May 2009, p. 7. Also, see IOM, *Emergency Needs Assessments, 1 June 2009, Monthly Report*.

¹⁷⁴ The IDPs to which IOM refers are those displaced since February 2006. IOM, *Assessment of Return to Iraq*, November 2009. IOM has been monitoring internal displacement in Iraq since 2003.

Access to Education

Throughout the middle of the 20th century, Iraq boasted one of the strongest education systems in the region. The strength of Iraq's education system is evident in the high levels of adult literacy, 77.6 percent for in 2008, compared to the regional average of 72.4 percent. Nationally, there is a 17.6 percent illiteracy rate for household members over 10 years of age. However, disaggregated data reveals gender inequities – the illiteracy rate is 10.7 percent for males and 24.5 for females.¹⁷⁵

Thus, while education has been very important to Iraqis, it has suffered tremendously in the last seven years: academics have been targeted, the physical infrastructure has suffered major damage, sectarian divisions entered the universities, children and youth largely avoided school during times of marked insecurity, and displacement has negatively impacted the education of Iraq's children and youth. This has long term implications for Iraq's future. The few UN surveys currently available are not particularly recent, and we know that conditions change rapidly in Iraq.

In the widespread and generalized violence which took place in the aftermath of the US invasion of 2003, teachers, academics and other professionals suffered disproportionately. Between April 2003 and April 2006, there were almost 400 assassinations of university academics and medical professionals, not specific to faith or sect; 62 percent of those recorded assassinations were people with PhDs, 57 percent worked in Baghdad's universities, 83 percent from universities generally.¹⁷⁶ As compared to the representation of those with PhDs among those assassinated, Iraqi professionals with Master's degrees accounted for 4% of the assassinations, and those with Bachelor's accounted for 1%. According to the International Education's Scholar Rescue fund, which places persecuted academics from around the world in safe countries for one to two years' work, 6,000 Iraqi professors have fled violence, blackmail and death threats since February 2006.¹⁷⁷ Between 30 and 40 percent of Iraq's most highly trained educators are thought to have left Iraq between 1990 and 2005.¹⁷⁸ Of the remaining university teaching staff only 28 percent have a doctorate. The International Medical Corps reported in 2007 that the population of teachers in Baghdad has fallen by 80 percent.¹⁷⁹ UNICEF in April 2007 reported that schools had to schedule several shifts due to the shortage of teachers and lack of infrastructure.

The physical infrastructure was not spared by conflict, either. Indeed, in the aftermath of invasion, there was widespread destruction of Iraq's educational infrastructure. According to a report by the UN University (UNU), from 2003-05, some 84 percent of Iraq's higher education institutions were burnt, looted or destroyed.¹⁸⁰ Another report notes that looters stole or destroyed 80 percent of the Iraqi Academy of Science's 58,000 books. In early 2004, Musa al-Musawi, president of the University of Baghdad reported that 70% of the university and college infrastructure in Baghdad had been destroyed in military operations and subsequent looting.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁵ WFP VAM, 2008.

¹⁷⁶ Ismail Jalili, "Iraq's Lost Generation: Impact and Implications," Report to Cross-Party Commission on Iraq, 15 June 2007. The March 2010 Brookings Iraq index reports that 2,000 physicians alone were murdered since 2003 invasion.

¹⁷⁷ James Reinl, "Middle East hardest hit by 'brain drain'," *The National*, <http://www.thenational.ae/article/20090419/FOREIGN/872562653>

¹⁷⁸ See UNESCO, "Iraqi higher education in tatters, says report," 25 May 2005, http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=39833&URL_DO=DO_PRINTPAGE&URL_SECTION=201.html

¹⁷⁹ International Medical Corps, "Iraqis on the Move: Sectarian Displacement in Baghdad" (January 2007), p. 7. <http://www.imcworldwide.org/content/article/detail/1007>

¹⁸⁰ See UNESCO, "Iraqi higher education in tatters, says report," 25 May 2005, http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=39833&URL_DO=DO_PRINTPAGE&URL_SECTION=201.html

¹⁸¹ Imad Harb, *Higher Education and the Future of Iraq*, Special Report no. 195, US Institute of Peace (January 2008). <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr195.html>.

The Iraq Index reported that in 2003 only 33 percent of high school-aged Iraqis inside Iraq were enrolled in school, as seen in Table 7.¹⁸² However, between 2002 and 2005, enrollment in Iraqi schools increased every year: the nationwide figure rose 7.4 percent, and by 27 percent in middle schools and high schools over the same period.¹⁸³ A 2007 report by UNESCO reports that only 20% of Iraqi children living in Iraq are in school. There have been widespread reports of parents keeping their children at home because of fears for their safety. The generalized violence, the targeted assassinations, and the suicide attacks made it dangerous for children to go to school. The disruption of routines and the shortage of trained teachers were other factors limiting school attendance.

Table 5: Education Indicators from Brookings Iraq Index, 11 March 2010¹⁸⁴

	Year	Number/Percentage of Students
Number of Children Enrolled in Primary Schools Nationwide	2002	3.5 million
	2005	3.7 million (5.7% increase)
Number of Children Enrolled in Middle Schools and High Schools Nationwide	2002	1.1 million
	2005	1.4 million (27% increase)
Percent of High School aged Iraqis Enrolled in School in 2003	2003	33%
Percent of Iraq's 3.5 million students attending class	2007	30%
Number of government run schools in Iraq (not including Kurdish region)		17,300

Note on Education Indicators: Education numbers do not include the Kurdish regions, which are administratively separate. Iraq's population increased to 26 million (8% increase) from 2002 to 2005.

As security generally improved in Iraq, it seems education access and attendance improved for the general population as well. According to a 2006 study, the net primary school attendance rate was as follows: rural (77.7 percent); urban (91.1 percent). Disaggregated by gender, the breakdown is as follows: rural females (68.4 percent); rural males (86.7 percent); urban males (93.8 percent); urban females (81.9 percent).¹⁸⁵

For all Iraq, as of 2008, of children aged 6-14 years who attend school (92 percent), only 2 percent did not attend school regularly for a variety of reasons, including security, illness, distance to school, and lack of funds to afford the costs. In addition, 8 percent of students dropped out of school for similar reasons.¹⁸⁶

In terms of IDPs' access to education, the IDP Working Group found in 2008 that among IDPs in the center and southern governorates, education was one of the lesser priorities (listed by only 5% of IDPs in the center of the country and 2.8% in the south) in comparison to shelter, food, employment, water,

¹⁸² Brookings Institution, "Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Saddam Iraq (April 2007) p. 45.

¹⁸³ According to the Ministry of Education, as cited in Sabrina Tavernise, "Amid Iraqi Chaos, Schools Fill After Long Decline," *New York Times*, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/26/world/middleeast/26baghdad.html>

¹⁸⁴ Sabrina Tavernise, "Amid Iraqi Chaos, Schools Fill After Long Decline," *New York Times*, June 26, 2006. Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report and Semiannual Report*, April 30, 2007, page 51. Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report and Semiannual Report*, April 30, 2008, page 140 Jeffrey Fleishman and Raheem Salman, "Childhood Cut Short in Baghdad", *Los Angeles Times*, October 18, 2008.

¹⁸⁵ UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), 2006.

¹⁸⁶ WFP Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM), 2008.

legal assistance, health services and “other” needs. In the northern governorates, however, education was given a higher priority, with 35% of IDPs listing it as a need, after employment (76.3%), shelter (53.5%), food (51.2%), and “other” (42.5%) needs. The working group noted that this was likely because few Arabic-language schools existed in the north.¹⁸⁷

Analysis of the Baghdad, Basra and Ninewa governorates reveals that IDP families are less likely to send all of their children to school than families in the local non-displaced population. IDP families also cite different reasons for non-attendance – primarily lack of money – as opposed to non-attending students in the local population, whose biggest concern is security.¹⁸⁸

In Baghdad, 62 percent of IDP families sent most or all of their boys to school, while 47 percent sent most or all of their girls to school. For the local population, 92 percent of children 6-14 years of age attend school. In Basra, 50 percent of IDP families sent most or all of their boys to school, while 44 percent sent most or all of their girls to school. For the local population, 93 percent of children 6-14 years of age attend school. In Ninewa, 89 percent of IDP families sent most or all of their boys to school, while 81 percent sent most or all of their girls to school. For the local population in Ninewa, 90 percent of children 6-14 years of age attend school.^{189,190}

For both IDPs and the local population in these three governorates, barriers to school attendance vary by governorate and by sex, and include security, lack of money, need to work, distance, cultural and religious constraints, language differences, and a lack of documents. The biggest barrier to attendance for IDP children in Baghdad (both boys and girls) was lack of money (cited by 88 and 91 percent respectively). For the local population, it was security (cited by 27.5 percent of students who dropped out of school). Among IDPs in Basra, for boys it was work, and for girls it was lack of money (78 percent for each). Some female IDPs also cited lack of documentation as a barrier to school (3 percent), which was not cited in either Ninewa or Baghdad. For the local population in Basra, security and lack of money were the main barriers (cited by 26 and 25 percent of students who dropped out of school, respectively). In Ninewa, like in Basra, security and lack of money were the main barriers for the local population (cited by 26 and 25 percent of students who dropped out of school, respectively).¹⁹¹

Given that the potential barriers to accessing education as well as quality vary by governorate, the status of an area’s education system may be a factor that influences IDPs’ decisions about where to flee, impacting patterns of displacement. For example, families may select a locale with the most functioning education system. This might be an especially relevant consideration for women as primary caretakers with responsibility for supervising their children’s education.

Also of note is how returnees fare in terms of accessing education. According to IOM’s assessment in November 2009 of around 58,000 returnee families (350,000 individuals), 94% of whom are returned IDP families, a majority (64%) of them report that their children are attending school.¹⁹² The top reported priority needs for returnees was food (61%), fuel (44%), and health (42%); only 11% of returnees listed education as a priority.¹⁹³ More data are needed to better assess reasons for the obstacles to accessing education, as well as the quality of the education received.

¹⁸⁷ IDP Working Group Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq – Update (24 March 2008), p. 12.

¹⁸⁸ Jamille Bigio and Jen Scott, *Internal Displacement in Iraq: The Process of Working Toward Durable Solutions*, Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, Washington, DC: 2009.

¹⁸⁹ IOM, *Governorate profiles: Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah al-Din*, December 2008, pp. 11-12.

Retrieved on February 7, 2009, from: www.iom-iraq.net/Library/idp_gov_profiles/2008.com

¹⁹⁰ WFP Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM), 2008.

¹⁹¹ Bigio and Scott, *ibid.*

¹⁹² IOM, *Assessment of Return to Iraq*, November 2009, p. 9. Note that this analysis is of Iraqis displaced after the start of extreme sectarian violence in Iraq in February 2006.

¹⁹³ IOM, *ibid.*, p. 10.

Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries do not seem to be faring as well in terms of accessing education when compared to Iraqis in Iraq. Many adult Iraqi refugees have secondary and tertiary educations, and thus have similar hopes of attainment for their children, yet fear this will not be possible.¹⁹⁴ Education is a serious issue for refugees given the scale of the displacement of school-age children, as UN agencies estimate that around one half of the estimated two million Iraqi refugees are children, 500,000 of whom are school age.¹⁹⁵ However, only a fraction of them are enrolled in schools in Jordan and Syria according to the Jordanian and Syrian governments, respectively. Across the region, many of those who are enrolled face already over-crowded classrooms and poor infrastructure; and UN agencies found that over-crowded schools turning refugee students away were part of the explanation for low enrollment and retention rates.¹⁹⁶ Aiming to redress the situation, UNHCR and UNICEF launched a joint \$129 million appeal in July 2007 to address the strains which educating Iraqi refugees placed on host countries.¹⁹⁷ The UNHCR Global Appeal for Iraq 2010-2011 budgets \$1.8 million for education, the second largest sub-sector in the 'basic goods and services' section for 2010 after hygiene items.¹⁹⁸

In Jordan, ten percent of Iraqi children, or 20,000, were enrolled for the 2006-2007 school year, 6,000 of whom dropped out.¹⁹⁹ The Jordanian Ministry of Education estimated that around 24,000 Iraqi students were enrolled in school in the following year. Even though the government was hard-pressed to be able to accommodate those students, in 2008 the government extended access to all schools to Iraqi children and asked for international assistance to better serve the students to respond to overcrowding and double-shifting.²⁰⁰ The 2007 Fafo report indicates that the low enrollment rates in Jordan could be linked with the lack of clarity during the 2006-2007 school year about the ability of children who lacked a valid permit to stay in Jordan, to register for schools.²⁰¹ The Fafo report examined enrollment rates for a sample of 1,565 Iraqi refugee students aged 6 to 17 and found that 78 percent of them were enrolled in school, with near gender parity, but that the enrollment numbers were lower among the poorest of the refugee children (60 percent) and among non-Muslim groups. The report also found that the majority of the children and youth not enrolled in school said their family's inability to afford education and their family's displacement were the causes. Interestingly, despite costing more than four times the amount of public schooling, private school enrollment was markedly higher (three in four) among the sample Iraqi refugee population – including the wealthy but also the very poor – than among the Jordanian population (20 percent). Adequate financial resources and the ability of private schools to better accommodate the refugees in terms of space, may be factors owing to this phenomenon, according to Fafo.²⁰²

¹⁹⁴ Jeff Crisp et al, UNHCR, *Surviving in the city A review of UNHCR's operation for Iraqi refugees in urban areas of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria*, PDES/2009/03, July 2009, p. 40. For figures, including male-female breakdown, of education level of Iraqi refugees aged 16+ in Jordan, see Fafo, *Iraqis in Jordan Their Number and Characteristics*, 2007, pp. 20-21. The Fafo survey was conducted between April and May 2007.

¹⁹⁵ *Joint UNHCR/UNICEF Appeal: Providing education opportunities to Iraqi children in host countries: A regional perspective*, July 2007, <http://www.unhcr.org/4700f8622.html>.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ *UNHCR Global Appeal 2010-2011 – Iraq*, p. 26, <http://www.unhcr.org/4b03cd879.html>.

¹⁹⁹ UNHCR, "UNHCR distributes school supplies to Iraqi refugees in Damascus," 5 August 2008, <http://www.unhcr.org/48984ce12.html>; UNHCR-UNICEF, *Joint Appeal: Providing education opportunities to Iraqi children in host countries: A regional perspective*, 27 July 2007, <http://www.unhcr.org/4700f8622.html>. Also: Refugees International, "Iraqi refugees: Time for the UN system to fully engage," 27 July 2007, <http://www.refugeesinternational.org/policy/field-report/iraqi-refugees-time-un-system-fully-engage>.

²⁰⁰ *UNHCR Iraq Situation update*, March 2008. Also, Amnesty International, *Iraq: Rhetoric and reality: the Iraqi refugee crisis*, June 2008, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE14/011/2008/en>.

²⁰¹ Fafo, *Iraqis in Jordan Their Number and Characteristics*, 2007, pp. 20-21. The Fafo survey was conducted between April and May 2007, p. 21.

²⁰² Fafo, *ibid.*

In Syria, less than ten percent of children, or 33,000, were enrolled for the 2006-2007 school year.²⁰³ This is despite the fact that education in Syria is free and compulsory until age 15, including for Iraqi refugee children. The following year the number enrolled in Syria increased to 49,132, it was still far below the increase of 100,000 agreed to by the Ministry of Education, UNHCR and UNICEF for that school year.²⁰⁴ The enrollment rates plunged for the 2008-2009 school year in Syria: 32,425 Iraqi students were enrolled. The low enrollment rates in Syria and Jordan stand in contrast to the 80 percent enrollment rate for Iraqi refugee children and youth in primary and lower secondary levels in Lebanon (where there are fewer Iraqi refugees than in Jordan and Syria) and the Lebanese government ordered all schools to accommodate the population.²⁰⁵ However, drop-out rates for children in Syria and Lebanon are reportedly high, in part due to the fact that English instruction starts earlier in Syria which means that they are even further behind.. The inability to follow the curriculum in Syria due to school being missed during displacement also affects enrollment rates.²⁰⁶ Economic duress is a related problem which affects access to education, especially given that Iraqi refugees cannot work legally and as the displacement situation has become protracted, many refugees have used up their savings. Indeed, UNHCR believes economic issues are behind the lower enrollments in Syria for the 2008-2009 school year.²⁰⁷ Indeed, aside from transportation costs, school uniforms and other related material costs alone are prohibitive for many families, ranging between \$46 and \$79 per child.²⁰⁸ The lack of documentation is also a reported problem inhibiting enrollment.²⁰⁹

Related to the economic situation of refugees in Syria and Jordan, various reports point to the fact that some Iraqi refugee children work to provide for their families, often in dangerous jobs.²¹⁰ The latest data are from an IPSOS survey in 2007, which was not a survey representative of the entire Iraqi refugee population in Syria, but according to which an estimated 10 percent of school-age Iraqi refugee children in the sample were working.²¹¹ A study to be conducted by UNICEF and ILO with the Ministry of Social Affairs, on the worst forms of child labor in Syria may prove the linkages between child labor and drop-outs, according to UNICEF.²¹² Also, early marriages are becoming more commonplace for Iraqi refugee girls in Syria, according to UNHCR.²¹³

Another issue is that psychological trauma and emotional stress is prevalent among Iraqi refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria.²¹⁴ Psychosocial problems among Iraqi refugees are also linked to low enrollment and retention rates of school-age Iraqi refugees, according to UN agencies.²¹⁵ In 2007, UNHCR Syria found almost 400 Iraqi female refugees who were survivors of sexual or gender-based violence, including rape, in Iraq. Between January and May 2008, UNHCR identified 200 cases of

²⁰³ UNHCR, 5 August 2008, *ibid.* UNHCR-UNICEF Joint Appeal, *ibid.* Refugees International, *ibid.*

²⁰⁴ UNHCR, 5 August 2008, *ibid.* Also, UNHCR-UNICEF Joint Appeal, *ibid.*

²⁰⁵ Jeff Crisp et al, UNHCR, *Surviving in the city A review of UNHCR's operation for Iraqi refugees in urban areas of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria*, PDES/2009/03, July 2009, p. 40.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

²⁰⁷ IRIN, "Syria: Poverty fuels child labour among Iraqi refugees," 14 December 2009,

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=87418>.

²⁰⁸ UNHCR, "UNHCR distributes school supplies to Iraqi refugees in Damascus," 5 August 2008,

<http://www.unhcr.org/48984ce12.html>.

²⁰⁹ See for example, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, *World Refugee Survey 2009*, available at <http://www.refugees.org/>. Some individual cases reported in Amnesty International, *Iraq: Suffering in silence: Iraqi refugees in Syria*, 2008, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE14/010/2008/en>.

²¹⁰ See for example International Organization for Migration, *Assessment of Psychosocial Needs of Iraqis Displaced in Jordan and Lebanon*, February 2008, p. 10. Amnesty International, *Iraq: Rhetoric and reality: the Iraqi refugee crisis*, June 2008. IRIN, 14 December 2009, *ibid.*

²¹¹ *Second IPSOS Survey on Iraqi refugees (31 October – 25 November 2007) – Final Results*, p. 6.

²¹² IRIN, 14 December 2009, *ibid.*

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ Anne Evans Barnes, "Realizing protection space for Iraqi refugees: UNHCR in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon," UNHCR Research Paper No. 167, 1 January 2009, p. 22. International Organization for Migration, *Assessment of Psychosocial Needs of Iraqis Displaced in Jordan and Lebanon*, February 2008. See also Ashley Jonathan Clements, "Trapped: Disappearing Hopes of Iraqi Refugee Children," World Vision, 2007.

²¹⁵ Ashley Jonathan Clements, "Trapped: Disappearing Hopes of Iraqi Refugee Children," World Vision, 2007.

Iraqi girls (aged 12-17 years) who survived sexual or gender-based violence in the Juvenile and Rehabilitation Centre.²¹⁶ UNHCR surveys of Iraqi refugees in Syria showed that every person interviewed had experienced one traumatic event before leaving Iraq.²¹⁷ Almost 70 percent reported that they were subjected to harassment by militias and 16 percent endured torture.²¹⁸ Most of the children have been exposed to the death of loved ones, exploitation, death threats, and even kidnappings. The aforementioned marginalization in host countries adds to the trauma of war. Psychologically distraught and disaffected children are prime targets for extremist elements in the region, potentially posing a major security concern for neighboring countries and the United States.

It is also troubling to note that schools and homes are not always places of refuge for Iraqi students in Jordan. Violence in schools has been a recognized problem nationally for Jordanians, and UNHCR has discovered this is also the case for Iraqi refugee children, at school and at home: “Iraqi children, like Jordanians, are subject to violence and face discrimination from headmasters and teachers.”²¹⁹ More research should be conducted on the prevalence of violence in Iraqi refugee households and in schools they attend.

Although very different contexts, certain common themes emerge from these short case studies, including difficulties in obtaining data on access to education by IDPs and refugees, particularly in non-camp settings. It appears that those in protracted displacement, such as Colombia, Sudan and Iraq have better access to education than those more recently displaced, as in Pakistan. While we earlier generalized that those in camps generally enjoyed more access than those in urban settings, the cases of Colombia and Iraq suggest that this isn’t always the case. In both countries, refugees and IDPs living in urban areas have relatively good rates of educational access – although (as always) there are some concerns about the data and particularly the likelihood of underreporting in the case of non-registered refugees/IDPs. Sudan offers a particularly interesting case; while it appears that about half of IDPs have access to education, the percentages are significantly higher for Darfuri refugees in neighboring Chad. Not unsurprisingly, gender disparities are evident in all four cases, as they are in the communities from which people were displaced.

V. Recommendations

Increasing knowledge on displacement and education

The lack of systematic data on education for refugees and IDPs is striking. While UNHCR generally collects information on refugees living in camps, its information – even basic information – on refugees living dispersed among host communities is almost non-existent. This is similar to the situation of internally displaced persons, except that for IDPs, there is no single UN agency which can be tasked with collecting this information. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Center is just beginning to systematically collect data on IDP education. Most non-governmental organizations which work on education, such as Save the Children, do not distinguish between displaced children and children affected by conflict. Even organizations with a particular focus on children, such as the Women’s Refugee Commission (which took the lead in compiling the Global Survey) have not been able to continue a regular process of collecting reliable information on refugee and displaced children.

Recommendation: that the GMR commission a research process to collect basic statistical information on refugee and IDP access to education to build upon the methodology used in the Global Survey with annual updates and more comprehensive information that also address aspects of quality education, such as basic learning levels.

²¹⁶ Barnes, *ibid.*, p. 22.; UNHCR, ‘Syria Update’, May 2008.

²¹⁷ UNHCR, *Trauma Survey in Syria*, 22 January 2008.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ UNHCR, *Refugee Education in Urban Settings Case Studies from Nairobi – Kampala – Amman – Damascus*, December 2009, p. 39.

Recommendation: that GMR work with UNHCR and the IDMC to commission in-depth studies on issues affecting the education of refugee and IDP children, particularly focusing on those issues identified here – such as language of instruction, certification, livelihoods development, and gender. The studies should also systematically examine best practices in overcoming these difficulties.

Recommendation: that UNHCR and the Education Cluster be commended for their efforts to collect data on refugee and IDP education and be encouraged to make these data publicly available. While the limitations of data collection on refugee and IDP children should be highlighted, making these data available to researchers will encourage better understanding of the actual state of education of displaced children and youth and could serve as a basis for advocating better funding of and commitment to education.

Recommendation: that NGOs and UN agencies, perhaps through INEE and the Education Cluster, collect a set of best practices on education of displaced children and youth

Recommendation: that national and international NGOs working with children and youth urge relevant government authorities and international actors to make information available on both refugee and IDP access to education and their experiences with education in their place of displacement. NGOs are also particularly well-placed to carry out research on the effects of displacement on education in the communities in which they are working.

Recommendation: that donor governments recognize the importance of robust data as a basis for evidenced-based programming and support the efforts of NGOs, UN agencies, and research institutes to collect necessary information.

Establishing the normative framework

National governments play the key role in determining whether or not IDPs and refugees will have access to education. In the case of IDPs, their responsibility is primary and they need to develop laws and policies which ensure that IDPs are able to get an education. In the case of refugees, the governments of host countries can ensure that refugees have access not only to primary education, but also to secondary and tertiary education. While the adoption of laws and policies are not in themselves sufficient to ensure access to high quality education, they are an important indication of commitment to education as a priority. Even when they are not immediately and fully implemented, they serve as a vision and statement of intentions by governmental authorities and can be used by IDPs and refugees as well as their advocates to press for greater governmental accountability.

Recommendation: that GMR should highlight that governments of countries with IDPs should develop laws and policies that ensure that displaced children and young people are able to continue their education. This should include measures to address the practical obstacles which often impede IDPs' access to education. Governments of countries hosting refugees should ensure that public schools are open to refugees. UNHCR should seek additional funds to compensate these governments for the increased cost of educating refugee children.

Recommendation: that governments of countries with significant internal displacement and which have not adopted laws or policies upholding the rights of IDPs consider doing so. In some instances this may involve drafting comprehensive legislation on IDPs, in others it may mean modifying existing laws and policies on education to ensure that IDPs are able to access education.

Recommendation: that governments of countries hosting refugees that are not signatories to the 1951 Convention and/or the 1967 Protocol consider taking the necessary steps to do so and that they ensure that refugees living in their countries have free and unimpeded access to educational opportunities.

Recommendation: that UN agencies and civil society organizations provide necessary technical support to governments to adopt the necessary laws and policies to ensure that IDPs and refugees have access to education.²²⁰

Recommendation: that civil society organizations in countries that already have laws and policies in place which affirm the right of refugees and/or IDPs to education monitor the extent to which these laws and policies are implemented and that they encourage refugees and IDPs themselves to work with the governments to ensure that educational needs are met.

Displacement-affected communities

As this study has shown, the impact of displacement goes far beyond the individuals who are forced to leave their homes because of conflict. Anecdotal evidence suggests that education is impacted by displacement in most, if not all, communities – including the communities from which the displaced leave, the communities which host them, and the communities to which they return – are also impacted by displacement. Yet little is known about the ways in which such Displacement-Affected Communities (DACs) are affected by and respond to the additional challenges of dealing with displacement. What is the impact, for example, on schools when large numbers of students, teachers and other staff leave? Does an increase in the number of children needing school in the host community generate tensions between the displaced students and host students, families, and communities? When the displaced return to their communities, are they able to access education?

Recommendation: that GMR closely examine the concept of DACs and highlight the range of socio-economic issues facing the communities and the implications for education. (Note: a much better understanding may require additional primary research, which may be outside the scope of GMR at present, but which should be encouraged and followed up by GMR).

Recommendation: that UN agencies, NGOs and bilateral donors ensure that programs developed to provide education to IDPs and refugees take into consideration the broader context of DACs, for example in ensuring that host and return communities are supported in their efforts to provide educational opportunities to the displaced or returnees. Efforts should be made to ensure that conflict-affected populations who have not been displaced also have access to educational opportunities.

Relief, development and early recovery: getting it right

In almost all post-conflict situations, the transition between humanitarian relief and development actors is a rocky one. While humanitarian actors may judge that the emergency is over, conditions are often too uncertain or insecure for development actors to launch large-scale programs, including programs to restore formal education. And yet education is an important component of peace-building and central to decisions by IDPs and refugees to return. While the World Bank has found that primary school enrolment increases fairly quickly after a conflict, secondary and tertiary education levels remain below average for a longer period of time.²²¹ In countries such as northern Uganda, the reestablishment of education is critical to the return of IDPs.

Recommendation: that GMR highlight the importance of humanitarian and development actors working together to develop ways to re-establish educational systems in post-conflict settings, including suggestions on how to support educational continuity and systems recovery. A specific discussion of the relative merits of investing in refugee and IDP education for post-conflict recovery should be highlighted.

²²⁰ See for example, *Protecting Internally Displaced Persons: A Manual for Law and Policymakers* (Washington, DC: Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, 2008) which provides detailed guidance and examples of good practices to governments wishing to adopt laws and policies upholding the rights of IDPs.

²²¹ Chen S., Loayza N.V., Reynal-Querol M. *The aftermath of civil war*. Post-conflict Transitions Working paper No. 4, World Bank WPS 4190.

Recommendation: that donor governments ensure that their humanitarian agencies recognize the crucial role of education during emergency situations and that they provide funding for educational initiatives. Donor governments are also asked to ensure that their development agencies prioritize education in post-conflict settings and that they work with humanitarian agencies to ensure a smooth transition. In particular, there is a need to recognize the role that re-establishment of education plays in encouraging and supporting the return of displaced communities.

Recommendation: that governments of conflict-affected communities take the necessary measures to ensure that returning refugees and IDPs are able to resume their education and that their learning attainments during the time of their displacement are recognized. Although governments in post-conflict situations face many challenges and competing priorities, restoring education is not a marginal issue, but rather is central for restoring trust in government, for rebuilding human capital, and for long-term recovery efforts.

UNHCR and education for refugees and IDPs

UNHCR is a crucial actor in ensuring education for displaced communities. However, their operations in general are seriously under-resourced and hence their support for the education sector is under-staffed and in great need of urgent and robust support.

Recommendation: GMR should shine a strong spotlight on the way in which the global community has failed to provide sufficient support for refugee education, and particularly for UNHCR's work in this area. This should be accompanied by a solid assessment of the costs and benefits of investing in education for displaced communities and the findings of this assessment directly related to UNHCR policies and programs. Additional primary research could be commissioned on this issue, looking at such issues as employment rates of refugees and IDPs who were able to access education compared with those who lost years of education because of their displacement.

Recommendation: UNHCR should ensure that all of its field offices regularly report on refugees' access to education and should continue to advocate with host governments to increase that access. While it is commendable that UNHCR's work with education falls within its Division of International Protection, Services (DIPS), continued efforts are needed to ensure that education's role as an instrument of protection is incorporated into overall protection strategies in particular situations.

Recommendation: Given the fact that UNHCR has assumed greater responsibilities for IDPs and has created a new funding pillar to support its work with IDPs, UNHCR should incorporate issues of IDP education into its overall educational strategy.

Recommendation: Donor governments should provide the necessary financial support to UNHCR to enable it to expand educational opportunities for refugees and IDPs. Among donors, Germany stands out for its initiative to support university education for refugees. Given the tremendous need for tertiary education for refugees, other donors are encouraged to adopt similar programs.

Recommendation: UNHCR, NGOs, and national governments should be encouraged to think creatively about non-traditional ways to increase support for education of refugees and IDPs. For example, a significant number of educational institutions mobilized substantial support in the aftermath of the Haitian earthquake. Although this took place in a very different context, it might be useful to think of 'twinning' initiatives in which educational institutions are linked with particular refugee situations to support education. This presently occurs on a bilateral, ad hoc basis, but a concerted international effort to highlight these initiatives could be worth exploring.