

Thematic Brief 9: Tracking displacement during crises

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Accurately locating populations in need of assistance and protection – especially those that are highly mobile – is essential in the response to humanitarian crises. In order to address this challenge, IOM developed the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), an information management tool which regularly captures, processes and disseminates complex information to provide a clear understanding of the changing locations, vulnerabilities and needs of populations in crisis situations.

The DTM has a modular approach that makes it adaptable to response and recovery efforts in disaster and conflict settings. It has been deployed and refined in numerous operations over the last decade and is now a standard resource for government agencies and humanitarian actors responding to crises.

Actions

- ▶ Adapt the Displacement Tracking Matrix to the specificities of the particular crisis context and of the information needs of the different humanitarian actors.
- ▶ Monitor the entire displaced population by covering all accessible sites and drawing on all reliable sources of information, such as NGOs, government authorities and humanitarian actors.
- ▶ In coordination with other relevant actors, distribute reports, maps and raw data in the public domain, in order to make them accessible to other clusters and partners, and to better inform their actions and analyses. *Examples: Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Sudan and Sudan.*
- ▶ Regularly repeat monitoring exercises to capture the dynamic aspects of displacement and the evolution of a population's needs. *Examples: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Iraq, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Pakistan and the Philippines.*
- ▶ Use DTM data to enhance assistance and support interventions in the early stages of a crisis, as well as to inform return, integration and relocation choices when planning for recovery. *Examples: Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Iraq, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Sudan and Sudan.*
- ▶ Draw on the wealth of detailed information stored in the DTM to identify local risk factors (e.g. presence of vulnerable groups and land and property issues) and better plan future DRR interventions. *Examples: Haiti, Mozambique, Nepal, Pakistan and the Philippines.*

CASE STUDY 14: The Temporary Settlement Support Unit in Pakistan¹³

The Temporary Settlement Support Unit (TSSU) used the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) to map displacement, assess needs and provide coordination support for humanitarian assistance activities following the monsoon floods that affected the provinces Sindh, Punjab and Balochistan in early September 2012. Through the DTM, TSSU was able to capture information on the mobility and needs of affected populations; their displacement and return patterns; and the type of assistance they required from the humanitarian sectors, both in temporary settlements and in areas of return.

In October 2012, TSSU profiled the situation of 32,269 individuals in 201 settlements (the majority of which were spontaneous sites) in flood-affected areas of Sindh Province, identifying their needs by sector (e.g. food, health and shelter). This first phase of the assessment highlighted that many affected families initially identified in the Multi-sectoral Initial Rapid Assessment (MIAR) in September 2012 had already been forced to leave temporary settlements by certain circumstances. Reasons cited for the premature return to areas of origin included the following: concern for assets left behind (including crops for harvesting); insufficient access to humanitarian assistance in camp-like settings; and eviction from temporary settlements.

TSSU conducted six rounds of assessment between September 2011 and February 2012 in 11 severely affected districts (Badin, Sanghar, Mirpurkhas, Umerkot, Dadu, Matiari, Hyderabad, Tando Allah Khan, Tando Muhammad Khan, Shaheed Benazirabad and Tharparkar). Overall, 8,879 temporary settlements were assessed by IOM and its partners, with the initial three assessments covering 83.34 per cent of all temporary settlements visited. These communities faced prolonged displacement, primarily due to the continued presence of standing water in their areas of origin, which hindered access and recovery.

While a consistent trend to return was observed, humanitarian needs in return areas were high, with returnees and host families often facing conditions similar to those faced by internally displaced persons. Around 66 per cent of affected families assessed in temporary settlements and return areas reported serious losses of livelihood and the deterioration of their economic condition, with access to health and education still very limited. To complement its assessment activities, TSSU also conducted capacity-building activities throughout the flood response to train government and humanitarian actors to better manage the displacement of populations.

CASE STUDY 15: Enhancing displacement tracking in Haiti

Haiti's 2010 earthquake resulted in the largest urban displacement ever documented: 1.5 million IDPs at the height of the crisis and 82,000 IDP households remaining in temporary settlements as of March 2013. The DTM was used throughout the emergency phase to manage humanitarian assistance and is now informing longer-term development and recovery programmes.

In order to respond to the challenges posed by such a massive displacement in a dense urban context, the DTM repeated assessments were improved through a combination of innovative technologies (e.g. unmanned aerial vehicles, geographic information systems and low-cost handheld devices for data collection and displacement tracking) and traditional monitoring methods (e.g. field teams). This allowed for better efficiency in the enumeration and identification of displaced people.

The Government of Haiti is now using displacement data to evaluate housing needs and land use planning options and priorities, which led to the establishment of a series of return, reconstruction and public housing projects (e.g. the FAES [Economic and Social Assistance Fund]–Zorange, USAID–Caracol and UCBLP [Housing Construction and Public Buildings Unit]–Morne Cabrit housing projects).