

THEMATIC SERIES HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

Children, women, older people, men, youth, people living with disabilities and people from marginalised groups all experience internal displacement differently. This thematic series investigates the various ways in which people's lives can be affected in relation with their pre-existing characteristics.



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Accounting for internally displaced children

NOVEMBER 2019

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Cover photo: A newly installed hand washing station is the object of curiosity for the children living in an IDP camp in Ethiopia. Photo: NRC/Sidney Kung'u, April 2017.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Internally displaced children are twice invisible in global and national data.¹ First, because internally displaced people (IDPs) of all ages are often unaccounted for. Second, because age-disaggregation of any kind of data is limited, and even more so for IDPs.

Planning adequate responses to meet the needs of internally displaced children, however, requires having at least a sense of how many there are and where they are. This report presents the first estimates of the number of children living in internal displacement triggered by conflict and violence at the global, regional and national levels.

There are 17 million children living in internal displacement because of conflict or violence around the world, and millions more whose displacement was associated with disasters, climate change or other causes. About 5.2 million are under the age of five. About 9.2 million are of primary and lower-secondary school age, between 5 and 14. An additional 2.5 million are between the ages of 15 and 17.

Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for the largest number of IDPs under the age of 18, with an estimated 8.2 million, or 48 per cent of the global population of internally displaced children. The Middle East and North Africa account for about 4.4 million IDPs under 18, followed by Central and South America with 1.9 million, South Asia with 1.6 million, Europe and Central Asia with about 705,000 and East Asia and the Pacific with 251,000.

The countries with the highest estimated number of IDPs under the age of 18 are Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Colombia, Somalia, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Yemen and Ethiopia, each of them accounting for more than a million children living in internal displacement.

Children are commonly viewed as one of the most vulnerable groups of people in internal displacement associated with conflict, violence or disasters. This report presents examples showing why that may be, although the impacts of internal displacement vary greatly from one context to the next. In rare cases, when the right policies are in place, displaced children may even experience an improvement in their living conditions, with increased access to healthcare or education, for instance.

Most reports on internally displaced children, however, point to harm to their security, physical and mental health and access to quality education.² This harm, if unaddressed, can have repercussions that will last into adulthood and even after displacement.

Given that more than 40 per cent of all people internally displaced by conflict and violence are under the age of 18, any attempt at preventing or responding to internal displacement should include a focus on children. They have remained invisible in internal displacement data and overlooked in many policies and debates on the phenomenon. This report is intended to demonstrate the scale and urgency of the issue and serve as a baseline against which progress can be assessed in coming years.

INTRODUCTION

Children and their families can be forced to leave their home for many reasons. They may be displaced by conflict or violence, disasters, climate change, evictions or other causes. Although those who cross an international border, including refugees and asylum seekers, often make the headlines, twice as many remain displaced within their own country. Forty-one-million people displaced because of conflict or violence alone were accounted for across the world at the end of 2018.³

These IDPs, however, receive much less attention, and we know less about them. The global number of people internally displaced by disasters or climate change, for instance, is still unknown. Most of the time, so is their age and sex. IDPs of different ages and sex, however, experience internal displacement differently. They face different challenges and may access different resources to overcome them.

Internally displaced children are at an especially high risk for abuse, neglect and violence, illness and distress, poverty and other harm to their current and future wellbeing. They require dedicated support from their governments and the international community, but that is difficult to plan for if they remain unaccounted.

This report presents the first global, regional and national estimates of the number of children living in internal displacement associated with conflict and violence. There were at least 17 million such children at the end of 2018, nearly half of them in Sub-Saharan Africa. That does not include millions more displaced because of disasters, climate change or other causes.

In addition to these figures, this report presents some of the impacts of internal displacement children experience more often than adults. It also looks at policies and practices from around the world to identify options for supporting and protecting internally displaced children in different contexts.

Given that more than 40 per cent of all IDPs are under the age of 18, any attempt at preventing or responding to internal displacement should include a focus on children. They have remained invisible in internal displacement data and overlooked in many policies and debates on the phenomenon. This report is intended to demonstrate the scale and urgency of the issue and serve as a baseline against which progress can be assessed in coming years.

KEY FIGURES

Internally displaced children are twice invisible in global and national data. First, because compared to people forced to leave their home who cross an international border, those who remain in their home country are largely unaccounted for. If they find refuge with family or friends, they are rarely registered as IDPs. Those who have to move to displacement camps are relatively better recorded, but they represent a minority of all IDPs worldwide. In the Lake Chad Basin, for instance, 80 per cent of the people displaced by Boko Haram live in host communities, as do 70 per cent of IDPs in DRC.⁴

In addition, age disaggregation of any kind of data is limited, and even more so for internal displacement. Seventy-seven per cent of countries and territories have age-disaggregated data for international migrants, but only 56 per cent of refugee data includes information on age.⁵ Meanwhile, out of the nearly 50 countries and territories for which IDMC was able to estimate the total number of IDPs in 2018, only 14 per cent provided age disaggregation, and only one in four did so systematically.

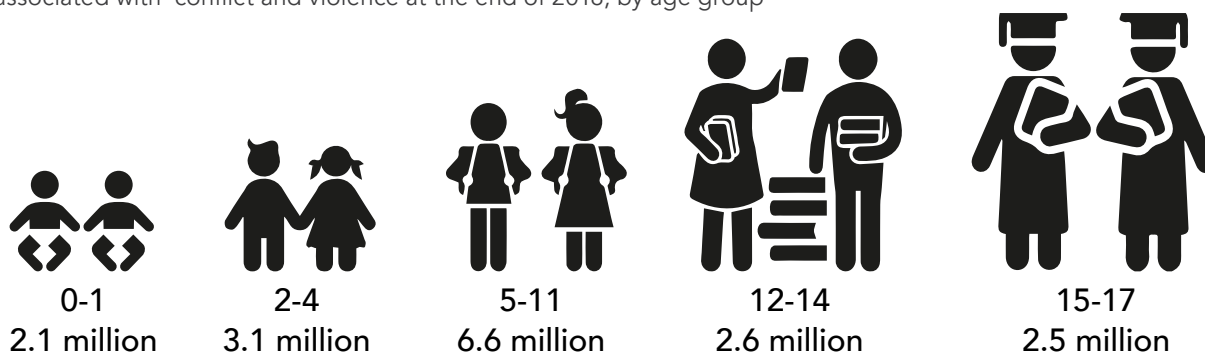
Knowing exactly how many children are currently living in internal displacement therefore requires better data at the national level. It also requires medium- to long-term investments in statistical and reporting capacities.

There are 20 years of unabated internal displacement on record. Improving our understanding of the situation so we can take more effective action is urgent. One option for getting a sense of the scale of the global phenomenon is to use national age distribution data and apply it to the internally displaced population.

The figures presented in this report apply the percentage of the national population in broad age groups, estimated by the UN Population Division's World Population Prospects 2019, to the number of people living in internal displacement because of conflict and violence in each country at the end of 2018, as published in the Global Report on Internal Displacement 2019.⁶ This method is used for 53 countries for which data is available.

The age groups employed throughout this report are commonly used to correspond to children's specific needs, including in nutrition, healthcare, education and psychosocial development. These age groups are 0 to 1, 2 to 4, 5 to 11 for primary school age, 12 to 14 for lower-secondary school age and 15 to 17 for upper-secondary school age. Although school age varies from one country to another, these age groups are used internationally for statistical purposes.

FIGURE 1: Global estimate of the number of children living in internal displacement associated with conflict and violence at the end of 2018, by age group



17 million IDPs under 18



Internally displaced children in northwest Colombia learn using playful tools, promoted by NRC to make the displacement situation less traumatic. Photo: NRC/Daniel Sánchez, January 2018

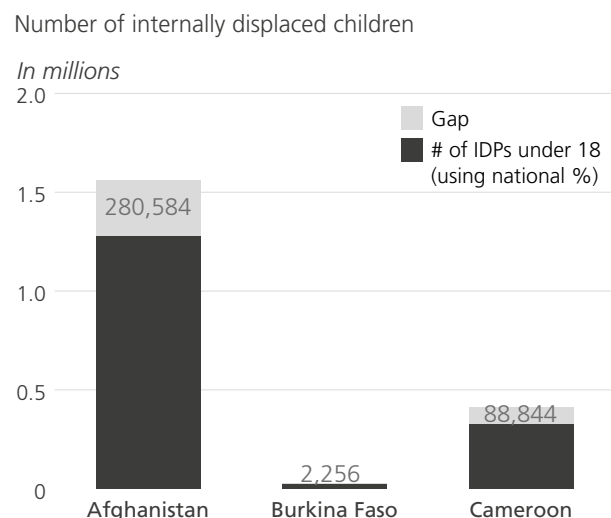
Figure 1 represents the estimated number of children living in internal displacement triggered by conflict and violence alone at the global level at the end of 2018. In total, there are 17 million IDPs under the age of 18 in this category. About 5.2 million are under the age of five. About 9.2 million are of primary and lower-secondary school age, which in many countries corresponds to the mandatory age for schooling. An additional 2.5 million are between the ages of 15 and 17, and may either be in upper-secondary school or entering the labour market.

These numbers are largely underestimated. They only account for 53 countries for which data is available, and only consider displacement associated with conflict or violence. Millions more are displaced around the world because of disasters, climate change, evictions or other causes, but their number remains unknown.

In addition, evidence from different countries shows that the proportion of children among the internally displaced population is often higher than their proportion among the overall national population. It is therefore likely that using national age distribution data to estimate the number of internally displaced children results in overlooking thousands, or even hundreds of thousands of children for some countries. Figure 2 illustrates this potential gap for some countries where age-disaggregated data on IDPs is available.

In Burkina Faso, where the overall population below the age of 18 represents 51 per cent of the total population, a 2019 assessment places their proportion at 56 per cent of the internally displaced population.⁷ In Cameroon, a survey in the North region showed that 62 per cent of the internally displaced population was below the age of 18, while children made up 49 per cent of the national population.⁸ In Afghanistan, 60 per cent of registered IDPs were below 18, and children constituted 49 per cent of the national population.⁹

FIGURE 2: Difference in the estimated number of internally displaced children for selected countries, using national age distribution data (dark grey) and IDP data (light grey).



In spite of these limitations, the estimates presented in this report give a sense of the scale of the issue and shed light on the countries and regions where the highest numbers of children are internally displaced because of conflict and violence. Map 1 illustrates their global distribution at the end of 2018. Table 1 presents in more detail the regional estimates for each age group.

Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for the largest number of IDPs under the age of 18, with an estimated 8.2 million, or 48 per cent of the global population of internally displaced children. Not only does the region have the largest number of people living in internal displacement. Among countries affected by internal displacement associated with conflict and violence, it also has

the highest proportion of children. An average of 50 per cent of the total population is under the age of 18. The Middle East and North Africa account for about 4.4 million IDPs under 18, followed by Central and South America with 1.9 million, South Asia with 1.6 million, Europe and Central Asia with about 705,000 and East Asia and the Pacific with 251,000.

The countries with the highest estimated number of IDPs under the age of 18 are Syria, DRC, Colombia, Somalia, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Yemen and Ethiopia, each of them accounting for more than a million children living in internal displacement. A table with estimates for all 53 countries where data is available and for each age group is presented as an annex to this report.

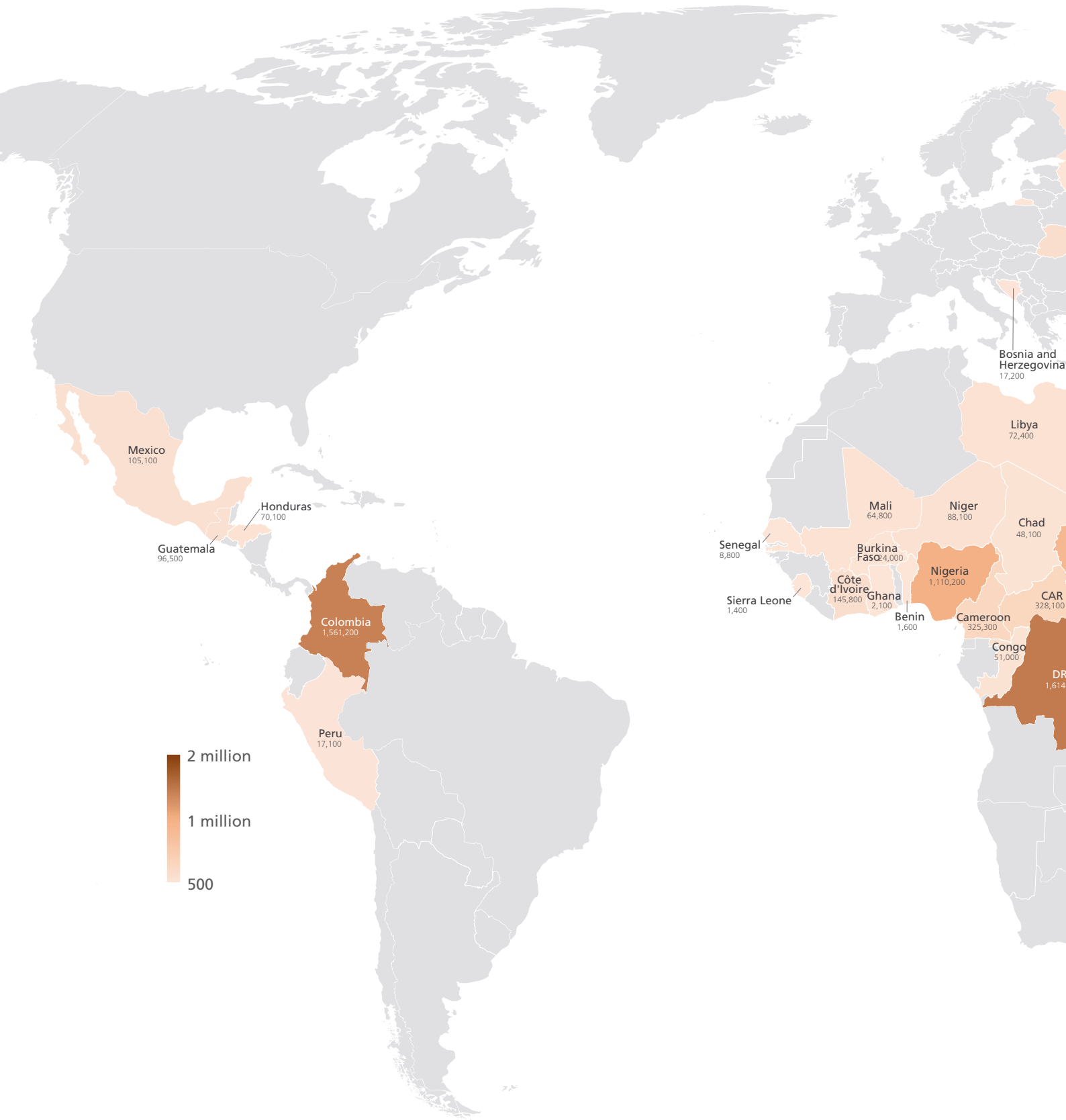
TABLE 1: Estimates of the number of children living in internal displacement triggered by conflict and violence at the end of 2018, by region and age group, using national age distribution data.

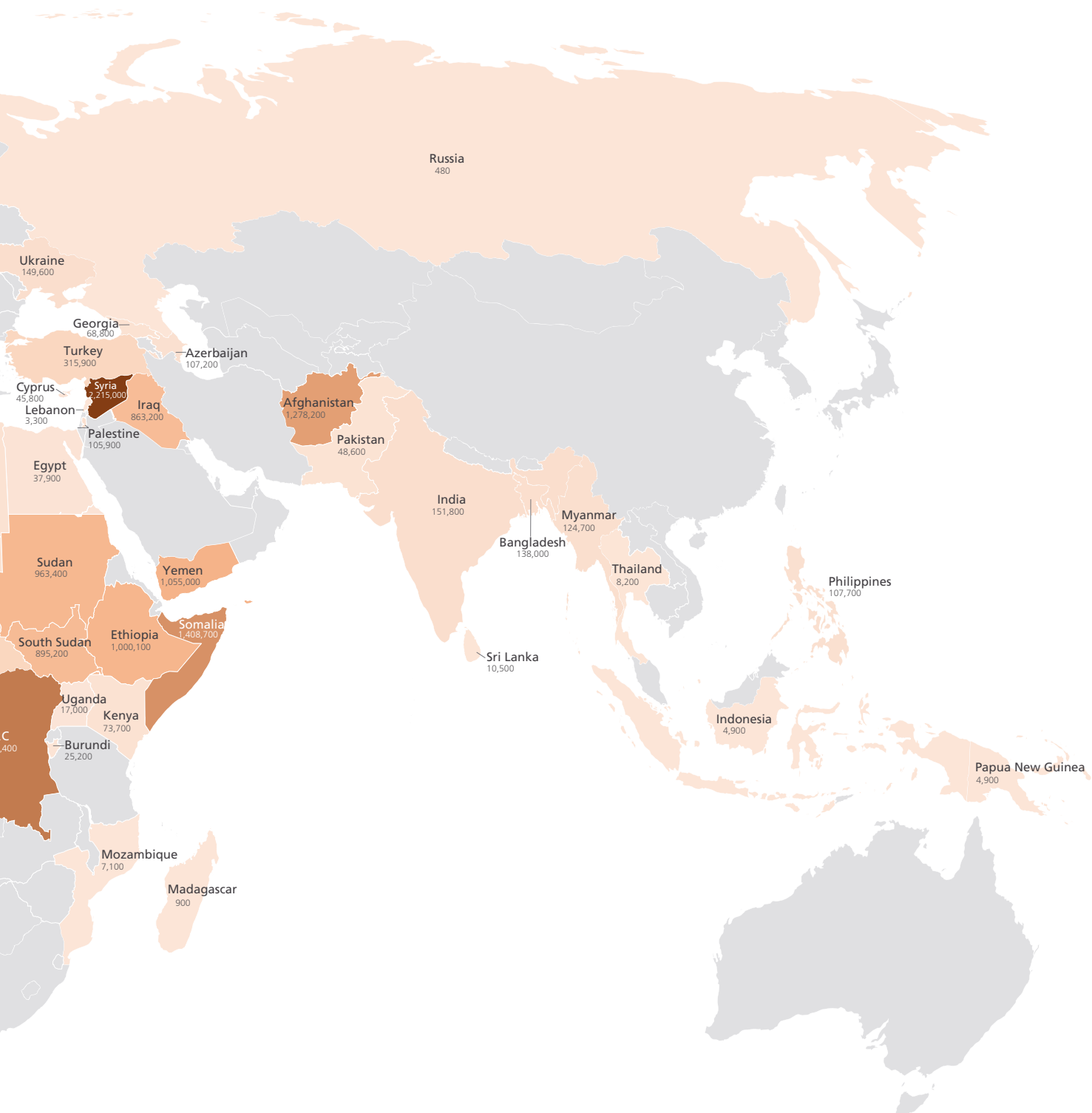
Region	0-1	2-4	5-11	12-14	15-17	0-17	% 0-17
Sub-Saharan Africa	1,108,000	1,555,000	3,219,000	1,215,000	1,117,000	8,206,000	50%
Middle East and North Africa	542,000	779,000	1,701,000	693,000	638,000	4,353,000	40%
Americas	199,000	302,000	705,000	312,000	330,000	1,850,000	28%
South Asia	194,000	280,000	638,000	264,000	249,000	1,627,000	44%
Europe and central Asia	72,000	119,000	285,000	115,000	110,000	705,000	24%
East Asia and the Pacific	26,000	40,000	98,000	42,000	43,000	250,000	32%
Global	2,141,000	3,075,000	6,646,000	2,641,000	2,487,000	16,991,000	41%

**Due to rounding, some totals may not correspond with the sum of the separate figures*

MAP 1:

Global distribution of children (0-17) living in internal displacement triggered by conflict and violence at the end of 2018





DIFFERENTIATED IMPACTS

Children are commonly referred to as one of the most vulnerable groups of people in emergencies and in internal displacement associated with conflict, violence or disasters. This section will present examples showing why that may be, but it should be emphasized that the impacts of internal displacement vary greatly from one context to the next.

Some children may experience limited impacts, for instance when effective mechanisms are in place to prevent or reduce displacement's negative consequences. Other children may even experience an improvement in their living conditions, although that, unfortunately, is rare. Most reports on internally displaced children, however, indicate harm to their security, physical and mental health and access to quality education.¹⁰ This harm, if unaddressed, can have repercussions that can last into adulthood and even after displacement.

SECURITY

With little to no ability to protect themselves, children are at a higher risk for abuse, neglect and violence. That is especially true in displacement situations where insecurity often rises.¹¹ In conflict settings, for instance, displaced boys face a higher risk of being recruited by armed forces, as has been reported in Nigeria and Iraq.¹²

Extreme deprivation, and the inability to pay for the care for their daughters, can also cause displaced families to marry their daughters early. An assessment of displaced families in Afghanistan found that one in three had forced at least one child into marriage.¹³

Financial difficulties may also compel children to work, interrupting their education and potentially endangering them. Some displaced Afghan children have had to earn money to help support their families as street vendors or car washers, exposing them to the risk of traffic accidents, abuse and violence.¹⁴

In IDP camps and settlements where educational services are not available, distance to the nearest school can be an issue. Walking to school may constitute a security challenge for children, especially for girls.

Displaced children may be more vulnerable to sexual violence. Girls living in camps in Mogadishu face sexual harassment and violence when they leave the camps to collect wood or use the latrines.¹⁵ In Nigeria, the prevalence of sexual violence in some situations is such that girls who return home may be stigmatised by their community of origin and even their families because they are assumed to have been raped.¹⁶

Young IDPs who identify neither as boys nor as girls are at increased risk of violence in general, and sexual violence in particular.¹⁷

HEALTH

Displaced families consistently experience a reduction in their financial resources because they have lost their homes and belongings. They often also find it difficult to acquire new sources of income in their host area.¹⁸ Undernutrition or malnutrition, which are particularly threatening for young children, are among the consequences.

A comparative study conducted in Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda showed that IDPs suffered a higher acute malnutrition rate than refugees, at 15.1 per cent and 12 per cent respectively.¹⁹ In Chad, for instance, the acute malnutrition rate among surveyed, internally displaced children was more than 20 per cent in 2016, compared with 16 per cent for children in the general population.²⁰

Babies born to displaced mothers in inadequate conditions have lower birth weights and suffer more complications.²¹ Severe displacement crises can even interrupt vaccination programmes. Immunisation rates fell



In northern Yemen, two families live in two separate rooms of a school where their kids study together with local children. Photo: NRC/ Alvild Stromme, April 2017

dramatically from 91 per cent before the conflict in Syria to 45 per cent in 2017, leading to a resurgence in polio in that country and in neighbouring countries hosting Syrian refugees.²²

Substandard shelters and overcrowding in displacement camps and urban settlements can also lead to increased transmission of communicable diseases that are especially dangerous for children.²³ Of the children displaced by the post-election violence in Kenya in 2007 and 2008 who died under the age of five, 31 per cent succumbed to malaria, 20 per cent to tuberculosis and 20 per cent to HIV.²⁴ Malaria cases are also significantly more prevalent among displaced children than other children in DRC.²⁵

Displacement can cause psychological distress. This is rarely addressed, however, by support interventions. In IDP camps of southern Darfur, three out of four children in displacement camps showed signs of post-traumatic

stress disorder, and 38 per cent showed signs of depression.²⁶ Children express their psychological distress in ways that can go unnoticed even to health practitioners, resulting, for instance, in aggressive behaviour or bedwetting.²⁷

Teachers in an IDP settlement in Ethiopia where children and their families found refuge from ethnic violence reported such signs of trauma in a survey conducted by IDMC in 2019: "They are easily upset and respond to situations in a seemingly aggressive way. (...) There are times when some students faint in school. (...) Some students often lose consciousness one minute after exams start. We have observed the problem among internally displaced children only."

If left untreated, psychological distress may develop into chronic mental disorders or even lead to suicide.



Lashi Roi Ja had to flee her home village in Myanmar because of violence. She gave birth to her son Naw Aung in an IDP camp three years ago. Photo: NRC/Ingrid Prestetun, 2017.

EDUCATION

Internal displacement can affect a child's education in many ways, reducing access to and equity in education, its quality and the way it is managed.²⁸ Displacement's repercussions in terms of mental health and stability can affect children's ability to learn, which can in turn reinforce their psychosocial instability. In an interview conducted in 2019 by IDMC, a retired school teacher reflected back on the situation of Kenyan children displaced by the post-election violence in 2007 and 2008: "Children and their parents were mentally tortured, and this affected their performance in class. No counselling sessions or rehabilitation were offered to help them heal the wounds."

Displacement's effects on families' financial resources can also be an obstacle to education. Even when public school is free, there are other costs, such as uniforms or school supplies, that displaced parents may not be

able to afford, as this Yemeni parent explained in an interview with IDMC in 2019: "It's true that education is free, but that's not enough for us. As an IDP, I can't afford basic schools supplies for my kids, even though those costs are minimal."

Child labour was cited as the main reason that displaced boys were out of school in Afghanistan in 2011.²⁹ Lower enrolment rates for displaced children than for non-displaced children are reported frequently. A study conducted in Timor-Leste linked displacement with an 8.5 per cent decrease in school attendance.³⁰

Other obstacles to education include the destruction of or damage to infrastructure and equipment, lack of teaching force due to displacement, lack of physical safety on the way to school, loss of documentation, language barriers, and stigmatisation. There may be no school nearby, schools may be overcrowded or they may be being used as emergency shelters, as is sometimes the case in conflict or disaster settings.³¹

There are also cases, however, where children go to school more often in their host area than in their area of origin. The IDMC conducted a survey in 2019 of Ethiopian IDPs forced to leave their homes because of violence. It showed that 83 per cent of their children were going to school in their host area, compared to 77 per cent before they were displaced.³² In a similar survey of Somali families forced to leave their rural homes because of drought and living near Mogadishu, 37 per cent of the children were going to school compared to 34.5 per cent before displacement.³³

These cases suggest that, with appropriate support mechanisms, the seemingly unavoidable harms of internal displacement can be addressed.

Access to education, of course, is not enough to ensure a child's full development. Quality education, rarely found in displacement situations, is essential too. In some displacement camps, educational facilities are limited to children's play areas.³⁴ Overcrowding, deteriorated buildings and a lack of books and school supplies

can also affect the quality of education, as is the case in Yemen.³⁵ Lack of qualified teachers is also often a serious issue.

KNOWLEDGE GAPS

Much has been published about the impacts of displacement on children, but major gaps need to be bridged to allow more comprehensive and effective support. There is still much to investigate about the effects of internal displacement on children in host communities or left behind in their home areas.

More research is also needed to assess the long-term repercussions on children's personal, social and economic development, and how they can persist into adulthood and even after displacement has ended. Information gathered from such research could help in planning better responses and make the case for increased investments in child-centred internal displacement policies.



Modrek, 7, and Obaid, 9, live in an IDP settlement in Houth, Yemen. They don't go to school, but rather spend their time collecting empty plastic bottles. "If we collect one full, large bag, we get 150 Yemeni Reals," says Obaid. That is around half a dollar. Photo: NRC/ Alvild Stromme, April 2017

PROTECTING AND SUPPORTING INTERNALLY DISPLACED CHILDREN

Children represent more than 40 per cent of all people internally displaced by conflict and violence worldwide and are often among the most affected. Child-centred internal displacement policies and interventions that consider their specific challenges, resources and plans for a life beyond displacement are needed.

Several countries have dedicated part of their national internal displacement policies to children, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iraq, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uganda, Vanuatu and Yemen.³⁶ Table 2 shows the child-specific measures most often included in these policies.

All the policies include the right to access education without discrimination. This is followed in frequency by the right of families to remain together or be reunited when separated. Half of the policies mention the importance of asking displaced children how to best support them. Half of them also call for providing them with psychological support and protecting them from exploitative labour.

Less than half of the policies consider their need to remain in their communities, receive essential immunizations, benefit from dedicated means of registration and recognition, and be protected from early marriage and military recruitment. Only three out of twelve policies state the need to focus on children's best interests and protect their assets, including their inheritances. Only one mentions the importance of access to vocational training.

Policies do not necessarily have to include all of these measures, of course. It depends on context, and context-specific measures may be added. This analysis merely shows the variety of options available to policymakers for delivering better responses for internally displaced children.

Nigeria's policy, for instance, states that internally displaced children should not be discouraged from speaking their mother tongue in their host area. Bangladesh's policy emphasizes the need for safe shelters for women and children. Sri Lanka highlights the importance of protecting households headed by children; Yemen, the need to inform children on the risk of landmines; Somalia, safeguarding children by getting police forces, and especially female police officers, to secure anticipated transit routes.

The following section presents examples of measures that have successfully addressed some of the most frequently reported needs of internally displaced children.

PROTECTING THE INTEGRITY AND THE WELLBEING OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED CHILDREN

Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children, including those living in internal displacement, is always a priority, but is more challenging in some situations.

Stating in a national policy that children should be protected from any form of abuse, neglect or violence, from early marriage, child labour and military recruitment is a first step to mobilizing the necessary resources.

Better knowledge of the specific risks children face in a given context and on the means to protect them is another requirement. Much remains to be done to guarantee the safety of all internally displaced children, but some aid providers have achieved success towards that end. Box 1 presents an example of Plan International's health-related interventions in South Sudan and Mali.

TABLE 2: Inclusion of child-specific measures in selected countries' internal displacement policies

	Iraq	Bangladesh	Afghanistan	Uganda	Vanuatu	Yemen	Sudan	Somalia	Sri Lanka	Kenya	Nepal	Nigeria
Right to access education without discrimination	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Right of families to remain together or be reunited	X		X	X		X		X	X	X	X	
Solicit views of internally displaced children on how to support them	X		X					X	X	X		X
Provision of psychosocial support		X	X			X			X	X		X
Need to protect children from exploitative labour		X	X					X	X	X		X
Need to remain in stable care in their community	X		X	X				X	X			
Need to receive essential immunizations	X		X			X				X		X
Means of registration and recognition of internally displaced children			X					X		X		X
Need to protect children from early marriage		X	X						X			X
Need to protect internally displaced children from military recruitment			X			X				X		X
Need to focus on best interests of the child			X						X	X		
Protecting children's assets, including inheritance								X		X		X
Importance of providing access to vocational training												X

BOX 1: PREVENTING MALNUTRITION AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES IN INTERNALLY DISPLACED POPULATIONS ³⁷

In South Sudan, Plan International provided parents of displaced children under five, along with pregnant and lactating women, tailored information on nutrition in order to limit the number of malnutrition cases.

In that country and in Mali, it trained dozens of hygiene promoters to promote awareness of the importance of handwashing and hygiene in preventing cholera and typhoid. The initiative reached tens of thousands of people in record speed.

ENSURING ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

Cases of government-backed discrimination that prevent internally displaced children from accessing school are extremely rare. As illustrated in Table 2, most national governments recognize all children's right to education, including IDPs.

Even without formal barriers to education, however, internally displaced children frequently find school more challenging than other children and drop out sooner and more often.

Studies conducted in Ethiopia and Somalia by IDMC in 2019 showed that free access to a local school can lead to a higher enrolment rate for displaced children in their host area than they had in their home one. The displaced children still had lower levels of enrolment than children in the host community, however, and the quality of the education they received was often much lower.

Educational policies aimed at internally displaced children must not look only at access to school and prioritize adapted opportunities for quality education, including measures such as accelerated learning, psychosocial counselling, school meals and support for the livelihoods of families so that children do not have to work to help their parents.

KEEPING CHILDREN WITH THEIR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Separation from loved ones, including family, friends and neighbours, is one of the most traumatic and long-lasting consequences of displacement. Children are particularly challenged by a change in their daily environment, and the right for them to remain or be reunited with their family is often included in national policies on internal displacement. When this is not possible, other options must be considered to keep children together with people they are close to, as the Afghan policy presented in Box 2 does.

BOX 2: AFGHANISTAN'S NATIONAL POLICY ON INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (2013) ³⁸

This policy stresses the importance of maintaining the integrity of families and reuniting separated children with their parents. In the event that this is impossible, the policy states that children's best interests should always be the priority and that efforts should be made to ensure that unaccompanied children are cared for within their community of origin.

SUPPORTING UNACCOMPANIED AND ORPHANED CHILDREN

Displacement and the loss of documentation can lead some children to be separated from their families and find themselves on their own. Conflict, violence and disasters can also result in the death of one or both parents, leaving children orphaned.

These children need even greater attention and care. Depending on their age and resources, some may become actual heads of households, caring for younger siblings and earning the family income much sooner than they should have to.

Communicating with these children requires different approaches, as they are not merely dependents but already agents in charge of their own, and sometimes others' lives. They should receive tailored information not only on what their rights are and how they can exercise them, but also on what kind of support they can get and how.

Nigeria's policy on IDPs pays particular attention to unaccompanied and orphaned children (Box 3).

BOX 3: NIGERIA'S NATIONAL POLICY ON INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (2012)³⁹

The policy recognizes that internally displaced children may lose one or both parents during conflict and disasters and highlights the importance of preserving their rights. The role of registration and the obligations of foster and adoptive families are emphasised. The policy also seeks to enable children to maintain some form of financial security: for instance, by preserving their rights of inheritance.

CONSIDERING THE CHILD'S PERSPECTIVE

All children should be given a chance to express themselves and should be accompanied in the identification of their needs and the development of a plan for their life during and after displacement.

When they are old enough, children can become agents of their own development and can even contribute to the dissemination of messages to their families and communities.

If empowered by a support system and by their social environment, they can take an active part in reducing the negative consequences of displacement and help build stronger, more resilient societies as they grow up.

Examples of policies that consider children as partners rather than mere beneficiaries are rare. Save the Children developed a tool with this objective, presented in Box 4.

BOX 4: SAVE THE CHILDREN'S DURABLE SOLUTIONS FOR CHILDREN TOOLKIT ⁴⁰

Save the Children developed a toolkit in 2019 to monitor progress towards the end of displacement considered from a child's perspective. The toolkit includes several child-centred indicators and is intended to be adapted in close collaboration with children. It has recently been experienced in the context of displaced children returned to Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and Syria.

IMPROVING KNOWLEDGE ON INTERNALLY DISPLACED CHILDREN

As this report shows, age- and sex-disaggregated data on internally displaced children is indispensable for designing better support programmes and monitoring their effectiveness. This type of data, however, is severely lacking.

Boys and girls of different age groups are affected differently by internal displacement and should receive tailored support. Not knowing precisely how many and where they are, and what they need and can contribute, is a serious impediment to addressing the consequences of internal displacement on children's current and future lives.

Data disaggregation requires human, technical and financial resources that many countries affected by internal displacement do not have. Box 5 presents an example of how the Displacement Tracking Matrix of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) can help national governments.

BOX 5: IDP DATA DISAGGREGATION IN ETHIOPIA

In Ethiopia, the number of IDPs has been disaggregated by sex and broad age groups since the end of 2016. The National Disaster Risk Management Commission and IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix publish estimates of the number of infants from 0 to 4 years old, school-age children from 5 to 14 and young people from 15 to 17 living in internal displacement associated with disasters or conflict. These estimates are obtained through key informants (85 per cent) and registration (15 per cent). Organisations working on child protection and gender-based violence rely on them to prioritise interventions for the most vulnerable groups, including unaccompanied or separated children and orphans.

CONCLUSION

Estimates such as the ones presented in this report can be useful to get a sense of the scale of an issue and raise awareness on the need to tackle it. They are not enough, however, to allow effective planning, budgeting and action for internally displaced children. For governments to protect and support these children, they need to know precisely and in a timely manner how many and where they are.

This situation may improve at last. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for better disaggregation of data by age, sex and other characteristics. The Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS) is soon to publish recommendations on how to improve national statistical capacities on internal displacement.

In the meantime, global, regional and national estimates can help raise awareness on the scale and urgency of the issue and monitor progress.

A child's timeline is very distinct from that of an adult. Children know little except the present, but most of their life is yet to come. Child-centred interventions affect their lives and society for years and decades. This means that investing in protecting and supporting internally displaced children is one of the most beneficial investments we can make.



In an IDP camp in South Sudan, Simon and his father Daniel go to the same primary school. Simon sometimes helps his father with his homework, as he is one class ahead. Photo: Ingrid Prestetun/NRC, 2018

ANNEX

TABLE 3: Estimates of the number of children living in internal displacement associated with conflict and violence alone at the end of 2018, by country and broad age group, using national age distribution data.

Country	0-1	2-4	5-11	12-14	15-17	0-17
Afghanistan	155,800	223,400	504,000	205,200	189,600	1,278,200
Azerbaijan	11,700	20,000	44,800	15,300	14,500	107,200
Bangladesh	14,900	22,100	53,200	23,400	24,200	138,000
Benin	200	300	600	200	200	1,600
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,400	2,500	7,000	3,200	2,800	17,200
Burkina Faso	3,200	4,500	9,400	3,500	3,200	24,000
Burundi	3,400	4,900	10,100	3,500	3,100	25,200
Cameroon	42,700	60,700	128,900	48,700	44,700	325,300
Central African Republic	40,300	57,600	128,800	52,500	49,300	328,100
Chad	6,700	9,200	18,800	6,900	6,300	48,100
Colombia	167,000	253,400	593,300	265,000	282,200	1,561,200
Congo	6,400	9,500	20,400	7,700	6,900	51,000
Côte d'Ivoire	19,600	27,700	56,400	21,400	20,500	145,800
Cyprus	4,700	7,500	17,700	7,700	7,900	45,800
Dem. Rep. Congo	227,900	317,300	637,700	227,900	203,300	1,614,400
Egypt	4,500	7,400	15,600	5,200	5,000	37,900
Ethiopia	128,200	183,700	388,900	151,700	147,400	1,000,100
Georgia	7,300	12,300	28,700	10,800	9,600	68,800
Ghana	200	400	800	300	300	2,100
Guatemala	11,300	16,400	37,200	15,400	15,900	96,500
Honduras	7,900	11,500	26,700	11,700	11,900	70,100
India	16,700	23,900	58,400	26,300	26,300	151,800
Indonesia	500	800	1,900	800	800	4,900
Iraq	102,000	160,800	347,200	129,400	123,600	863,200
Kenya	8,500	12,600	29,300	11,900	11,100	73,700

Country	0-1	2-4	5-11	12-14	15-17	0-17
Lebanon	300	500	1,300	500	500	3,300
Libya	7,700	12,300	29,600	11,700	11,000	72,400
Madagascar	100	100	300	100	100	900
Mali	8,800	12,400	25,500	9,400	8,400	64,800
Mexico	11,100	17,500	41,200	17,500	17,500	105,100
Mozambique	900	1,300	2,800	1,000	900	7,100
Myanmar	13,600	19,600	47,300	21,600	22,400	124,700
Niger	13,100	17,700	34,400	12,100	10,600	88,100
Nigeria	150,600	214,900	438,700	161,700	146,200	1,110,200
Pakistan	6,100	8,900	18,900	7,400	7,100	48,600
Palestine	12,800	19,500	42,800	16,100	14,700	105,900
Papua New Guinea	600	800	1,900	700	700	4,900
Peru	2,100	2,800	6,600	2,800	2,500	17,100
Philippines	11,100	18,000	43,600	17,700	17,400	107,700
Russia	50	90	200	70	70	480
Senegal	1,100	1,600	3,500	1,300	1,100	8,800
Sierra Leone	100	200	500	200	200	1,400
Somalia	201,200	270,000	545,400	206,500	188,000	1,408,700
South Sudan	117,700	168,200	353,200	134,500	123,300	895,200
Sri Lanka	1,100	1,700	4,100	1,700	1,700	10,500
Sudan	124,300	176,100	377,100	149,100	138,800	963,400
Syria	287,500	385,400	844,400	367,100	330,400	2,215,000
Thailand	800	1,300	3,100	1,400	1,500	8,200
Turkey	32,900	52,600	123,900	52,600	52,600	315,900
Uganda	2,200	3,200	6,700	2,500	2,200	17,000
Ukraine	14,400	24,000	63,200	25,600	22,400	149,600
Yemen	127,800	192,800	420,600	162,600	153,300	1,055,000

**Due to rounding, some totals may not correspond with the sum of the separate figures*

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