The disaster-conflict-fragility nexus

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A. Introduction

The Sendai Framework highlights the dynamic and complex systemic risks from which disasters materialize. It emphasizes the need to move beyond a hazard-by-hazard approach towards multi-hazard and comprehensive risk management. This underscores the need for an integrated, multisectoral and whole-of-society approach to reducing existing and future risks.[423]

This chapter analyses the interface between disasters, conflict and fragility, and outlines the challenges and opportunities for developing and implementing DRR policies and actions. It presents examples highlighting the complex relationships at regional and national levels. A brief overview of disasters, conflicts and fragility in the region defines the overlaps in drivers and consequences, and the compound, mutually reinforcing effects when disasters and conflict unfold concurrently. Specific thematic areas are examined, including identification of regionally and nationally relevant policy hooks between DRR and conflict policy architecture, opportunities and constraints in strengthening the traction

423 UNDRR, 2019a.

of traditional DRR with national stakeholders, ways to increase collaboration between peacebuilding and DRR actors, the importance of understanding typologies of conflict in identifying strategic opportunities, and the central role of data in ensuring an evidence-based approach.

1. Fragility as a systemic interaction between human, financial and political systems with environmental systems

The global fragility landscape has worsened since the turn of the century, impacting both low- and middle-income countries.[424] More than 80 per cent of the world's extremely poor are expected to be living in fragile contexts by 2030,[425] and the trend is expected to continue. Inequality and marginalization, weak economic performance, high unemployment rates and social fragmentation continue to characterize fragile and conflict-affected settings. Combined, these intensify enduring grievances and increase community vulnerability to shocks and crises.[426] More nuanced manifestations of fragility are also emerging, with countries that are not in crisis still unable to deliver sustainable and inclusive development gains.[427] As fragility – and our understanding of it – evolves, these realities intersect with risks caused by climate change, technological advancement and globalization to create complex and highly integrated systemic risk. This growth in multidimensional fragility demands that DRR efforts are catalysed to deliver the necessary reductions in disaster risk in line with Sendai Framework priority areas.

2. Fragility, conflict and disaster risk drivers

Alongside the worsening fragility landscape, in the past 10 years, there has been an upsurge in the total number of armed conflicts.[428] These are frequently protracted and complex, involving many actors and against a backdrop of deep domestic grievances. The conditions that appear in fragile contexts are also present, and amplified, in times of armed conflict. This includes the lack of socioeconomic opportunities, marginalization and discrimination, poor governance and weak rule of law, rapid and often unchecked urban expansion, environmental degradation and poverty. These conditions combine with damaged or poorly maintained basic infrastructure and weak or disrupted service provision to accentuate the risk and impacts of disasters. Diverse conflict types, actors and intensity levels are important factors in shaping disaster risk, complicating the creation of responses that are effective across different conflict settings and undermining efforts to blend DRR approaches.

3. Policy and operational guidance to understand the disaster-conflict nexus

With disaster risk defined as a function of hazard, vulnerability, exposure and capacity, it seems obvious that fragile and conflict-affected settings have amplified systemic risk. Communities living through conflict and fragility have increased vulnerabilities, lower levels of resilience to shocks and weak or impeded coping mechanisms. In recognition of this, the DRR community has gradually come together around an evolving body of evidence that centres on understanding risk when disasters intersect with conflict and fragility. In the Arab region, this was confirmed by the inclusion of a special session on conflict at the 2018 ministerial-level Africa-Arab Platform on DRR, where the Tunis Declaration broadly acknowledged the conflict-disaster nexus. It was also affirmed at the global level by the 2019 Global Assessment Report on DRR, or GAR, which included an opening first chapter dedicated to DRR strategies in fragile and complex risk settings.

However, there continues to be little policy or practical guidance to lead the implementation of DRR activities in contexts of conflict and fragility. This limits the capacity of States and communities to understand how systemic risk evolves and mitigates its impacts. The negative repercussions are stark. Natural and human-made hazards have a disproportionate impact on fragile and conflict-affected countries and vulnerable populations.[429] More than 55 per cent of disaster deaths occur in the world's 30 most fragile States.[430] Without enhanced DRR efforts, disasters are expected to increase in severity and frequency in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

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424 OECD, 2018.
425 Ibid.
426 World Bank, 2020.
427 OECD, 2018.
428 Strand and others, 2019.
429 Peters, Eltinay and Holloway, 2019.
430 Peters and Budimir, 2016.

B. Disaster–conflict–fragility situational overview

1. Conflict, fragility and disaster profile in the Arab region

The Arab region is one of the most fragile and conflict-affected in the world.[431] An estimated one in five battle-related deaths occurred in the region in 2019,[432]with one in five people in the Middle East and North Africa region living near a major conflict.[433] As a consequence, humanitarian needs have increased exponentially. As of 2020, 63 per cent of the region's population, or 266 million people, were said to be living in countries at high risk of experiencing a humanitarian catastrophe. Further, 6 of the 20 most fragile countries globally are in the region, with four in the top eight positions.[434] Fragility and conflicts have eroded State, community and individual capacities to prevent, prepare for and cope with the impacts of hazards.[435]There are multiple examples where conflict and fragility exacerbate the impact of hazards, including when people affected by conflict are forced to flee to areas prone to hazards, reducing expenditure on all aspects of DRR, and limiting access to disaster-affected areas and humanitarian assistance.[436]

The region is also prone to natural and human-made hazards. For example, between 2009 and 2019, floods triggered 64 per cent of the total disaster displacement in Arab States.[437]Severe weather conditions during winter generate cold snaps and snowstorms, in addition to floods and flash floods. Like the more commonly reported hazards, these winter phenomena can trigger displacement, which heightens vulnerability among affected populations and can create new disaster risks in displacement-affected areas. They also affect other vulnerable populations, including those already displaced, such as internally displaced persons, or those displaced across borders, including refugees. Displaced people often reside in precarious locations with high hazard exposure. The combination of hazards affecting the region increases the complexity and extent of risk, as shown in 2019, when Somalia and the Sudan were affected by widespread flooding in some areas and drought in others.

More than 270 disasters have occurred in the region during the past 30 years, causing an estimated total of 150,000 deaths and affecting about 10 million people.[438] The combined effects of conflict and disaster include population displacement, disease outbreak, food insecurity, heightened inequality and a worsening socioeconomic outlook,[439] all of which drive fragility or exacerbate conflict. Across the region, 886,000 displacements associated with disasters were recorded in 2019.[440] In fragile and conflict settings, disasters shock overburdened and often underprepared governments and communities, placing unmanageable stress on response systems.[441] This can deepen pre-existing vulnerabilities and grievances, increase tensions and cause violence, laying the foundation for extended and more complex crises.[442]

2. Climate change and conflict

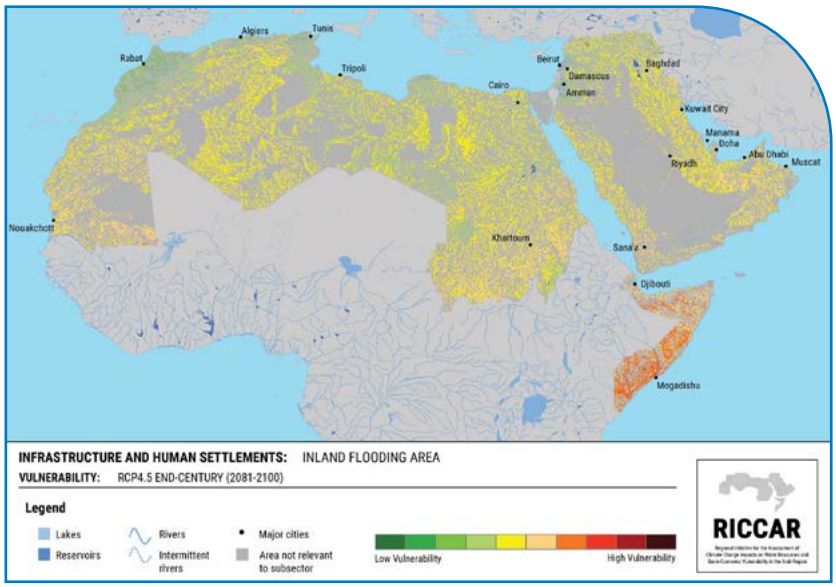
In fragile and conflict-affected settings, climate change acts as a threat multiplier, with the severity and frequency of climate-related disasters impeding capacities to adapt to shocks and manage disaster risks. Studies show that climate change has influenced 3 to 20 per cent of all armed conflicts over the past century,[443] with the effects expected to intensify. If projections of a 4°C warmer world by 2100 hold true, a fivefold increase in the influence of climate on conflict dynamics is predicted, with a 26 per cent increase in substantial conflict risk.[444]

In 2019, data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) for the Sudan showed that 272,000 new displacements were triggered by floods in the White Nile River basin over a few weeks, with more than 16,500 homes destroyed across the state. People without social or family networks struggled to find shelter, with reports of families

431 IEP, 2018.
432 Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) 2019. Available at https://ucdp.uu.se/.
433 Corral and others, 2020.
434 The Fund for Peace, 2020; OECD, 2018.
435 Peters, Holloway and Peters, 2019.
436 Ibid.
437 IDMC, 2020b.
438 UNDRR, 2013b.
439 League of Arab States, 2010.
440 IDMC, 2020d.
441 OECD, 2018.
442 Ibid.
443 Ryan, 2019.
444 Ibid.

having to sleep in the open air. The disaster took place on top of a major political transition and high levels of political turmoil and economic fragility. The president of three decades, Omar al-Bashir, was deposed in April 2019 following protests over the economic crisis. A transitional government was put in place in August, at the height of the floods, which impacted coordination of response efforts. The Sudan's Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) activated the flood steering committee and task force, but it was unable to cope. The United Nations and CSOs had to provide emergency support for those affected. Almost all of those displaced by the floods remained displaced as the year concluded.[445]

*Figure 6.1 End-of-century inland flooding exposure for RCP 4.5**



Source: UNESCWA and others, 2017a.

Notes: * RCP, or representative concentration pathway, is a greenhouse gas concentration trajectory adopted by the IPCC with RCP 4.5 an intermediate stabilization pathway, see https://www.ipcc-data.org/guidelines/pages/glossary/glossary_r.html; the designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Flood risk is projected to increase over the coming years,[446] which will increase flood-related displacement if not mitigated. From 1985 to 2005, only 2 per cent of the region's landmass was at high risk of flooding, however, by the mid-century exposure is projected to increase to 16 to 18 per cent of the region. In a worst-case scenario, by the end of the century, 31 per cent of the region's landmass is projected to be at high risk of flooding (figure 6.1).[447] Concurrently, slow-onset natural hazards, such as rising sea levels, could devastate major cities located in low-lying coastal zones across the region.

Average annual displacement (AAD) risk – riverine flood displacement risk in the Arab region (IDMC)

Historical data shows that floods are the hazard causing most displacement in Arab States. Looking backwards will not be enough to assess and reduce the risk of displacement, however. Risk models are useful in estimating the level of damage and loss of future disasters, and provide valuable information for decision-makers and planners that could support risk reduction efforts. Even though disaster risk modelling is well developed and applied, few models have looked at the likelihood of displacement in the context of disasters. In 2017, IDMC, working with partners, developed a unique riverine flood displacement risk model that estimates how many people future floods could displace. The data is disaggregated by urban and rural areas, allowing a better understanding of the implications for towns and cities.[448]

445 IDMC. 2020d.

446 The UNESCWA study is based on the flood prone areas indicator, selecting all areas with low or greater flood potential. This includes 32 per cent of the area of the Arab region.

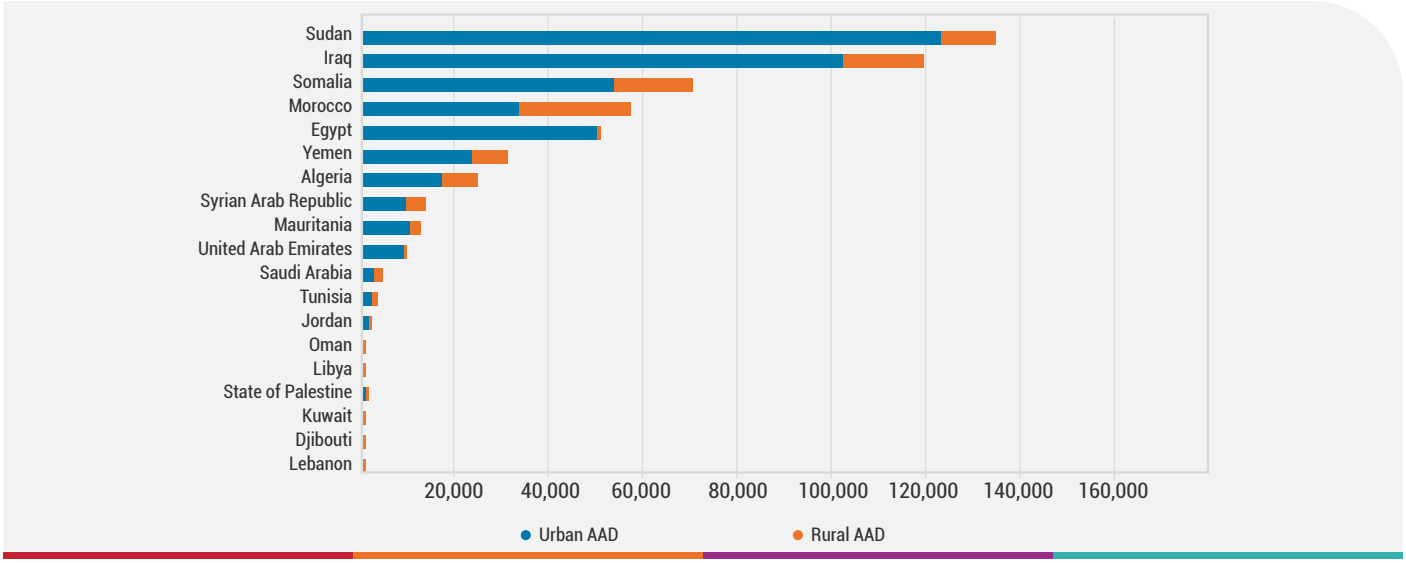
447 UNESCWA and others, 2017a.

448 The datasets for human settlements can neither distinguish between different types of land use (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.), nor account for vertical intensity of development (building height etc.). The derived grid population data will overestimate population in cells where floor space is predominantly industrial or commercial. Population density may be overestimated in areas where structural density (floor-to-area ratio) is low, underestimated where it is high. The allocation of population within the grid cells of an administrative area is, however, a valid approximation at aggregate level. See OECD, *Rethinking Urban Sprawl: Moving Towards Sustainable Cities* (Paris, 2018).

On average, riverine floods could displace 538,000 people in any given year.[449]Results also show that 82 per cent of the total people at risk of flood displacement in the region will be located in urban and peri-urban areas. This average annual displacement risk (AAD) should be considered conservative. It takes data on population exposure as of 2018 and the way displacement risk may increase or decrease will depend, therefore, on how cities grow in the coming years.[450]In addition, the model looks only at riverine floods, not urban floods. The likelihood of flood displacement can increase due to inadequate drainage and water management systems, informal urban expansion, and lack of absorption capacity in cities, among other factors not included in the model.

Despite being cautious, the results show the challenge that lies ahead is considerable and will have different implications for the countries affected; for example, countries currently affected by conflict, including Iraq, Somalia and the Sudan, are among those with the highest AAD figures. Most of the AAD is also concentrated in urban and peri-urban areas (figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2 Riverine flood displacement risk (annual average displacement), Arab States



Source: European Commission, Global Human Settlement Layer. Available at https://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/editorial-manual/footnotes/chap-04#L (accessed on 15 March 2021).

When assessed against a series of social and development factors at national and local levels, the data produced by the model could be used for urban and national sustainable development planning, and for putting in place DRR measures, including crisis prevention and management tools, contingency plans and early warning systems. Making internal displacement risk part of the equation would also mean such interventions could support durable solutions and displacement risk reduction in the years to come.

Climate change has also increased exposure to hazards not ordinarily associated with the region, such as tropical cyclones. Although most States are not prone to cyclones, countries including Comoros, Djibouti, Oman, Somalia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen have been affected. Between 2018 and 2019, nine tropical cyclones caused approximately 70,000 displacements in the six countries;[451]half were triggered by Cyclone Sagar that formed in the Gulf of Aden in mid-May 2018. The consequences in coastal areas of northern Somalia are still being felt today. Many people lost their livestock and crops, and were displaced for several months. The gradual deterioration in livelihoods increased the need for humanitarian assistance and pushed some to seek refuge elsewhere.[452] Cyclone Kyarr, the most powerful storm to hit the Arabian Peninsula in 12 years, impacted Yemen in October 2019, followed by Cyclone Maha in November 2019 and Pawan in December 2019.[453]

449 IDMC, Global Internal Displacement Database. Available at https://www.internal-displacement.org/database/global-displacement-risk-model (accessed on 10 March 2021).
450 European Commission, Global Human Settlement Layer. Available at https://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/editorial-manual/footnotes/chap-04#L (accessed on 15 March 2021).
451 IDMC, 2020d.
452 Ibid.
453 Ibid.

Box 6.1 *Disasters in areas most affected by conflict-related displacement, the Syrian Arab Republic*

The north-western parts of the Syrian Arab Republic have been particularly affected by ongoing military hostilities, with harsh impacts on civilians and damage to public infrastructure, including health-care and education facilities. This has created protracted displacement, with informal and formal accommodation frequently overcrowded; the density of internally displaced people in certain locations in Idleb governorate, for example, is four times more than the intended capacity. In 2020, there were more than 1.8 million new displacement movements across the country as a result of conflict,[a] most either within Idleb governorate or towards it.

The Syrian Arab Republic is also highly vulnerable to climate change impacts that manifest as extreme flooding, increased storm frequency and severity, changes in rainfall patterns, sea level rise and increased droughts, and disease outbreaks.[b] The areas most affected by the floods of 2018 were in the northwest, mainly in the governorates of Hassaka and Idleb.

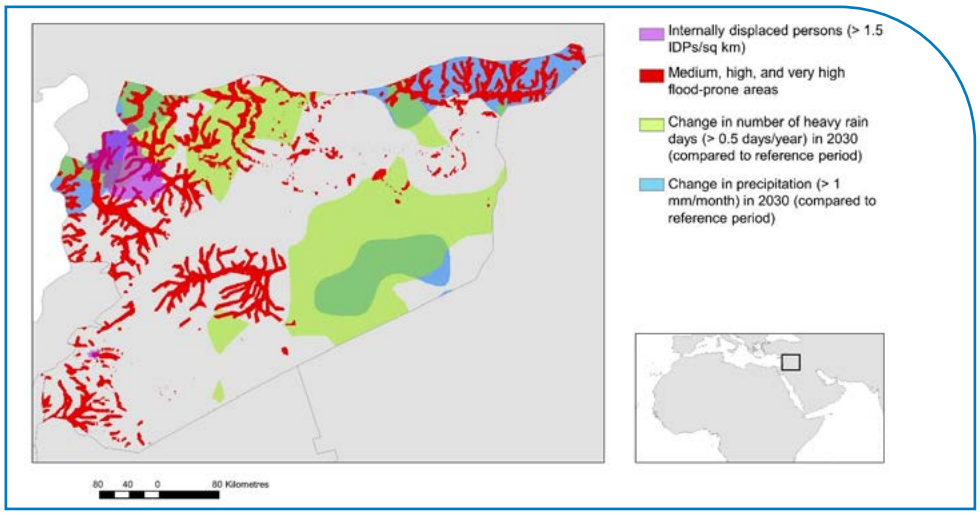
The following year, the country faced the worst flooding in a decade, ravaging Hassaka. More than 118,000 people witnessed their homes being destroyed and livelihoods shattered as a result of these extreme climate events, with camps hosting the resulting wave of internally displaced populations disproportionately affected.[c] Of the 27,000 people who were internally displaced as a result of floods, 12,000 were in Idleb. This trend has led to increased disaster displacements in northwestern parts of the country and was maintained throughout the following year. In 2019, the totality of new displacements resulting from floods within the country was reported in Idleb and was estimated at more than 17,000 people.

a There were 1.8 million new displacements recorded in 2020, approximately the same as in 2019, a slight increase on the 1.6 million recorded in 2018, see https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/syria.
b Ibid.
c Syria: Floods - Mar 2019. Available at https://reliefweb.int/disaster/fl-2019-000031-syr.

To project seasonal changes in extreme weather indices, rainfall variation and other climate parameters, ESCWA, working with UNDRR and 10 other partners, has been implementing the Regional Initiative for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on Water Resources and Socio-economic Vulnerability in the Arab Region, or RICCAR. The project has established an Arab domain for generating regional climate projections for various sets of climate parameters (for example, temperature and precipitation) and used those projections to run two regional hydrological models to generate projections for several hydrological variables (for example, evapotranspiration and run-off) under various emission scenarios, spatial resolutions and time periods. Building on the integrated assessment methodology and the data layers and modelling outcomes generated under RICCAR, a country analysis for the Syrian Arab Republic was undertaken. This identified regions with the highest projected vulnerability to climate disasters, with implications for the most vulnerable, notably those forcibly displaced as a result of the ongoing conflict and their forecasted social and economic effects. The disaster analysis focused on flash flood potential, with the outcomes generated used as a predictor/proxy for the likelihood of flooding events. Extreme climate indices studied included the annual number of days when rainfall is greater than 10 mm (R10). In addition, the modelling outcomes related to projected changes in rainfall volume were used to provide complementary information on the regions with an increased likelihood of floods across the study area.[454] The climate parameters were mapped, showing an increase in R10 and rainfall in the year 2030 (computed as an average for the 2025–2035 period), compared with the reference period (1986–2005), of 0.5 days/year and 1 mm/month, respectively, or greater (figure 6.3).

454 RICCAR regional climate modelling ensembles project increases in precipitation intensity over northwestern parts of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Figure 6.3 Flood-prone areas and internally displaced persons



Source: **UNESCWA and others, 2017a.**

Note: The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Flash flood potential indicators were coupled with two other indicators to determine hotspots. Overlaying these indicators reveals hotspots in the northwestern sector of the country. The findings are corroborated by historical records, which show the area is highly prone to the threat of floods.[455]The governorates that would be particularly impacted include Idleb and its surroundings. In 2020, Idleb was the target destination for the largest share of IDPs within the country.

3. Climate change, water stress, fragility and conflict

World Bank data suggest that climate change will continue to drive water stress in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Somalia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, all countries that are either directly or indirectly affected by conflict.[456] Increasing water scarcity can cause significant socioeconomic impacts and can catalyse fragility and conflict.

In Iraq, a complex water crisis in the south continues to have implications at humanitarian, socioeconomic, security and social levels. With 85 per cent of the water withdrawn used in agricultural activities, shortages stress water management systems, increasing civil unrest and intercommunity tensions.[457] This comes against a backdrop of turbulence ongoing throughout 2019, driven by youth unemployment, perceptions of inadequate resource management and deficient access to quality basic services. In July 2019, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) identified 21,314 persons from the central and southern governorates who were displaced due to lack of water associated with high salinity or outbreaks of waterborne disease. Simultaneously, the Syrian Arab Republic, in its tenth year of conflict, had the worst recorded droughts in living memory between 2007 and 2012. More than 75 per cent of the Syrian land area, predominantly in the northeast, is used for agriculture. This region has faced consecutive and severe droughts over the past decade, the effects of which have been exacerbated by water scarcity and increasing land tenure insecurity. More than 60 per cent of cultivated land is in this northeastern region, which is also home to approximately 58 per cent of the county's poor. Studies show that water scarcity and drought negatively impact economic stability and drive social and cultural separation. Desertification and land degradation also contribute to inequality, vulnerability and instability. While further research is needed to better understand these dynamics at the regional level, sustainable land management and ecosystem restoration good practice have already been documented in Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia.

It remains likely that the combined impact of conflict and slow-onset disasters, caused or amplified by climate change, will contribute to making many communities uninhabitable, and compel increasing numbers of people to migrate

455 For more information on the DesInventar database, see https://www.desinventar.net/DesInventar/.
456 World Bank, 2018, 2019c, 2019d.
457 Al-Ansari and Knutsson, 2011.

internally or internationally in search of new livelihoods. Although this type of migration falls outside the classification of "displacement", there is a fluidity between migration and displacement in a changing climate, and moving for many is clearly a necessity, rather than a choice. Migration driven by climate change will likely increase. This highlights the need for increased policy coherence and the creation of policy architecture that harnesses migration as a potential positive force for CCA. For example, regional and national policies and strategies can integrate provisions to enable the management of safe and voluntary internal and/or international migration as a positive coping strategy or adaptive response that reduces disaster risks and strengthens resilience for vulnerable persons.

4. Disaster and conflict in urban settings

As discussed previously, almost 70 per cent of the region's population lives in cities and towns, with up to 80 per cent expected to be urban by 2050.[458] The movement of people to urban centres concentrates disaster risk. Seventeen of the 25 most fragile cities in the world are located in the region, six in both Yemen and Iraq, three in Somalia and two in the Syrian Arab Republic. Much of the conflict and displacement in the region has unfolded in towns and cities,[459]such as Aleppo, Idleb and Raqqa in the Syrian Arab Republic, Aden, Hodeidah and Taiz in Yemen, Benghazi and Tripoli in Libya, Mosul in Iraq and Mogadishu in Somalia. Some are sites of ongoing conflict but among those that have stabilized, reconstruction and recovery challenges persist. In contexts where urban community participation in planning and decision-making around local development and DRR is limited, there can be vulnerability and exposure to hazards. For example, urban centres are often a preferred destination for conflict-displaced populations due to the inaccessibility of humanitarian aid and services in rural environments. These populations often settle in informal settlements that historically have been viewed as temporary and thereby not factored into national and/or city-level risk reduction and development plans and strategies. Settlements often lack adequate infrastructure and basic services to meet the needs of the host community, let alone those newly arrived, which can lead to tension. Additionally, as displaced people congregate in informal urban settlements they are often exposed to new hazards. For example, when living arrangements are poorly designed and crowded, this increases exposure to human-made hazards, such as fire outbreaks and structure collapse, and biological hazards, in particular epidemics and pandemics such as COVID-19. Combined, these increase pre-existing vulnerabilities and risks, often resulting in secondary displacement.

Box 6.2 Disaster and conflict in urban settings, Mosul

In Mosul, urban disaster and conflict collided. People fleeing the city in northern Iraq during the offensive in May 2017 were suffering both disaster and conflict impacts. Under heavy bombardment, Mosul residents were seeking safety but the flooding of the Tigris cut off all the crossing points between the east and west of the city, with the military forced to dismantle the makeshift bridges linking the two sides. Exhausted families risked their lives escaping in small fishing boats, which could hold only about five people; they also needed to pay extra money for the boat ride. This slowed their flight from the besieged city, and left many waiting in peril on the riverbanks.[a]

a IDMC, 2020d.

Urban areas have become the epicentre of forced evictions. They exacerbate vulnerabilities, drive secondary displacement and push displaced populations into even more precarious housing situations. In Somalia, more than 686,000 people, primarily internally displaced persons, were evicted between 2016 and 2018. Forced evictions continue to increase as relative peace returns to urban centres across the country and landowners begin to develop their land.[460]

Housing, land and property issues, which are sometimes combined with poor social protection policies and an unequal distribution of land also push the poor into more vulnerable situations.

458 UNDP, Bahrain Center for Strategic and International Studies and Energy and UN-Habitat, 2020.
459 IDMC, 2020a.
460 IDMC, 2020d.

Box 6.3 *Urban profiling to understand post-conflict reconstruction, Iraq*

Since the liberation of east Mosul in January 2017 and west Mosul in July 2017, international aid actors have been providing assistance for the rehabilitation of infrastructure and public facilities. Several, including Ninewa governorate, have expressed concern that reconstruction without a coordinated strategy is inefficient and may complicate long-term development. It was noted that the city's recovery and reconstruction would benefit from a risk-informed recovery framework that considers emerging needs within greater Mosul, and the fast-changing reality on the ground.

To address this, in 2018, a multidisciplinary team from UN-Habitat and UNESCO developed an Initial Planning Framework (IPF) for the Reconstruction of Mosul to support local government with reconstruction and risk-informed recovery. This IPF defines recovery priorities and seeks a comprehensive reconstruction and planning approach for the greater Mosul area, with special focus on the Old City. It aims to provide concrete actions for the revival of the entire Mosul metropolis, supported by desk research, fieldwork and data, and recommendations for implementing the suggested actions.

The IPF is based on consultation with Mosul's technical directorates, local leaders, and CSOs, and drone imagery analysis of structural damage and satellite analysis of urban developments. It hopes to help citizens become key players in the reconstruction of their city, supporting accountability to affected populations.

Source: UN-Habitat and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2018.

5. Disaster displacement, protracted conflict and secondary displacement

Globally, combined, sudden-onset disasters and conflicts have resulted in the largest displacement crises in recorded history, with an estimated 79.5 million people displaced from their area of origin as of 2019.[461]Displacement also drives increased risk, heightening the physical, social, psychological and economic vulnerabilities of affected communities, including among host populations.

The Arab region hosts some of the largest displaced populations in the world. At the end of 2019, there were 17.3 million internally displaced persons in the region, representing almost 40 per cent of the total global number of people internally displaced by conflict and violence.[462]Figures illustrate an overall increase in new displacements regionally over the past decade (figures 6.4 and 6.5).[463] In 2019, there were 2.8 million new displacements triggered by conflict and violence, approximately 30 per cent of the global total. An additional 885,000 new displacements were caused by disasters, most due to flooding, drought and storms.[464]

In fragile and conflict settings, disaster displacement has received less attention than conflict displacement. Databases often provide conservative estimates and are marred by data gaps. This can be due to several reasons, including insecurity impeding access to and collection of relevant data and/or a lack of willingness or capacity among governments and partners, who often experience significant resource constraints and must balance competing priorities related to the maintenance of peace and security. Further, there is almost no data on the intersection of disaster and conflict in relation to displacement figures, with data treating them as largely separate. This is despite the fact that disaster displacements often unfold in locations where displacement from conflict is already happening. To date, there is also no regional data that explores the relationship between slow-onset natural hazards and displacement.

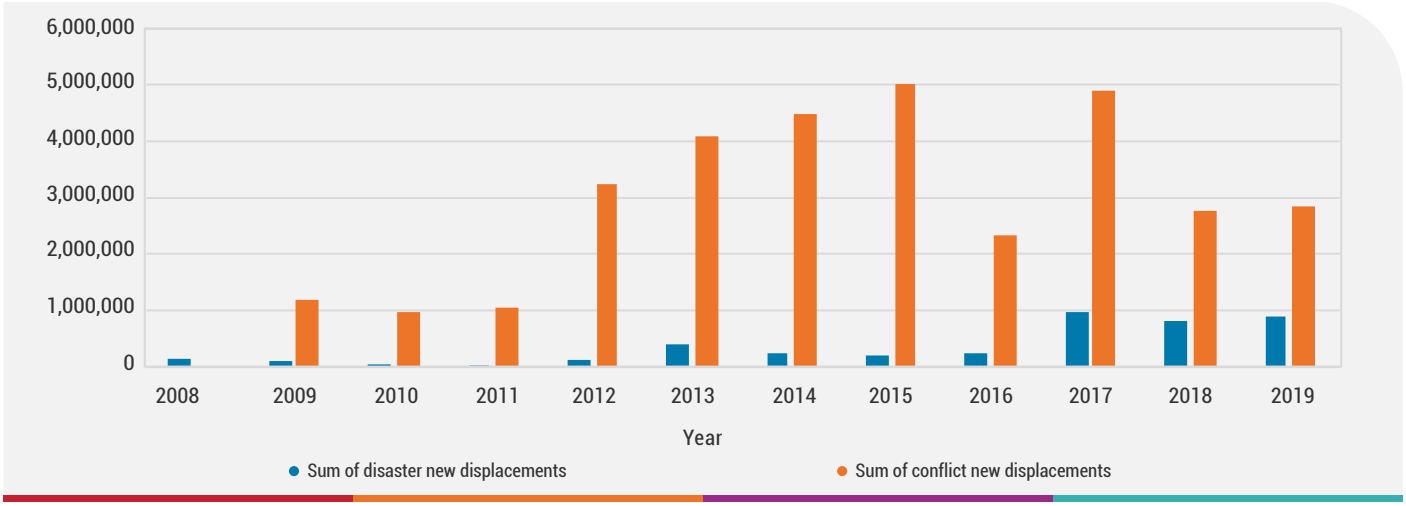
Across the region, displacement is no longer a short-term phenomenon. More than half of the 6.6 million internally displaced persons in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2020 had been displaced for more than five years. There is almost no investigation into the relationship between the length of displacement and level of exposure to disaster risk, yet those experiencing protracted displacement continue to comprise the bulk of displaced persons. In areas experiencing community tension, large flows can destabilize both the disaster-affected area and the host area, creating compound

461 UNHCR, 2020.
462 IDMC, 2020d.
463 Data presented covers the 22 Arab States recognized by the League of Arab States, including Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.
464 IDMC, 2020d.

risks and heightening pre-existing vulnerabilities. Although most of those displaced by disaster remain within their own country,[465] this dynamic has cross-border dimensions when people seek safety in neighbouring States.

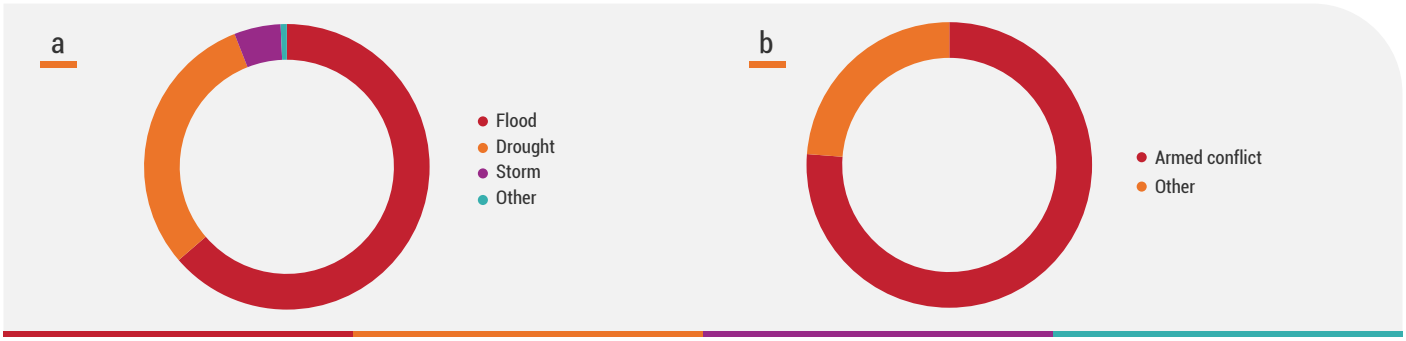
The reality in several Arab countries is that many new displacement flows are secondary or tertiary; people are forced to flee multiple times due to attacks or threats of violence but also because of hazardous events. Over recent years, the Syrian Arab Republic has faced repeated floods. Camps for internally displaced persons were severely hit by flooding across the north of the country in March 2019. Some 14,000 people in Hassaka province were impacted, with a further 40,000 reported as being affected across 14 camps in Idleb.[466] The latest flood occurred in December 2019, in northern areas of Idleb, which host the highest number of internally displaced persons in the country. In the midst of a fierce military offensive, as their tents flooded and became uninhabitable, 2,850 people were forced to move again.[467] A similar situation was observed in Iraq, where widespread flooding on 22 and 23 November 2018 affected 35,000 internally displaced persons in Ninewa and Salah ad-Din governorates. This included the secondary displacement of families unable to find security where they were first displaced and making the prospect of a durable solution to displacement more remote.[468]

Figure 6.4 New displacements triggered by conflict, violence, and disasters across the Arab region, 2009–2019



Source: IDMC, 2020b.

Figure 6.5 New disaster displacements in the region by hazard type, 2009–2019 (a), and by conflict, violence and disasters, 2016–2019 (b)



Source: IDMC, 2020d.

Note: Other disasters include wildfire, wet mass earthquake, extreme temperature and movement.

465 Nansen Initiative, 2015.
466 The New Arab, 2019.
467 Save the Children, 2020.
468 United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2018.

The impact of displacement is extensive for both disaster risk and fragility. Large-scale displacement has the potential to shock already weak national and local governance structures in receiving locations, while also overloading basic infrastructure and services in areas characterized by limited service provision. This can increase intercommunity tension in locations where peace is already fragile. Once displaced, the average annual cost of providing every person with support for housing, health care, education and security, and their lost income, based on seven Arab States, is $554.[469] Applied to the total number of displaced people recorded in the region at the end of 2019, this places the overall economic impact of internal displacement at nearly $10 billion (table 6.1).[470] When hazards unfold, valuable resources that could be directed towards preparing the response and the response itself are already absorbed in responding to ongoing displacement crises.

Table 6.1 Economic impact of internal displacement, Arab States

Country	Economic impact ($) per IDP for one year of displacement	Total economic impact for 2019 ($)	Percentage of GDP
Iraq	715	1.1 billion	0.5
Libya	441	199 million	0.4
State of Palestine	743	181 million	1.2
Somalia	383	1 billion	21.5
Sudan	379	911 million	2.2
Syrian Arab Republic	869	5.6 billion	14.0
Yemen	348	1.3 billion	4.7

Source: GDP based on World Bank data for the last year available (all countries have data for 2018, except the Syrian Arab Republic, where it is 2007), see https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD.

Note: Estimates given only for countries where humanitarian response plans were available for 2019.

6. Migration

Beyond displacement, other types of migration are also prominent across fragile and conflict-affected countries in the region. Drivers and patterns across the region are complex, with the distribution of migrants varying significantly across subregions. Over the past decade, the number of international migrants has grown significantly. This is in parallel with an increase in rural-urban migration, often driven by people seeking a better living and livelihood opportunities. Slow onset hazards, often linked to climate change, have increased migration as access to livelihoods and employment changes in areas of origin. When conflicts and disasters unfold in areas with large numbers of migrants, their specific needs, vulnerabilities and whereabouts are often overlooked in the crisis response. This is especially apparent when dealing with large migration flows across borders.

Conflict can also result in increased migration, which can generate significant socioeconomic repercussions and spikes in fragility. This was exemplified by the two Gulf wars, where the return of thousands of migrant workers to their countries of origin generated significant spikes in unemployment rates and a decrease in remittance. For example, the percentage of Yemeni remittances dropped from 54.8 per cent of GDP in 1987 to 15 per cent in 2002.[471]

469 IDMC, 2020d.
470 Ibid.
471 League of Arab States, n.d.

C. Key thematic areas

1. Policy architecture: displacement as the common denominator

Achieving the priorities of the Sendai Framework requires consideration of conflict dynamics in the design and implementation of DRR interventions. The DRR community must isolate appropriate "hooks" within policy architecture that lie on the disaster-conflict-fragility nexus. This is no easy task. Although the Sendai Framework initiated the transition towards addressing systemic risk via a shift to outcome-based indicators (which include some conflict drivers such as poverty, inequality and environmental degradation), it did not explicitly reference conflict.[472]The same holds true for the subsequently developed definitions of disaster and disaster risks.[473] One approach to locating policy hooks is to identify common drivers of both disaster risk and conflict that are present at regional and national levels. For fragile and conflict-affected settings in the region, this approach naturally lends itself to viewing displacement as a common denominator. This includes internal displacement, the bulk of displacement in the region, and to a lesser extent, cross-border displacement.[474]

The United Nations 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (GPID), the 2010 Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs, the Nansen Initiative's 2015 Protection Agenda for Disaster Displacement and the Sendai Framework of 2015 highlight common agenda-setting focused on addressing the root causes of vulnerabilities heightened during displacement and reducing exposure to hazards as a means to reduce risks. To date, there is little focus on how human mobility, specifically displacement, is accounted for in DRR planning and interventions and how to effectively integrate displaced communities into DRR activities.

While the Sendai Framework does not directly reference the IASC framework or the GPID, the use of displacement-related terms is notable, specifically in the preamble, and priority areas one and four. This is compared with just one reference in the preceding Hyogo Framework for Action.[475] It provides multiple pegs for policy and interventions to address displacement as a consequence of disaster and driver of risk.[476] The Sendai Framework acknowledges that approaches to DRM aim to protect "persons and their property, health, livelihoods, and productive assets, as well as cultural and environmental assets, while promoting and protecting all human rights". It also emphasizes the need to reduce asset and housing damage and destruction, tacitly encouraging the avoidance of key drivers of displacement from the outset.

This rights-centred approach finds common ground with durable internally displaced persons/refugee policy architecture, including the IASC framework and GPID. It provides an important entry point for potential DRR integration.[477] For durable solutions for internally displaced persons specifically, the Sendai Framework is harmonized with several criteria listed in the IASC framework, which are used to determine the extent to which a durable solution has been achieved. These include access to: (i) long-term safety, security and freedom of movement; (ii) an adequate standard of living, including access to adequate food, water, housing, health care and basic education, at a minimum; (iii) employment and livelihoods; (iv) effective mechanisms to restore housing, land and property or provide compensation; (v) necessary personal and other documentation; and (vi) participation in public affairs at all levels on an equal basis with the resident population.

Attempts to recognize the regional impact of disasters were initiated with the ASDRR 2020, which was adopted in December 2010. An updated version for 2030 to implement the Sendai Framework with a programme of work was adopted by the League of Arab States and endorsed by Arab leaders at the Arab Summit in April 2018. Interestingly, it measures the impact of disasters by the number of the displaced people, stating that 3.5 million people in the region have been forced to flee their homes over the past 35 years. As with the 2010 policy, it refers to displacement as a driver of risk, with informal settlements in urban centres recognized as increasing disaster risk. The 2030 strategy also points to the need to address the vulnerability of internally displaced persons and to ensure their participation in economic, social, and political life, while identifying Member States as the main party responsible for implementation at national level. Efforts are yet to be effectively pursued.

472 United Nations, 2015.
473 United Nations, General Assembly, 2016a.
474 Although cross-border displacement does occur, most disaster displacement continues to result in internal displacement within country of origin. This section focuses on internal displacement policy architecture with tertiary reference to refugee policy frameworks.
475 UNDRR, 2005.
476 IDMC and Norwegian Refugee Council, 2017.
477 Kalin, 2015.

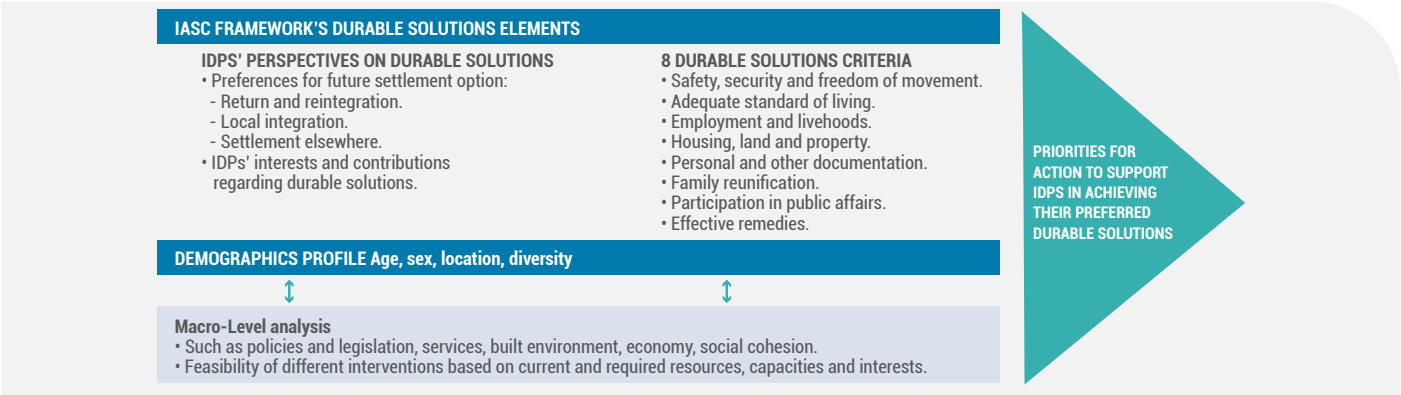
National integration of displacement in disaster risk reduction strategies

At the national level, comprehensive policies on internal displacement enable States to establish mechanisms and institutions to prevent and respond to displacement and its by-products in a more coordinated way. Such policies create opportunities to address displacement associated with both conflict and disasters, and contain measures to prevent it, promote durable solutions and mitigate consequences on other affected populations. Promising examples of DRR policies that include disaster and conflict displacement are emerging across the region, and can be capitalized on. The DRR strategy implemented by Egypt from 2011 frequently refers to displacement; for example, understanding large population movements as a result of sea-level rise and the inundation of low-lying areas such as the Nile Delta.[478] Jordan's 2019–2022 strategy not only encompasses natural hazards such as severe weather, flooding and extreme temperatures as risk, but also external and internal conflicts. Conflict and conflict displacement in the region are understood as specific conditions to be considered in preventing risks and responding accordingly.[479]

Significant constraints continue to impede the implementation of potentially positive measures, however. In Yemen, legislation and policy frameworks relevant to displacement and DRR have been put in place, such as the policy on internal displacement drafted in 2013, but gaps remain in resource allocation and capacity.[480] In addition, escalation in the conflict in 2015, the split between different administrations and the associated deepening of the displacement crisis have left the policy largely unimplemented. The same can be said of Iraq's national policy on internal displacement, which remains unimplemented.[481] In 2009, the Government of the Sudan adopted the National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons but the lack of a fully functional government monitoring mechanism, and recognition of and attention to internally displaced persons outside camps and settlements, has meant implementation has been slow and the full extent of the impacts remains to be seen.[482] Continued implementation of national policies requires stronger support mechanisms. This should include a national oversight body, budget and specific provisions for protecting and assisting internally displaced persons.[483]

Approaches for achieving Sendai Framework priorities can also be strengthened through ongoing efforts to promote durable solutions at global and regional levels. This can be through integrating DRR policies in active ventures to resolve displacement vulnerabilities, such as the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, established in October 2019 by the United Nations Secretary-General.[484] The mandate is to increase global attention to internal displacement, while developing specific recommendations for Member States, the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders. Currently engaging in multi-partner consultations before drafting recommendations, the panel offers an opportunity to better integrate DRR actions into any proposed resolution of common vulnerabilities. Its appointment builds on earlier efforts, such as the IASC framework, whose principles include helping to integrate displaced persons' perspectives in local development plans conducive to durable solutions, such as which settlement option to pursue (figure 6.6).

Figure 6.6 IASC analytical framework for durable solutions analysis



Source: Inter-Agency Standing Committee (2010). Project on Internal Displacement. The Brooking Institute, University of Bern. Available at: https://www.brookings.edu/research/iasc-framework-on-durable-solutions-for-internally-displaced-persons/

478 IDMC, 2020d; Yemen, Government of Yemen and UNHCR, 2013.
479 IDMC, 2020d.
480 Ibid.
481 IDMC, 2020d; Iraq, Ministry of Displacement and Migration, 2008.
482 A/HRC/23/44/Add.2.
483 Ibid.
484 United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement.

Box 6.4 *Durable solutions to address displacement as a cross-cutting issue, Somalia*

In Somalia, the federal and municipal governments have substantially advanced policy architecture to protect the rights of internally displaced persons and promote durable solutions. In 2019, the Mogadishu local administration created a policy on internal displacement and established a supporting Durable Solutions Unit under the mayor's office. Later the same year, a Durable Solutions Secretariat (DSS) was set up at federal level. The DSS included all ministries and federal institutions. A national policy, with a supporting national evictions guideline, was also rolled out at federal level, providing protection for the rights of displaced persons, and ensuring that any evictions are planned and legal. The Somali government also ratified the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (the Kampala Convention), a legally binding instrument that affirms the rights of internally displaced persons, and included provisions for internally displaced persons in its latest national development plan.

According to a 2019 research report, integrating human mobility into DRR policy and programming presents a strategic opportunity for increased "collaboration between operational agencies concerned with internally displaced persons and refugees, and issues of peace, conflict and disasters, to develop a holistic understanding of compound risk factors and vulnerability to disasters in conflict settings".[485]This perspective helps identify strategically relevant opportunities where the capacities of mobile communities can be better leveraged in DRR responses. In conflict-affected settings, this ensures newly settled – and mobile – communities are better informed and protected from hazards as they make mobility decisions. It also shapes decisions around durable solutions. This builds on the International Organization for Migration's Progressive Resolution of Displacement Situations Framework, which "recognizes mobility as central to allowing people to preserve or increase available resources and opportunities, enabling them to save their lives, access basic assistance and/or to enhance livelihood opportunities" (figure 6.7).

Figure 6.7 IOM's objectives on disaster risk reduction and resilience, 2017

Source: IOM, "Disaster risk reduction and environmental degradation". Available at https://www.iom.int/disaster-risk-reduction *(accessed on 10 May 2020).*

Box 6.5 *Diaspora engagement and community ownership in climate change adaptation, the Sudan*

Across the Sudan's Red Sea State, climate change has contributed to new types of mobility. Seminomadic communities chiefly inhabit the eastern parts of the state, while the centre and west are home to sedentary agricultural communities. As the land in the east tilts towards the Nile River, decreasing rainfall and poor water harvesting techniques have resulted in water scarcity. This has increased the movement of nomadic-pastoralist communities and their livestock towards central and western parts of the state. This mobility shift is exacerbated in the summer when the communities seek water and grazing land, further straining already scarce resources.

485 Peters, Eltinay and Holloway, 2019.

To improve local capacity to adapt and respond to the impacts of climate change in the state, and to reduce sources of localized tension, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) implemented a multilayered intervention in Durdeb. To improve resilience to future shocks, it focused on improving the joint management of natural resources, developing innovative agricultural practices to promote socioeconomic development, and building awareness of climate adaptation plans and ecosystems management among local communities and authorities. Leveraging the value of mobility, IOM engaged diaspora communities in project implementation. With a large proportion of skilled professionals migrating to other countries, the Sudan has the potential to rebuild its capacity through the transfer of knowledge and skills of members of the diaspora.

By leveraging the social and cultural capital of the Sudanese diaspora and relevant technical skills, IOM was able to gain community trust and adapt the project to the local context. Based on information gathered during consultations with communities, an integrated farming and irrigation system across multiple family farms was identified to promote crop and livestock diversification. This will enable a shift towards less water-intensive crops, while also increasing resource sharing in response to changing population dynamics. A general community steering committee (GCSC) was established that included marginalized groups, such as women and youth, alongside local representatives from the judiciary, administration, economic and police divisions, further instilling community ownership.

Through community collaboration, 20 vulnerable families were identified to use the integrated farm for multi-crop farming. Similarly, several rounds of training were implemented from a 13-step curriculum designed around the community in Durdeb. Groups were assigned to present local operational problems, with brainstorming facilitated by experts to generate local solutions. A short session for local authorities, community leaders and representatives from the GCSC also researched environmental degradation and climate change, with participants collaborating to develop climate adaptation plans.

2. Advancing support for disaster risk reduction arguments with stakeholders in conflict-affected and fragile settings

Research by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) points out that orthodox methods championing DRR action and preparedness are less effective in conflict and fragile settings. Traditional arguments focused on the value of disaster risk and resilience investments have limited traction when governments face the types of resource constraints experienced in conflict, or when resources are themselves allocated towards the conflict. This can be due to several things, including the inability within the DRR community to articulate key messages to relevant stakeholders, the State-centric approaches that can negate the centrality of communities in DRR, and the excessive power of gatekeepers in policy and programming decision-making forums, something that is often amplified in conflict settings characterized by highly centralized governance systems.

State responsibilities, including providing protection to populations, are often skewed in conflict and fragile settings, particularly when the State actively excludes certain groups to advance their position in the conflict. DRR interventions and arguments must therefore relate to the setting. This includes refining arguments with national counterparts or local powerbrokers and making interventions that illustrate mutual benefits in contexts where incentives are unconventional. There is also a need to explore processes to decentralize DRR in non-permissive environments to engage localized actors, such as civil society, to be effective in pressing powerbrokers to both pursue relevant policies and play a role in DRR itself.

Mainstreaming DRR into ongoing humanitarian, development or post-crisis early recovery programming can be a cost-effective and politically appealing way to advance efforts. First, it is relevant to the immediate concerns and circumstances, and the emergent needs of governments and affected communities. Second, traditional DRR in conflict settings is often hampered by lack of political support, low availability of resources, ongoing security issues and access constraints, and restrictions imposed by donors on direct government support. There are examples of successful emergency preparedness, humanitarian response and early recovery programming in conflict settings that are used as entry points to integrate DRR interventions, such as in Lebanon and Somalia.

Box 6.6 Integrating disaster risk reduction in ongoing humanitarian and development initiatives, Somalia

Somalia's hazard profile is complex. The first six months of 2019 were characterized by drought caused by below-average rainfall between April and June, which resulted in lower agricultural and livestock output. In subsequent months, heavy rainfall led to severe flooding along the Jubba and Shabelle river basins, and flash floods in Somaliland and Banaadir. Some 416,000 new displacements were recorded due to floods, and 150,000 to drought.[a] This was on the back of the drought in 2017 and Cyclone Sagar the following year, both of which displaced significant numbers of people.[b]

Conflict-induced displacement is interlinked with natural hazards, human-made environmental degradation and climate change. According to a study by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the University of Leuven, drought in Somalia is predicted to increase the likelihood of conflict by 62 per cent.[c] In a separate study, a rise in temperature is forecast to increase the likelihood of conflict in sub-Saharan Africa by up to 54 per cent by 2030, mainly due to negative developments in the agricultural sector combined with poor governance.[d] In general, the impact of climate change can increase inter-clan tension, internal displacement and irregular migration, while also providing terrorist groups with the opportunity to play a role in local governance during disaster recovery.

The National Development Plan (NDP-9) 2020–2024 is a step towards addressing accumulated disaster and conflict risks. It stipulates that improving DRM in the country must centre on expanding government capacity. Further, it recognizes the need to develop a nationwide early warning system. To further increase the resilience of communities vulnerable to natural hazards, the NDP proposes strategic investment in crop and integrated water resource management and sustainable livestock, while pushing for economic diversification away from natural resource bases to increase resilience to environmental shocks.[e]

To mainstream DRR, the IOM incorporated DRR components into humanitarian and early recovery interventions in line with NDP priority areas. This included incorporating DRR mechanisms into camp coordination and management, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) services, and recovery and durable solutions programming. For example, at 67 sites for internally displaced persons in Baidoa, South West State, disaster-resilient infrastructure was built to mitigate any potential flooding events. In addition, reforestation was implemented in sites and around IOM-rehabilitated boreholes in arid regions of the country to prevent flooding and soil erosion. To further ensure the sustainability of humanitarian interventions, IOM ensures sanitation facilities built at sites for internally displaced persons, and host communities, are flood-proof, reducing the risk of damage to critical infrastructure.

a For additional information on UNHCR, Somalia, Protection and Return Monitoring Network, see; UNOCHA, Somalia Flash Update, 1 November 2019;
b UNOCHA, Somalia Flash Update, May 2018.
c Maystadt and Ecker, 2014.
d Burke and others, 2009.
e Somalia, Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development, 2020.

3. Increasing collaboration between peacebuilding and disaster risk reduction actors and integrating a conflict-sensitive perspective

Recognizing disasters are not conflict-neutral, the logical conclusion is that DRR policies and interventions have the potential to exacerbate social tension and conflict as much as resolve them.[486] When executed poorly, they can increase marginalization in communities when one or more groups feel excluded from project benefits, and in government if key authorities are not appropriately engaged in coordination, planning and implementation. They can also alter the dynamics in a negative way and/or entrench the power of one group over another.[487]

Across the Arab region, coordination and planning mechanisms to strengthen operational coalitions between peacebuilding and DRR actors are not adequately explored. Most organizations that implement emergency and

486 Twigg, 2015.
487 Peters, Eltinay and Holloway, 2019.

development programmes assimilate "do no harm" approaches in their institutional principles. There is no policy framework available to DRR practitioners who work in conflict or fragility, with limited evidence of engagement between DRR and peacebuilding communities.[488]A review of more than 50 vulnerability and capacity assessments and disaster recovery frameworks across international NGOs, the United Nations system and multilateral institutions, revealed no systematic documentation of conflict or fragility in a way that would enable inter-programme learning.[489] This leads to the underutilization of do no harm approaches and impedes integration of conflict sensitivity in DRR.[490]

Opportunities exist to remedy this and establish constructive connections. This includes DRR collaboration with humanitarian and peacebuilding actors in ongoing conflicts such as in Yemen and the Syrian Arab Republic. In these environments, DRR can be mainstreamed into humanitarian assistance activities, or map the relationship between localized hazards and conflict vulnerabilities to more explicitly support peacebuilding efforts. The Sendai Framework priority 4b, build back better, can support post-conflict recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction plans alongside peacebuilding and post-conflict actors. Both scenarios would strengthen the integration of DRR into conflict and peacebuilding exercises, and support efforts to feature conflict analysis in the identification and rollout of DRR.

The United Nations system reform, with its shift towards stronger inter-agency collaboration and a prevention-focused agenda, offers such an opportunity to activate connections. There are examples of inter-agency partnerships on which to capitalize. These include the February 2020 joint UNDP-UNDRR statement of intent, which aims to integrate DRR measures into country planning and decision-making processes, thereby accelerating the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience.[491]A further example is the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (the CADRI Partnership), which is integrating conflict sensitivity in its DRR diagnosis and planning tools and processes. Finally, UNDRR and its partners are working on an initiative for scaling up DRR in humanitarian action, with a checklist for integrating DRR into the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (for example, humanitarian needs overviews and humanitarian response plans). It is being tested in the Asia and Americas regions, with testing planned for the Arab region.[492]

Statement of intent between UNDP and UNDRR – purpose of collaboration

UNDRR and UNDP have agreed to scale up collaboration on three priority areas of mutual interest to accelerate the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction and the Sendai Framework. The partnership, signed in February 2020, creates opportunities to integrate DRR in planning and decision-making processes introduced by the United Nations Development System reform. The three priority areas are:

1. Sendai Framework monitor: support national reporting on implementing the Sendai Framework, including DRR-specific SDG indicators.
2. Sendai Framework target E and coherent agenda: achieve target E at the country level and ensure coherence with the climate change agenda and the SDGs.
3. Risk-informed Common Country Analysis and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework: provide guidance and technical assistance to support risk-informed and sustainable development.

At national level, good operational practices in adopting a conflict-sensitive perspective could play a remedial role, and strengthen the integration of conflict sensitivity as a core DRR principle. Across the region, anecdotal evidence from multiple research projects suggests a store of knowledge on implementing DRR in fragile and conflict settings.[493] In Lebanon, advanced conflict preparedness, a focus for national and international actors due to the country's history of civil unrest and the destabilizing effects of the Syrian conflict created a gateway for potential discussions of natural hazard preparedness,[494] and in Yemen, drought risk management has been used as a mechanism to reduce conflict drivers.[495] Lack of systematic knowledge management and quality assurance at programmatic level has, however, undermined the sharing of good practices.

488 Mena, Hilhorst and Peters, 2019.
489 Ibid.
490 Ibid.
491 United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience.
492 UNDRR, 2021.
493 Peters, 2019.
494 Peters, Eltinay and Holloway, 2019.
495 Peters, 2019.

4. Context-specific interventions: conflict typologies and opportunities for disaster risk reduction along the humanitarian-development-peace nexus

A growing body of evidence suggests that different conflict intensity levels can create unique challenges and opportunities for DRR. In short, the setting in which a disaster evolves will significantly influence the available disaster response strategies, approaches and resources. A one-size-fits-all approach to conflict settings fails to recognize the nuances, impeding identification of strategic opportunities for DRR. In some cases, this can also cause harm. A deeper understanding of the dynamics and the intensity of conflict increases the capacity of DRR communities to identify the unique opportunities and limitations present in each setting. This improves the design of DRR strategies and interventions at national and local levels, and reconciles with broader global efforts through the New Way of Working (NWOW) to implement collective outcomes that bridge humanitarian, development and peace planning and synchronize actions where there is need and opportunity for different pillars to work collaboratively.

Subdividing conflict-affected environments into high intensity, low intensity and post-conflict scenarios illustrates key trends that can be applied across the region.[496] For example, in high-intensity conflicts – present across parts of Somalia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen – the scale of violence can amplify governance fragility alongside access and resource limitations. This complicates the logistics of implementing DRR activities or responses to ongoing disasters. If the conflict is protracted, these access limitations will likely reduce a government's ability to maintain infrastructure, which can increase exposure to disaster risk.[497] In settings where high-intensity conflicts unfold, insecurity also reduces access, with actors increasingly forced to use remote implementation modalities that have significant cost and accountability implications.[498]

Low-intensity conflicts offer a different pool of opportunity costs. National governance systems are likely functional, though decision-making can be opaque and difficult to navigate. This can increase bureaucratic barriers, impact data collection and result in changes to action plans. State control in these settings is often fragile and contested by various actors, while parallel governance structures can emerge at a subnational level, forcing the DRR community to interact simultaneously with national and local authorities, and local powerbrokers, complicating implementation dynamics. The provision of aid and DRR support can be used by these actors to both garner support and damage the legitimacy and capacity of community groups, antagonizing structural inequalities and sources of tension. This can also result in powerbrokers deciding to restrict access to some communities, exaggerating sources of social tension and pre-existing vulnerabilities.

For efficiency gains, an improved effort to integrate conflict typology analysis into DRR governance is needed. This skill set will likely not come from the DRR community but will require the engagement of peacebuilding actors.

Box 6.7 Operationalizing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, Somalia

After the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit acknowledged that humanitarian tools alone were insufficient to resolve protracted crises, there was a call for improved collaboration across the humanitarian-development nexus and a commitment to a New Way of Working to reduce needs, risk and vulnerability. This can be described as working over multiple years, based on comparative advantages, towards collective outcomes and reinforcing capacities and resilience at national and local levels. The same year, the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council adopted twin resolutions on sustaining peace, which emphasized the significance of insecurity as a driver of vulnerability.[a] Efforts to prevent conflict and sustain peace should be carried out through the three pillars of United Nations engagement (peace and security, development, and human rights).

From September to December 2018, IOM identified case studies in Colombia, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia and Turkey to understand approaches to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus (HDPN) at country level. The Somalia study highlights good practices for successfully operationalizing the nexus and reducing vulnerabilities and systemic risk.

a The twin resolutions (General Assembly Resolution 70/262 and Security Council Resolution 2282) define sustaining peace as "encompassing activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict".

496 Hilhorst and others, 2019.
497 Ibid.
498 Stoddard and others, 2017; Healy and Tiller, 2014.

a. Frameworks combining humanitarian and recovery are conducive to better coordination

Joint frameworks bringing together humanitarian and development actors were seen to improve joint planning and programming. In Somalia, the planning process for the 2018 RRF was highlighted as a success. It built on the 2017 Disaster Impact and Needs Assessment that put the government in control from the beginning, further emphasizing the importance of government ownership in driving resilience and recovery initiatives.

b. Building integrated and localized analysis tools for humanitarian-development-peace nexus actors

In Somalia, the United Nations Resident Coordinator's office, with the backing of the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, piloted a multisectoral analysis combining humanitarian, development and peace data to inform the operationalization of the Community Recovery and Extension of State Authority and Accountability strategy. The tool examined all publicly available datasets to establish correlations that could be used for field-level analysis to better prioritize interventions through area-based approaches.

c. Localized context monitoring around disaster risk

The Somalia Resilience Program (SomReP), a consortium of seven international NGOs, namely Action Against Hunger, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Christian Action, Research, and Education (CARE), Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI), Danish Refugee Council, Oxfam and World Vision, was formed in response to the 2011 famine. It has developed a system based on early warning committees trained to monitor indicators and develop contingency plans in their own communities for rapid-onset (floods, conflict) and slow-onset (drought, climate change) disasters. By linking community-level monitoring to regional early warnings from the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FSNAU-FEWS NET) through radio and SMS, consortium members have been able to analyse information and make faster decisions. SomReP has linked its monitoring system with a pooled funding mechanism for early action.

5. Data gaps in the disaster-conflict-fragility nexus

There is an absence of data on disaster loss and damage due to gaps in availability, quality control issues and accessibility constraints. In disasters in fragile and conflict settings, data collection is inhibited by weak government capacity to operate evidence-based preparedness systems for intersecting risks and stresses. This has implications for DRR preparedness and response systems, undermining the potential to predict and, where possible, prevent disaster, impeding protection of the most vulnerable populations. The set of 38 global indicators included in the Sendai Framework Monitor provide a platform for national-level data collection and reporting progress towards the seven Sendai Framework targets.

One of the ways that conflict and civil unrest have come into the conversation surrounding the Sendai Framework Monitor is through considering them as societal hazards.[499] This was evident in a 2020 technical report on hazard classification and definition led by the International Science Council (ISC) and UNDRR, in which conflict falls under societal hazards. However, the report also notes the discourse is just beginning; a more scientific review of listings and hazard information profiles for those not routinely included in DRM, such as societal hazards, is necessary.

Progress in addressing the data gap could also be advanced by adopting a model approach to data collection. This could integrate the Sendai Framework monitor indicators into ongoing remote geospatial data collection processes, such as remote sensing, climate data, and agricultural and population statistics, creating an automated model that could help identify key trends and generate datasets to inform the monitor, such as the geospatial model quantifying the people affected by agricultural drought in Eastern Cape, South Africa.[500]

Implementing such a system would necessitate dedicated resources and enhanced data-sharing practices, alongside a data analysis and evaluation system at national or regional level to strengthen data applicability. Many countries still collect data on paper, which can be shared only by using systems like scanned PDFs. Switching to a more sophisticated analytical platform requires technical support to transfer data into filtrable and calculable formats.

499 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2018.
500 Walz and others, 2020.

Interoperable information would also go a long way to facilitating data entry and analysis. In the process of addressing and responding to disaster vulnerabilities and losses alongside displacement trends, data sharing is as important as its collection. Investment in new tools and technologies is critical for collecting data in areas with little or no mobile phone or Internet coverage. It would make the work of data collection teams and information managers easier, though the potential for this is limited in some countries; for example, in Somalia, carrying a smartphone or similar device for data collection is a punishable offence in areas controlled by al-Shabaab.

Data challenges, and in establishing consistency among stakeholders in related areas such as displacement resolution, are gradually being overcome. For example, a comprehensive monitoring framework for internal displacement in the Syrian Arab Republic has enhanced the understanding of stakeholders, including data collectors, policymakers and humanitarian and development organizations.

The integration of quality disaster displacement data can also mobilize resources and provide evidence for increased policies and action for DRR. This includes the collection and management of data on slow-onset disaster displacement, understanding displacement movement and flow, and monitoring the length of displacement. It necessitates the disaggregation of data by hazard type to better inform national planning for risk reduction, preparedness and response.[501]

D. Conclusion

Conflict dynamics and disaster risk reflect past and current trade-offs in the use of natural resources, and the unequal distribution of benefits, exposure, vulnerability, risks and losses emanating from this use, which defines the development pathway a country or a region decides on.

With the advent of climate change, this unequal distribution is further exacerbated, and with it the disaster risk drivers and conflict drivers become more acute. This requires improved efforts to integrate conflict dynamics in DRR and CCA strategies, and for both to be mainstreamed in sustainable development strategies. Notwithstanding existing guidance on displacement integration in national DRR strategies,[502] a main challenge hindering broader integration is weak capacity at national and local levels, which necessitates the development of clearer guidance, tools, definitions and approaches specific to programming DRR in conflict-affected and fragile settings.

There are multiple operational examples of DRR interventions being implemented across the region, in fragile and conflict settings. These do not all recognize conflict- and disaster-induced displacement as a strategic entry point for integrating DRR and conflict mitigation and recovery interventions. Indeed, integrating DRR policies into active ventures and policy architecture to resolve the vulnerabilities created during displacement can advance DRR in conflict settings. Further, at community level, engaging displacement-affected populations, including internally displaced persons and hosting communities, provides an opportunity to better integrate localized sociocultural and conflict dynamics into the design of DRR interventions, in an inclusive and transparent manner, using bottom-up and top-down approaches.

Adopting a broader approach to understanding systemic risks, as pioneered in GAR19 and the GRAF, is crucial in the Arab region, the starting point for the interaction of conflict drivers and conflicts with climate change drivers and impacts, with their cascading risks across health, environmental, financial, social and economic systems. Traditional arguments on the cost-benefit value of DRR need to be refined to make it applicable to current conflict contexts. In this regard, the case for the return on investments should build on the regional focus on climate change, to make the link with conflict over key issues such as water scarcity, flooding, sea-level rise and unsustainable temperatures.

501 UNDRR, 2020b.
502 UNDRR, 2019b.