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1st Edition

# Displaced Persons in Civil Conflict



Draft Copy for Review Only



Disaster Management Training Programme

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# Displaced Persons in Civil Conflict

*1st Edition*

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Disaster Management Training Programme

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## ■ INTRODUCTION

### **Purpose and scope**

This training module, *Displaced Persons in Civil Conflict*, is designed to introduce this aspect of disaster management to an audience of UN organization professionals who form disaster management teams, as well as to government counterpart agencies, NGO's and donors. This training is designed to increase the audience's awareness of the nature and management of disasters, leading to better performance in disaster preparedness and response.

The content has been written by experts in the field of disaster management and in general follows the UNDP/UNDRO Disaster Management Manual and its principles, procedures, and terminology. However, terminology in this field is not standardized and authors from different institutions may use the same terms in slightly different ways. Therefore, there is a glossary of terms used in this module at the end of this text. Definitions found in the glossary are those of the UNDP/UNDRO Disaster Management Manual. Most of the definitions in the text are those of the authors.

### **Overview of this module**

The purpose of this training module is to introduce you to basic concepts related to working with non-combatant, internally displaced persons in civil conflict. The first part of the module discusses the primary causes of civil conflict and how to identify the pressure points leading to conflict. It should help you recognize populations most likely to be displaced, types and patterns of migration, the different phases of migration, and settlement patterns.

In the second part of this module, you will learn more about the needs of displaced persons, focusing on issues of protection and security, relief and assistance, and the needs of vulnerable groups. Problems associated with the implementation of assistance programs to meet these needs are analyzed in Part Three of the module. Some of these problems are: political and logistical constraints, limitations of the international aid "system," inaccessibility of the displaced, pacification schemes and safety concerns of relief teams in conflict zones.

Issues which arise in dealing with the host country are presented in Part Four. You should come away with a heightened awareness of human rights violations, the role of national governments in assistance programs and possible hostility toward international agencies. The roles and limitations of these international agencies are set forth in the final part of this module.

### **Training methods**

This module is intended for two audiences, the self-study learner and the participant in a training workshop. The following training methods are planned for use in workshops and are simulated in the accompanying "training guide". For the self-study learner the text is as close to a tutor as can be managed in print.



Workshop training methods include:

- group discussions
- simulations/role plays
- supplementary handouts
- videos
- review sessions
- self-assessment exercises

The self-study learner is invited to use this text as a workbook. In addition to note-taking in the margins, you will be given the opportunity to stop and examine your learning along the way through questions included in the text. Write down your answers to these questions before proceeding to ensure that you have captured key points in the text.





## INTRODUCTION

*This module is designed to help you:*

- *learn the causes and patterns of conflict-induced displacement*
- *identify the impact of this displacement on various populations*
- *analyze what organizations can do to assist the displaced*
- *consider operational challenges related to assistance*
- *discuss the roles of international organizations in working with displaced populations*

### Overview of the problem

It has been estimated that there are approximately 20 million internally displaced persons worldwide. These are persons displaced by human-made rather than natural disasters. Most have fled from warfare or other types of violence, repression or persecution. They are called internally displaced persons because, unlike refugees, they remain inside their own countries.

By region, it has been estimated that there are more than:

- 9 million in Africa — principally in the Horn — in Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan; in Southern Africa — in Angola and Mozambique — and another 3.6 million forcibly resettled in homelands in South Africa
- 500,000 in Central America — in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala
- 4 million in Asia — in Afghanistan, Cambodia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Burma, Lebanon and Iraq
- 500,000 in the Soviet Union

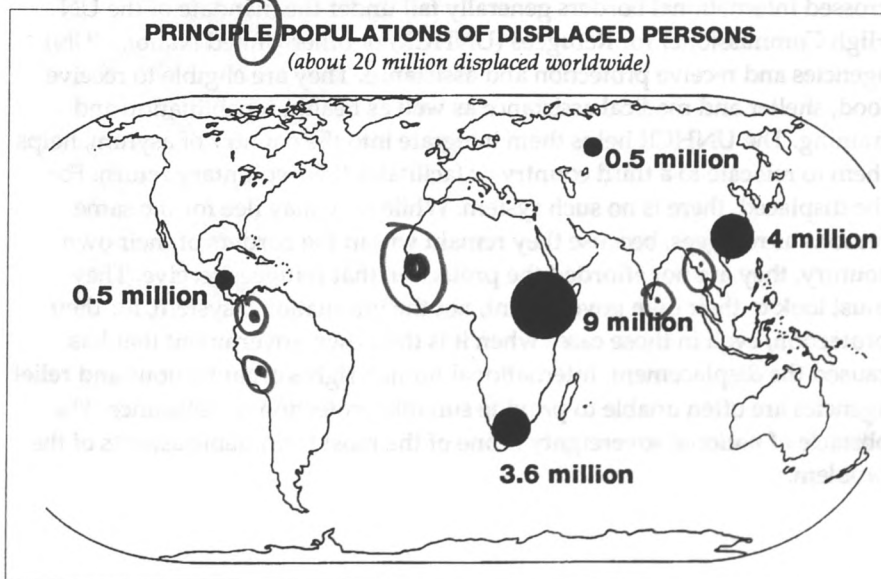


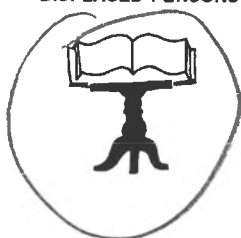
FIGURE 1

The causes of displacement reflect the growing instability of many countries. In most cases, the people have been displaced by civil conflict or separatist wars within their country. In some cases, they have been forcibly resettled by their governments. These relocations are often carried out by a government to exert control over a tribal or ethnic group. Others have been displaced because of ethnic strife or persecution.

The flight of the displaced to other parts of their country may fail to provide them with the protection they need. Often the host population fails to accept their presence and they may find themselves in other zones of conflict or in highly volatile situations where they are viewed with mistrust by the host community. The displaced often need to relocate repeatedly, sometimes because of starvation or because food is used as a weapon to control them.

Unfortunately, displacement is usually not temporary. The situations that cause displacement often go on for years without resolution.

DISPLACED PERSONS



### **Definitions**

This document will focus on internally displaced persons, defined as "non-combatant individuals and families forced to leave their homes because of the direct or indirect consequences of conflict but who remain inside their country."

The term "displaced person" is often used in a broader context. Some organizations refer to people who are forced to leave their homes as a result of drought or famine as displaced. Others include people who have been forcibly resettled by their government if the resettlement is ethnically, tribally or racially motivated. While each of these groups is in a difficult situation, this paper will focus on people displaced by war or civil conflict who remain in their own country.

### **Reasons for concern**

The international humanitarian relief system is just now beginning to meet the challenge of working with the displaced. The 15 million people who have crossed international borders generally fall under the mandate of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or other United Nations (UN) agencies and receive protection and assistance. They are eligible to receive food, shelter and medical assistance as well as health, rehabilitation and training. The UNHCR helps them integrate into the country of asylum, helps them to relocate to a third country or facilitates their voluntary return. For the displaced, there is no such system. While they may flee for the same reasons as refugees, because they remain within the borders of their own country, they are not afforded the protection that refugees receive. They must look to their own government, not the international system, for their protection, even in those cases when it is their own government that has caused the displacement. International human rights organizations and relief agencies are often unable to provide suitable protection or assistance. The obstacle of national sovereignty is one of the most formidable aspects of the problem.





In 1988, the United Nations General Assembly called on the Secretary General to study the need for creation of an international mechanism to coordinate assistance programs for internally displaced people. By 1990, the General Assembly passed a resolution (44/136) "assigning to the United Nations resident coordinators the function of coordinating assistance for internally displaced persons, in close cooperation with Governments, local representatives of donor countries and United Nations agencies in the field." The Secretary General has also recently called for preventive measures and pre-emptive action to avoid displacement, including the addressing of "root causes." For UN staff, assisting the displaced is a major challenge. Successful actions can reduce conflict and help lay the groundwork for successful reconciliation, rehabilitation and even the further development of the country. Inadequate attention to the problem, however, can prolong conflicts, make achievement of peace more difficult and create long-term dependencies that may be difficult to overcome long after the conflict.

While relief and assistance are critical to the well-being of the displaced, their human rights must also be protected from any abuse by government authorities or by members of opposition groups. Often violations are overt. Others are a result of policies that restrict or impede assistance and relief from reaching the displaced.

In 1987, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Status of Refugees, which defines a refugee as a person who has fled his or her country of origin because of a well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. The Convention also provides for the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the return of a refugee to a country where he or she would face persecution. The Convention is a cornerstone of international refugee law and is widely regarded as the most comprehensive and authoritative instrument in the field of refugee protection. It has been ratified by over 100 countries and is a key element of the international legal framework for the protection of refugees. The Convention also provides for the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the return of a refugee to a country where he or she would face persecution. The Convention is a cornerstone of international refugee law and is widely regarded as the most comprehensive and authoritative instrument in the field of refugee protection. It has been ratified by over 100 countries and is a key element of the international legal framework for the protection of refugees.

PART **1**

## CIVIL CONFLICT AND DISPLACEMENT

*In this part of the module you will learn:*

- *the primary causes of conflict*
- *how to identify the pressure points leading to conflict*
- *how to recognize:*
  - *those most likely to be displaced*
  - *types and patterns of migration*
  - *the different phases of migration*
  - *settlement patterns*

### The causes of conflict

WC  
Conflict within a society may be created by many different factors. In the advanced stages of conflict, especially wars, it is often difficult to identify the underlying causes or motivations of the combatants. Civil conflict is the sum of many individual factors, some of which are rather fundamental. If thoroughly understood, these factors can provide opportunities for conflict reduction. Two opinions are central to this text. The first is that most conflicts are rooted in economic disparities. Later they may be cloaked in ideological, racial or even religious overtones but, at the most fundamental level, they represent a contest for control over economic assets, resources or systems.

The second opinion is that most combatants would rather not participate in the conflict. Given suitable alternatives and an honorable way out, most would choose to return to productive enterprises rather than continue to risk their lives.

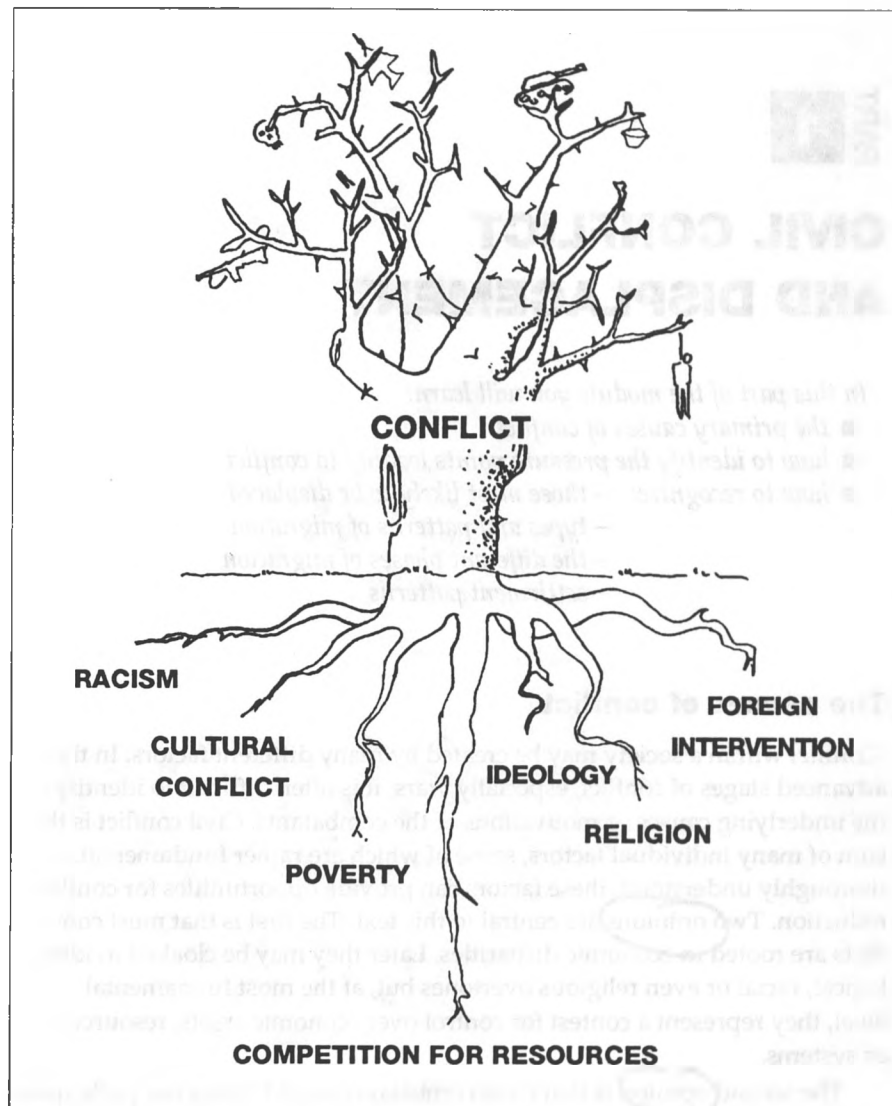
These two factors give development agencies an opportunity to make a contribution to conflict reduction. By targeting development assistance in such a way that competition for resources is reduced and job opportunities are provided, it is often possible to "drain away" substantial numbers of people who otherwise would be drawn into the conflict. It is also possible to target development assistance so that it draws warring parties away from each other and engages them in activities which decrease the likelihood that they will enter the conflict.

*Most conflicts are rooted in economic disparities.*

*Most combatants would rather not participate in the conflict.*

FIGURE 2

ROOT CAUSES OF CONFLICT



Some of the more important causes of conflict are as follows:

1. **Competition for resources:** Most conflicts are, at their most basic level, a competition for resources. This competition may be manifested in disputes over land, water rights, grazing rights or jobs.
2. **Ideology:** Of all the causes of conflict, ideology is the most difficult to deal with. In most cases, however, ideology is a later development and is often superimposed on more basic causes as a justification or as a means of organizing people for a common purpose. An example of an ideologically-based conflict is the war in El Salvador between Marxist rebels and the conservative government.
3. **Racism:** Racism, tribalism, or other manifestations of discrimination are key causes of conflict. Racism is difficult to temper and, in many cases, even after people have lived side-by-side for generations, a sudden spark fueled by latent racism can lead to violence. Generally, however, racism is superimposed over an economic conflict, for example, in Guatemala where the economically-dominant Latino population is fighting to

maintain hegemony over the more numerous Indian population. If all sides have equal access to jobs and opportunities, to land and other resources, conflict can be contained.

4. **Religion:** Religion and religious intolerance is another cause of conflict that is difficult to address. Sometimes, religious differences are the fundamental cause, such as in India and Pakistan in the 1940s. But in many cases, this too is superimposed on a more fundamental dispute with religion being a means of rallying people. For example, the conflict in Northern Ireland is often seen as a dispute between Catholics and Protestants; yet at a more fundamental level, the conflict involves a continuing struggle for economic justice and elimination of the vestiges of the colonial period.
5. **Foreign intervention:** Many conflicts are caused by foreign intervention. In some cases, there may be outright meddling by a foreign government. In others, conflict may be caused by the presence of foreigners, such as refugees or guerrillas operating out of bases or sanctuaries in the country, who create conflict as an adjunct to their own agendas.
6. **Poverty:** Poverty and injustice are major factors fuelling conflict in the Third World. Increasingly, conflicts are seen as a war between the haves and the have-nots. When people perceive that there is no end in sight to their economic hardship, they may take up arms. When stuck in a quagmire of economic oppression and social injustice, large numbers of the poor may take a more activist stance and demand more assistance to alleviate economic hardships. The demand for bread has toppled more than one government. It is often said that the poorest of the poor are too poor to start a revolution, and that revolutions are the product of students and the middle class. That has not always been true. During the great Sahelian famine of the 1970s, every government affected by famine fell. More than half of these governments fell as a result of revolutions or military coups.
7. **Cultural conflict (leading to separatist aspirations):** In many cases, two distinct cultures find it difficult to live in harmony. If the two cultures live in separate and distinct geographic areas, it is not uncommon that aspirations for independence arise. Separatist movements may result from resentment that resources are not equally shared or, conversely, resentment at having to share resources with another region or population. It is important to recognize that one conflict will often generate others, especially if the original conflict is prolonged. This is due to several factors. Governments may become weaker and less able to control events in other areas. Dissidents may see an opportunity to exploit the government's weakness. The general proliferation of arms that usually accompanies conflict often leads to a breakdown of law and order. This is especially true in areas adjacent to the conflict zone, where local grievances may flare up. Conflict may also arise from the migration of people and competition for resources in the areas of influx. Even within one conflict there may be several sub-conflicts. For example, in Sri Lanka, the principal struggle is between the Hindu Tamils in the North and East and the Buddhist Sinhalese in the South. However, the violence in the East has also sparked a conflict between the Muslim population and the Tamils.

It is important to identify the underlying causes since many of them may be fairly easy to resolve. For example, if a major cause is competition for resources such as water or pasture, the programming of development assistance into those areas to increase the resource base may help reduce tensions and violence.

**Q.** How might development agencies reduce the causes of conflict?

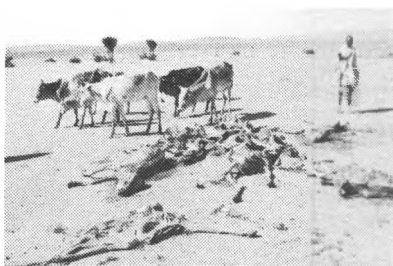
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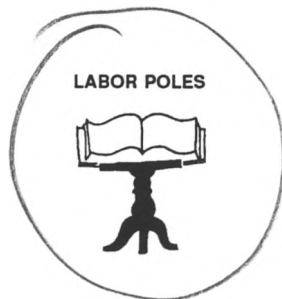
### Pressure points and how to identify them

Pressure points can be defined as zones where demographic and economic changes are occurring, usually rapidly, that lead to possible conflict. These zones exhibit certain characteristics. Among the places where conflict can be expected are:

Desertification in Ethiopia



UNDRO news  
September/October 1983



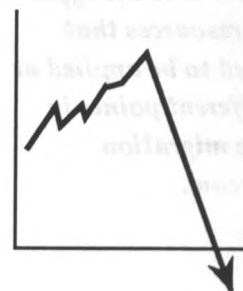
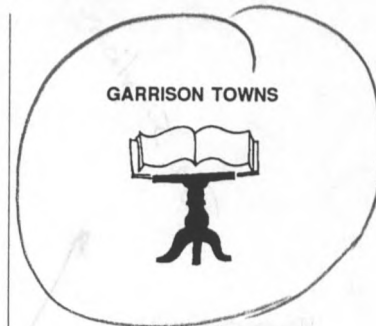
1. **Areas of environmental degradation:** Changes in habitat such as desertification, deforestation or declining rainfall force people to migrate in search of better land, pasture and water. These migrations may put pressure on resident populations in the areas where the migrants settle, leading to increased competition for available resources. This competition, if acute, can lead to violence.
2. **Areas of chronic food insecurity:** Food insecurity is normally related to available resources. If the resources are only marginal and periodic shortfalls in food production occur, people are forced to migrate in search of food or work to earn the income needed to procure food. Migrants often saturate local labor markets, driving wage scales down and creating tension between the local workers and the migrants.
3. **Labor poles:** Labor poles are areas where large numbers of day laborers are employed, such as in large-scale agricultural schemes. They are often areas of tension during crisis-induced migration. Thousands of displaced may migrate to these areas in search of work, drastically lowering the wage scale and making it difficult for the resident workers to find work at a decent wage. In many cases, secondary migration occurs: either the incoming workers continue onward when it becomes clear that they can't find jobs, or the resident workers are forced to migrate to maintain their income level. Experience has shown that incidents of violence may occur around these labor poles as people compete for increasingly fewer jobs.

4. **Overpopulation:** Conflict often occurs in areas that become overpopulated as a result of migration. Overpopulation may occur at garrison towns (towns controlled by government forces in the midst of a conflict zone) where the arrival of displaced persons may double, or even triple, the normal population; in villages at the edge of a conflict area; or in squatter settlements that quickly become overpopulated with the new arrivals. Conflict generally breaks out because of tensions created by overcrowding or competition for scarce resources in the settlements, especially water and agricultural land.
5. **Large-scale development programs:** Large-scale development programs such as irrigated farming, dams and reservoirs often displace significant numbers of people, change the economics of an area or force changes in traditional migration patterns. All of these factors can create conflict in or around the development schemes.

### Triggering events of displacement

The migration of people out of a zone of conflict may be triggered by several different factors. These factors may occur independently or simultaneously.

1. **Military operations:** Ground operations by armies, insurgents or militias are a major trigger to migration out of a conflict zone. Ground operations could include invasions of an area, military sweeps, sustained military occupation, foraging or widespread conscription. Aerial bombing rarely causes widespread migration out of rural areas. However, if towns or cities are attacked and urban dwellers have open escape routes, many may evacuate.
2. **Destruction of crops or economic assets:** If military activities destroy standing crops, livestock, harvested grains, or the economic assets of villagers on a wide scale, people in the affected area are likely to migrate.
3. **Food shortages:** Conflict can disrupt both agricultural production and food marketing creating both a shortage of food and a lack of income for people in the food production and supply chain. As food shortages increase, migration will increase proportionately.
4. **Collapse of agricultural systems:** In most Third World countries, agricultural systems are extremely vulnerable to conflict. Conflict can disrupt the production sequence, thereby causing a **substantial** reduction of output. If this production loss is substantial, the agricultural system can break down. This ~~breakdown~~ *drastic* creates food shortages and, more importantly, loss of income for large numbers of people. When that occurs, famine is likely to break out and large numbers of people will be forced to migrate.
5. **Collapse of the economy:** Conflict can ~~cause the~~ collapse of an economy in many ways. It can ~~destroy or~~ disrupt the marketing systems. It can destroy the economic assets of a community. It can push the cost of doing business to a level that destroys profitability for even the most basic enterprises. It can deplete the labor market. It can also establish a cycle of migration that strips the economy of both labor and purchasers. As people begin to migrate out of the conflict zone, businesses will gradually find the number of buyers declining, and at some point will find it unprofitable to continue. They will close their shops and, in many cases, join the migration stream.



#### ANSWER (from page 8)

Development agencies might reduce the causes of conflict by targeting assistance to reduce competition for resources, by providing jobs or by engaging warring parties in activities which draw them away from each other.

## Displaced Persons in Civil Conflict



Houses destroyed by shelling during civil strife.



MPLA/ Luanda

*Identifying the predominant types of migration helps to determine the types of resources that need to be applied at different points in the migration stream.*

### Groups most likely to flee

In the initial stages of civil conflict, the people most likely to flee are those who live in the countryside, such as farmers, pastoral and rural laborers. This is not only because armies and insurgents maneuver in the field, but also because cultivation is one of the enterprises most vulnerable to disruption by warfare. Furthermore, rural people living isolated on farms or in remote villages feel their vulnerability more acutely.

### Types of migration

Migration and conflict can be classified as sudden, precautionary, or economically induced.

**Crisis-induced migration:** This type of migration usually occurs as the result of military operations. Crisis-induced migration is often characterized by people fleeing out of fear when sudden, unanticipated events occur that force them to abandon their homes and move out of harm's way.

**Precautionary evacuation:** Precautionary evacuation occurs when people decide to move as a precaution against violence, to avoid an aspect of the conflict (such as conscription), or to leave while they can still sell their assets and evacuate in an orderly manner.

**Economically-induced migration:** In sustained conflicts, studies have shown that the majority of people leave for economic reasons. These factors could include substantial increases in the cost of living due to shortages of basic commodities, collapse of local economies, collapse of the macro-economy, the unavailability of work or alternative income, or the lack of buyers for goods produced.

Identifying the predominant types of migration helps to determine the types of resources that need to be applied at different points in the migration stream. For example, people who migrate suddenly as a result of conflict usually have few assets when they reach areas where relief agencies can provide assistance. Therefore, their assistance needs are more likely to be of an emergency nature.

People fleeing as a precaution normally have time to convert their assets to cash and usually require less in the way of immediate assistance. Furthermore, their pattern of migration will be substantially different from those making a sudden evacuation.

Economic migrants, too, are likely to have more assets than those who evacuate rapidly. However, if they have been holding out until the last possible moment, the relative amount of cash or convertible assets that they are bringing may be less than those making a precautionary move.

### Patterns of migration

The actual pattern and direction of migration may be influenced by several factors. One of these is location. People generally move away from conflict. Those who live on the periphery of a conflict zone are likely to migrate out of the zone. If they live in the middle of an unstable area, they are likely to go towards towns or cities that they believe are safe. In short, migration routes are highly influenced by the choices available.



The cycle of seasons also affect the pattern of migration. Precautionary and economic migration tends to increase at the end of the harvest season and peak two or three months afterwards. At the end of the harvest, farmers calculate how much grain they have harvested and make a rough estimate of whether or not they can survive until the next crop is harvested (making allowances for the amount of seed that must be held in reserve). If they cannot survive on the amount of grain they have gathered, and do not have other assets such as animals that could be converted to cash or bartered for food, and if there are insufficient alternative income possibilities, such as temporary labor in the nearby markets, the families will be forced to migrate.

If a harvest has been marginal, cultivators may decide to attempt to remain in the area and see how the next harvest season unfolds. They will usually stay in the area until they can see if the climatic factors, especially rainfall, are favorable. If rains are late, migration will increase midway through the planting season.

Migration can also be cyclical. Displaced persons often move their families to safe areas, then return seasonally to attempt to work the agricultural land.

The cause of displacement affects also migration. People who are forced to evacuate suddenly tend to have fewer assets and migrate in stages. They first move to a safe area and regroup, then to a nearby town in search of work. As family members accumulate assets, they move on to a larger town or labor pole where they accumulate more assets, then begin moving on toward the larger cities.

People who migrate as a precaution usually tend to go farther in their initial move, sometimes moving directly to a labor pole or, in some cases, directly to the capital city.

Persons moving for economic reasons also tend to go farther in their initial move, depending on the amount of cash they have been able to generate by selling their assets.

Local conflicts and pressure points can also be a major influence. Migration routes, especially in Africa, are highly influenced by traditional rivalries and conflicts. For example, people of one tribe will often adjust their migration routes by hundreds of kilometers to avoid passing through an area where traditional rivals live. In areas where tribes or clans have a history of conflict over pastures, water or land, or where cattle raiding, kidnapping or village raiding has occurred, migrants may take great pains to avoid potential conflict zones. In some cases, transit routes have been established to permit nomads to pass through cultivated areas without incident. Migrants may follow these traditional routes but, if an incident occurs, conflict could spread quickly.

Localized conflicts during times of drought or famine might also trigger migration. This occurs when people migrating from one area in search of more secure resources come into conflict with people who are settled along the migration route. Clashes between the migrants and the resident population can lead to displacements of both groups.

Conflicts can also arise in the locations where the migrations terminate. The migrants may bring traditional rivalries into their new community or conflict may develop as a result of competition for scarce employment opportunities. If an incident occurs, word will quickly spread to others who

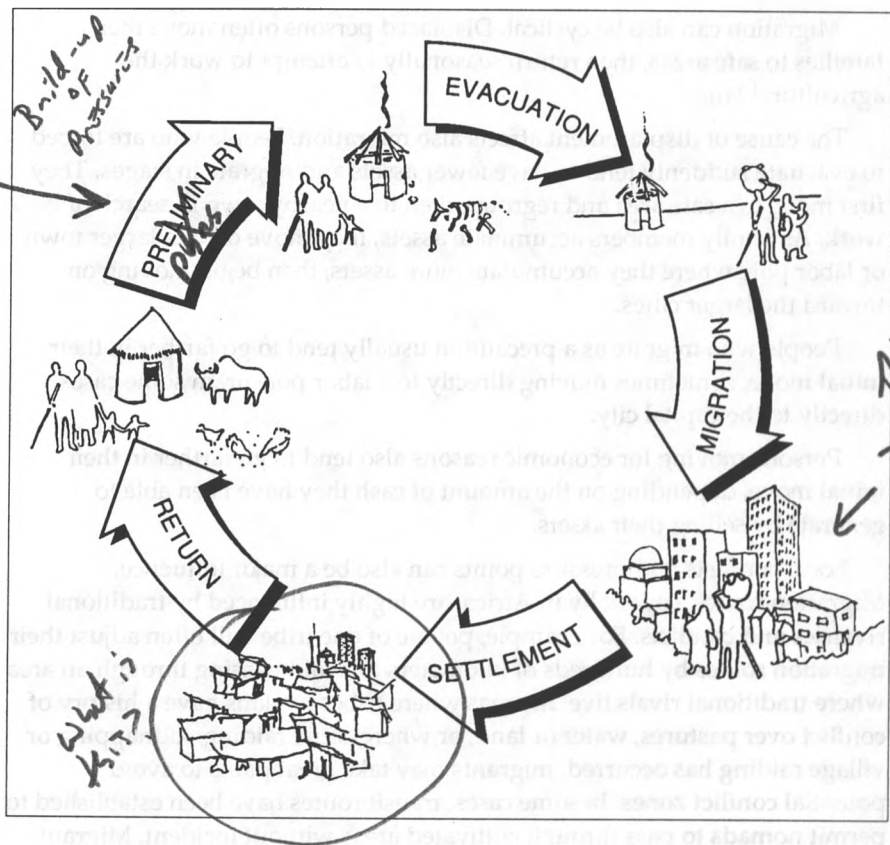
are still in the process of migration, and migration routes may be adjusted to avoid the pressure points.

Tribal or ethnic areas are also of concern. The location of tribal areas or populations with the same or similar cultural, linguistic, or ethnic characteristics can draw displaced persons where they may perceive that assistance or sympathy exists.

### Phases of displacement

Displacement can be broken down into five general phases: the preliminary phase, the evacuation/emergency phase, the migration phase, the settlement phase and the return phase.

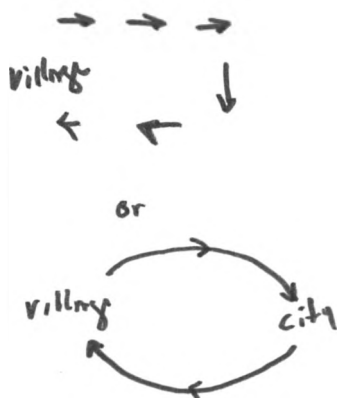
PHASES OF DISPLACEMENT



Need to resist & show fighting spirit. (Not sure I like to show this as a goal.)

Maybe show this as follows:

FIGURE 3



**The preliminary phase:** During the preliminary phase, pressures build within the community that cause people to consider leaving their homes. These pressures can include insecurity, declining access to food (either from declining income or declining sources of food), loss of job opportunities, conscription, and increasing competition for available resources. With a general breakdown in law and order, localized conflict may increase.

**The evacuation or emergency phase:** There are three elements to consider in this phase: the triggers that force a decision to evacuate, the evacuation itself, and the arrival of the family at a sanctuary.

A decision to evacuate can be triggered by many different events. Among the more common are: military activities; violence; threat of imminent danger; loss of a family member; loss of access to food, income or credit; or the imminent threat of conscription. In some cases, the decision may be precautionary — the head of the family notes the general trend of events or the gradual decline of security or the economy and decides that it would be better to leave while assets can still be converted to cash.

In some cases, the evacuation may be stimulated by the departure of others (sometimes referred to as the "bandwagon effect") and in some cases the evacuation may be decided by others in the community, such as village elders, tribal chiefs or political leaders.

Once a decision is made to evacuate, migrants must decide where and how far to go to reach a place where they will be safe. That point, or sanctuary, may be in a nearby town or area held by a friendly party in the conflict, such as a rebel-held area or, more commonly, a garrison town. Sanctuary may also be in a point outside the conflict zone.

The choice of which destination to seek is often influenced by: the location of the nearest point of sanctuary; the escape routes that are open and safe; location of other family members, friends, relatives, clan members, tribes or language groups; the location of perceived income opportunities; and the location of markets where the breadwinners' skills can be used.

How much consideration is given to each of these factors usually depends on whether or not the evacuation is precautionary, occurring after careful deliberation, or whether the move is sudden and unplanned.

The actual evacuations also follow a common pattern. In the case of sudden evacuations, whole families are usually forced to move. As long as there is an imminent threat of danger, it proceeds swiftly, but haltingly, with families travelling only at night, generally avoiding other settlements and staying off the main roads. If the family is walking and not using pack animals, the amount of food that they can carry is limited. If the distance to the sanctuary is long, the family's nutritional status may decline during the evacuation.

If the evacuation is precautionary, the families will generally carry more assets and convert them to cash or food as they go along. The fact that they are carrying their assets may attract attacks from bandits along the way. For this reason, they, too, often travel only at night in small groups. However, if they manage to keep their assets as they go along, they are more likely than others to venture into communities along the way to sell or barter for more food.

Another characteristic of precautionary evacuations is the sending of breadwinners and working-age males first, then gradually bringing other family members out of the conflict zone.

Precautionary evacuation tends to follow established migration routes as long as the ~~migrants are~~ <sup>migrants are</sup> uninterrupted. For example, if the evacuees have a tradition of migrating as seasonal agricultural laborers to areas outside the conflict zone, families making precautionary moves will usually follow the same migration routes.

Proor choice of words.  
If you don't like "word"  
use "stronger":

Highlighted this

SANCTUARY



*Operationally, the emergency phase can generally be said to last as long as there are new arrivals into the sanctuary and as long as malnutrition, morbidity and mortality rates are above normal.*

The *sanctuary* is the first safe place that the displaced stop after leaving the conflict zone. It is the first point where humanitarian assistance can be provided. In many cases, the people arriving are in terrible shape. They may be malnourished, sick and exhausted from their evacuation. They may have been traumatized by attacks upon them during their journey. In some cases, they may have passed through endemic disease areas for which they had no resistance. Typically, large numbers of people will arrive without any visible assets, and families may be separated from or have lost some of their members.

In these conditions, emergency assistance and relief are required. Typically, large percentages of the people will accumulate around a health post, a water point or other rallying place, and a camp will evolve.

Some of the new arrivals may be able to find work in nearby towns or on local farms, especially if resident farmers have a tradition of employing migrant labor or establishing temporary sharecropping relationships.

Operationally, the emergency phase can generally be said to last as long as there are new arrivals into the sanctuary and as long as malnutrition, morbidity and mortality rates are above normal. From the migrants' point of view, however, the emergency phase lasts either until they can be assured that their families can live on the assistance being provided or they have accumulated enough resources to move on to an area where they can find steady employment. In the initial stages of a conflict, it may be possible for the early arrivals to find employment opportunities near the sanctuary. But soon, these openings will be taken and the job market saturated to a point where the wage scale is sufficiently depressed that subsequent arrivals must move outward in search of jobs and income. It can thus be said that the emergency phase ends when onward migration begins.

*The migration phase:* At the point where people begin moving out of the sanctuary, the pattern of movement quickly develops the characteristics of normal, though accelerated, migration. The ultimate destination for many of the people will be the large cities or capital of the country. In the early years of these migrations, much of the flow of people from the sanctuaries towards the cities will be segmented. In other words, people will stop as soon as they are able to secure adequate income possibilities. Close to the sanctuary, spontaneous settlement in nearby villages or on farms will occur. But progressively, as each labor market becomes saturated, subsequent arrivals must move further "up the line."

In many countries there are large labor poles such as mechanized farming schemes, large-scale irrigated agricultural schemes or industries such as mines that can employ large numbers of additional short-term laborers. Thus, much of the migration will be towards these labor poles. However, as they too become saturated and wage scales begin to decline, more and more families will go directly to the urban centers.

At the labor poles, the influx of new and cheap labor may force many of the earlier arrivals to quit the area and move on towards the urban centers. This secondary displacement is a major cause of conflict in these areas.

*The settlement phase:* When migrants reach a destination where they can remain without expectation or fear of having to move onward, the settlement phase begins. In towns and cities, most migrants tend to move into squatter settlements located in the marginal areas of the city environs, or on the periphery of the metropolitan area. Outwardly, these settlements are often not distinguishable from other squatter settlements and, indeed, many of the displaced may move into areas where other migrants, not displaced by conflict, have already settled. The displaced tend to move to areas where they have friends, relatives or clansmen. In recent years, displacement has been one of the major contributors to urbanization and the proliferation of slums.

*The return phase:* As in any migration, a certain number of people will return when conditions permit. When and how many will return are dependent on many factors including the relative degree of security in the people's homeland, the amount of time between the original displacement and the time when a return is possible, the level of indebtedness incurred by families desiring to return, and the availability of work and income-generating possibilities in the place of origin.

Very little systematic research has been done on whether displaced people who formerly lived in rural areas ever return, even if a full settlement of the conflict which caused their displacement is achieved. The one group of migrants who are most likely to return are former urban dwellers in the conflict areas. Merchants, white-collar workers, teachers and government officials are generally more likely to return if a settlement can be achieved.

A certain amount of spontaneous return occurs during lulls in the conflict. Few studies have been done about these spontaneous returns, but it is likely that they resemble the following patterns of spontaneous repatriation of refugees.

The persons most likely to repatriate are those living closest to the border. Translated into crisis migration terms, people living in or near the transition zone and in garrison towns are those most likely to return. This is because they will be better able to maintain contacts in their original communities, and they will be aware more quickly of opportunities to return safely.

People who have retained rural agricultural skills are the most likely to return during ongoing conflicts because they fear loss of their land.

Spontaneous returns may be influenced by a lack of job opportunities or support structure in other communities. In other words, the best option is to return.


Returns are also influenced by considerations such as whether the displaced can reclaim their lands and whether sufficient infrastructure remains in the aftermath of the conflict.

Displaced persons on the way back to their village of origin.




UNHCR/E. Birrer

**Q.** List three factors which often influence a displaced person's choice of destination to seek upon leaving home.

**A.** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ 

**Q.** Which of the following might be factors used by displaced persons to determine when and whether to return to their homes?

- The time between their original displacement and when a return is possible
- The relative degree of security in their homelands
- The level of indebtedness incurred in their new communities

**A.** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ 

### Secondary displacement

Migration that results from civil or separatist wars may create pressures that expand the conflict and produce areas of tension that can erupt into localized conflicts. This is due to several factors. The displaced may establish a smaller version of their society in the cities, bringing with them all the unresolved conflicts. The movement of people from one zone to another may also increase competition for available resources and lead to resentment against the newcomers by the host population.

The arrival of large numbers of unskilled workers in a labor market serves to depress wages and causes resentment among local workers.

A final added tension is that new migrants can increase pressures on available services and infrastructure. For example, in many communities, large numbers of new migrants may decrease the amount of water available in a village or settlement. Displaced persons are often blamed for inflated costs of housing and for shortages of essential commodities. They may also be blamed for increased crime and other social ills.

*ANSWER (from top of page)*

The choice of destination is often influenced by:

- the location of the nearest point of sanctuary
- the escape routes that are open and safe
- the location of other relatives or friends
- the location of perceived income opportunities

## Migration as a pressure-relief mechanism

It is often difficult to predict when displacement will occur and what type or pattern of migration will follow. Even when all the indications are present, populations may remain in place longer than anticipated. This has led some observers to theorize that crisis-induced displacement is largely a self-regulating pressure-relief mechanism. In other words, out-migration of people during periods of stress often relieves or eases the pressures that force migration. For example, in conflicts that are created as a result of competition for resources, out-migration of substantial numbers of people reduces the competition for those resources and thereby lowers the level of conflict.

## Settlement patterns

Because relief programs for displaced persons tend to focus on the areas in which they reside, it is important to understand the characteristics of the settlement types usually encountered. In general, there are three physical settlement patterns: camps, spontaneous settlements, and pockets within existing squatter settlements.

**Camps:** Sometimes referred to as welfare centers, relief camps or distribution centers, emergency camps for the displaced are normally those locations where relief supplies are distributed and which become the focal point for the delivery of emergency services to persons in the first stages of displacement. These camps can vary in size from several dozen families to many thousands. Their growth will ultimately be decided on the basis of the amount of assistance that can be provided to sustain the population, the security of the area, and government policies relating to the size of the camps.

Assistance in camps for displaced persons generally follows the same lines as assistance in camps for refugees. A full range of food, shelter and health programs needs to be provided along with water, sanitation and other site improvements.

Governments often try to contain displaced persons exclusively in camps. In these cases, caution should be exercised, for such restrictions necessitate an escalation in the levels of service that must be provided. Since camps are normally in more remote locations, assistance will probably require substantial transport investment and result in higher per capita costs. The only way to keep costs manageable is to permit the displaced to work and participate in the local economy to the greatest extent possible.

Camps should be avoided wherever possible. They foster dependencies and often result in a loss of self-esteem. Camp life is commonly cited as the cause of breakdowns in traditional social networks and coping mechanisms. Camps have also been cited as the basis for increased domestic violence.

**Spontaneous DP settlements:** Spontaneous settlements composed entirely of displaced persons quite often spring up around towns and cities. People with similar ethnic, linguistic or cultural backgrounds to the displaced are often located in smaller towns close to the area of origin. Thus, spontaneous settlements may form an extension of an

Korem camp

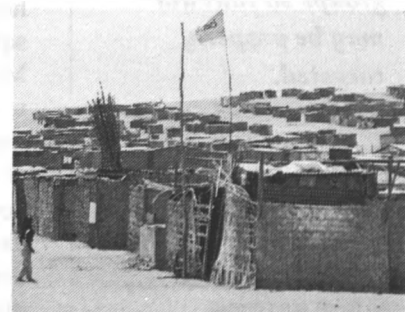


Northern Ethiopia/Camera

*In general, there are three physical settlement patterns: camps, spontaneous settlements, and pockets within existing squatter settlements.*

*Camps should be avoided wherever possible.*

Spontaneous settlement



Villa el Salvador Lima, Peru UNDP/Lois Jensen

**Q.** Which type of migration does each of the following quotations from a displaced person represent?

- a. "My son and I fled our home when rumors began that all adolescent boys would be forced to join the army."
- b. "No one seemed to need bricklayers after the rebels declared control over my community, so I moved to the city."
- c. "Immediately after our village was strafed during the night, my husband and I moved to the model village."

**A.** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



*Once the government recognizes that spontaneous settlement is likely to occur, sites of the government's choice where services can be provided cheaply and equitably should be identified.*

*In determining overall priorities of assistance, it is important to identify specific population groups so that aid may be properly targeted.*

existing community. The primary difference between a new spontaneous settlement and an existing squatter settlement may be in the quality of shelter and other services. Since the displaced initially have neither the resources nor the interest in making a permanent investment in shelter, these settlements can become overcrowded slums unless the government and relief agencies act quickly. Once people have settled, it is very difficult to replot the site in order to add basic services and provide sufficient land for reasonable population densities. Thus, once the government recognizes that spontaneous settlement is likely to occur, sites of the government's choice where services can be provided cheaply and equitably should be identified. Development plans should be made so that a settlement can grow along orderly and cost-efficient lines.

In larger cities, where the majority population is culturally or linguistically different from the displaced population, spontaneous settlements may be established near to, but not contiguous with, the urban area. This pattern provides protection from the larger population. Over a period of years, normal growth of the urban area may fill in the territory between the city and the spontaneous settlement. However, the spontaneous settlement is likely to remain a ghetto, culturally distinct from the surrounding population.

**Pockets within squatter settlements:** If a government demonstrates hostility towards the displaced, they are likely to try to integrate into existing squatter settlements, making it more difficult for authorities to locate them. Most squatter settlements are considered illegal by the authorities, but the mere fact that they exist demonstrates that a government is powerless to prevent their development. By grafting onto these settlements, some degree of solidarity can be achieved — if not overtly, at least subtly. If the government upgrades the facilities in the settlement, the displaced benefit along with all the rest of the residents. On the other hand, actions detrimental to the displaced may be perceived as a threat to the non-displaced population who, in self-defense, may unite with the displaced against the government actions.

ANSWER (from page 16)

All three are correct.



Displaced persons who have integrated into squatter settlements are often the most difficult group to assist. Consequently, they often experience high malnutrition rates, especially for children under five. In a 1984 survey of squatter settlements with high proportions of displaced persons in the capital of El Salvador, surveyors found the gross malnutrition rate as measured by middle-upper-arm circumference (MUAC) to be around 7 percent. However, when DPs were isolated within the same communities, the malnutrition rate for their children proved to be 27 percent.

In determining overall priorities of assistance, it is important to identify specific population groups so that aid may be properly targeted. However, targeting can be extremely difficult, as it is socially and politically disruptive to provide food and other services for the displaced and not for other low-income families residing within the larger community. Therefore, provision of comprehensive assistance to both populations within the same geographic area could have many positive political benefits for the government. Unfortunately, the resources to sustain such an operation are usually unavailable.

Squatter settlement



Cooperation South/UNDP 1989 No. 1

*Q. Explain how crisis-induced displacement may act as a self-regulating pressure-relief mechanism.*

A. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



*Q. In which physical settlement site is your agency best prepared to work with displaced persons: in camps, in spontaneous settlements or in pockets within existing squatter settlements? Explain why.*

A. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_





**PART 2**

## **ASSISTANCE**

*This part of the module is designed to enhance your understanding of the needs of displaced persons. It covers the following aspects:*

- *protection and security*
- *relief*
- *needs of vulnerable groups*
- *needs after the cessation of conflict*
- *reconstruction needs*

### **Protection and security**

Displaced persons must often be protected from serious human rights violations. While the UNHCR has a mandate to protect refugees, at this writing, no international organization has been given a mandate to do this for internally displaced persons. The displaced must look to their own government, instead of to the international community, for protection and security. This can be problematic, for it is often their own government that is the source of the problem. In other cases, the government may not have the resources or ability to protect and assist them. While the UN has a mandate to provide relief and assistance, it has neither the mandate, the resources nor the competence to provide protection or security. Furthermore, the UN often runs into major problems in gaining access to those in need, principally because the host government places administrative obstacles in the way. In some cases, host governments may even deny that a displacement problem exists.

As a result of these obstacles, the UN must rely on an ad hoc protection system. A common principal strategy is placing as many international agencies as possible in the areas where the problems are occurring. It has been demonstrated that the presence of international agencies serves to reduce the incidence of human rights abuses. In cases where UN peacekeeping forces are engaged, it is often possible to coordinate humanitarian assistance with peacekeeping operations.

The press can be a powerful ally in helping to reduce protection problems. Few countries want the adverse publicity that the media can focus on human rights abuses. Countries with major human rights violations sometimes have difficulty obtaining the international credit and development resources that are needed for development programs.



**REFUGEES**

*While the UN has a mandate to provide relief and assistance, it has neither the mandate, the resources nor the competence to provide protection or security for the displaced.*



**DISPLACED PERSONS**

*The United Nations has a higher ~~moral~~ responsibility: it represents the collective moral force of the world community.*

ASSISTANCE RELIEF



The threat of aid termination is often proposed as a means of reducing human rights abuses. Experience has shown that this threat has rarely been carried out. Generally, UN staff must work quietly behind the scenes to bring the government into compliance with international standards. These quiet efforts must also be strong and carried out in concert with other major donors.

NGOs may be able to play a role in identifying and publicizing problems related to human rights. However, if they become too active in this regard, their ability to operate in the country might be severely curtailed.

Operational difficulties include lack of coordination, the use of ad hoc approaches, obstacles created by governments, and the issue of national sovereignty. In many cases, the UN staff has little leverage since it is reluctant to use the cancellation of aid as a threat. It is clear that many governments have recognized that donors can be manipulated. The UN staff is particularly vulnerable because of its role as a servant of the member state. Thus, UN staff must be careful not to be drawn into an adversarial relationship with the government. It must continually strive to find ways to reinforce and build on the positive steps that governments may take to reduce tensions and facilitate operations. Nonetheless, the United Nations has a higher ~~moral~~ responsibility: it represents the collective moral force of the world community. Actions must never be taken that legitimize a government's ill behavior towards its citizens, or denial of any of their rights guaranteed under the UN's Declaration on Human Rights.

### Assistance and relief needs

If we approach the problem of displaced persons only from an emergency services perspective, we neglect many long-term needs where development approaches and programs can be applied. Furthermore, if we continue to apply emergency relief beyond a certain point, we run the danger of creating dependencies and establishing inequities in the communities where the displaced take up residence. This, in turn, creates local resentments, elevates tensions and may spark localized conflicts.

Generally, emergency assistance is necessary during the preliminary and evacuation phases, but more developmental assistance is required in the migration and settlement phases. In the return phase, a combination of transport and reconstruction assistance is required.

*Preliminary phase:* During the preliminary phase, if it is possible to reach the affected area, it may be possible to provide assistance in such a way that displacement can either be prevented or limited. For example, if displacement will result from food insecurity or lack of income to procure food, a combination of short-term work programs to provide jobs and income along with various types of food aid may provide enough support so that people will not be forced to leave their homes. If potential displacement will result from localized conflict, such as that arising out of a competition for resources, increasing the resource base with development aid may serve to reduce the level of conflict or at least contain it. For example, conflict may arise out of access to water. By increasing the number of water points in the competing communities, conflict could be reduced.

International agencies might also be able to help by providing protection or by serving to adjudicate or mediate local disputes. Sometimes, the presence of outsiders can temper an escalating crisis.

Most assistance needs can be categorized as economic assistance or projects designed to increase food security.

**Assistance needs during the emergency or evacuation phase:** Once people have started to move, it is imperative that their emergency needs be met as soon as they reach sanctuary. These needs typically include food, nutritional rehabilitation, medical and public health assistance, water, shelter and, (possibly) protection. Relief agencies can expect the majority of the displaced in the worst condition to congregate in relief camps.

**Migration phase:** During the early stages of migration, assistance will be needed to support smaller communities that are affected by a high rate of spontaneous settlement, and assistance will need to be provided in and around labor poles. Since the migrants will immediately increase competition for resources and jobs, assistance strategies should focus on providing additional work and income-earning opportunities. Projects to increase water supplies where there is scarcity, especially during times of drought or during the dry season, should be given priority. Increasing access to health services and educational facilities may also help the migrants assimilate into their new communities. It should be cautioned that the displaced should not be singled out for assistance. Rather, assistance should be provided to the entire community.

During the migration phase, it is also important that assisting agencies pursue a range of conflict-reduction strategies. By identifying likely pressure points and monitoring situations to detect rising tensions, agencies can often use development aid to limit or contain local conflicts that are caused by migration and rapid population changes.

**Settlement phase:** Once migrants have reached their destination and have begun settling into their new communities, assistance should be provided to help them assimilate and find adequate sustained employment to help them take care of their own needs. Typically, the types of assistance and inputs that people need are land, credit and extension of municipal services (water, sanitation, roads, etc.).

In larger urban areas where migrants settle in squatter settlements, programs to upgrade the living environment through improvement of living conditions can provide great benefit not only to the newcomers, but to the municipality in general.

If the rate of influx to urban areas is unchecked and continuous, it may be necessary to investigate the possibility of providing sites and services programs on a large scale. Sites and services programs are projects to rationally develop tracts of land for urban migrants. Land, serviced by municipal services such as water, roads, and electricity, is provided on long-term tenure arrangements and assistance is provided to people to build their own homes on the allocated land.

As mentioned earlier, there might also be a need to provide immediate assistance to newcomers to help reduce the high infant mortality rates that accompany their arrival in urban zones.





*It is important that assistance be provided to the whole community, not just the returnees.*

**Assistance needs during the return phase:** When families indicate that they are willing to return to their original homes, assistance agencies might wish to encourage that return by providing support. This may include return transport, short-term financial assistance and, possibly, food aid.

Once the families have returned to their area, general reconstruction assistance should be provided. This may include: credit, provision of tools or agricultural inputs, housing reconstruction aid, etc. There might also be a need to assist families in reacquiring title or access to lands abandoned earlier. It is important that assistance be provided to the whole community, not just the returnees, since those who stayed may have had an even harder time than those who left. To do otherwise would create resentments that would make reconstruction more difficult.

The conflict may have separated families and scattered various family members to different parts of the country. Therefore, it is often necessary to help establish tracing services and family reunification programs. It is generally fairly easy for adults to locate other adults, but if families have been separated from their children, outside assistance can be extremely helpful.

**Q.** Match which type of assistance is most needed within the following phases of displacement: (Place one letter after each number.)

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Preliminary and evacuation phases | a. developmental assistance                |
| 2. Migration and settlement phases   | b. transport and reconstruction assistance |
| 3. Return phase                      | c. emergency assistance                    |

### **Vulnerable groups**

The categories of vulnerable displaced persons are variously defined to include: unaccompanied minors, the elderly, the mentally and physically disabled, victims of physical abuse or violence and pregnant, lactating or single women. As in most crisis situations, these groups of people are most vulnerable to disease and death.

In the emergency phases, women and children often receive less food than other members of a family and therefore are more likely to be malnourished by the time they come into the assistance system. Small children are more susceptible to diseases, especially those who live on isolated farms where they have little contact with communicable diseases.

The combination of undernutrition and exposure to communicable diseases increases the vulnerability of children under five.

It has also been observed that the displaced experience very high infant mortality rates in the first six months after they arrive in cities, especially when they live in squatter settlements. This is probably because it takes some time for the family to begin to earn enough money to buy all the food they need and because drinking water in many of these settlements is of poor quality, leading to high rates of diarrhea.

### **VULNERABLE GROUPS**



Burundi, 1984



UNHCR/Vanappelghem

Women are often vulnerable, not only to disease but to exploitation and sexual harassment, especially if no adult male from their family is present. Camps for displaced persons often attract the worst kind of attention from nearby communities. The incidence of rape, beating and kidnapping is often high. To some extent, this can be reduced by expanding the number of staff in settlements with a high proportion of single women, providing proper lighting and avoiding settlement designs or layouts that create dark, remote areas where such incidents can easily take place. It is difficult to stop these abuses without strong support from the local government and security forces.

The majority of displaced adults are women and many of these are heads of households. In many emergency programs, especially in garrison towns and at the periphery of the conflict zones, women and children make up two-thirds to three-quarters of the population, yet most relief programs have a distinct male bias. For example, many loan programs created to assist the displaced are less effective because women are not eligible to apply. Other programs, such as food-for-work, are often predicated on males being the primary breadwinners.

Displaced women often stay vulnerable because programs for them tend to be minimal. Few programs go beyond handicraft projects or small cottage industries. Therefore, assistance programs for displaced persons should consider involving women in decision-making whenever possible.

**Q.** Briefly describe a strategy which has been implemented successfully by an agency in your region to meet a specific need of a vulnerable group. Explain how this strategy might need to be modified in working with displaced persons of the same vulnerable group.

**A.** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



### Immediate needs after cessation of conflict

The conclusion of a conflict quickly brings many new responsibilities to the UN. A distinct set of short-term assistance programs must be established to help the people return to their homes and complete the process of settling in before reconstruction of the war-torn areas and revitalization of the economy can begin. Examples of some of the immediate needs are: family reunification, repatriation assistance, restoration of basic services, especially water and sanitation, temporary income support and, sometimes, food aid.

*Women are often vulnerable, not only to disease but to exploitation and sexual harassment, especially if no adult male from their family is present.*

*Assistance programs for displaced persons should consider involving women in decision-making whenever possible.*

ANSWER (from page 24)

1-c; 2-a; 3-b

*Special programs  
must be instigated to  
help get young people  
back into productive  
enterprises as soon  
as possible.*

### **After-effects of conflict**

Demobilization of forces presents a number of problems for people in the conflict zone. One the first is land mines. Land mines are one of the most lethal and senseless weapons of modern warfare. The abundant supply of mines on the international market has made it easy for even the poorest guerrilla force to obtain large quantities and sow them over vast areas. In the demobilization of forces, the people who planted the mines and maintained records on their locations often leave the areas before the mines are cleared. Thus, for many months and even years after the conflict, people and animals stumble over the mines and are killed or injured. Therefore it is important that coordinators of assistance immediately organize a mine-sweeping organization and meet with the leaders of both forces to try to keep the mine-layers in areas where they have sewn mines to guide mine-sweepers in their removal.

The second lingering after-effect of conflict is the impact that it has had on youth. Often entire generations of young people have been denied access to proper schooling and a healthy supportive environment. The failure of governments and the international community to get these youths mentally demobilized has been cited as one of the major causes of high crime rates and continuing political instability in the former conflict zones. Special programs must be instigated to help get young people back into productive enterprises as soon as possible. Because displacement results in urbanizing many young men and women, few have the desire to return to rural areas to become farmers or herdsmen. Special programs are needed to assist urbanized youth.

Another major issue involves disarming former irregular forces (both rebels and paramilitary militia). In civil conflicts, small arms proliferate at an alarming rate. Often virtually everyone in the conflict has access to light, but highly lethal, weapons. Assault rifles, pistols and rocket-propelled grenades are among the types of weapon that individuals can easily hide and that many people will attempt to retain. Innovative ways must be found to disarm the population as a means of bringing stability back into the area. In some cases, such as in Namibia, Mozambique and Nicaragua, the UN has offered both cash and commodities to families turning in their weapons. In cases where records have been maintained indicating which individuals have received them, the surrender of weapon may be a desirable prerequisite to obtaining UN assistance.

### **Preparing for reconstruction**

Reconstruction activities are normally funded by the major donors in the international financial institutions, such as the World Bank. The UN can play two important roles. First, in the provision of emergency rehabilitation assistance, the UN coordinator can develop programs that provide aid in such a way that it will support and lay the foundation for reconstruction activities. For example, in the provision of emergency shelter to help returning refugees and displaced persons, programs can be devised to provide building materials such as corrugated iron roofing sheets, timbers



and wood panelling which can be used for emergency shelter and then be reincorporated into a permanent house. Usually such approaches are cheaper than providing tents or other forms of emergency shelter that will only be used a short period of time and will cost many hundreds of dollars each to procure and deliver to the affected areas. By providing tools and materials in the rehabilitation phase, a contribution is also being made to reconstruction.

A second way the UN participates in reconstruction is by providing technical assistance to government agencies, especially those in the affected areas to help rebuild their capabilities and expand their expertise in sectors that will require priority attention during the reconstruction period.

Once reconstruction commences, it is not unusual for UN agencies to provide support and technical assistance to the government to help it execute the reconstruction program. This is a vital role, for often new institutions will need to be created to plan and coordinate the reconstruction program.

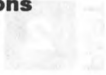
The UN plays a vital role in preparing a country to return to peace.

*Q. Explain how a UN agency has worked to meet some immediate need of displaced persons after a recent conflict in your region. Consider family reunification, repatriation assistance, restoration of basic services, temporary income support or food aid.*

*A.* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



*The UN plays a vital role in preparing a country to return to peace.*



# NOTES

and wood paneling which can be used for emergency shelter and then be re-incorporated into a permanent house. Usually such procedures are...  
It is important providing tents or other forms of emergency shelter that will...  
only be used a short period of time and will cost many billions...  
such to procure and deliver to the affected areas. By providing...  
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reconstruction.

A second way the UN participates in reconstruction is by providing...  
technical assistance to governments, especially those in the...  
stages to help rebuild their capabilities and expand their activities in sectors...  
that will require priority attention during the reconstruction period...  
The reconstruction programme, it is not unusual for UN agencies to...  
also provide technical assistance to the government to help it...  
reconstruction programme. This is a vital role for other new institutions will...  
need to be created to plan and implement the reconstruction programme...  
The UN plays a vital role in providing a counterbalance to power...

Q Explain how the UN agency has worked for the same...  
need of displaced persons after a recent conflict in your region. You...  
side family reconstruction assistance, restoration of basic...  
services, temporary income support or food aid.

The UN plays  
a vital role in  
preparing a country  
to return to peace



**PART**  
**3**

## **OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

*This part of the module provides insights into the problems associated with the implementation of assistance programs for displaced persons. Some of these are:*

- *political and logistical constraints*
- *constraints of the international aid "system"*
- *inaccessibility of displacees*
- *pacification schemes*
- *safety of relief teams in conflict zones*

*This part also provides guidance in strengthening counterpart organizations.*

### **Political constraints**

Assisting displaced persons is one of the most politically sensitive activities carried out by the UN staff. In cases where the government is one of the parties in a civil conflict, UN staff is often placed in the difficult position of having to deal with government agencies who are reluctant to provide assistance to people whom they consider "enemies." In many cases, government actions or policies may be root causes of the conflict.

The fact that the UN may provide assistance through the host government often leads to charges that the UN is not a neutral agency. Many liberation groups mistrust the UN and most donors and NGOs find the UN's position frustrating. Unfortunately, this is a working reality. When the UN is involved, humanitarian assistance can only be provided within certain limits. However, those limits can be quite broad and the UN has a major role to play in humanitarian operations which cannot be discounted. In any assistance program for the displaced, all UN staff must clearly understand what these limits are and how to operate effectively within the constraints.

Assistance is often provided to internally displaced persons from the government side. This is because most of the displaced migrate to government-controlled areas, due to migration routes, family ties, language differences and economic survival. Displacement is often as much an economic survival strategy as a flight from conflict. The displaced must earn a living. They cannot rely on international relief, so they must go where the economy is functioning. They may migrate to the government side because they are

familiar with, and have a right to participate in, the national economy. They are not necessarily, as is often claimed, making a political statement or choosing one side over the other. There are obvious political obstacles for any international organization to aid displaced persons in opposition-controlled areas.

Logistical problems <sup>often</sup> are hampered the delivery of assistance.

### **Logistical difficulties**

It is often quite a challenge to reach the displaced with assistance. In many cases, they reside in remote areas where access and transportation may be difficult. The topography may be rugged and seasonal rains may make surface transportation hazardous and difficult. In the conflict zone, security conditions may prohibit or severely restrict travel. In areas adjacent to the conflict zone, security conditions may be marginal at best, especially for the displaced.

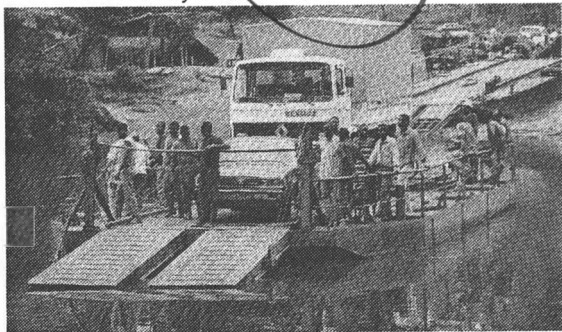
In these situations, full attention must be given to advance planning. It is often necessary to stockpile supplies in, or near, areas to which the displaced migrate to avoid shortages during times when these areas are isolated by conflict or climatic conditions.

In some cases, the UN may have to rely on extraordinary means of transport. Garrison towns may have to be supplied by aircraft. On-site management may require the use of small planes to move quickly over vast areas where needs can change instantaneously. Emergency operations are often said to require planning in three dimensions: air, land and sea. However, operations planners should be aware that long-range relief operations, especially when aircraft are involved, are extremely expensive. Emphasis should be placed on procuring as many relief supplies as possible from local or nearby sources. It is often possible to use a broad range of market interventions that can have the same results as bringing large amounts of relief supplies from outside the affected area.

### **"Structural" problems**

Many relief workers talk about the "international relief system." However, no one system exists. Rather, there are groups of organizations that provide different types of assistance at different levels. In any situation, these groups may band together formally or informally to provide relief to the displaced. Some organizations act in the capacity of fund raisers; others act as donors. Some provide funds directly to the displaced while others provide funds to other agencies that will help the displaced.

There are many difficulties with this ad hoc structure. NGOs are often seen as the primary operating agencies in emergencies. While many agencies have excellent capabilities, most can only provide a fairly limited range of services. Many of the most important areas where lives can be saved are overlooked. For example, only a handful of agencies have the capability of providing assistance in the sectors of water and sanitation. Few agencies are experienced in setting up and maintaining the "heavy" logistics system required for providing massive food aid.



UNHCR/J. Crisp

Once the displaced are no longer in an emergency situation, few agencies are in a position to provide assistance to help people integrate into their new communities. Agencies rarely can provide the necessary jobs, education and temporary support to enable the displaced to take care of their own needs.

The system for international assistance is vastly over-stretched. The needs have grown far beyond the capability of international agencies to meet all requirements. Experienced personnel are often drawn from one operation to another before completing each contract. For this reason, UN staff should focus ~~is~~ attention on building up cadres of national emergency management personnel, both inside the government and in the private sector. By so doing, the sudden transfer of international personnel will not disrupt an ongoing program.

*UN staff should focus its attention on building up cadres of national emergency management personnel, both inside the government and in the private sector.*

### Reaching people in conflict zones

Many people may remain in the areas of conflict. In recent years, donors and relief agencies have shown an increased willingness to run the risk of providing assistance to people in those areas. Agencies have begun to realize that most people are usually better off remaining in or near their homes where they can remain at least partially self-sufficient. The nature of long-term, low-intensity civil wars often permits people to stay home with an acceptable level of risk. In many cases, people are safer in rebel-held areas than if they were to flee to government-held zones. The UN has recently been involved in helping to arrange corridors through which relief aid can pass unmolested (in Angola, Ethiopia and Sudan), in establishing temporary cease-fires so that civilians can be assisted (in El Salvador) and in establishing cross-line feeding programs where people can come into government-held areas, obtain the assistance they need and take it back to their villages in the conflict zone (in northern Ethiopia).

**Q.** *List three logistical considerations which should be taken into account in operations plans for transporting supplies to displaced persons.*

**A.** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



*Providing development assistance in a way that encourages new settlement patterns or resettlement has many political connotations and must be approached carefully.*

ANSWER (from page 31)

Considerations mentioned in this section include: area topography, seasonal climate, security conditions, changes in needs, and expense of long-range operations.

**Q.** *Some of the difficulties with the ad hoc structure of the international relief system include: (Circle the letter next to each correct answer.)*

- a. Many important areas where lives can be saved are overlooked*
- b. The system is vastly underutilized*
- c. Experienced personnel are often drawn from one operation to another before completing each contract*
- d. Few agencies are in a position to provide assistance with longer-term post-emergency needs.*

### **Avoiding pacification**

A number of programs styled as assistance to displaced persons are actually pacification programs. These include relocation projects designed to resettle the rebels' popular support base and programs designed to force neutral peasants to choose sides (usually the government's side), or to establish effective control over populations for military or security purposes.

Pacification programs are especially prevalent in Central America. Many relief organizations participate in these projects without understanding the broader issues and implications. Providing development assistance in a way that encourages new settlement patterns or resettlement has many political connotations and must be approached carefully.

The nature of assistance determines if the program is promoting pacification. Relief aid designed to create dependencies and hold people in camps may have different implications in different situations. Relief officials must be very careful in formulating projects and try to understand all the issues that are involved. This is not to say that long-term assistance of a developmental nature should not be provided. However, when governments begin planning alternative housing, new urban development, or so-called "peace villages," UN staff should be alert to the implications and recognize that they are getting into very sensitive areas.

### **Setting priorities**

Priorities in programs for the displaced change over time. In or near conflict zones, the top priority is usually protection. A well-structured emergency assistance program may also be a top priority to save lives. Often protection depends on assistance. An international presence in the area must often be established to ensure respect for human rights.

**Initial response:** The primary factors that cause high death rates in an emergency are malnutrition, measles and diarrhea. Each is related to the other. A child that is severely malnourished will not be able to survive a case of measles. Severe diarrhea can quickly dehydrate and kill a malnourished person or someone with measles. In order to save lives, these three threats must be addressed. Therefore, the cornerstones of an effective emergency

response are provision of food, immunization against communicable diseases, and diarrhea control carried out by providing clean water, oral rehydration and sanitation. Until these three sets of problems are addressed, it will be difficult to prevent increased mortality, especially among women and children.

**Priorities in settlements:** In the period immediately after arriving in settlements, special attention should be focused on women and children. It has been shown that abnormally high infant mortality rates occur during the first six months after the displaced arrive at their destinations.

**Priorities during the settlement phase:** At this stage, the top priority is providing employment opportunities so that families can earn enough money to survive until they can return to their homes.

### Strengthening counterpart organizations

As a provider of technical assistance, the UN plays a key role in helping governments develop the capacity to deal with the problems of displacement. In the initial stages of a crisis, few governments are adequately prepared to handle the problems of displaced persons. The UN can support governments by providing experts, training and financial support.

A great deal of forethought should be given to proposals to create institutions or capacities in government to assist the displaced. The type of institution created often has implications for the way in which assistance will ultimately be provided. For example, if the UN encourages the government to assign responsibility for displaced persons to an agency that normally provides assistance to refugees, the displaced will likely be treated as a refugee-like problem and more attention will be given to relief than to the development needs of the people. If the mandate is assigned to regional governments or to a ministry of local government, it is likely that the programs will be much broader and more developmental in nature.

In some cases, the UN has encouraged the government to establish a separate commission for the displaced to serve as coordinator of assistance and protection and to formulate plans which are executed by the line ministries. This approach can work well as long as the technical assistance given does not encourage the agency to focus more on relief than on development assistance.

Local and regional branches of government are often the most important entities in providing assistance to the displaced. When considering technical assistance and institution building, they should receive high priority.

In countries that have weak regional and local governments, there is a tendency to centralize authority and decision-making in the capital. The UN must devise strategies for moving decision-making into the theater of operations so that "hands on" management can take place.

In large countries where the displaced are located in remote areas, centralized government decision-making can delay operations and affect the quality of decisions. In these cases, it is important to devise strategies that will encourage government authorities to send senior officials with the authority to make on-site decisions to the field. One way to do this is to build

How about a graphic here for emergency response. at least report it in the margin.

*The UN can support governments by providing experts, training and financial support.*

*Local and regional branches of government are often the most important entities in providing assistance to the displaced.*

ANSWER (from page 32)

Correct answers are a, c and d.

a large operations base in a central location and endow it with resources. Governments are unlikely to entrust such an operation to a junior official and will send a person with sufficient authority to resolve key assistance issues locally.

### **Safety of relief teams in conflict zones**

As coordinators of assistance for the displaced, the UN staff bears a special responsibility for ensuring that all personnel operating in or adjacent to conflict zones work in conditions of minimum risk and maximum security. Guidelines and procedures for personnel should be established in conjunction with the host government and, where possible, with insurgent groups. The UN is often charged with the responsibility of notifying relief workers and other organizations about the risks they may face from military operations in or near their relief activities. In this regard, the UN is often able to obtain clearances for special flights into contested areas on airplanes bearing United Nations markings, to arrange for safe transport through the front lines in specially-marked UN vehicles, and to establish special relief corridors whereby food and relief supplies can be delivered under flags of truce or through designated corridors without undue restraint. It is important for the UN to carefully assess the risks before encouraging relief organizations to commit personnel and resources to operations in non-secure areas. A UN assurance that an area or means of transport is safe carries much weight—and responsibility.

Two of the most important aspects of working in remote and insecure areas are communications and stand-by evacuation support. To the greatest extent possible, UN coordinators should ensure that relief personnel have immediate and 24-hour access to telecommunications facilities and that suitable means are immediately available to evacuate personnel in case of an emergency. This may entail the assignment of light aircraft to be available on short notice to evacuate staff.



## PART 4

# ISSUES IN DEALING WITH THE HOST COUNTRY

*This part of the module should heighten your awareness of:*

- *human rights violations*
- *the role of national governments in assistance programs*
- *possible government hostility to international agencies*

*It also provides some guidelines on the relocation and registration of displaced persons.*

### Human rights violations

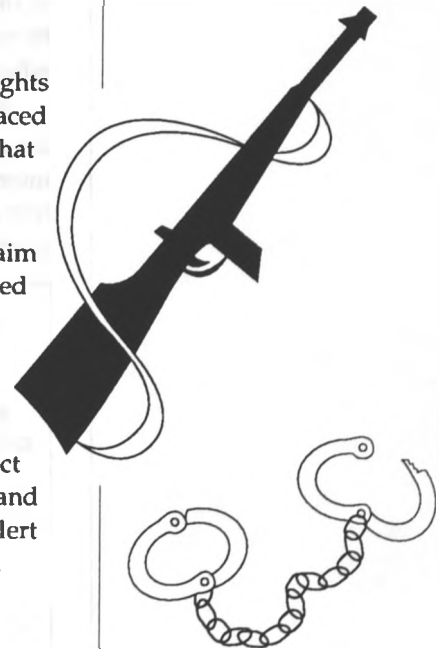
One of the most difficult concerns for UN staff to deal with are human rights violations ~~perpetrated by the national government~~. Unfortunately, displaced persons are often subjected to abuses. Staff should be alert for evidence that human rights abuses are occurring and promptly report any suspected abuses to the Resident Coordinator.

Human rights abuses may include violent actions designed to kill, maim or intimidate the displaced as well as denying people food or water; forced relocation into conflict zones; and forcible removal of people from urban areas to regions where resources for basic needs are not available.

A major problem in dealing with governments is control over paramilitary organizations and unregulated militias. Governments often arm civilian populations to "protect" themselves in, or adjacent to, conflict zones. Often these militias use their new-found arms to settle old scores and to organize raids against their neighbors. UN staff should be especially alert for signs that human rights abuses are being carried out by these groups.

### The role of the government in assistance programs

If most of the displaced people are from an ethnic or cultural group different from that of the population majority, the role of a government in providing relief and assistance becomes a delicate issue. No matter who the displaced are, ultimate responsibility for their welfare and maintenance falls squarely on the shoulders of the government. This does not mean that governments can, or should, be involved directly in all cases of assistance. For example, in a civil war, the government is one party of the conflict, and any assistance to the displaced will be viewed within the political context. How and where, then, does a government determine its assistance role?



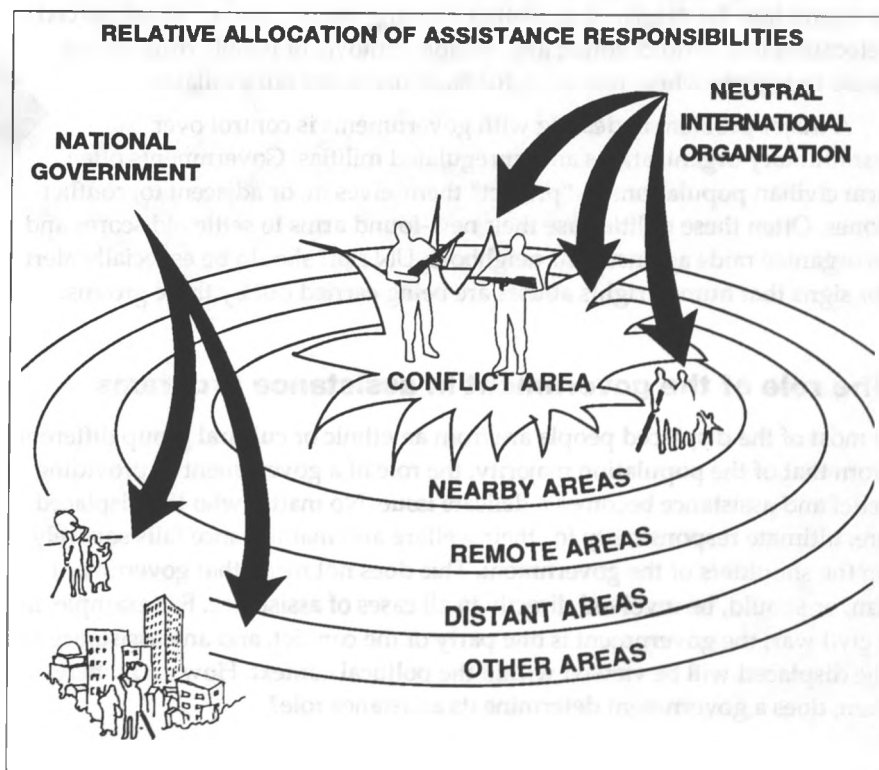
*Assistance is most successful when government officials understand that the welfare of the displaced will be a key to any peaceful resolution of the conflict.*

Several principles should be observed. First, assistance is most successful when government officials understand that the welfare of the displaced will be a key to any peaceful resolution of the conflict. If the displaced are abused, not properly cared for, starved or permitted to languish without adequate supplies, resentment against the government will be increased. One only has to look at parallel experiences in refugee assistance. Spontaneously-settled, working refugees contribute proportionally less money and effort to insurgent movements than refugees in camps. Therefore, the displaced must be taken out of the conflict equation by ensuring the highest possible level of services and job opportunities.

Second, where the majority of displaced are from cultural or ethnic minorities, government officials should provide the overall framework for assistance but remain only indirectly involved in actual assistance to the displaced communities. Since a government cannot be neutral in a conflict, it must often remove itself from the provision of assistance and allow international or other neutral organizations to give direct aid. The Secretary of the Ministry of Rehabilitation in Sri Lanka once remarked that the greatest contribution the government made to assisting the displaced during their civil war was to stand aside and allow NGOs to work.

This principle, however, is somewhat limited. Few NGOs have the capability to sustain major relief operations over wide areas for long periods of time. In other words, some degree of government involvement will always be necessary. Where then, should a government allocate its resources and where should it rely primarily on NGOs, on the ICRC, or on the UN?

The answer is usually found in the geography of the situation. The closer the camps or settlements are to the zone of conflict, the more neutral international organizations should be involved. The greater the distance from the zone of conflict, and in spontaneous settlements in urban areas, the greater the involvement of the government can be. (See figure 4)



**FIGURE 4**

This principle is also compatible with government and international relief capabilities. Generally, governments are poorly-suited to operate in camps while international organizations often specialize in these types of services. On the other hand, government is always structured to provide municipal services. Extension of water and sanitation is not only easy, it is also more cost-effective as new mechanisms, structures and ministries do not have to be formed. Thus, governments should plan to build on their inherent strengths and on those of international organizations and avoid creating new institutions.

### **Relocation of the displaced**

Sooner or later, every government proposes some sort of relocation program despite overwhelming evidence that such programs are rarely successful and require a major commitment of funding. If a government decides to go ahead with relocation, it is important that criteria be set to ensure that all moves are entirely voluntary. If a government is to avoid controversy, the following policies should be established and observed:

- All relocations must be voluntary.
- An internationally-recognized NGO should verify that each move is voluntary.
- No government-sanctioned relocation should be undertaken if the proposed site is in a zone of conflict.
- If an individual chooses to relocate to a site that is in or near a conflict zone, financial support for the move should be provided by a non-governmental or international agency rather than by the government.
- No relocation activities should take place until adequate food, water and public health services are ready on site to service the resettled families.
- Once relocated, a framework for assistance should be immediately available to help people make the transition to their new life.

Governments often try to force people to relocate by exerting various types of pressure — some subtle, others overt. Widespread debate is currently surfacing about how far governments can go in trying to force compliance with their resettlement objectives. In the worst-case scenario, government troops cordon off a section of a community. The troops round up the people and physically convey them to the relocation site, often bulldozing or burning their houses to discourage them from returning.

In a less traumatic but still harsh and unacceptable approach, governments have cut off water or food supplies to relief-dependent communities in the hope of forcing the people to move out. Such a move is usually accompanied by an announcement that subsidized food and other relief services will be available at the new site.

In urban areas, governments may take a more subtle approach. As a spontaneous community begins to form, the government simply ignores its existence and neglects to extend municipal services such as water, sanitation and electricity to the new settlement.

That a government has the right to decide on its urban development policies is indisputable. Furthermore, there are often very legitimate reasons for not wanting a community to be established or to grow in a certain area.

*All governments have the right of eminent domain and the right to use legal methods to plan and guide urban growth.*

*Supporting people with any degree of self-help is much better than creating an artificial relief situation that must be maintained for any length of time.*

All governments have the right of eminent domain and the right to use legal methods to plan and guide urban growth. Despite this, the overwhelming evidence shows that virtually all moves to resettle people involuntarily fail. In forced resettlement, the government only alienates affected persons and increases their determination to return to the place from which they were evicted. When families do return, they may take greater precautions to integrate into the host community and find other, more secure sites to settle. This makes it even more difficult for the government to find them and send them back to the relocation site.

"Carrot and stick" approaches may meet with some success but, ultimately, success will be more dependent on income and employment opportunities than on provision of relief supplies. Few governments are adequately prepared, especially financially, to support displaced persons between the time of the move and the time that they are fully established in new settlements. As soon as the level of service falls, people will begin to abandon the settlement and return to the community from which they were relocated.

Economically, agencies should be cautious with regard to "carrot and stick" approaches. It is expensive enough to supply relief services to the displaced in spontaneous settlements; moving them to a relocation center escalates the level of support required and thus the costs. Governments that try this approach soon realize that its limits are more financial than logistical. Supporting people with any degree of self-help is much better than creating an artificial relief situation that must be maintained for any length of time.

The least successful approach is that of creating disincentives to spontaneous settlements by neglecting to provide urban services. There will always be entrepreneurs who will find ways of supplying needed services (for example, donkey cart water tankers). In the end, the cost to the government will be higher if services are not provided in a logical and planned manner as the communities evolve. It is always more costly to go back and install utilities in dense, unplanned settlements than to lay out a community in a logical manner and encourage growth along rational lines.

**Q.** *List three policies which should be observed when any government establishes a relocation program.*

**A.** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The disease factor should also be considered. By refusing to extend water, sanitation and health services into spontaneous settlements, a government increases the likelihood of communicable disease outbreaks. No government can afford to ignore the adage that "disease knows no boundaries." Conditions of overcrowding, poor sanitation and unclean water are the breeding ground of epidemics that may spread to planned areas.

### Registration of displaced persons

At some point in every assistance program, the question of whether and how to register displaced persons will arise. Registration is a legitimate concern, not only of the government but also of other humanitarian agencies. Overall population statistics are one important by-product of registration, and protection and tracing are good reasons for some form to be adopted. However, it is important that the registration system be secure and that it be designed in such a way that it cannot be used to provide any party with information that might be detrimental to the DPs.

#### *Several options exist for registering displaced persons:*

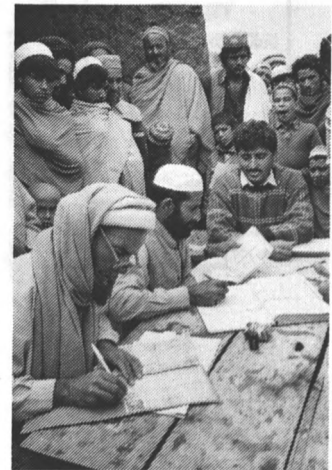
1. Assigning registration to a neutral international organization such as a UN agency or the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The primary advantage to this approach is that the neutral body is the only one maintaining lists. Central control can be maintained to discourage misuse of registration cards. Statistics may be provided to the government or other entities as necessary for planning purposes.
2. Designating a lead agency in each community as the registrar for the settlement. Each agency carries out registration using a standard format developed by all the participating agencies and produces overall information for statistical and planning use. Each organization is responsible for ensuring that errors or duplication are minimized for the communities they serve.
3. Using a multi-organization registration system. A system utilizing the services of a number of assisting organizations can be developed and made secure through random numbering. To do this, a standard registration card is issued to each family bearing the logos of the participating relief agencies. Upon receiving a card, the head of the family goes to the registering agency and is issued a number which is recorded for verification purposes only. The card can be presented at any time to any one of the participating agencies to obtain relief supplies or services. The recording organization is responsible for making periodic inspections of different distribution programs to ensure that duplication is minimized.

It should be remembered that DPs will actively seek to avoid any type of registration, including surveys to enumerate the population and other information-gathering activities. They recognize that they are in a precarious legal position and, in short, do not want to be on anyone's list.

#### *ANSWER (from page 38)*

The following policies might be listed: relocations must be voluntary; an NGO should verify that each move is voluntary, proposed sites should not be in zones of conflict; financial support for relocation to sites in or near conflict zones should not be provided by the government; food, water and public health services should be ready on site for resettled families; and assistance should be available to help people make the transition to their new life.

*Italics?*



UNHCR/A. Hollman



### Hostility of the government to international agencies

Governments committing human rights abuses or denying the displaced their full rights as citizens will soon be in an adversary relationship with donors. Eventually, the government is likely to become hostile to the presence of international agencies and accuse them of interfering with the national sovereignty of the country. Non-governmental organizations are likely to bear the brunt of the government's displeasure. In this situation the UN should formulate a comprehensive program framework under which the NGOs can operate and thereby provide some degree of protection for their work. At the same time, the UN should be careful not to encourage the NGOs to undertake activities on behalf of the international community that will lead to a further eroding of their relationship with the host government. The UN has often been accused of using the NGOs as a "lightning rod" to determine the political limits of a particular program. When the NGO gets in trouble, the UN has not been able to provide adequate help.

### Travel restrictions

When governments are carrying out human rights abuses, it is often difficult for United Nations personnel to obtain travel and work permits where the displaced have sought refuge. Restrictions on travel and access to the displaced must be vigorously protested and a blanket permission to travel to these areas should be sought. The United Nations should establish its right to visit the displaced wherever they are as a prerequisite for assisting the government.



**PART 5**

## **INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

*This part of the module presents the major actors in the areas of assistance to displaced persons. It should help you understand the roles and limitations of:*

- *the UN agencies*
- *the International Committee of the Red Cross*
- *NGOs*
- *Donors*
- *the International Organization for Migration*

### **Roles of UN organizations**

In 1989, the Secretary General effectively designated UNDP as an agency for coordinating relief to the displaced. He designated the UNDP Resident Representative (ResRep), who serves as UN Resident Coordinator, to be the focal point for coordination and relief. In part, this reflects the growing awareness that assistance to the displaced requires the application of development resources to the many problems faced by the displaced. For example, when ~~rural~~ displaced persons move into urban areas, the problem becomes largely an urban and economic development issue. If large numbers of the displaced remain in rural areas and seek work as farm laborers, agricultural development programs must often be expanded. While the displaced often have very acute relief needs in the initial stages of displacement, as time goes on, continuation of relief may not be appropriate. Furthermore, as residents of the country, they are entitled to development benefits and opportunities for development assistance equal to those of their fellow citizens.

To provide assistance, the UNDP Field Offices have devised a number of staffing models. In exceptionally large emergencies, such as in Ethiopia, Mozambique and the Sudan, the UN has established special emergency units in the UNDP offices and mandated the staff to focus exclusively on problems caused by the emergency. In other situations, the UNDP has simply created a special post for an "emergency officer" to advise the ResRep and prepare plans and projects in cooperation with the host government and the donors. In several cases where the emergency situation has been deemed to be of extraordinary importance, the Secretary General has appointed a high level, special representative to serve as coordinator.

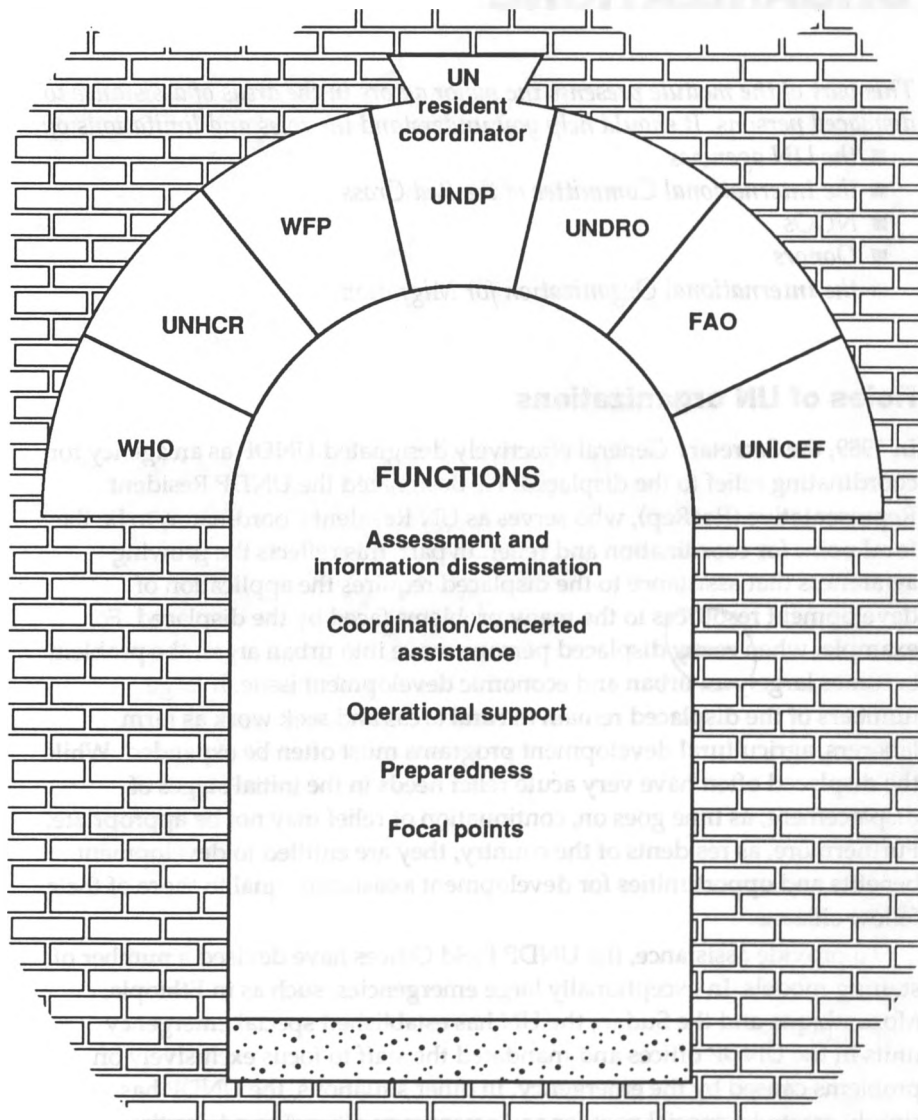


*As residents of the country, they are entitled to development benefits and opportunities for development assistance equal to those of their fellow citizens.*

In 1990, UNDP created the Office of the Senior Advisor to the Administrator on Humanitarian Affairs at its headquarters in New York. A large part of its work focuses on displaced persons.

Today, the UN is moving closer to concerted action regarding humanitarian assistance to displaced populations through the UN Disaster Management Team (DMT) structure. The operating procedures of the UNDMT are set forth in the UNDP/UNDRO Disaster Management Manual.

**THE STRUCTURE OF THE UN DISASTER MANAGEMENT TEAM**



**FIGURE 5**



Other United Nations organizations that often become involved with displaced persons include:

**UNICEF:** Because of UNICEF's unique mandate to assist children anywhere they are in need, the organization often becomes involved in providing assistance to the displaced in areas outside of government control. This occurred in Kampuchea in 1979-80 and is currently the situation in southern Sudan. UNICEF may also provide assistance to displaced persons in government-held zones. Building on its strengths in child care, feeding for vulnerable groups, family reunification and the provision of clean water and sanitation, UNICEF is often involved in helping displaced children and their mothers in the settlements and temporary camps where they have moved.

**United Nations Disaster Relief Office (UNDRO):** UNDRO generally plays a supporting role to the Resident Coordinator by providing technical assistance, contracting for emergency services and providing logistical support. The UNDP ResRep represents UNDRO in countries where UNDRO does not have a presence. In the early 1980s, UNDRO was entrusted with overall responsibility for assistance to displaced persons in Lebanon. More recently, UNDRO played an important role in helping third-country nationals displaced by the instability in the Iraq/Kuwait region until they could return to their homelands from Jordan. UNDRO participates in all of the important UN interagency coordination groups.

**World Food Program (WFP):** The role of the World Food Program is to provide food to governments or, in some cases, to non-governmental organizations assisting the displaced. If the displaced are in government-controlled areas, emergency food aid may be provided through government channels. If, however, the people are residing in areas outside government control, the food will normally be provided through UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross, or NGOs.

WFP has established an emergency unit at its headquarters in Rome. This unit provides assistance to the WFP representative in determining emergency needs, managing international logistics and coordinating with donors at the international level.

**World Health Organization (WHO):** The World Health Organization is the medical and public health arm of the UN system. Their representatives help the local Ministry of Health or public health authorities to formulate and execute programs to ensure that the displaced receive proper medical attention and public health support. One of their most important functions is establishing epidemiological surveillance over the displaced population so that disease threats can be properly identified, detected and controlled. In Latin America and the Caribbean, WHO's Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has proven to be extremely effective in helping develop medical and health interventions for the displaced.

Both WHO and PAHO have established emergency sections in their headquarters in Geneva and Washington respectively. These offices can provide technical support and information during emergencies.





**CARE**

**OXFAM**



**United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees:** While the mandate of the UNHCR does not extend to displaced persons specifically, it has been able to provide relief and protection in a number of cases, particularly when the agency has been involved in helping returning refugees in the same area. In some cases, UNHCR has been able to extend assistance under a clause of its mandate which permits it to use its "good offices" to help persons affected by conflict at the request of the government of the country in which the people reside. For example, in Sri Lanka in the late 1980s, UNHCR accepted responsibility for assisting returning displaced persons as well as refugees repatriating from India. In Zimbabwe, UNHCR's interventions led to a repatriation and resettlement program for both internal and external returnees. The integration of all returnees into a single program resulted in a speedy and successful process of return.

**Other UN Organizations:** From time to time, other UN agencies may become involved in providing assistance to the displaced. For example, the International Labor Organization (ILO) may be called to develop projects to provide employment to the displaced (such as under its Special Public Works Program). The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) has often been asked to assist the displaced in establishing agriculture or livestock projects to provide income support. Employment generation has often been studied by groups such as the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) or the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

### **Roles of Other Organizations**

#### *The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)*

The ICRC is mandated under international agreements to provide assistance to civilians in conflict zones outside of government control. However, in order to remain neutral, the ICRC usually provides assistance for non-combatants on both sides of a conflict. Therefore, the ICRC may be operational in many of the same areas in which UNDP is providing assistance to the displaced in government-held areas and in the garrison towns.

#### *Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)*

Non-governmental organizations are often the front-line implementing agencies providing assistance to the displaced. NGOs are principally service agencies. They have certain specialties such as nutrition programs, medical care, or social services which they can provide quickly and effectively, even in remote areas. NGOs are often the source of innovative approaches to dealing with the problems of the displaced and their flexibility permits them to experiment with new ideas that may be tailored to specific needs.

Donors such as USAID, the European Community and many European governments prefer to implement their programs through international NGOs.

**Donors**

Several of the larger donor countries have specialized agencies that deal with the problems of displaced persons. For example, AID's Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) in Washington often provides funding and technical assistance to USAID missions to develop and support programs for the displaced. However, in most cases, the donors channel their funds through the host government, NGOs, the ICRC, or through the UN system.

Donors may provide aid in the form of cash, equipment, technical assistance or food.

**International Organization for Migration**

The IOM (formerly the Intergovernmental Committee on Migration) is an international organization which has become increasingly involved in the problems of displaced persons. Its mandate is to assist governments in dealing with the problems of migrations, both internal and international. In recent years, it has conducted a number of studies on the impact of crisis-induced migration and has provided assistance to some governments in dealing with large-scale population movements caused by conflict.

**Q.** Consider an example of conflict-induced internal displacement in your region involving assistance from more than three international organizations. Describe the primary role of three such organizations.

**A.** \_\_\_\_\_  
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DONOR



I O M





Don't like this.  
Too simplistic →

## GLOSSARY

### ***assistance***

The provision on a humanitarian basis of material aid and services necessary to enable people to meet their basic needs for shelter, clothing, water and food. Assistance is available for extended periods, unlike relief supplies and services which are provided, free of charge, in the period immediately following a crisis.

### ***crisis-induced migration***

This type of migration occurs when people are forced to abandon their homes to move out of harm's way when unanticipated events occur, often as the result of military operations.

### ***displaced persons***

In this document, these are non-combatant people, forced to leave their homes because of the direct or indirect consequences of conflict, but who remain inside their country of origin.

### ***economically-induced migration***

This type of displacement occurs when people abandon their homes because sustained conflict has caused: substantial increases in the cost of living due to shortages of basic commodities; a collapse of the economy; a lack of available income; or a lack of buyers for goods produced.

### ***garrison towns***

These are communities controlled by government forces in the midst of a conflict zone.

### ***human-made disasters***

Situations in which the principal, direct causes of disaster are identifiable human actions, deliberate or otherwise. This mainly involves situations in which civilian populations suffer casualties, losses of property, basic services and means of livelihood as a result of war, civil strife, or other conflict.

### ***precautionary evacuation***

This type of migration occurs when people decide to abandon their homes: to avoid anticipated violence or some other aspect of civil conflict (such as conscription); or to leave while they can still sell their assets and evacuate in an orderly manner.

### ***relief***

The provision on a humanitarian basis of material aid and emergency medical care necessary to save and preserve human lives. Relief supplies and services are provided, free of charge, in the period immediately following a sudden disaster. They may need to be provided for extended periods in the case of population displacements.

### ***sanctuary***

This is the first safe place where displaced people stop after leaving a zone of conflict.

### ***vulnerable groups***

Categories of displaced persons with special needs, variously defined to include: unaccompanied minors, the elderly, the mentally and physically disabled, victims of physical abuse or violence and pregnant, lactating or single women.