CONCLUSION
From global to local solutions

In 2018, IDMC took stock of the progress made in the 20 years since the adoption of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. This year is the 10th anniversary of the Kampala Convention, and to mark the occasion the African Union has declared 2019 the Year of Refugees, Returnees and IDPs. Activities across the continent will draw attention to internal displacement and the need for durable solutions, but the situation of those displaced has not significantly improved at the regional or global level.

The figures presented in this report show that in many countries affected by conflict, not only is displacement becoming protracted, but new displacements continue to take place, deepening national and regional crises. Certain countries and regions are also consistently affected by disasters year after year. Many IDPs face serious vulnerabilities and protection gaps and are at high risk of being displaced again within urban centres, particularly if they lack secure tenure, employment and social support that ensure their local integration.

Humanitarian responses alone will not resolve the internal displacement crises affecting many countries around the world, nor reduce the risk of future displacement. As our cities grow and the landscape of urban displacement changes, local authorities will be at the forefront of both responding to crises and reducing risk in the long-term. National responsibility and leadership and international accountability now must combine with tangible and significant support to local action. And given that growing numbers of IDPs live in urban centres across the world, this local action will increasingly need to happen in towns and cities.

The provision of basic services for IDPs remains an important humanitarian challenge in active crises and camp settings. It also lies at the heart of development efforts in complex urban and protracted displacement settings.[485] Long-term displacement in already deteriorating socioeconomic conditions makes it difficult for local authorities to provide services to the whole urban population. Decades of conflict and displacement result in municipal structures and services unable to meet the needs of the urban poor. Many IDPs are trapped in poverty, which in turn contributes to making their displacement protracted. In such circumstances, concerted and coherent poverty reduction efforts, including targeted assistance and broader social protection, need to be developed in place of siloed, short-term humanitarian interventions.[486]

Cities are also tasked with applying and localising global and national development frameworks as part of the sustainable development agenda, but often struggle to do so. The way and extent to which authority and resources are decentralised will determine their capacity for effective governance and implementation. Financial capacities to achieve development objectives and address humanitarian crises vary considerably from country to country, and from city to city. Size, economic productivity, social equality and institutional arrangements all determine the ability of a city's government and its communities to prevent and cope with crises, including internal displacement crises.[487]

Affecting city-level change will require progress across at least three main areas. Knowledge and evidence of the drivers, impacts and risks of urban displacement and of appropriate and successful approaches to addressing it are a prerequisite for effective action. The capacity to act on the evidence also needs to be strengthened, particularly in low-income countries and those that face large displacement crises.

Most importantly, however, incentives to increase political will are needed at both the municipal and national level to adapt urban planning, investment, regulation and service delivery to the realities of informality and protracted displacement. Urban opportunities cannot be unlocked without political solutions, and those solutions need to move beyond short-term responses to embrace long-term risk reduction and inclusive development.

In moving ahead in these three areas, a checklist of sorts may be useful to guide prioritisation of local-level actions and encourage more national and international support for relevant sectors and institutions, adapted to each city. Data and insight, and the capacity to present evidence that generates incentives to create the required political will are critical in this regard and suggest a first set of priority areas for action at local level (see Figure 24).

As we look into the coming years, the conclusions from our last global reports remain alarmingly valid. More than 20 years of mass displacement and increasingly protracted situations across the globe leave us today with the highest number of people living in displacement ever. Despite policy progress in several countries, the root causes of internal displacement persist.

This report shows, however, that despite the significant challenges, promising approaches exist. In a rapidly urbanising world, many of the opportunities for solutions to displacement are located in and around cities. For the urban displaced to break out of protracted and cyclical displacement, inclusive legislation, housing provision and service delivery need to become a part of the DNA of urban governance.

The involvement and, over time, leadership of displaced people in urban planning and service provision is central to their success. Where responsible states work hand in hand with local governments and communities, supported by the international community, solutions are found and the future of those displaced today and of global displacement risk becomes less bleak.

FIGURE 24: Toward a checklist for action on urban displacement: start by building an evidence base

Data and analysis

| Systematically account for urban IDPs. Record their number and the duration and severity of their displacement, disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other relevant criteria
| Monitor movements and conditions of those displaced over time, not just during and immediately after crises
| Undertake profiling exercises that include both displaced and host populations
| Collaborate with humanitarian, development and other stakeholders working to reduce vulnerability and risk to ensure that any data collected is interoperable

Capacity and participation

| Build on communities' existing capacities, including for the collection of data on their vulnerabilities and needs, but also their existing resources, skills and community services
| Strengthen the capacity of local organisations and government departments for data and statistical analysis
| Work with IDPs and those at risk of displacement to identify priority areas in service delivery and infrastructure development
| Identify urban development approaches that accommodate informality, including through flexible and secure tenure arrangements and adaptive labour market strategies in line with national and international sustainable development initiatives

Incentives and political will

| Estimate the impacts of displacement on city development and the risks inherent in inaction, including effects on the city's economy, security, stability and social wellbeing
| Use risk assessments to advocate for new and appropriate financing mechanisms to support city action and make displacement risk one of the core considerations in urban planning and development
| Document successful approaches to managing and reducing internal displacement in cities and provide a platform for exchange and learning for municipalities and their partners
| Recognise IDPs as local citizens, even when return is their preferred long-term solution, by allowing voting rights and providing space for public participation, and supporting their access to documentation