

24 October 2014

CHAD

Regional instability overshadows the fate of remaining IDPs

Chad's security situation has improved and the country has become more politically stable since 2010, but it lies at the centre of a region troubled by various conflicts. It continues to suffer poverty, institutional weaknesses, underdevelopment and the regular impacts of natural hazards. Parts of the country are also affected by food insecurity across the wider Sahel region. In May 2014 the UN reported that 17 per cent of Chad's population, including at least 500,000 children, were living in food insecurity ([OCHA](#), May 2014). Epidemics cause nearly three-quarters of premature deaths, with malaria particularly rife ([OCHA](#), May 2014).

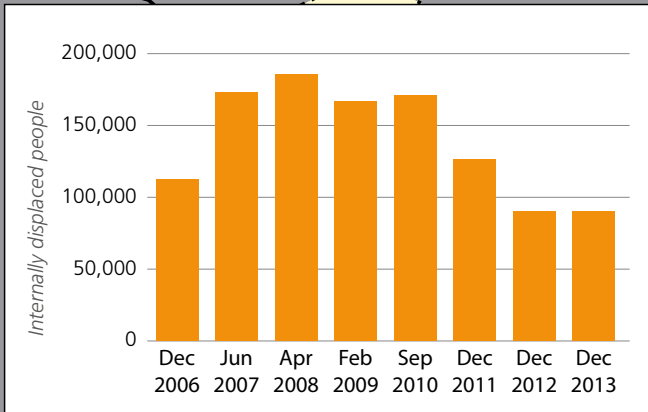


A woman at a meeting between OCHA staff and returnees in Borota, Eastern Chad. The most important concern discussed was the lack of clean water.
Photo: Pierre Peron/OCHA, June 2012

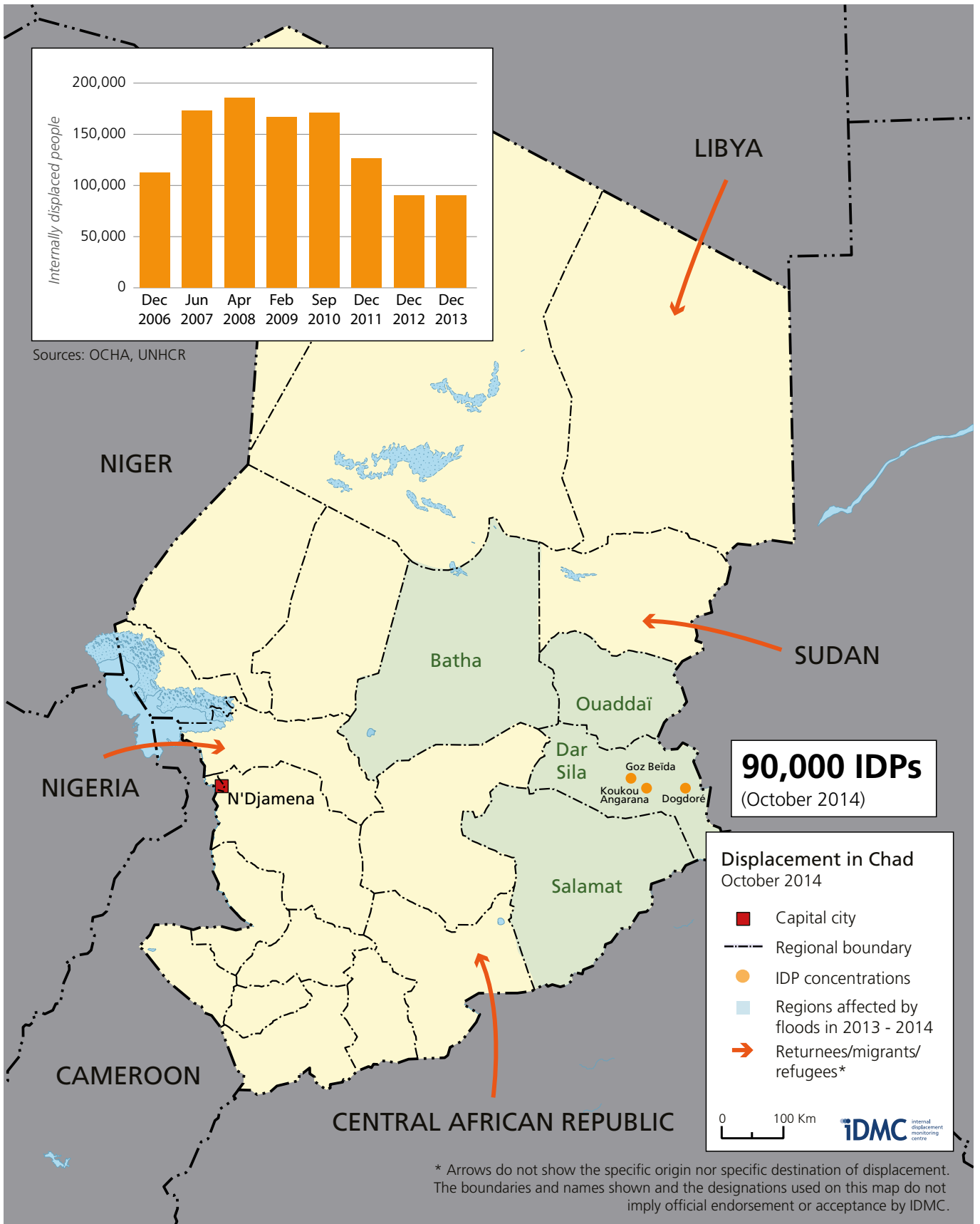
These dynamics affect the country's remaining 90,000 internally displaced people (IDPs), who were forced to flee their homes between 2006 and 2008 by conflict between government forces and armed opposition groups. The government no longer recognises them as IDPs, meaning that they receive no direct assistance. Their main protection concerns lie in the problems they experience in accessing housing, land and income generating opportunities. The same issues hamper their efforts to achieve durable solutions, as do unstable security conditions in their areas of origin, a lack of basic social services and the absence of water and sanitation infrastructure.

Chad also hosts hundreds of thousands of refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR), Sudan and other neighbouring countries ([OCHA](#), July 2013), and in recent years many Chadian migrants have returned from CAR, Nigeria and Libya, putting further pressure on the country's already scarce resources.

The government should fulfil its responsibility to protect its displaced people and provide them with dignified living conditions ([OCHA](#), November 2013). It should begin by acknowledging that people are still living as IDPs, and by recognising their specific needs related to their displacement ([OHCHR](#), September 2012).



Sources: OCHA, UNHCR



Map by: IDMC

More maps are available at www.internal-displacement.org/search?Type=Map

Background and causes of displacement

Chad is rich in gold, uranium and oil, but the wealth its natural resources generate does not filter down to the general population. The country ranked 184th out of 187 on the UN Development Index for 2014 (RULAC, 2009; UNDP, July 2014), and sixth on the 2014 fragile states index compiled by the Fund For Peace. Its neighbours CAR and Sudan ranked third and fifth respectively (FFP, 2014).

Regional dynamics

Located in the heart of Africa and surrounded by six countries - Libya, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, CAR and Sudan – Chad's population movements have been driven by violence and armed conflict both within its borders and in the wider region. The government recently reinforced security outside the capital N'Djamena for fear of an incursion by Boko Haram, the Nigerian Islamist group responsible for mass displacements in the region, and which has forced thousands of Chadian migrants, including many unaccompanied children, to return to their country (The Economist, July 2014; OCHA, August 2014; AFP, August 2014).

Chad's relations with Sudan deteriorated significantly in 2003, with each supporting the other's armed opposition groups. Attacks took place in both countries, and 270,000 Sudanese refugees fled into eastern Chad in 2004. The two countries signed a rapprochement agreement to end the proxy war in 2010, but their unresolved internal crises continue to be a source of instability in the region (HRW, January 2011; HSBA, February 2012).

Chad's own conflict has also affected displacement dynamics in neighbouring countries. Former Chadian militia members have joined local groups and Chadian pastoralists have perpetrated violence in northern CAR over the years, displacing local people from their villages (IRIN, February 2012; HSBA, February 2012; ICG, April 2014). It was also reported that many former fighters with

Séléka, the armed opposition group at the centre of the crisis in CAR, which escalated dramatically in December 2013, were Chadian nationals (OHCHR, January 2014).

Internal armed conflict

Against a backdrop of regional tensions, internal armed conflict erupted in Chad in 2006 after President Idriss Déby, who has held office since staging a coup in 1990, changed the constitution in order to run for a third term. Chadian rebels based in Darfur accused him of restricting government and military posts to members of his minority Zaghawa ethnic group, and of using oil revenues to bolster the armed forces rather than investing in social services and infrastructure (ICG, August 2009).

Tens of thousands of people were forced to flee their homes as a result of the conflict, mainly in the east of the country. Déby was re-elected in 2006 after the opposition, which has never accepted the legitimacy of his initial rise to power, boycotted the election. He was re-elected again in 2011 in the same circumstances (Freedom House, 2013). The government foiled an alleged coup attempt in 2013, and arrested the people supposedly involved in it (HRW, May 2013).

Inter-ethnic violence and attacks by criminal gangs

Inter-ethnic violence over land and natural resources also caused displacement in eastern Chad in 2006 and 2007. Sudanese Janjaweed militias were the main perpetrators, targeting the civilian population with human rights abuses such as massacres and rape, and burning down entire villages (HRW, June 2009).

From 2007, bandits or coupeurs de route carried out widespread attacks against civilians, including internally displaced people (IDPs), refugees and humanitarian workers, and causing further displacement (UNSC, April 2011). Relatively minor incidents still take place, but security has improved significantly since 2012 (Freedom House, 2013).

Displacement induced by disasters

Flooding during the annual rainy season often displaces thousands of people, but the scale and frequency of the phenomenon is most likely under-reported, particularly in the case of smaller, localised disasters. The magnitude of the 2012 floods in central, eastern and southern areas of the country was unprecedented, forcing around 500,000 people to take refuge in spontaneous sites or with host families, and hampering humanitarian access ([IDMC](#), May 2013). Most IDPs returned to their homes when the floodwaters receded, but they faced major challenges in recovering from their displacement given the significant losses they suffered.

Displacement figures

Between 2006 and 2008, 181,000 people were displaced in Chad. Around half of them have since returned to their homes, integrated locally or settled elsewhere in the country, leaving around 90,000 IDPs still living in protracted displacement as of the end of 2012. The situation appears to have evolved little since, and no new data has been made available. The remaining IDPs live on sites in Goz Beida, Koukou and Dogdoré in the eastern region of Dar Sila. Some appear to have left to go back to their villages, but organisations on the ground have struggled to determine how many or whether their return has been sustainable (email exchange with OCHA Chad, August 2014). The government declared an end to internal displacement in 2012 and stopped recognising those who had not returned to their homes ([UN](#), August 2013).

The above figures do not include people displaced by natural hazards, but the 500,000 people displaced by flooding in 2012 amounted to the highest per capita displacement by a disaster worldwide that year ([IDMC](#), May 2013). Floods also forced at least 133,000 people to flee their homes in 2013, and as of August 2014 at least another

1,000 had already been displaced, on both occasions in eastern areas of the country (IFRC/DMIS [authorised log-in required], August 2014).

Hundreds of thousands of Chadian migrants have returned to the country from CAR, Libya and Nigeria ([OCHA](#), April 2014). Around 97,000 returned or were evacuated from CAR between December 2013 and the end of February 2014 ([OCHA](#), July 2014), when the country was also hosting at least 400,000 refugees from CAR and Sudan, many of them from Darfur. Between them, CAR and Sudan account for 99 per cent of Chad's refugee population ([OCHA](#), April 2014), which as of May 2014 was the seventh largest in the world ([OCHA](#), May 2014). Such influxes have increased competition for scarce resources between refugees, returnees, IDPs and their host communities.

Limitations of data

Since 2007, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and its partners have conducted several profiling exercises to determine the number and location of IDPs and provide disaggregated data on their age, sex, ethnicity and village of origin ([IDMC](#), December 2009). The 2013 consolidated humanitarian appeal for Chad reported 49,460 women and 40,540 men among the displaced population, two-thirds of whom were under the age of 18 ([OCHA](#), December 2012).

That said, UNHCR and other humanitarian organisations have scaled down their assistance to IDPs in 2014, making it more difficult to collect data ([UNHCR](#), August 2014). As a result, any progress made towards achieving durable solutions is not systematically assessed or documented, meaning that the true number of IDPs may be lower than 90,000.

Protection and assistance needs

As highlighted in the mid-year review of the 2013 consolidated humanitarian appeal, the situation of

the remaining IDPs and some of the 91,000 former IDPs remains a concern because they lack access to minimum basic services ([OCHA](#), July 2013).

The protection cluster, which is co-led by UNHCR, assessed IDPs' residual needs in 2013, mainly in the Koukou area, and concluded that their main protection concerns lay in the problems they experienced in accessing housing, land and income generating opportunities, and in the discrimination they face (email exchange with UNHCR, June 2014). They also struggled to get legal assistance, in part for want of the necessary civil documents, and in part because the judicial authorities lack qualified staff ([OCHA](#), December 2012; Email exchange with UNHCR, June 2014).

The return of Chadian migrants from CAR, Libya and Nigeria, and the arrival of refugees from CAR and Sudan, have increased competition for scarce resources between refugees, returnees, IDPs and their host communities.

The remaining IDPs receive little if any assistance, and live in facilities such as schools left behind by NGOs that used to work in the area. Many work their host communities' fields or sell groundnuts to get by (email exchange with OCHA Chad, August 2014).

Displaced children are a particularly vulnerable group, and in some cases the military and other armed groups have recruited them into their ranks. Such allegations continued to be made as recently as March 2012 ([UN](#), May 2013). Since then the government, in cooperation with the UN, has shown its commitment to ending under-age recruitment into the army. It has established a central child protection unit in the Ministry of Defence and introduced screening and age verification measures ([UN](#), 2014).

Durable solutions

Given improved security conditions, at least 91,000 IDPs have returned to their villages, integrated locally or settled elsewhere in the country since 2008. In May 2010, the government encouraged all remaining IDPs to return to their homes, but a lack of basic services and infrastructure in their places of origin prevented many from doing so ([HRW](#), January 2011). UNHCR began to facilitate returns in May 2011, organising 12 convoys within a matter of weeks ([UNHCR](#), June 2011). Many IDPs, however, were confronted with fragile security conditions, the absence of local authorities and a lack of social services in their home areas ([UNHCR](#), June 2011).

In some cases returns appear to have been permanent, but in others IDPs go home during the agricultural season and spend the rest of the year living in displacement sites ([Oxfam et al](#), March 2012). Most of the remaining IDPs in the east of the country are thought to prefer the option of local integration or resettlement ([Oxfam et al](#), March 2012), but those who choose to integrate locally are often hampered by their lack of civil documents, including birth certificates ([OCHA](#), December 2012). That said, IDPs living in the Koloma displacement site did manage to integrate locally and as a result it became a fully-fledged district of Goz Beida (email exchange with OCHA Chad, September 2014).

Many of the same issues that prevent IDPs from returning to their homes - unstable security conditions, limited access to land, a lack of basic social services and the absence of water and sanitation infrastructure - are also obstacles to their achieving durable solutions ([Oxfam et al](#), March 2012; [OCHA](#), December 2012). A multi-sectorial approach is needed in return areas to build local authorities' capacity and put infrastructure in place ([OCHA](#), December 2012).

National and international response

In 2007, the government established a national committee to assist IDPs (*Comité national d'assistance aux personnes déplacées*, CNAPD) and in 2008 it set up a coordinating body (*Coordination nationale d'appui à la force internationale au Tchad*, CONAFIT) to synchronise the activities of the UN mission in CAR and Chad (MINURCAT) and humanitarian organisations. MINURCAT's mandate included the protection of civilians, particularly IDPs, and contributing to the authorities' initiatives to establish conditions conducive to durable solutions (MINURCAT, n/d). Neither CNAPD nor CONAFIT had the staff and resources to fulfil their roles, however, and their impact was limited. Another government body (*Commission Nationale d'Accueil, de Réinsertion des Réfugiés et des Rapatriés*, CNARR) has co-led the protection cluster with UNHCR since April 2011.

MINURCAT was established by UN Security Council resolution 1778 in 2007, and completed its mandate at the end of 2010 (UN, n/d). After its departure, the government assumed responsibility for Chad's security via the establishment of forces such as the Integrated Security Detachment (*Détachement Intégré de Sécurité*, DIS) (OCHA, July 2011). To support DIS, UNHCR and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) set up a joint initiative to provide logistical and technical support (Oxfam et al, March 2012; UNDP, December 2013). This helped to improve security conditions in the east and south of the country and allowed more IDPs to return home, but a lack of funding meant it was not as effective as it might have been (Oxfam et al, March 2012).

Since MINURCAT's withdrawal, the government has also established a humanitarian coordination body (*Coordination Nationale de Soutien aux Activités Humanitaires*, CONSAHDIS) and a security office (*Bureau de Sécurisation et des Mouvements*, BSM) to facilitate humanitarian operations.

The government has in the past made efforts to support IDPs, particularly in their search for durable solutions, and it publicly stated its preference for returns (Oxfam et al, March 2012). It also acknowledged its responsibility to provide adequate conditions for returnees, including basic services and access to justice (Oxfam et al, March 2012). It developed a recovery programme for eastern Chad (*Programme Global de Relance à L'est du Tchad*, PGRET) in 2010, but limited capacity and funding mean commitments were not always matched by action on the ground.

In 2012, the government stopped recognising the country's remaining IDPs as such. It stated that it had given them the opportunity to integrate, relocate or return to their villages and supported them in trying to do, the implication being that those still living in displacement sites had integrated locally (OHCHR, September 2012). According to the international humanitarian community, however, many IDPs have still not achieved a durable solution to their displacement.

Chad ratified the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, also known as the Kampala Convention, in 2011. In doing so, it committed to developing a legal framework to protect and assist IDPs. The government, however, still needs to implement a national policy or legislation to this end. Chad is also party to several international human rights instruments, including on women and children's rights, but national legislation needs to be brought into line with the country's international obligations.

In August 2013, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) voiced concern about the government's statement that there were no more IDPs in Chad. It recommended the state adopt legislation on internal displacement and, based on reports from 2011, that it take steps to combat violence against displaced women (OHCHR, September 2013). In March 2014,

the UN Human Rights Committee recommended the government adopt a bill incorporating the provisions of the Kampala Convention into national law ([OHCHR](#), April 2014). The development of such legislation should be a high priority for the government, and the international community should provide the necessary support ([OCHA](#), December 2012).

The Humanitarian Country Team's [strategic response plan for 2014 to 2016](#), put together by UN agencies and NGOs operating in Chad, was only 29.7 per cent funded as of 20 October 2014 ([OCHA](#), October 2014). The protection cluster had planned to scale down its activities in 2014, but had to recognise new needs following the influx of refugees and returning migrants. It concluded that many groups, including the country's remaining IDPs, still needed protection assistance ([OCHA](#), January 2014). Its focus for 2014 was to include documentation, reintegration and access to land, but its activities were only 26 per cent funded ([FTS](#), October 2014).

UNDP supported IDPs in their search for durable solutions, leading a project that aimed to reduce their vulnerability in return areas by providing training in agricultural transformation and reinforcing gender equality ([OCHA](#), January 2014).

In a challenging and evolving context such as Chad's, the country's remaining IDPs should not be forgotten. The government should take concrete steps to ensure they are able to exercise their human rights, from civil and political to economic, social and cultural rights, including adequate living conditions and access to basic social services. The government should also recognise that IDPs still exist in the country as a precondition for development organisations to focus on them and include their needs in their programmes. Better funding and greater political will are also needed if Chad's IDPs and returnees are to achieve durable solutions.

About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) is the leading source of information and analysis on internal displacement. For the millions of people worldwide displaced within their own country, IDMC plays a unique role as a global monitor and evidence-based advocate to influence policy and action by governments, UN agencies, donors, international organisations and NGOs.

IDMC was established in 1998 at the request of the Interagency Standing Committee on humanitarian assistance. Since then, IDMC's unique global function has been recognised and reiterated in annual UN General Assembly resolutions.

IDMC is part of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), an independent, non-governmental humanitarian organisation.

Contact:

Sebastián Albuja

Head of Africa and Americas department

Tel: +41 22 799 07 08

E-mail: sebastian.albuja@nrc.ch

Melanie Kesmaecker-Wissing

Regional analyst

Tel: +41 22 799 07 17

E-mail: melanie.kesmaecker-wissing@nrc.ch

Anaïs Pagot

Associate Regional Analyst

Tel: +41 22 795 07 42

E-mail: anais.pagot@nrc.ch

IDMC

Norwegian Refugee Council

Chemin de Balexert 7-9

1219 Geneva, Switzerland

www.internal-displacement.org

Tel: +41 (0)22 799 0700

Fax: +41 (0)22 799 0701