



# The Future of Internal Displacement and Sustainable Development

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## EDITORIAL

It is now commonly accepted that internal displacement and other forms of forced migration are multifaceted issues involving intersecting humanitarian, human rights and development concerns. To examine the topic without being cognisant of these multiple facets would be to produce an incomplete picture of the issues posed. Traditionally, however, it has been the case that while the humanitarian and the human rights aspects of forced displacement have been of intense concern, development matters have been to some degree neglected. Now, as we mark over twenty years since the publication of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, we see development concerns beginning to be given the equal attention they deserve.

It is today increasingly recognised that large-scale, protracted internal displacement and cross-border movements are often underpinned by problematic development trajectories, and that long-term displacement has a significant, if still unquantified, impact on national and regional economies, on stability, and on security. Moreover, internal displacement cuts across all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), meaning that failing to address the realities of internal displacement risks holding back or even reversing progress made towards achieving these goals.

In this JID Special Issue, the focus is first and foremost on exposing the intersections between displacement and development. Yet, this is not always a straightforward task. While attention is often rightly drawn to how the displaced are typically left behind in the pursuit of development, development aims can themselves create sites of displacement that reinforce and even exacerbate traditional forms of inequality and discrimination. In exposing these intersections, this issue's three substantive articles traverse a breadth of contemporary issues and country contexts that deal with displacement in all its phases.

The first substantive article comes from Tetyana Durnyeva, Harald Hartvig Jepsen and Hannah Roberts.<sup>2</sup> In this article, the authors examine IDP electoral rights. Set within the context of the protracted conflict in eastern Ukraine, 'IDPs' Electoral Participation Gap' reveals, as its name suggests, a gap in electoral participation experienced by those who have been displaced by armed conflict and occupation in eastern Ukraine and the Crimean peninsula. The authors critique the persistence of an outdated and invidious Soviet-era permission-based residency registration system, known as *propiska*, which effectively prevents IDPs from exercising their right to vote and to stand as candidates in elections. The authors detail the barriers to participation that exist and reflect upon the impact that these have on those who have been displaced within Ukraine. This timely piece demonstrates the continuing impact that the protracted conflict is having on IDPs' access to their most fundamental of democratic rights. Yet, in recognition of the multifaceted nature of internal displacement, the authors rightly locate their critique within the context of the SDGs, specifically SDG 16, and thereby demonstrate how a lack of access to basic democratic entitlements jeopardises not only IDPs' human rights but also the development prospects of the entire State of Ukraine. In their capacity as staff and affiliates of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the authors

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<sup>2</sup> Journal of Internal Displacement, Volume 9, Issue 1, January 2019, 5-29

reveal the push for legislative change that they and others in Ukraine are leading on, change that while promising much, remains unrealised to date.<sup>3</sup>

The theme of national barriers to the realisation of IDP rights and sustainable development continues in Wakgari Kebeta Djigsa's article, 'The Protection of Internally Displaced Persons in Ethiopia: Leave No One Behind'.<sup>4</sup> As its title reveals, central throughout this piece is the SDGs' pledge to leave no one behind. But leaving IDPs behind is exactly what Djigsa observes in his assessment of domestic legislative and policy provisions in Ethiopia. Djigsa traces a number of the most important developments at the international and regional levels that promote and protect IDP protection on the African continent, perhaps most notably the Kampala Convention. Yet, when attention is turned to the domestic level, it becomes clear that the national authorities have failed to so far translate the normative principles that underpin the international regime into concrete domestic provisions, despite being mandated to do so. This results in a perilous situation; in the words of Djigsa, while '[t]he number of IDPs in Ethiopia is skyrocketing... displaced persons in Ethiopia [continue to] suffer from the most acute humanitarian needs'.<sup>5</sup>

The final full-length article in this JID Special Issue is provided by Xinyu (Promio) Wang. In 'Development Induced Migration and Institutionalised Discrimination: Differential Citizenship and Internal Migrants' Self-Identity in China',<sup>6</sup> Wang examines the process by which Chinese internal migrants understand and constitute their own identities post-displacement. This vastly underexplored phenomenon is, for Wang, one of forced internal displacement. Whether justified as the path to a better life, or as a personal sacrifice for the developmental greater good of the State, many rural residents are coerced into leaving their homes and are forced into taking up employment in one of China's many new urban industrial hubs, such as those in and around Shanghai. When there, these new urban-dwellers are ghettoised, both physically and societally. Wang's research draws upon empirical findings and a strong theoretical grounding as it seeks to reveal how China's internal migrants navigate their own identity transformation as they undergo the physical shift from rural to urban dwellers. What Wang reveals is confusion, contradiction and uncertainty in how forced internal migrants self-identify, most notably in relation to other groups, whether that be local Shanghai residents or other migrants from outside the Shanghai region. This ambivalence, it is argued, is the combined effect of 'urban protectionist' attitudes and the institutionalisation of exclusionary policies under the existing *hukou* system. It must be said that this is an ambitious and truly insightful piece on a critical issue that should be of great concern to displacement scholars across the globe.

This Special Issue concludes with two book reviews written by JID Editor-in-Chief, Dr Veronica Fynn Bruey. The first concerns the 2017 edited volume, 'Compassionate Migration and Regional Policy in the Americas' by Steven W. Bender and William F. Arrocha; and the second, the 2017 monograph,<sup>7</sup> 'The Myth of Self-Reliance: Economic Lives Inside a Liberian Refugee Camp' by Naohiko Omata.<sup>8</sup> These informative and, in the case of the latter, highly personal reviews, provide an insight into some of the most progressive and thought-provoking scholarship being produced on forced migration. From critiquing the response to migration in receiving States, to revealing the true reality of forced migrants' lived experiences, such academic contributions are essential to an evidenced critique of the management and perception of forced migration around the world. In the words of Fynn Bruey, these are seminal

<sup>3</sup> This article ends, in Annex 1, with key findings and recommendations for improving IDP enfranchisement – see pages 29-31.

<sup>4</sup> *Journal of Internal Displacement*, Volume 9, Issue 1, January 2019, 36-50.

<sup>5</sup> *Journal of Internal Displacement*, Volume 9, Issue 1, January 2019, 48.

<sup>6</sup> *Journal of Internal Displacement*, Volume 9, Issue 1, January 2019, 51-73.

<sup>7</sup> *Journal of Internal Displacement*, Volume 9, Issue 1, 74-77.

<sup>8</sup> *Journal of Internal Displacement*, Volume 9, Issue 1, 78-80

texts, ‘meticulous, respectful, empathetic yet rigorous’,<sup>9</sup> that will be of interest to a broad range of audiences.

All of the contributions in this JID Special Issue are timely and poignant. While each engages with a different displacement context, multiple common themes exist. Not least, it is abundantly clear that displacement has a profound impact upon the development prospects of both individuals and entire communities. Displacement can not only stunt economic growth, but can often inflame existing inequalities. Moreover, access to opportunity and access to justice is typically inhibited by ineffectual domestic policies and laws that either fail to tackle the enormity of the issue or simply disregard it. What is, however, perhaps most clear from these contributions is that IDPs and refugees have been and continue to be ‘left behind’. This is not some relic of the past, but a defining characteristic of the world today. Now is therefore the time to truly appreciate that this cannot continue and to take effective action that demonstrably improves the development prospects of displaced persons and the societies within which they reside.

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<sup>9</sup> INSERT ARTICLE PAGE NUMBER.