

# IMPACT on IDPs

Bi-Weekly Update • 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020



COVID-19 Mobility Impacts Update Series

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**Important:** This update strives to use terms in conformity with the IOM's Glossary on Migration to describe issues faced by Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in relation to the COVID-19 outbreak. Given the sensitive nature of the information, those terms are used to the best of our knowledge and within the limit of our possibilities to confirm political correctness while producing a weekly update. The update is **external** and the information contained in it is **sensitive**. Corrections are very welcomed and should be submitted to DTM COVID-19 [dtmccovid19idps@iom.int](mailto:dtmccovid19idps@iom.int) for ensuring consistency of information in the database repository.

Weekly updates on "Impact on IDPs" are a collaboration between DTM and CCCM in drafting and reviewing; MHD, PRD and TRD in technical guidance and sharing of files. The objective of these reports is to gather better situational awareness of the spread and impact of COVID-19 among internally displaced populations globally, with a view to ensuring informed public health response and accountability for provision of care to vulnerable populations. The **methodology** includes integrating direct reporting from IOM Regional Offices and Country Missions, IOM sitreps, IOM files and media outlets, as well as public media outlets. Sources are weighed for relevance and accuracy, and then condensed into summaries by country. Instances of reported cases of IDPs with COVID-19 are checked for confirmation and monitored for continuing developments. Limitations include dependence on IDP cases being reported in public media. Cases emerging in countries without IOM presence and/or that go unreported in the media could be potential blind spots. For feedback, corrections, additions or removal from mailing list please get in touch with DTM COVID-19 [dtmccovid19idps@iom.int](mailto:dtmccovid19idps@iom.int).

## □ Summary

People affected by humanitarian crises, particularly those displaced and living in communal settings, are often faced with challenges including vulnerabilities distinct from those of the general population. These vulnerabilities are further heightened by the disparate health and socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, and if not appropriately addressed could push IDPs even further behind other populations. As recently reported by IDMC, [global figures of internally displaced persons \(IDPs\)](#) reached an all-time high at the end of 2019. Conflict and disasters triggered 33.4 million new internal displacements across 145 countries and territories in 2019. In particular, the number of new disaster-related IDPs increased to 24.9 million in 2019 (compared to 17.2 million in 2018). This is the highest figure recorded since 2012 and three times the number of new displacements caused by conflict and violence.



*Community awareness activity providing information on COVID-19 in Siem Reap, Cambodia © IOM 2020*

The movement restrictions and other measures imposed by countries, territories or areas as a response to the pandemic are directly impacting the daily lives and circumstances of IDPs and host communities. Livelihoods are being interrupted and access to healthcare, where it is available, remains limited. Many communities hosting internally displaced populations lack adequate investments in health, water and sanitation infrastructure, in addition to the issues of overcrowding, poor shelter, scarce resources, limited access to reliable information, social discrimination, and marginalization of certain groups, all of which have the potential to exacerbate social tensions and increase the risk of emergent localized conflict. The impact felt by these communities not only increases humanitarian need but also exacerbates the existing and already complex barriers to IDPs seeking solutions.

## □ Key Highlights

- **Reported Cases:** As of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020, there were **131 confirmed COVID-19 cases reported among IDPs**, with a total of 2 in Nigeria, 64 in Iraq, 3 in Somalia, 8 in Mali and 54 in South Sudan. It is likely that number of COVID-19 cases is largely under-reported. The CCCM Cluster in South Sudan also announced

the death of 5 IDPs due to COVID-19 in a POC Sites COVID-19 update ([link](#)). The CCCM Cluster in Iraq, with the support of the Department of Health (DoH) and the Health partners operating in formal IDPs camps, reported 53 IDP confirmed cases ([link](#)).

Reporting Period	Location	Cases notified among IDPs	Source (Reported by)
31 July – 13 August	Iraq	28	In IDP camps in Duhok, Erbil, Al-anbar, Ninewa, etc. CCCM source
31 July – 13 August	South Sudan	6	PoC (Malakal) - <a href="#">link</a>
14 August – 27 August	Iraq	12	In IDP camps in Erbil, Baghdad, Duhok, etc. CCCM source
31 July – 13 August	South Sudan	11	PoC (tbc)
18 August – 9 September	Iraq	20	In IDP camps in Duhok, Baghdad, Sulaymaniyah, etc. CCCM source

Table 1: Summary of COVID-19 cases in IDP locations by date, location and source

- Restrictions of Movement:** Measures implemented by governments to limit the spread of COVID-19 also directly impact the movement of IDPs in and out of sites. In some countries (e.g. Nigeria, Sudan, and Iraq) specific camp measures have been implemented affecting potential returns, as well as livelihood activities. Certain countries (Nigeria) are slowly lifting mobility restrictions (lockdowns) which will likely impact service access in camps. In Iraq, service delivery to some formal IDP camps improved due to easing of movement restrictions but service delivery remains a challenge in nine of the 62 camps in which humanitarian actors have recorded partial or no-access to the camps.
- Challenges in Access to Assistance and Services:** Lockdowns and restricted access to camps in places such as Iraq and Uganda have meant that the provision of goods and services to IDP populations have been reduced. For many countries, movement restrictions also reduce IDPs' capacity to access livelihood opportunities, putting further pressures on their ability to supplement limited aid. Delayed preparedness and contingency actions for the coming monsoon seasons, considered non-essential, may increase the risk and vulnerabilities for IDPs in the coming months.
- Public Health and Socioeconomic Measures:** IOM is working with partners and local authorities to put in place public health and socioeconomic measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and improve health and hygiene conditions and access in displacement sites. Humanitarian partners have also put in place measures to ensure life-saving services can continue in sites despite movement restrictions for staff. Humanitarian actors also continue to prepare for remote management scenarios in case some sites become inaccessible.

## Regional Overview

### ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

**Myanmar:** A total of 579 locally transmitted cases have been reported across Rakhine between 16 August and 10 September. Across the country, 2009 cases, six fatalities and 553 recoveries have been reported. No cases have been reported in camps or sites for internally displaced people (IDPs) as of 31 August, while displaced persons who had been in contact with COVID-19 confirmed cases were placed in quarantine and tested. The Rakhine State Government has introduced various COVID-19 measures since 16 August, including a state-wide "stay-at-home" order and other measures aimed at preventing the local transmission. As of 9 September, Ministry of Health and Sports also announced 21 townships from Yangon Region also including a state-wide "stay-at-home" order and other measures aimed at preventing the local transmission. Humanitarian actors are assessing the impact of the recently introduced COVID-19 measures on operations, including COVID-19 preparedness and response activities.

**Philippines:** According to the Philippine Government's Regional Departments of Health and the Bangsamoro Inter-Agency Task Force on COVID-19, as of 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020, there are 925 active cases in the areas with displaced

populations out of the 52,893 active cases in the country, a 19 per cent increase from the past two weeks. No COVID-19 cases have been reported inside evacuation centres or other displacement sites in the Philippines.

IDP movement and their access to essential services continue to be hampered. Services that are more reliant on face-to-face interaction, such as MHPSS, have seen a general decrease in line with health protocols on social gatherings. Local government units have begun construction of relocation sites for IDPs displaced by the earthquakes in Mindanao, although there is no clear timeline as to when IDPs will transfer. A reported increase in the frequency of handwashing by IDPs in Cotabato and Davao del Sur may be attributed to the construction of various handwashing facilities in sites – 96 per cent of interviewed IDPs report that they wash their hands significantly or somewhat more than they did before the COVID-19 pandemic. Water scarcity is however reported in areas covered by the Protection Cluster. Access to food and livelihood is also impacted, with business chains affected by limited transportation options. Access to accurate and timely information is also critically lacking in displacement sites assessed by the Protection Cluster, especially in terms of quarantine protocols, return and rehabilitation.

### *EAST AFRICA AND THE HORN OF AFRICA*

**Ethiopia:** As of 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020, the Ministry of Health reported a total of 61,700 COVID-19 cases, 966 deaths and 23,054 recoveries. At the federal level, the COVID-19 response is coordinated by the ECC and is led by the NDRMC Commissioner. Authorities have performed over 1 million tests to date (a higher testing rate than any other East African country) as part of the Government's COVID-19 "ComBAT" nationwide campaign. OCHA reported that in the Amhara region, COVID-19 cases have increased, especially in points of entry (PoEs) such as Metema in West Gondar and Bati in North Wello. In Qoloji IDP camps, 17 patients who tested positive for COVID-19 were isolated in the Jijjiga Isolation Centre, while a high risk of COVID-19 spread has been identified in the congested IDP sites of Darso (Dolobay), 02 Kabele (Qoohle of Afder), Qoloji (Babile), 01 Kabele (Gashamo of Jarar), Mindeya (Goro Baqaqsa of Liban), Haruun (Guradamole of Liban), Bohol Hagare (Adadle of Shabelle, Asbuli (Erer of Siti), Fadhato and Hariso (Gablalu of Siti) of Somali region. Humanitarian needs in Ethiopia have increased because of COVID-19, the impact of the desert locust infestation, floods, and changes to the displacement landscape.

**South Sudan:** The Ministry of Health reported a total of 2,555 known COVID-19 as of 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 (48 deaths, 1,317 recoveries). Authorities performed a total of 22,218 tests from samples collected across 23 different counties and Abyei Administrative Area. Juba remains the hotspot with min. 2,142 reported cases, followed by Abyei Administrative Area (52) and Malakal (50). Testing capacity is still minimal and centralized in Juba, which hinders attempts for any anticipatory analysis that could inform response planning. According to [CCCM update](#), there are 57 cases of COVID-19 confirmed within the UNMISS Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites in Juba, Bor, Wau, Bentiu and Malakal altogether hosting more than 160,000 IDPs. Whilst in Juba, Wau and Bentiu no movement restrictions are observed, entry and exit from the sites in Bor and Malakal are limited for IDPs and humanitarian workers. The security situation in most of the sites is stable. However, in the largest PoC in Bentiu the situation is deteriorating due to an increase in unrest related to worker complaints over changes in the labour rates in the past months. The situation continues to affect regular service provision. UNMISS has initiated the process to change the status of the PoC sites to displacement sites/camps managed by the Government. The timeline for full withdrawal of UN protection forces from the existing PoC sites is not fully established. Nevertheless, according to field reports, the process already has started in PoC sites in Juba, Bor and Wau. While UNMISS is in advanced communication with the Government over this transition, humanitarian partners are advocating for sufficient time for transition and community engagement to ensure smooth handover between the parties.

The number of people displaced due to flooding is increasing. Due to limited accessibility, DTM is supporting partners in verifying displacement data. Through a network of key informants, the team confirmed the displacement of more than 60,900 IDPs across Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile states. Another 32,000 IDPs are being tracked in Mingkaman site (Lakes State), and new arrivals are reported daily. DTM is planning to deploy a team to assist OCHA and partner with data verification in Bor and Mingkaman. CCCM and DTM completed rounds of focus group discussions with IDPs and host communities in urban areas and displacement sites in Juba, Bentiu, Bor and Wau as part of IOM's contribution to the consultation process for the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on IDPs. The consultations will continue until the end of the month, aiming to capture information from the communities on

how to better prevent, respond to and achieve solutions for internal displacement, including exploring the community awareness and impact of COVID-19 on livelihoods and the process of finding durable solutions.

**Uganda:** As of 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020, there are 4,101 COVID-19 cases with 46 deaths, and 1,876 recoveries in Uganda. The Government started a phased lifting of the lockdown, reopening most businesses and allowing movement within the country. The movement restrictions earlier imposed on border districts have been lifted, allowing all travel. The government continues to restrict cross border movements, including closure of the international airport, in a bid to minimize possible spread of COVID-19. The Government opened the airport for repatriation of Ugandan nationals stranded in other countries, including in the East African Community. DTM, in collaboration with District authorities, is conducting multi-sectorial site assessments following the floods which affected approximately 248,210 individuals in Bulambuli, Sironko, Bududa, in the East and Bundibugyo and Kasese in the West.

### *MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA*

**Iraq:** As of 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed 273,821 cases of COVID-19 in Iraq, 56,096 active cases, 206,324 recoveries, and 7,732 deaths. According to the latest DTM Master List Report (31 August 2020), DTM Iraq identified 1,381,332 IDPs dispersed across 18 governorates (104 districts and 2,977 locations). The top three governorates of displacement are Ninewa, Dahuk and Erbil. According to WHO, the number of confirmed cases in these governorates are 7,205 in Ninewa, 6,451 in Dahuk, and 13,575 in Erbil as of 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020. On 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020, the CCCM Cluster in Iraq (co-lead by UNHCR and IOM) with the support of the Department of Health (DoH), camp managers, and the health partners operating in formal IDPs camps, recorded 77 confirmed IDP cases and 10 cases among humanitarian staff providing services there. There are no updates on confirmed or suspected cases in informal sites. IOM continued to conduct awareness campaigns, meetings with committee members and construction works. For awareness campaigns, IOM uses new mechanism like flyers or posters, or holds activities in large spaces (like in the church in Zayona camp) to maintain social distance. Coordinated by Department of Health and AAF Civil defence, a complete sterilization campaign was completed for the AAF camp. Additionally, Mercy Corps, the WASH partner, have begun distribution of COVID-19 response hygiene kits. In round 2, IOM has begun providing hygiene promotion sessions and distributed hygiene kits to households in the informal sites in Salah Al-Din. Access to camps and locations with out-of-camp IDP population has remained a challenge due to COVID-19 and consequent movement restrictions. COVID-19 testing kits have remained unavailable to most of the IDP population and when suspected cases are identified. Some IDP camps were shut down, impacting activities and return programming.

IOM continues to implement protective measures to ensure that activities can be conducted while avoiding exposure to contamination for staff and beneficiaries. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) have been suspended and physical visits to sites have been replaced by on-line follow ups. Life in camps has remained challenging for IDPs, with limited or no access to livelihood activities and lack of freedom of mobility from the camps. As a result, more IDPs have chosen to leave camps to their governorate of origin. The situation of the Community Resource Centres (CRCs) has remained the same, with direct walk-in services unavailable during this reporting period.

**Yemen:** Through IOM Yemen's Displacement Tracking Matrix, between 26<sup>th</sup> August and 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020, 799 new displaced households were recorded in areas where IOM has access. The highest number of displacements were due to conflict in Marib, Al Hudaydah and Taizz governorates. From 1<sup>st</sup> January to 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020, IOM Yemen DTM estimates that 22,421 households or 134,526 individuals experienced displacement at least once.

While over 10,000 COVID-19 related movements were recorded in previous months, no IDPs cited COVID-19 as a reason for displacement in August 2020. Over eight months this year, 22,421 households have been displaced by the crisis, with many facing increased risks of COVID-19 transmission. Displacement and COVID-19 challenges have been compounded by flooding in July and August; some 62,000 households are estimated to have been affected by torrential rains and storms. IOM teams continue to improve WASH services in displacement sites and communities that are hosting large number of displaced populations. IOM water trucking activities are ongoing in 88 sites in Hudaydah, Taizz, Ibb and Marib, reaching 12,475 people. During the reporting period, IOM also distributed 1,776 long lasting insecticide nets to immunocompromised and high-risk individuals in Marib. IOM

continues to engage IDP communities on making masks in Ibb and Marib. In Ibb 2,686 masks were made, and distributed, along with COVID-19 information, education, and communication (IEC) materials, to IDPs in five sites. As part of a wider IOM-initiative to boost COVID-19 testing capacity in Yemen, IOM has also trained staff from the National Tuberculosis laboratory in Aden on techniques and procedures for conducting COVID-19 testing using Cepheid GeneXpert systems.

### *WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA*

**Chad:** As of 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020, 1,048 COVID-19 cases (including 931 recovered, 38 under treatment and 79 deaths) have been confirmed in Chad. In Lac Province (which hosts 297,000 IDPs), five cases have been confirmed since the beginning of the pandemic, none of which are currently active. One death has been registered in Bol (which hosts 39,000 IDPs). As of the reporting date, no cases have been identified among IDPs. In the framework of its COVID-19 prevention and response activities in Lac Province, IOM has finalized the construction of 225 shelters in two sites of Kangalam sous-préfecture, and started another sensitization campaign in eight sites located in the sous-préfectures of Baga Sola and Ngouboua, which are hosting newly-arrived IDPs. In addition, DTM's Round 13 data collection, which includes specific questions on COVID-19 awareness and preparation in assessed displacement sites and host communities, started on 10 September 2020.

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## □ Key Resources

- **Global:**
  - [DTM Portals \(migration.iom.int and displacement.iom.int\)](https://migration.iom.int)
  - [IOM COVID-19 Camp Management Operational Guidance Frequently Asked Questions](#)
  - [Africa Center for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 Dashboard](#)
  - [Global figures of internally displaced persons \(IDMC\)](#)
  - [World Health Organization Situation Reports](#)
  - [IOM COVID 19 Response - Situation Report 26 \(7 August 2020\)](#)
  - [COVID-19 Travel Restrictions Output — 10 August 2020](#)
- **Regional:**
  - [Impact Of COVID-19 Movement Restrictions On Migrants Along The Eastern Corridor 5 \(as of 31 July 2020\)](#)
  - [Middle East And North Africa — Tracking Mobility Impact: Point Of Entry Analysis \(06 August 2020\)](#)
  - [West and Central Africa — Monthly Regional Update \(June 2020\)](#)
  - [West and Central Africa — COVID-19 — Impact on Mobility Report \(June 2020\)](#)
- **Country:**
  - [Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-1\) Dynamic Infographic Dashboard for Iraq](#)
  - [Libya — IDP & Returnee Report, Round 31 \(May – June 2020\)](#)
  - [Cameroon — Displacement Dashboard 21 \(25 May — 10 June 2020\)](#)
  - [Chad — Emergency Tracking Tool report 71](#)
  - [Chad — Displacement Dashboard 12 \(June — July 2020\)](#)
  - [Chad — Displacement Dashboard 11 \(April 2020\)](#)
  - [Libya – COVID-19 Mobility Tracking](#)
  - [IOM South Sudan COVID-19 Situation Report #19](#)
  - [IOM South Sudan COVID-19 Situation Report #20](#)

- [Nigeria — COVID-19 Point of Entry Dashboard #13 \(1 - 7 August 2020\)](#)
- [WHO COVID-19 Dynamic Infographic Dashboard for Iraq](#)
- [Yemen — Situation Report — COVID-19 Response \(16 August — 22 August 2020\)](#)
- [WHO Pulse Survey](#)