

CONCLUSION

Patterns of sound practice in internal displacement. As noted above, field practice in internal displacement is evolving. Nonetheless, the examples of field practice above suggest several themes or patterns that characterize sound programming:

- **Encouragement of national authorities to meet their responsibilities.** The internally displaced, by definition, remain citizens of their own nation, and national authorities retain primary responsibility for their welfare. When lack of resources or of will limit assistance by national authorities, sound practice may suggest support for, or advocacy with, those authorities as an appropriate first step.
- **Investment in collection of detailed data on displacement.** Chaos, separation, limits on access, desire for anonymity, and other factors accompanying displacement crises complicate the international community's ability to get a clear picture of the displaced, their capacities, and their needs. Sound field practice will be based on accurate data collection—including data disaggregated by gender, age, and other key factors—to permit quality program design and targeting.⁶
- **Careful analysis of local sociocultural patterns.** Displacement will be perceived differently by different communities and individuals, depending on prior experience and on local social, cultural, religious, and community traditions and beliefs. Sound field practice will be preceded by careful study of these factors in order to understand what displacement means to those experiencing it.

⁶Currently, the Global IDP Survey, in cooperation with the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee Working Group on IDPs, is designing a global data base on IDPs. As this project is attempting to address the multitude of methodological issues pertaining to data collection on the internally displaced, it bears watching by practitioners.

- **Protection as well as assistance interventions.** As internally displaced persons remain within the boundaries of their nation, international efforts to guarantee the types of protection listed in the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* will encounter issues of national sovereignty. Yet, displaced populations may be especially vulnerable to abuse, and protection may be a higher priority than material assistance. Creative efforts to extend protection to the internally displaced are an essential element of sound field practice.
- **Recognition that displaced individuals, families and communities are key actors.** In displacement situations, as in other circumstances when international organizations attempt to assist local communities, the perspectives, rights, and capacities of the displaced themselves should guide appropriate interventions. In certain cases, the displaced will be in extremely difficult conditions, and will require immediate relief. In other cases, the total effort of the international community might pale in comparison with what the displaced will do for themselves. Supporting displaced communities, understanding their objectives, seeking their input in planning, and enhancing their role in relation to local authorities are essential steps to sound field practice.
- **Addressing internal displacement within a broader humanitarian strategy.** The factors causing internal displacement may also affect other groups, including host communities, conflict-affected communities, refugees, and returnees. Although the internally displaced may experience particular vulnerabilities related to their condition, assistance and protection for the internally displaced should be provided as part of a broader humanitarian strategy that takes into account the perspectives, rights and capacities of other affected groups within the society.
- **Recognition of the gender aspects of displacement.** Many aspects of displacement—from camp facilities, to food access, to disruption of employment, to risk of violence, to social standing—will affect men and women differently, with the impact often most severe on women. Just as important, the experience of displacement is likely to affect the social relationship between genders. Recognition of this reality is a core element of sound field practice.

- **Collaborative institutional arrangements among international organizations and international and local nongovernmental organizations.** The complexity of displacement crises, the gap in international institutional leadership, and the evolution of systematic practice should all impel close working relationships among responding organizations. It is all too easy for the particular needs of internally displaced persons to “fall through the cracks” if international and national organizations, including governments and nongovernmental organizations, are not talking with each other, sharing data, and rationally allocating tasks. Close and collaborative working relations among responding institutions—including the use of IDP working groups and similar targeting arrangements—are essential to sound field practice.
- **Integration of emergency and developmental interventions.** Many displacement crises have an emergency phase, when immediate, life-saving assistance may be required. Many displacement crises, however, can last for years, as the internally displaced are caught in ongoing conflicts or political stalemates. Sound field practice aims at assisting and promoting the earliest possible return to self-sufficiency by access to economic activity, such as food production and employment. Sound field practice is also characterized by an early planning for durable solutions—such as return or resettlement—and a recognition that the solution to internal displacement may be related to national economic and political development.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFP: Armed Forces of the Philippines

BWI: Bosnian Women's Initiative

CODHES: Human Rights and Displacement Consultancy

ECHO: European Community Humanitarian Office

ELN: National Liberation Army (Colombia)

EPI: Expanded Program on Immunization

ERC: Emergency Relief Coordinator

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization

FARC: Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia

FORELAP: Labor and Productive Reinsertion Fund

HRFOR: Human Rights Mission in Rwanda

IASC: Inter-agency Standing Committee

IASC-WG: Interagency Working Group

ICPD: International Conference on Population and
Development

ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross

ICVA: International Council of Voluntary Agencies

IDP: Internally Displaced Person

IFRC: International Federation of Red Cross and Red
Crescent Societies

IOM: International Organization for Migration

IRC: International Rescue Committee

LTTE: Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

MINARS: Ministry of Social Assistance and Reinsertion
(Angola)

MISP: Minimum Initial Service Package

MONUA: UN Observer Mission (Angola)

NARECOM: National Rehabilitation Committee (Sierra
Leone)

NGO: Nongovernmental Organization

NID: National Immunization Day

NIS: National Institute of Statistics

OCHA: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

OHCHR: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

OIM: Organization for International Migration [see IOM]

OLS: Operation Lifeline Sudan

ORC: Open Relief Center

SCHR: Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response

SPLA: Sudanese People's Liberation Army

TBA: Traditional Birth Attendants

UCAH: Coordination Unit for Humanitarian Assistance

UNAVEM III: UN Military Force (Angola)

UNDP: UN Development Programme

UNFPA: UN Population Fund

UNHCR: UN High Commissioner for Refugees

UNHCU: UN Humanitarian Coordination Unit

UNICEF: UN Children's Fund

UNITA: National Union for the Total Independence of Angola

USCR: U.S. Committee for Refugees

VVM: Vaccine-Vial Monitors

WFP: World Food Programme

WHO: World Health Organization