Key achievements and recommendations from the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP statistics EGRIS

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Background

Forced displacement vs conflict, violence and fragility

• People living with conflict, IDPs and refugees face similar challenges

• Similar challenges in data collection: Hard to reach populations

• Internal displacement also includes displacements caused by natural or man made disasters and development projects

UNSC adoption of recommendations – perfect timing

Map 1: Refugees, including persons in a refugee-like situation | mid-2017

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Number of refugees:
- 500,000
- 100,000
- 10,000
- 1,000

Key:
- 3,204,000 - Turkey
- 979,000 - Islamic Republic of Iran
- 1,003,000 - Lebanon
- 1,407,000 - Pakistan
- 1,270,000 - Uganda

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Outline of presentation

– Current state of refugee and IDP statistics
– Establishment of EGRIS
– Key achievement and recommendations
– Way forward
Some central global challenges

- Historically, a weak link between the national statistical offices, migration authorities and international organisations that produce statistics on forcibly displaced persons.
- A lack of consistent terminology, inadequate data sources and difficulties in comparing international statistics on forcibly displaced persons.
- In most countries statistics on refugees and IDPs are not an integral part of the regular migration and population statistics.
- Increasing number of humanitarian actors/organisations that are directly or indirectly involved in collecting and disseminating estimates on refugees.
Challenges (2)

- No or limited coordination at national level
- Data access problems due to sensitivity or lacking legal framework
- Large differences in capacities between countries/regions
- Limited collaboration between development and humanitarian actors in this area, recognition that this is needed.
IDP statistics today

- Few NSOs or NSSs produce and publish statistics on internal displacement

- Currently IDP statistics vary due to:
  - Data for different purposes
  - Different definitions and legislation

- Quality frameworks and guidelines seldom used
- Coordination challenge
Establishment of EGRIS (1)

- Report by UNHCR and Statistics Norway presented to the 46th session of the UNSC in 2015 - how to better incorporate statistics on displacement into national statistical systems
- The report gave a broad presentation of the status of international statistics on refugees and IDPs
- First time in the 70 year history of the Commission that statistics on refugees was discussed.
- Asked for a mandate by the UNSC to hold a conference on international refugee statistics and to explore feasibility of developing international recommendations/handbook on statistical standards
- October 2015: conference held in Antalya, Turkey
Establishment of EGRIS (2)

March 2016 the group was mandated by the UN Statistical Commission to develop:

– International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics: Reference guide for national and international work concerning statistics on refugees and asylum-seekers


Members: approx. 40 national statistical authorities and 15+ regional/international organizations
EGRIS member countries
International and regional organisations

- European Commission (DG Home and DG Employment)
- EASO
- EFTA Statistical Office
- ESCWA
- Eurostat
- IDMC
- IOM
- JIPS
- OECD
- MED-HIMS/Medstat
- UNFPA
- UNHCR
- UNICEF
- UNRWA
- UN special rapporteur (HR/IDP)
- UNSD
- WB
- WFP
IRRS and the technical report on IDP statistics build on challenges mentioned previously and comes up with specific recommendations to tackle them from the statistical viewpoint.
Key achievements of IRRS

1. Creation of a statistical framework standardising relevant terminology, concepts, definitions and classifications

2. List of basic data tabulations and indicators

3. Assessment of data sources and methods for producing refugee data as well as recommendations for their improvements

4. Identification of socioeconomic indicators of refugee integration

5. Recommendations how to improve
   - coordination at national/regional/international level
   - data quality, legal frameworks and capacity building
Examples of concrete recommendations
**IRRS - statistical framework**

**A. Persons in need of international protection**
1. Prospective asylum seekers
2. Asylum seekers
3. Persons with determined protection status
4. Others in refugee-like situations

**B. Persons with a refugee background**
1. Naturalised former refugees
2. Children born of refugee parents
3. Reunified refugee family members from abroad
4. Others with refugee background

**C. Persons returned from abroad after seeking international protection**
1. Repatriating refugees
2. Repatriating asylum seekers
3. Returning from international protection abroad
4. Others returning from seeking international protection abroad

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i. Refugees
ii. Admitted for complementary and subsidiary forms of protection
iii. Admitted for temporary protection
Basic classificatory variables for collecting and compiling refugee statistics

a) Age or date of birth
b) Sex
c) Country of birth
d) Country of citizenship (including stateless, undetermined status and multiple citizenship)
e) Date of arrival in country
f) Reason for migration
g) Country of previous or last residence
h) Date of first displacement/leaving previous country of habitual residence
i) Parents’ refugee statuses
j) If an unaccompanied child
k) Legal residential/international protection status as applicable to the national context
Basic statistics *(example for stock data)*

a) Total number of persons in a country for international protection, by sex and age

b) Total number of asylum seekers, by sex and age

c) Total number of refugees, by sex and age

d) Total number of persons admitted for subsidiary, complementary protection, by sex and age

e) Total number of persons admitted for temporary protection, by sex and age

f) Total number of persons with refugee-like status, by sex and age

g) Total number of persons with refugee background, by sex and age

h) Total number of persons returned from abroad after seeking international protection, by sex and age
Data sources and methods

Censuses and household surveys

- Current core topics (in census recommendations):
  
  a) Country of birth
  
  b) Country of citizenship
  
  c) Acquisition of citizenship
  
  d) Year or period of arrival in the country

- Additional topic proposed:
  
  a) **Reason for migration, with response categories:**
      
      i. Employment (including military service)
      
      ii. Education and training
      
      iii. Marriage, family reunification or family formation
      
      iv. Forced displacement (refugees, asylum seekers, temporary protected status, others)
      
      v. Other
Socioeconomic indicators

Dimensions of topics of indicators of the satisfaction of the immediate and ongoing needs and integration:

1. Legal indicators
2. Civil-political indicators
3. Demographic and migration indicators
4. Education indicators
5. Economic indicators
6. Social inclusion indicators
7. Health indicators
Towards a statistical framework on internal displacement

- Legal framework
- Statistical categories
- Different data sources (censuses, surveys, registers and civil registration) to find the number of IDPs and describe them
- Data protection and data confidentiality
- IDP data in line with other official statistics and SDGs
- Coordination within NSS and with other actors
- Dissemination of statistics
Clarifying definitions

Figure 7.2 Statistical categories to be included in official IDP statistics
1. Specify needs
2. Design
3. Assemble
4. Collect
5. Process
6. Analyse
7. Disseminate
Why is the work important?

- Huge potential: Data for improved policy and practice, visibility of vulnerable groups in development planning and SDGs, enhanced comparison of data
- Country-led and experience-informed process to develop solid report with realistic and tangible recommendations
The UN Statistical Commission:

“Welcomed the report of the Expert Group on Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Statistics,
Appreciated that the Expert Group conducted global consultation involving all national statistical offices before the finalization of the documents and endorsed them and
Supported the development of a compiler’s manual to provide hands-on guidance to collect statistics on refugees and internally displaced persons……..Expressed the need for national statistical capacity-building to support Member States in improving the quality and availability of statistics on refugees and internally displaced persons…."

(UNSC, New York 5 March 2018)
Next phase: Initiating cooperation to...

- Refine recommendations for IDP statistics
- Develop a compiler’s manual
- Measure durable solutions and end of displacement
- Develop a training strategy and related implementation plan
- Continue working more with National Statistical Offices