



THE JOURNAL OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

PREFACE

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The problem of Internally-displaced Persons (IDPs) (people who have been forced to flee their homes but remain within their countries' borders) has received worldwide attention, and justifiably so, with the continuing spate of political upheavals particularly in Africa and Asia. The so-called 'Arab Spring' is a case in point. Countries with the largest numbers of IDPs include Sudan (5-6 million), Iraq (2.5 million), Columbia (2-3 million, DR Congo (1.5 million). The Norwegian Refugee Council has aptly described the IDP problem as "one of the greatest humanitarian challenges of our time", with conservative estimates putting the number of IDPs as 25 million worldwide, of which over 75 % are found in Africa alone. These chilling statistics call for even more sustained worldwide attention to stem the tide.

A solution to the problem requires a cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences through research and publications to highlight the IDP problem. The Journal of Internal Displacement (JID) offers such an opportunity as a platform for highlighting the problem of IDPs through research, discussions and critical dialogue. Responses to calls for papers for publication in the JID have come from all parts of the world and have been very encouraging, with the last issue devoting its entire pages to the IDP problem in Africa. There are also plans for a future issue focusing on the 'Arab Spring'.

One aspect of the IDP problem which has received little attention is the effect of human displacement on the environment, particularly wildlife and their habitats. Very often, IDPs are forced to re-settle in resource-scarce and environmentally-sensitive areas, and this puts pressure on the water, flora and fauna of these areas, posing a great challenge to environmental decision-making, with its attendant economic, medical and social consequences both to the IDPs and the countries involved. The JID commits itself to highlight such problems in future editions of the journal.

This third issue of the JID highlights the IDP problem in Africa and Asia. **Safiya Ahmad Nuhu** writes on development-induced displacement in an African context, and discusses the role of the African Union in highlighting this often-overlooked aspect of IDP discourse with the adoption of the Kampala Convention. **Bangbose Adele** looks at the plight of IDPs in Nigeria over a 10-year period (1999-2009) during the fourth republic against the background of rampant violent confrontations. He argues that democracy *per se* is no guarantee of political stability, at least in the Nigerian context.

The JID problem in Asia has **Silvia Masiero** writing on the problems of ungoverned people, using Palestinian refugees in Lebanon as a case-study. She draws a clear distinction between civil society, with its laid-down governance structures and political society, where no such structures exist, and alludes to an 'accountability gap', which poses problems for the latter society. The problem of displaced Kahmiri Pandits in Kashmir, India, is comprehensively dealt with by **Seema Shekhawat**, who provides a historical account of the displacement in the late 1980s and efforts at repatriating them to their native land in the Kashmir valley. This is an article whose lessons are applicable to other IDPs camps worldwide. **Saira Bano Orakzai** also highlights the 'war against terror' post 9/11, and its impact on IDPs in Pakistan. The issue of how people not directly involved in a 'war', are having to bear the brunt of its fall-out, compounded by a series of natural disasters, is the focus of this article.

There could not have been a more qualified reviewer of the book written by **Howard Adelman** and **Elazar Barkan**, than our own Editor-in-Chief, **Veronica Fynn**, who spent a number of years as a Liberian refugee in Ghana. The book highlights the problems of refugee repatriation using scenarios from refugee camps all over the world, and should be compelling reading for decision-makers and researchers interested in finding lasting solutions to the refugee/IDP problem.

I hope readers will gain useful insights into the IDP/refugee problem after reading this volume, and if this will stimulate more research and dialogue, the JID would have justified its existence. I wish all a happy reading.

Professor Daniel K. Attuquayefio
Advisory Board Member