ROUTLEDGE HUMANITARIAN STUDIES

FORCED MIGRATION AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS FOR SUPPORTING PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Edited by
LORENZO GUADAGNO AND
LISETTE R. ROBLES

ROUTLEDGE

"*Forced Migration and Humanitarian Action* brings together a wealth of experience and much-needed knowledge on how humanitarian action can be improved to more effectively meet the specific and differentiated needs of displaced people who are all too often lumped together under the label of 'vulnerable groups'".

Walter Kälin, *Professor Emeritus at University of Bern, Switzerland, and former Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons*

"*Forced Migration and Humanitarian Action* makes a valuable contribution to understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the humanitarian system in responding to the needs of forced migrants at particular risk because of their age, gender, ability and legal status. I hope that the book is not only widely read but that its insights are translated into more effective humanitarian action".

Elizabeth Ferris, *Professor at Georgetown University, USA*

"This book offers thought-provoking insights into different forced migration scenarios. It poses well-grounded lessons on addressing displacement challenges for researchers and practitioners in Japan and around the globe".

Yukie Osa, *Professor of Rikkyo University, and Chairperson of the Association for Aid and Relief (AAR), Japan*

Forced Migration and Humanitarian Action

Forced population movements are a defining feature of almost any humanitarian crisis, shaping the design, targeting, and delivery of emergency responses.

This book investigates how the evolving situation of different forced migrants is accounted for and addressed in humanitarian action in order to improve their access to support and assistance. Bringing together case studies from Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Pacific, this book focuses on a diversity of operational modalities and types of assistance provided by both traditional and non-traditional humanitarian actors to address the specific needs of displaced children, women, people with disabilities and older people, as well as trafficked migrant workers.

This book adopts a broad perspective on humanitarian action, acknowledging how its boundaries are challenged and expanded in forced migration contexts. Its operational and theoretical insights will be useful for a range of readers, from humanitarian and migration researchers and students to practitioners and policymakers.

Lorenzo Guadagno works on displacement, disasters, and climate change with the Platform on Disaster Displacement. He has a PhD in Sociology of Disasters and over 15 years of experience working with academic institutions, International and Non-Governmental Organisations on Disaster Risk Reduction, Emergency Management, and Migration and Displacement.

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Forced Migration and Humanitarian Action

Operational Challenges and Solutions for Supporting People on the Move

Edited by
Lorenzo Guadagno and Lisette R. Robles

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Contents

Figures

Boxes

Tables

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Abbreviations

AAP	accountability to affected populations
AGD	age, gender and diversity
AHP	Australian Humanitarian Partnership
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance
AU	African Union
CLM	Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar
COSE	Coalition for Services for the Elderly
COVID-19	coronavirus disease of 2019
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CRRF	comprehensive refugee response framework
DRR	disaster risk reduction
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
EU	European Union
FGD	focus group discussion
GBV	gender-based violence
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
HAI	HelpAge International
HLP IDP	High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement
HR	human resources
HRP	humanitarian response plan
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDAC	International Data Alliance for Children on the Move
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDPs	internally displaced persons
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JEMIS	Japan Emigration and Migration Service
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency

JONAPWD	Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (of Nigeria)
KI	key informants
LPN	labour rights protection network
LGBTQI	lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex
MIPAA	Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing of 2002
MPFA	Revised Migration Policy Framework for Africa
MSNA	multi-sectoral needs assessment
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office (of Vanuatu)
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
NHF	Nigeria Humanitarian Fund
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPDs	organization of persons with disabilities
OPOs	older people organisations
RTG	Royal Thai Government
SADD	sex- and age-disaggregated data
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOHS	The State of the Humanitarian System
TIP	trafficking in persons
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNTFHS	United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security
VDPA	Vanuatu Society for People with Disability
VoTs	victims of trafficking
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization

Foreword

The threats posed by conflicts, natural disasters, human rights violations and persistent poverty are impacting a growing number of people, with serious consequences for global migration. These threats are driving forced migration worldwide, with profound implications for human security.

At the second World Refugee Forum, held in Geneva, Switzerland, in December 2023, Japan made a strong commitment to address the issue of forced migration. In its statement, it emphasised the importance of supporting the governments of refugee-hosting countries through collaboration with partners working in peace, development and humanitarian assistance. The increasing complexity of crises has led to situations in which people are displaced within and across borders for much longer periods. Providing assistance to refugees and migrants in vulnerable and marginalised conditions has become an urgent issue of international cooperation.

This edited volume is the outcome of the research project, "Evolving Humanitarian Action for Forced Migration", conducted by the JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development. This project aligns with the global policy priorities outlined in the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM). In-depth policy discussions reinforce this publication's significance in the broad literature on humanitarian action. This book considers various displacement scenarios driven by conflict, natural disasters and poverty. With the inclusion of five case studies on children, women, persons with disabilities, older people and trafficked migrants, this book emphasises the need for broader humanitarian action to ensure the safety of displaced persons, protect their dignity and empower them. It calls for collaboration among actors to mitigate threats, uphold people's rights, and strengthen community capacities. Finally, it provides fresh perspectives into the new and old debate regarding the seamless transition from humanitarian assistance to development cooperation.

This book makes a unique contribution to both the academic and the practical fields related to migration and displacement. This publication will be a valuable resource for practitioners longing for people-centred, comprehensive

and context-specific solutions. I hope this book will be widely read by those committed to human security and ensuring the rights of displaced persons to live in dignity, free from fear and want.

Chiyoda, Tokyo, Japan

Akihiko Tanaka
President
Japan International Cooperation Agency

Preface

The forced movement of large numbers of people is a key concern to humanitarian operations in countries all over the world. As people are forced to leave their homes by conflict, disasters and other crises, they face impoverishment, deprivation, separation from family and community members and acute conditions of risks, requiring support, services and protection. Forced migration is no recent phenomenon—in fact, fleeing has been a basic response to hazards and crises for people and communities at all times. However, it has become a critical operational concern and an important object of studies, over the last decades, as multiple, interconnected and compounding drivers and triggers are leading to more frequent, larger and more impactful population displacement.

Addressing the consequences of forced migration requires delivering a diversified series of humanitarian services and assistance to cater for people's needs in a holistic manner and over time. Successful responses, however, also help prevent and minimise the longer-term impacts displacement can produce for those displaced and other affected persons: reduced access to healthcare and education, limited livelihood opportunities, poverty, long-lasting psychosocial impacts can all undermine resilience and prospects of people, communities and societies. Forced migration is therefore a critical issue to understanding and operationalising the humanitarian-development nexus. Addressing it requires both short-term assistance and long-term resilience-building, while failing to do so effectively results into threats to both people's survival and dignity and long-term well-being.

In June 2022, JICA Ogata Research Institute launched the research project "The Evolving Humanitarian Action for Forced Migration" to delve deeper into this topic. This exploratory investigation examined how humanitarian action can be adapted to assist diverse at-risk groups across diverse forced migration contexts, how modalities and types of assistance evolve in response to changing needs of people on the move and how humanitarian actors account for and address the situation of displaced persons who struggle to access available support and assistance.

Forced migration studies have significant value in both research and practice. Understanding forced migration means interpreting drivers and features of processes with important demographic, socio-economic and political implications, all while providing tangible evidence and recommendations that can be leveraged to improve living conditions and prospects for the people on the move and other affected communities. In order to effectively pursue these different objectives, the project brought together academics and humanitarian practitioners in a platform to exchange knowledge and experiences and contribute to the broader understanding and improvement of humanitarian action in forced migration contexts.

This book is the outcome of the project and has been shaped through a series of online and in-person meetings and workshops among the authors. These were valuable opportunities to collectively discuss the findings of the individual case studies, drawing out the similarities and specific issues in delivering humanitarian action for at-risk groups in displacement. Project members presented their studies at seminars and conferences, including the 7th International Humanitarian Studies Association (IHSA) Conference in Dhaka. These repeated discussions with a diverse set of project members and other researchers and practitioners resulted in a richer analysis of the themes, integrating both academic and practical perspectives in the case studies.

This book, entitled *Forced Migration and Humanitarian Action: Operational Challenges and Solutions for Supporting People on the Move*, is the culmination of this work, and covers the intention and scope of the project. First, it attempts to present some existing issues in effectively responding to the needs of people in displacement, analysing various components of humanitarian assistance for different at-risks groups in displacement, providing a snapshot of the multidimensional drivers and triggers that lead to displacement and of the encompassing impacts displacement can have on individuals, communities and societies. Second, this book pays attention to the evolving challenges humanitarian actors face in responding to different needs in these operational contexts, and to some of the solutions that have been elaborated to support specific groups of vulnerable people in displacement. The case studies included in this book showcase how support systems need to be adapted to respond to shifting needs during forced displacement, highlighting in particular: the need for more and better data on child migration from Africa to Europe; the positive impacts of the engagement of female enumerators and key informants in the collection of displacement data; the increased attention for the protection of disabled and older people in forced displacement; and the specific coordination systems that need to be leveraged to protect trafficked migrant workers.

This seven-chapter volume includes an Introduction that lays out the framework of this book and of the overall research project, addressing the boundaries of the concepts of 'forced migration', 'humanitarian action' and 'vulnerability'. It includes five chapters, each presenting a case study on a

group facing specific needs and risk in displacement: children, women, older people, people with disability and trafficked migrant workers. Lastly, it includes a set of Conclusions that identify and combine the salient themes from the five case studies.

Through this work, the editors and authors look forward to collectively contributing towards the increasing academic and policy efforts in the field of forced migration and displacement, examining the complexities surrounding people's forced movement and reflecting on this global challenge for both development and humanitarian practitioners.

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We would also like to extend our appreciation to the organisations and institutions of our contributors, including the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), Christian Blind Mission (CBM), the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), the International Organization on Migration´s—Global Data Institute (IOM GDI) including the IOM Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC) and the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (IOM DTM), Kindai University and the University of Connecticut. The opportunity to work together in examining humanitarian practices for diverse groups of displaced persons showed the importance of cooperation and joint efforts among researchers and practitioners to produce meaningful evidence and recommendations on this research theme.

We are very thankful to the individuals and organisations directly involved in providing support to different at-risk groups in displacement, including children, women, older people, people with disability and trafficked migrant workers. The generosity and kindness of these individuals and organisations, particularly the anonymous interviewees, key informants, enumerators, coordinators and resource persons, were essential throughout the research process and have substantially contributed to this publication's success.

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the Labour Rights Promotion Network (LPN), the IOM colleagues in the Offices in the Asia Pacific Region, Thailand and Indonesia, staff from the Thai Government's Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) Division of Anti-Trafficking in Persons (DATIP), the Thai Government's Office of the Permanent Secretary, Winrock International (Thailand), Thailand-Migrant Working Group, as well as Tatsuhiro Mitamura, Atsushi Hanatani and Tetsuo Seki. We recognise the importance of all these professionals' insights and feedback in helping us to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand.

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The local offices of JICA in the Philippines and Thailand graciously supported the fieldwork conducted for the case studies on displaced older people and trafficked migrant workers, respectively. We are also grateful to Tomomi Orita, the head of the Peacebuilding and Humanitarian Support Cluster, for her support towards the completion of this publication. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the management, editorial and logistics teams of JICA Ogata RI comprising Yasuhiko Sato, Nao Ido, Aika Akamu, the efficient staff of JICA's library and the research project members Shota Oboshi, Tsunetaka Tsuchiya and Signy Goto-Spletzer. Their combined work and support at different moments in this project are greatly appreciated.

Finally, we would like to state that the views and interpretations expressed in this volume are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the organisations or persons mentioned in this note.

1 Introduction[1]

Forced Migration Crises, Diverse Humanitarian Needs and Responses

Lorenzo Guadagno, Lisette R. Robles and Ako Muto

1.1 Forced Migration Crises: A Defining Concern for Humanitarian Action

Forced population movements are a defining feature of almost any humanitarian crisis. People leave their homes to avoid the risks of armed conflicts, political violence, human rights violations, state failures, natural hazards, and related disasters or to find assistance and opportunities after suffering from their resulting impacts. Their movement, in turn, determines the spatial distribution and intensity of humanitarian needs, the risks people on the move are facing, and the secondary impacts on societies and host communities. Population movements in crises shape the design, targeting and delivery of short and long-term responses from the local to the international level.

Today's global humanitarian situation is characterised by diverse forced migration scenarios brought about by different crises in all regions. In 2023 alone, massive population movements were precipitated by the Israeli invasion of Gaza in October, the civil war in Sudan in April, and the Turkey–Syria earthquake in February. Each of these occurrences added millions of internally displaced persons (IDPs), asylum-seekers and refugees to the tens of millions of people already displaced worldwide. Other recent crises figure among the triggers of some of the largest displacements on record: over 11 million people fled their homes in Ukraine following the Russian invasion in 2022, including 6.5 million who crossed borders into other European countries (UNHCR, n.d.a); more than seven million Venezuelans have left the country following political turmoil and violence since 2015 (UNHCR 2023); over 13 million were displaced internally and almost seven million fled across borders following the Syrian civil war starting in 2011 (UNHCR 2020).

While not necessarily unprecedented in nature or size, these recurring crises are accumulating, raising the numbers of people displaced internally or across borders to an all-time high. At the global level, almost 120 million people were reportedly living in displacement by the end of 2022, including over 62 million people internally displaced due to conflict and violence, 8.7 million due to disasters, and almost 47 million refugees, asylum-seekers

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and other people in need of international protection (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre [IDMC] 2023; UNHCR n.d.b). In 2022 alone, IDMC recorded 32.6 million new displacements associated with disasters and 28.3 million with conflict and violence, numbers that are expected to rise further as climate change and ecosystem degradation fuel the incidence of natural hazards, while regional and global instability results in further conflict and violence, and demographic growth puts more people at risk.

Moreover, many of today's humanitarian contexts feature overlapping crises. Late in 2023, the Israeli invasion of the Gaza Strip displaced almost two million Palestinians who, for decades, have collectively experienced displacement, forced immobility and deprivation (NRC 2023). In October 2023, Cyclone Hamoon affected coastal areas in Cox's Bazar that have been home to Rohingya refugees since the escalation of the violence in Rakhine State in 2017 (IRC 2023). The impacts of the 2023 earthquake in Turkey were felt hardest in border areas that had been hosting the largest share of Syrian refugees since 2015 (Tahir 2023). Part of this complexity is the direct product of the protracted nature of many forced migration situations, which have already lasted years or decades in the absence of adequate, effective action by state, non-state and international actors to achieve sustainable solutions. Many recent humanitarian crises are, in fact, forced migration crises, in which acute humanitarian needs stemming from people's movement exacerbate years, and sometimes decades, of deprivation, marginalisation and increased vulnerability. The experiences of people who remain entreched in displacement situations provide an example of the different ways that forced migration considerations feature in operations to address crises triggered by hazards of all kinds. Response efforts increasingly require actions that address the short-term needs and the long-term circumstances of people on the move, as well as the profound drivers and causes of their forced movements.

Acute humanitarian needs also arise in situations where people face significant constraints to their mobility decisions (Collyer, Düvell, and de Haas 2012; de Haas 2021). Economic hardship, livelihood insecurity, worsening well-being perspectives and social exclusion and marginalisation compel forms of migration that are closer to the forced end of the continuum, albeit not triggered by immediate life-threatening events. Moreover, the constraints people face while on the move also result in deprivation and limited access to basic services, increasing people's vulnerability and dependence on external assistance and support.

As opportunities for regular international movements, especially towards affluent countries in Europe, North America, and the Gulf, become more difficult to access, migration routes become increasingly risky, and migration experiences become increasingly unsafe and undignified. Over the last decade, tighter border policies and the externalisation of border controls towards peripheral areas—in which the rights of migrants and refugees are systematically violated—have effectively transformed traditional and newly

established migration routes into humanitarian settings (Frelick, Kysel, and Podkul 2016). Migrants and refugees along these routes routinely face violence and physical harm, exploitation, lack of access to essential services, and natural hazards. National, local and international actors have been intervening to save lives and address the humanitarian consequences of these movements along the Mediterranean and Balkan routes into Europe and throughout Mexico to support members of the *caravanas* moving from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador towards the United States. Other contexts receive very little global media exposure and visibility, such as the Darien Gap jungle in Panama (Mohor 2024) and routes from the Horn of Africa across Djibouti and Yemen that migrants follow towards the Gulf Countries (Binwaber 2023). Further humanitarian consequences are associated with migrants' limited access to services and opportunities, especially when disasters reveal underlying conditions of vulnerability and risk, as witnessed worldwide during the COVID-19 pandemic (Guadagno 2020).

These diverse scenarios all contribute to shaping the current landscape in which humanitarian policies are formulated, and humanitarian operations implemented. The global occurrence of forced migration situations, the sheer number of people they affect, the level of need migrants experience, and the way in which these situations perpetuate and reproduce suffering and deprivation across space and time make forced migration an essential concern for today's humanitarian work. Addressing the needs of all people on the move has been recognised as a key objective of local, national and international actors in the humanitarian space, and warrants specific scrutiny and reflection in order to develop and implement more effective practices (IOM 2012).

The intersection between humanitarian action and forced migration is not a new object of study, having been explored for at least a century and examined by a growing number of academic papers, grey literature, as well as operational documents and frameworks since at least the 1980s (Elie 2014). The dynamic, evolving nature of forced migration situations and the rapid developments in many sectors of humanitarian action in recent years, however, point to the need for continued analysis, both theoretical and operational. This book aims to contribute to this objective through the study of responses to different forced migration situations. Through the analysis of operations in selected humanitarian contexts, it aims to identify practical, actionable recommendations for relevant actors to better address the specific needs and conditions of vulnerability of people on the move by enhancing activities across different sectors.

1.2 Definitions: Scope of "Forced Migration" and "Humanitarian Action"

Different occurrences of forced migration present diverse challenges to humanitarian actors worldwide. In order to identify lessons and recommendations that can be effectively applied across contexts, it is useful to approach

the issue of the effectiveness of humanitarian action holistically. This requires adopting broad definitions and theoretical perspectives when framing "forced migration" and "humanitarian action".

The term "forced migration" is used throughout this book in a comprehensive manner as an umbrella term that refers to the movement of persons away from their place of usual residence due to a diversity of factors and in a diversity of circumstances that all imply force, compulsion, or significant levels of coercion.[2] In this formulation, "forced migration" encompasses the movement of IDPs due to conflicts and disasters, asylum-seekers, refugees, and people displaced across borders in the context of disasters, as well as victims of trafficking. We also recognise the need to consider "forced" as the migration of people moving in the context of severe economic hardship and livelihood insecurity, especially when it leads people to experience risky and undignified conditions along migration routes and at their destination.

We also acknowledge that the forced nature of migration is a dynamic concept and may evolve throughout the migrants' journey. Their ability to make mobility decisions—including whether, how and when to move onward or to return—may be affected by their circumstances and experiences. A migration project that starts as rather voluntary and/or planned can become increasingly constrained as people on the move face challenges, human rights violations, and marginalisation (Collyer, Düvell, and de Haas 2012). These constraints and challenges have specific humanitarian implications, especially when they arise as a direct consequence of people's migration status and experiences. From an operational standpoint, this requires looking at the forced nature of migration (and, more importantly, accounting for associated situations of need) not just as a consequence of the event or process initially triggering a movement but as an evolving feature of population movements.

Adopting this comprehensive perspective is particularly important in light of two considerations that have implications for policy and practice. First, any forced migration situation is always the result of the interaction of a specific trigger with deeper socio-economic and environmental drivers (see Black et al. 2011 for a discussion on multi-causality and intersections among environmental and other drivers). Second, many of today's migration crisis scenarios feature people who might have initially decided to move for very diverse reasons but end up on the same routes, presenting similar humanitarian needs and facing similar risks, regardless of the specific migration status and protections they qualify for (MMC 2023).

This volume also adopts a broad definition of "humanitarian action", which refers to all efforts undertaken to save lives and alleviate the suffering of people affected by crises that threaten their physical integrity and safety, well-being and dignity (Gutierrez Salgado 2013). We consider that this may include interventions by state institutions, civil society bodies, international organisations and other actors, whether or not explicitly invested with a humanitarian mandate or primarily devoted to humanitarian work. Humanitarian action is understood to encompass life-saving functions

such as rescue at sea, evacuation support and rapid delivery of food, water, emergency healthcare, and other services that are essential for the protection of people's human rights, including legal support and counter-trafficking assistance, and support functions such as data collection, coordination and community engagement.

Throughout this book, neither of these definitions is used in a strict, normative manner. Rather, they are both adopted loosely to help explore the boundaries of the domain and the commonalities of approaches adopted across diverse operational contexts. This is coherent with well-established perspectives in this field of studies, especially supported by scholars and practitioners who have highlighted that narrower approaches can produce or support narratives that exclude, disempower and marginalise (some) people on the move (Zetter 1991). This approach allows the authors of the different chapters to explore the domain according to their own experiences and understanding—a key opportunity for a publication authored by a majority of humanitarian practitioners rather than pure academics. The authors seek to leverage evidence to improve practices.

1.3 Specific Humanitarian Concerns and Operational Challenges in Forced Migration Contexts

Forced migration scenarios inherently intersect with humanitarian action. Disempowerment and vulnerability are intrinsic to these forms of movement, which often result in severed family and community ties and the loss of social support systems. Moving away from one's home also means losing of local knowledge and control over resources, as well as the capacity to avoid hazards and cope with their consequences. Whenever large numbers of forced migrants are on the move, these conditions translate into a significant concentration of assistance needs, specifically associated with the fact that people are on the move (Kälin 2008).

Moreover, forced migration situations are characterised by very specific operational challenges, which have been an object of study very early in the elaboration of the field of humanitarian action in forced migration settings (Barakat and Strand 2000; Martin et al. 2005). Population movements, both internal and cross-border, can increase local demographic and cultural diversity, requiring intervening actors to be able to adapt their services to the specific needs of people speaking various languages, professing multiple faiths, and presenting diverse preferences or limitations related to the provision of food, non-food items and essential services. People on the move may also present specific needs that need to be met through specialised services and assistance (e.g. documentation, international transportation, or legal assistance). Constraints people face while on the move often result in movements towards areas that are not easily accessible or highly risky for both crisis-affected persons and humanitarian personnel. Lastly, humanitarian actors face increasing issues in providing services and assistance to

people on the move, as their operating space shrinks with the progressive criminalisation of migration movements (Roepstorff 2019).

While the centrality of forced migration considerations for humanitarian action has long been identified and analysed, shifting global migration and displacement patterns continue challenging humanitarian action in new and evolving ways, requiring relevant actors to constantly adapt their responses. This has led to the development of a variety of context-specific measures and system-wide approaches, some of which are surveyed in this book. However, much work remains to be done, and recent analytic and programmatic processes within the humanitarian sector have clearly highlighted that successfully preventing, responding to and addressing displacement and forced migration should be key objectives for the successful evolution of humanitarian action (HLP IDP 2021; OCHA 2016).

Coordination is a crucial element that underpins all humanitarian efforts in forced migration scenarios. Addressing the needs of migrants and displaced persons requires collaborating with a broad set of actors, not all of whom are primarily dedicated to humanitarian interventions (including, for instance, migrant organisations, border management authorities, consulates and embassies) or well-integrated in humanitarian coordination mechanisms. Moreover, coordination needs to extend across administrative areas and national borders, as many of the relevant operations need to be multi-sited in order to allow for effective humanitarian service delivery along migration routes, across different displacement sites or between places of displacement and return/resettlement. The endorsement of a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) by the UN General Assembly in 2016 (United Nations 2016), the emergence of a specific Refugee Coordination Model that complements humanitarian coordination under the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in refugee situations (UNHCR 2018) and a dedicated humanitarian coordination structure to respond to the movement of migrants and refugees (for instance out of Venezuela), are clear testimonies of these specificities (R4V n.d.).

Moreover, responses to forced migration situations have to concomitantly address the short and long-term needs of the people on the move, especially when constraints on people's mobility translate into protracted situations of displacement (Kocks et al. 2018; Leiderer and Roxin 2023). Relevant operations routinely encompass work as diverse as the distribution of life-saving supplies, the provision of education and healthcare, including psychosocial support, and the planning of land use in settlements or the construction of shelters. These activities form part of a continuum from preparedness and response to post-crisis reconstruction and recovery that, in forced migration scenarios, largely revolves around the progress towards durable solutions that are often built on people's further movement (i.e., through returns, resettlement or further migration) (IASC 2010; IOM 2016).

As a last recurrent element of specific operational approaches, it needs to be highlighted that population movements have significant social and

environmental cascading impacts in areas of destinations (Tagliacozzo, Guadagno, and Ayeb-Karlsson 2022), requiring the integration of relevant assistance and support in area-based approaches towards service provision, community cohesion, resilience-building and ecosystem management that also involve host communities and local actors. As such, the continuum of efforts to respond to forced migration and address its consequences sit squarely at the intersection of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding work.

1.4 "Vulnerability" and Adapting Humanitarian Action to the Specific Needs of Individuals on the Move

People on the move in any given crisis are not a homogeneous entity, and additional efforts are needed to adapt and complement humanitarian assistance and service provision to the circumstances and needs of individuals on the move. Specific patterns of exclusions and marginalisation emerge in different contexts pertaining to factors such as age (particularly for the elderly and the very young), gender and sexual orientation, health and ability status, migration status, and ethnicity or race, among other factors. The intersection of these factors determines the specific barriers hindering each person's access to resources and assistance in crises, the risks they face, and the needs they are not able to meet autonomously. Social, economic, political and environmental factors shaping these conditions ultimately determine the unique ways in which each individual will be affected by a crisis—i.e. their vulnerability (Wisner et al. 2004; UNDRR n.d.).

Adopting inclusive approaches that acknowledge the diversity of conditions and impacts is the foundation of effective humanitarian action in forced migration situations. Such approaches require humanitarian actors to develop a better understanding of their operating environment and increase their ability to provide affected persons with appropriate services. They also need to establish systems that allow complementing better-established forms of assistance with responses that address different people's specific needs. In most operations, however, humanitarian work requires striking a balance between the speed of delivery of assistance and the provision of adapted, appropriate services in a highly constrained and constantly evolving operating environment. The notion of specific demographic groups being "particularly vulnerable" is widely used by humanitarians as a way to find this balance (OCHA 2016; see also the reference to "vulnerable migrants" in IOM 2019) and is integrated into relevant policy and operational frameworks (UN 2016). In fact, it is a pragmatic shorthand to design and provide assistance that is adapted and specific, at least to a certain degree, without compromising the ability to deliver aid rapidly and effectively. The integration of measures specific to "vulnerable groups" translates, for instance, into improved disaggregation of displacement data, integration of accessible design and prevention of protection risks in the planning of camps and shelters, and improved engagement of representatives of marginalised minorities in humanitarian

decision-making. Each of these measures needs to be supported by capacity building of humanitarian personnel, deployment of experts, partnerships, and budget allocations.

We fully acknowledge that the use of this terminology can be quite problematic, as recently highlighted by Turner (2019), Sözer (2020), and Gilodi, Albert, and Nienaber (2022). The reference to "groups" can result in many of the specific circumstances of crisis-affected individuals being overlooked, while the identification of people with a condition of "vulnerability" can be victimising and disempowering, leading to criticism from crisis-affected persons, scholars and practitioners. It is also quite possible that by adopting and using these categories, humanitarian actors might contribute to reproducing the patterns of exclusion and marginalisation people face. However, the primary objective of this book remains to observe how humanitarians adapt their work to the concrete operational circumstances they face in forced migration settings. As such, we try instead to investigate how awareness and understanding of differential patterns of needs and risks among crisis-affected persons can support an evolution of humanitarian practices and more targeted work. We consciously refrain from criticising the widespread use of "vulnerability" terminologies and categories and accept them as heuristic and operational tools that can be usefully leveraged to identify areas of potential improvement and transformation and ultimately support more effective assistance (as accepted in other domains, for instance by Wisner et al. 2004, and Robinson 2023).

We also acknowledge that individual identities are always defined at the intersection of different dimensions and characteristics. These intersections have very different implications across contexts—both in crises and non-crisis times—in determining people's specific conditions of vulnerability and risk. Responses designed to address the specific needs of a single group in a standardised manner may not be the most effective way to account for these intersections. Therefore, through our analysis of the case studies and in the conclusion of this book, we attempt to draw lessons and recommendations that transcend the work with or for single groups and holistically address the need for inclusive humanitarian action in forced migration contexts.

Lastly, we note that the root causes of the conditions of vulnerability people face in crises are inevitably determined by patterns of exclusion, marginalisation and disempowerment that are embedded in pre-crisis "normal-time" social, political and economic processes and decisions (Wisner et al. 2004). For humanitarian actors, addressing these conditions of vulnerability means confronting issues and factors that are more systemic and longer-lasting than crisis response alone. Therefore, it needs to be noted that by acknowledging (or not) group-specific issues, by addressing (or not) group-specific needs, and by creating (or not) conditions for the meaningful participation of members of these groups, humanitarian actors play a role in reproducing or addressing these conditions (Sözer 2020). Effective, more inclusive practices can both support more effective humanitarian service delivery and contribute

to long-term social, cultural and political change around these issues—yet another way in which the work we are analysing sits at the intersection of humanitarian and development concerns.

1.5 This Book in Context: Principles and Frameworks of Humanitarian Action in Forced Migration Scenarios

This book aims to contribute to the analysis of how humanitarian action is evolving in forced migration situations and to support its further progress and change. It does this by compiling the perspectives of practitioners and researchers working with different groups of forced migrants, whose experiences of forced migration—and conditions and needs in crises—diverge owing to their various "vulnerable" characteristics, as listed in the previous section. Collectively, the chapters provide a picture of some of the challenges humanitarian actors face when working with forced migrants with specific needs and some of the attempts they have made to adapt responses to the specificities of their operational context.

The need to adopt inclusive approaches in humanitarian action—particularly in forced migration situations—has been explicitly identified as a key transformation mandated by the humanitarian system to support the objective of "Leaving No One Behind" under the Agenda for Humanity (OCHA 2016). As a core responsibility of the international humanitarian system, this requires prioritising to specifically address the needs faced by the most vulnerable groups, including women and girls, persons with disabilities, older persons, minors and ethnic minorities. The relevance of these objectives for the international humanitarian system and the need for sustained action to progress towards them have again been highlighted through the work of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement (HLP IDP 2021) and embedded as a key priority to address in the Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement (United Nations 2022). Moreover, they are explicitly set out in both the Global Compact on Refugees (under its section on "meeting needs and supporting communities") (United Nations 2018) and the Global Compact on Migration (especially, but not exclusively, under Objective 7) (United Nations 2019).

Different national and international actors leverage a variety of operational approaches to pursue these objectives. Human rights-based approaches, for instance, are supported by organisations such as OHCHR in crisis contexts to ensure participation, protection, and assistance for all people affected by crises. They can also be used to ensure that humanitarian actors are accountable for guaranteeing that everybody's rights are respected and fulfilled (OHCHR n.d.). People-centred approaches have been elaborated and implemented by humanitarian actors, particularly within the Red Cross and Red Crescent system, as a way to ensure that humanitarian assistance leverages the agency of people affected by crises in the diagnosis of the situation and the design and implementation of solutions (Slim 2020).

Recently, the international humanitarian system has committed to the principle of Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), recognising the imbalance of power between aid providers and (marginalised) aid recipients. There is a need to support transparency and participation in humanitarian decision-making to avoid undermining the rights and dignity of crisis-affected persons—especially the most marginalised (IASC n.d.). At national and local levels, instead, emergency service providers have adopted approaches designed around the concept of "cultural competence", recognising the diverse social, cultural, religious and linguistic needs of people in crises and the need for responders to adapt their practices to effectively deliver services (for a synthesis of the wide variety of national and local approaches, see Connolly, Knox and Haupt 2020).

From a humanitarian standpoint, all of these approaches and attempts are primarily concerned with the effectiveness of aid and adherence to humanitarian principles, notably the principles of humanity (the need to address human suffering, with particular attention paid to the situation of the most vulnerable) and impartiality (the need to provide humanitarian aid without discrimination on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinions). Leaving No One Behind, however, is also a vital commitment and objective under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Inclusive humanitarian action contributes to the collective aim of combating inequality and discrimination that undermine the fulfilment of people's rights (UNSCEB 2017).

The understanding of humanitarian action as an element in promoting these longer-term well-being and development objectives is central to approaches that comprehensively promote human security. Human security frameworks and objectives are built around the need to identify and address the full extent of challenges and crises threatening every person's survival, livelihoods and dignity through people-centred, comprehensive responses that protect and empower all people. Humanitarian aid is key to preserving and promoting freedom and agency during and after crises, and in particular for the most vulnerable individuals involved in forced migration.

1.6 Bridging the Humanitarian and Development Work for People on the Move

This book is the culmination of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development research project "Evolving Humanitarian Action for Forced Migration", which examines the challenges forced migration poses to humanitarian action and recent developments towards improving assistance and better-protecting people with specific needs in different phases of displacement.

Encounters with people in different displacement scenarios are not new for a cooperation agency like JICA. JICA was established in 1974 and

consolidated the work of the Japan Emigration and Migration Service (JEMIS), the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency (OTCA),[3] and several other organisations. In particular, JEMIS provided support and guidance to Japanese migrants, as well as fulfilled other tasks necessary to promote Japanese emigration since its establishment in 1963. Records of Japan's migration experience date back to 1868 (National Diet Library 2014), long before the establishment of JICA. Since then, Japanese emigrants and their descendants have, against various hardships, formed Nikkei communities and contributed to the socio-economic development of the countries to which they emigrated. Along with this background, JICA's work evolved from direct support to the emigrants, switching to international cooperation for the development of the countries to which they emigrated—mainly in Latin America—and then maintaining and strengthening partnerships with Nikkei communities (Hosono, Campos Rocha, and Hongo 2016; JICA 1999, 2023). The Japanese migration experience and the evolving role of JICA in supporting Nikkei communities underscore the importance of medium- and long-term cooperation in improving the lives of people who move for various reasons, especially those who are compelled to move in situations of acute vulnerability and risk.

Humanitarians are commonly engaged in short-term assistance to meet the immediate needs of displaced persons but are often not fully equipped to deliver the kind of long-term assistance needed to support progress towards durable solutions. Working in displacement situations inherently requires integrating the development approach in humanitarian assistance (Harlid 2016).

As an implementing agency for development cooperation, JICA has had ample opportunities to navigate this interface between offering humanitarian responses and long-term cooperation. JICA's involvement in emergency assistance varies depending on whether the emergency is related to natural hazards and disasters or armed conflict. In the case of disasters, JICA provides both emergency assistance and development cooperation, focusing on all affected persons and communities, including displaced persons. Some of this work has been based on partnerships with the private sector, and has aimed to comprehensively support the rehabilitation and reconstruction process in affected areas and build a disaster-resilient country and society, considering the lessons learned from past disasters in Japan (Ono and Jibiki 2018).

In situations of armed conflict, whether leading to internal or cross-border movements, JICA has supported the reconstruction and development of the conflict-affected countries, taking a medium- to long-term perspective in cooperation in partnership with other agencies engaged in humanitarian assistance. Its main traditional beneficiaries among people on the move have been the returnees. However, the 2016 adoption of the CRRF brought about a significant change in responsibilities and coordination for comprehensive assistance for refugees.

Considering that the situation in which the number of refugees remaining in displacement settings longer than five years has increased as a result of protracted armed conflicts, the CRRF advocated promoting the self-reliance of refugees staying in host countries rather than waiting for their return home. This influenced JICA's activities, leading to increased engagement in support of host countries through bilateral cooperation, targeting refugees and host country nationals as direct beneficiaries.

Against this background, JICA established this research project on humanitarian action and forced migration to better understand the needs of those facing specific conditions of vulnerability and marginalisation during crises, especially when they are forced to move from their habitual residence. In order to effectively respond to the complexity of displacement, it is vital to comprehend the experiences of displaced persons, how their needs change over time, and how those assisting them can effectively meet those needs.

Through the collective works of researchers and practitioners, the project created a platform to exchange knowledge and experiences, contribute to the broader understanding of forced migration, and improve relevant crisis response operations. These exchanges highlighted how important it is that the issues and approaches identified through the project—while primarily related to the implementation of humanitarian action—be mirrored in development cooperation to deliver seamless support for people in displacement as they progress towards finding durable solutions.

1.7 Outline of the Book: Articulation of the Thematic Case Studies

In order to unpack the specific patterns of vulnerability that humanitarian actors have to address in crisis situations and identify relevant responses, this book presents a collection of case studies. Each case analyses a selected forced migration scenario, a different group of forced migrants, and a distinct set of practices by a specific actor or group of actors. This approach, while perhaps lacking breadth and comprehensiveness, allows authors to analyse the challenges, actions and lessons learned in each operational context in detail. This thereby meets the precondition of being able to contribute meaningfully to our knowledge and understanding of this domain. Moreover, cross-context comparison allows the distillation of some recommendations that hold more general value.

The selection of case studies has mainly been oriented by the degree to which specific groups are considered in current humanitarian action. While we acknowledge that significant forms of discrimination, marginalisation and persecution exist against individuals and groups based on race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, beliefs, language and culture, political opinions or profession, the following chapters focus on inclusive action for children, women, persons with disabilities, elderly people, and trafficked migrants. A broad array of interventions, spanning short and long-term assistance, are

examined by a diversity of humanitarian actors to address the specific needs of these groups, supported by relevant international, regional and national policy frameworks and institutional commitments.

Our decision to privilege these types of responses in this book is by no means an attempt to establish (or confirm) a hierarchy of vulnerability and needs. On the contrary, we are cognisant that the lack of dedicated attention to the specific needs of other vulnerable individuals may itself be a driver of vulnerability. Instead, we approach this selection pragmatically, selecting specific responses among bodies of work in the theoretical analysis (see, for instance, the section on "lived experiences and representations" in Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al. 2014) and in relevant policies and practice (OCHA 2016). We interpret their emergence as a positive development towards broader inclusion and attempt to identify lessons and recommendations that could be applied more widely.

In Chapter 2, titled "Humanitarian programming on child migration in Northern Africa and Southern Europe: The role of data", Irene Schöfberger and Salma Nooh focus on data collection and analysis on migrant children along the Mediterranean migration route between Northern Africa and Southern Europe. They explore how the operational challenges embedded in migration work conducted at the interface between different regions—where policy priorities related to child protection and border control collide—lead to data and knowledge gaps. Through an analysis of the work of relevant practitioners, they look at how persistent information gaps on the number, location and needs of migrant children on the move reflect on the planning and targeting of relevant humanitarian operations and propose solutions for improved collection, sharing and use of appropriate data across countries and regions.

Chapter 3, by Alexandra Bate and Nikki Herwanger, entitled "Representative humanitarian data collection: Women's participation for better data on migration and internal displacement", reflects on the practices adopted by different offices of the International Organization for Migration in the rollout of its Displacement Tracking Matrix. The analysis focuses on the equal representation of men and women in crisis-related data collection operations among both data collection staff and key informants. The authors assess the perspectives of relevant practitioners to understand what factors hinder (or enable) women's participation in the data collection process and what practices can be mobilised to improve it. They then document the positive outcomes of increased gender parity on data availability and quality, as well as their implications on the design and implementation of humanitarian programming.

Chapter 4 titled, "From policy to practice: The evolution of disability-inclusive humanitarian action on internal displacement in Vanuatu and Nigeria", was written by Oliver Neuschaefer and Louisa Yakusawa. It looks at how global policy developments on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action have been effectively translated into operational efforts in displacement situations. Comparing two different displacement

contexts—triggered by natural hazards and disasters in Vanuatu and violence in Nigeria, respectively, they identify progress achieved by humanitarian actors and outstanding challenges that remain to be addressed in promoting the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities. They also identify priorities to address such challenges, including the need to support and enable the work of self-representative organisations in humanitarian spaces.

Chapter 5, written by Lisette R. Robles and Rogie Royce Z. Carandang, is titled "Inclusion of displaced older people in research and practice: Insights on humanitarian action for older Filipinos". The chapter explores the specific conditions of older people in displacement based on an extensive literature review and an analysis of displacement triggered by different events in the Philippines. This analysis allows readers to identify ways in which humanitarian service provision can be adapted to effectively address the specific health, psychosocial and socio-economic conditions of fragility and needs that older people experience in displacement. Practitioners can then leverage their contribution to crisis management and emergency responses and support relevant work through more systematic advocacy.

Chapter 6, titled "Protecting forced migrant workers: A case study of rescue operations for fishermen trafficked from Thailand to Indonesia" by Tatsuya Hata and Kaito Takeuchi, focuses on trafficked migrant workers, analysing the ways that patterns of deprivation and marginalisation (and the mobility constraints migrants experience as a consequence) change all along people's migration journeys. Looking at counter-trafficking responses to rescue and protect large numbers of fishermen trafficked from Thailand to Indonesia between 2014 and 2016, they explore the boundaries of humanitarian action in forced migration contexts along a continuum that spans search-and-rescue, protection and repatriation and reintegration. Throughout this analysis, they show that effective humanitarian action in forced migration contexts relies on context-specific, dynamic coordination systems, which include actors that are not primarily humanitarian in nature (e.g., consular personnel, migrant organisations, and migrants themselves).

In the concluding chapter of the book, titled "Reflections on operational challenges in forced migration: Towards inclusive humanitarian action for people in displacement", Lisette R. Robles and Lorenzo Guadagno combine the insights and perspectives from the case studies to identify common themes and parallel approaches while emphasising specificities of conditions and responses in emergencies. Practices and lessons identified through the case studies are organised across five areas considered most relevant for adapting humanitarian action to address specific needs in forced migration—namely, data collection, direct delivery of services, coordination with multiple actors, engagement of beneficiaries and advocacy. For each of these areas, the book provides recommendations for more adapted, effective work that can be applicable to other operational contexts, emphasising the need to assist and protect diverse groups of forced migrants.

The book also reflects on the intersectional nature of the challenges and barriers people experience in crises, highlighting the importance of addressing the diversity of individual situations as an outstanding area of progress for humanitarian action worldwide. Lastly, it provides a critical reflection on the scope and boundaries of humanitarian action in forced migration scenarios as an element of a continuum of different forms of assistance that address both short and long-term needs while considering both short and long-term impacts and outcomes.

Notes

1 This book was prepared as part of a JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development research project entitled "Research on the Evolving Humanitarian Action for Forced Migration."
2 In the absence of a legal definition, this has been adapted from IOM (2019).
3 OTCA was established in 1962 by the Japanese government to implement technical cooperation in developing regions based on treaties and other international commitments (JICA 2008, 136).

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2 Humanitarian Programming on Child Migration in Northern Africa and Southern Europe

The Role of Data

Irene Schöfberger and Salma Nooh

2.1 Introduction

As the number of child migrants increases worldwide, so do their humanitarian needs. In 2020, it was estimated that there were 35.5 million international child migrants, the highest number ever recorded (International Data Alliance for Children on the Move (IDAC) 2021). While all children are different and their experiences unique, child migrants are often exposed to safety risks during their migration journey or at their destinations (IDAC 2022). Eight out of ten young migrants and adolescents travelling along the Central Mediterranean route to reach Europe report being exposed to exploitation (UNICEF and IOM 2017). Existing research has investigated child migrants and their conditions of vulnerability from different angles. Macro-level studies have mostly explored child protection and migration policy regimes (Gornik, Sedmak, and Sauer 2018), while micro-level studies have dedicated greater attention to children and their embeddedness in different contexts, including humanitarian contexts (Ensor 2010; Lems, Oester, and Strasser 2020). However, meso-level studies of the role of non-state actors, including humanitarian actors, in assisting and protecting children remain scarce. Also missing is an analysis of how these actors use evidence to inform their programming and the implications of data gaps. While researchers have investigated links between evidence and policymaking (Castles 2003; Scholten 2018), they have dedicated less attention to links between evidence and humanitarian programming.

This chapter investigates *how non-state humanitarian actors use data and evidence on child migration*, focusing on the provision of humanitarian assistance to child migrants in Northern Africa and Southern Europe. It dedicates particular attention to countries lying at the border between the two regions—that is, Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia in Northern Africa, and Italy, Spain and Greece in Southern Europe. While migration occurs more frequently within regions (IDAC 2021), it is often at regional borders that different policy and legal frameworks meet, and state responsibilities are more intensively negotiated, frequently leading to protection gaps and greater humanitarian needs.

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The chapter looks at non-state actors providing humanitarian assistance to children involved in mixed migration. "Mixed migration" is referred to in this chapter as "the cross-border movement of people, generally in an irregular manner, involving individuals and groups who travel alongside each other, using similar routes and means of transport or facilitators, but for different reasons". People travelling as part of mixed movements have different needs and profiles. They may include asylum-seekers, refugees, victims of trafficking, unaccompanied or separated children, stateless persons, and migrants (including migrants in irregular situations or migrants in vulnerable situations)" (UNHCR Master Glossary of Terms[1]; see also Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) 2018). While migration policies have often distinguished between forced/involuntary and voluntary migration, in recent years, an increasing number of researchers and international organisations[2] have underscored the need to recognise that the reality is often more complex and nuanced, instead proposing the adoption of a mixed migration lens. Such a lens is better suited to acknowledging the diversity, multi-dimensionality, and interlinkages of migration drivers for persons with different migrant or refugee status. This also appears to be the best lens to analyse child migration in Northern Africa and Southern Europe, given that migration drivers in the regions are often multidimensional, involving factors as diverse as conflict and persecution, climate change, poverty, and individual aspirations (e.g., Bartolini and Zakoska-Todorovska 2020). As noted by IDAC (2023b), the Central Mediterranean Route is a common mixed migration route for children, as it is taken by both refugee and migrant children looking for protection and better socioeconomic opportunities in North Africa and Europe. It is estimated that 15,770 unaccompanied minors travelled along this route in 2017 (IDAC 2023b).

For the scope of this chapter, in line with the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), a "child" is defined as a human being below the age of 18 unless, under the law applicable to the child, a majority is attained earlier (UN 1989). It further defines "unaccompanied and separated children" as those children who are not accompanied by any adult relative and those who are separated from their parents or primary caregivers, respectively (in line with IDAC 2021).

This chapter draws on a mixed-methods approach, including a literature review, the analysis of policies and websites, as well as nine semi-structured interviews with representatives of non-state humanitarian actors (in their function as data users) and international organisations (in their function as data producers). In line with the approach of the whole volume, the chapter focuses on the meso-level and explores both vertical and horizontal interactions between humanitarian actors and child migrants and among humanitarian actors and data-related actors and processes.

The chapter is structured as follows. Section 2.2 provides some methodological considerations, followed by Sections 2.3 and 2.4 with an overview of child migration, key humanitarian concerns, and data on child migration and their use for humanitarian programming. Section 2.5 focuses on the case study

of non-state humanitarian actors in Northern Africa and Southern Europe to further analyse the use of child migration data for humanitarian programming. Finally, Section 2.6 provides some conclusions and recommendations.

2.2 Methodology

The analysis for this chapter was conducted in two steps. The authors first conducted an analysis of the literature, policies and websites of humanitarian actors. This first step served to delineate humanitarian concerns related to child migration, as well as survey the use of data on child migration for humanitarian assistance globally and, more specifically, in Northern Africa and Southern Europe. The policy analysis focused on documents on child migration and protection adopted by African Union (AU), European Union (EU), and UN bodies. Website analysis focused on project descriptions of four UN agencies, four humanitarian networks and fifty-two non-governmental organisations (NGOs), with all of these organisations identifying child migrants in Northern Africa and Southern Europe as beneficiaries of their humanitarian assistance projects.

As a second step, the authors conducted an empirical investigation focusing on the use of data for humanitarian programming in Northern Africa and Southern Europe. To explore this aspect, nine semi-structured interviews took place between November 2022 and January 2023. Of these, six were conducted with non-state humanitarian actors working with child migrants in Northern Africa and Southern Europe to explore how these organisations use data related to child migration (data users). These six interviewees work on international protection, policy advice, advocacy, and programme/project management within their organisations. Three additional interviews were conducted with staff members from international organisations working on data on child migration, including in humanitarian settings (data producers). Within their organisations, these three interviewees work on migration and child migration data and statistics, as well as coordination and operations support. All interviews were conducted online and analysed through an inductive approach (Kuckartz 2012). The non-state humanitarian organisations for which the six interviewed data users work are active in Northern Africa and Southern Europe, particularly Algeria, Greece, Italy, Libya, Spain, and Tunisia. Two organisations are active at the regional level in Northern Africa. The assistance they provide to child migrants includes humanitarian corridors, shelter, health, documentation, legal assistance, housing, psychosocial and family support, family reunification, education, vocational training, transition to adulthood, and poverty reduction. The three international organisations for which the three interviewed data producers work are active transregionally, and they engage in the production and/or improvement of data on child migrants, including in humanitarian settings.

This qualitative study focuses on a selected number of non-state humanitarian actors and does not aim to be representative of all humanitarian actors

assisting child migrants. It mainly investigates how non-state humanitarian actors use data on child migration and is not intended to provide a comprehensive analysis of their humanitarian actions per se. Interviewees were selected based on their role in providing humanitarian assistance to child migrants, their employment in non-state humanitarian organisations, and their relevance to the selected case regions and countries.

2.3 Child Migration and Humanitarian Concerns

Child migrants present different degrees of vulnerability, depending on their age and personal and socioeconomic characteristics (such as who they are travelling with, the length of travel, whether the journey is authorised and regular, whether they are escaping child-specific persecution, whether their family is aware of and involved in their travel, and whether humanitarian assistance is available) (Bhabha and Abel 2020). Unequal access to resources in countries of origin often determines the different levels of risk child migrants face in transit and destination countries and shapes their ability to cope with such risks (Maioli et al. 2021). For example, age, gender, education, country of origin and ethnicity, health status and social status, as well as the length of travel and availability of protection and humanitarian assistance, appear to be crucial (Cahill et al. 2014; Hansen et al. 2019). However, data gaps still hinder a comprehensive assessment of these differential conditions of vulnerability during child migration.

Policy frameworks in countries of transit and destination are significant determinants of vulnerability. Child migration policy lies at the intersection of child protection policy and migration policy. However, these two policy fields differ substantially, leading to ambivalences in relevant discourses, frameworks and practices (Bhabha 2018). On the one hand, the CRC attributes innate rights to children and establishes guiding principles to ensure the existence of safeguards, namely non-discrimination, adherence to the best interests of the child, life, survival and development, participation, and the child's right to be heard and respected. States that are parties of the CRC have obligations towards children within their territories irrespective of their nationality or migration status; they furthermore need to ensure that CRC provisions are mainstreamed and reflected in their national legislation. On the other hand, states are also responsible for immigration policy, which is typically more restrictive.

In this context, age and vulnerability assessments are essential for identifying the legal and humanitarian obligations of states and child migrants' "right to have rights" (Arendt 1962, in Gornik, Sedmak, and Sauer 2018, 10). However, some researchers have argued that approaching child migration exclusively through a vulnerability lens may be misleading, and they have underlined the need to go beyond merely humanitarian approaches and advocate for the political legitimation of children to claim their rights beyond the "goodwill of national authorities" (Gornik, Sedmak, and Sauer

2018, 9) in line with the recognition of their agency contained in the CRC. Similarly, Ensor (2010) has pointed out ambivalences between the CRC's best interest and right to be heard principles, with the first one suggesting a more protective approach and the second allowing greater recognition of children's agency and rights to choose to engage in activities that could appear to be contradictory to the best interest principle, such as migrating irregularly or absconding from states of first arrival. Regarding age, moreover, researchers have underlined the need to identify solutions to facilitate child and adolescent migrants' transitions to adulthood through measures that "involve opportunities for both protection and exploration, dependence and independence" (Bhabha 2014, 14).

There are several humanitarian concerns related to child migration, as shown by available evidence. A United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) poll of almost 4,000 young migrants and refugees aged 14–24 found that 67% were forced to leave their home country, 49% had not seen a doctor since the beginning of their journey, 58% had lost one or more years of school, and 38% had not received any help during their journey (UNICEF 2018). Trafficking, child labour, violence, discrimination, and detention are other risks that child migrants routinely face (IDAC 2021). The inability to access critical services and the lack of support throughout the journey pose serious threats to the well-being of child migrants. In this context, non-state humanitarian actors intervene to address protection gaps. The assistance provided by non-state humanitarian actors ranges from emergency interventions, such as the provision of food, water, and shelter, to legal services, sustainable livelihood support through vocational trainings, educational services, psychosocial support, language courses, and others. While non-state actors are essential in filling the humanitarian needs of child migrants that are not addressed by states, they face different challenges. In particular, they need timely and comprehensive information to identify the needs of beneficiaries and to design tailored assistance measures. They also need to raise funds and advocate for the legitimacy of their interventions. However, there are various challenges related to data on child migration, as will be seen in the next section.

Ambivalence on the position of children vis-à-vis states of transit and destination, together with additional challenges such as data and funding, lead to gaps in the humanitarian assistance and protection that states provide to child migrants.

2.4 Data on Child Migration and Their Use for Humanitarian Programming

In 2020, there were an estimated 35.5 million international child migrants globally, the largest number ever recorded (IDAC 2021). Most such children are on the move within their region of origin. The number of internally and internationally displaced children has nearly doubled over the last ten years, with most having fled conflicts and violence. In addition, almost half of all

refugees are estimated to be children (IDAC 2021). Worldwide, the Missing Migrants Project (MMP) recorded the deaths of 2,892 children during migration between 2014 and December 15, 2022,[3] with this number being likely lower than the actual number.

2.4.1 Gaps and Challenges

There is still much that is not known regarding the number of child migrants and vital aspects, such as their age and gender, their countries of origin and destination, their reasons to migrate, whether they are travelling alone or with others, the risks they face during migration, or their humanitarian needs. Moreover, existing data are often of poor quality, as they tend to be outdated, patchy, scattered across various sources, and incomparable across countries/regions. Migration stock data remain the main source of information available on child migration,[4] but they are often outdated and incomplete (Singleton 2018). Twenty-nine per cent of countries and territories do not disaggregate migration stock data by age. Availability and age disaggregation of migration flow data are also uneven across countries. In Europe, data on unaccompanied minors are often available only for those who have applied for asylum, and the situation is worse in other regions. Of countries and territories collecting refugee data, 39% do not disaggregate them by age. The same is true for 86% of states collecting data on conflict-related international displacement (IDAC 2021). The lack of age-disaggregated data hinders the development of well-informed and age-specific humanitarian programmes. Also lacking are qualitative and longitudinal data (Ensor 2010), which could enable a better understanding of children's perspectives, motivations, and insights that could help address quantitative data gaps.

Different factors contribute to such evidence gaps. First, data collection within countries is often not conducted comprehensively, accurately or in a timely manner. For example, censuses are usually only conducted every ten years, and relevant work has been further delayed or disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, countries often adopt different data collection methodologies, definitions and indicators (Turner and Burgess 2020), hindering cross-country sharing and comparability. Limited integration of different data sources and systems (e.g., statistical, administrative and innovative data) and scarce data sharing and dissemination also contribute to the dearth of information on child migrants and their needs (IDAC 2023a).

Collecting data on child migrants is particularly difficult due to challenges in accessing this population group in general, and more specifically, children moving irregularly, being trafficked, unaccompanied, living outside reception facilities, missing, or identifying as LGBTQ+ (Maioli et al. 2021). Many child migrants, in fact, may wish to avoid contact with actors in charge of data collection due to their legal status, age and gender, or other reasons. Data collection is particularly challenging in humanitarian settings because of unsafe and unstable situations in the field.

2.4.2 Improving Child Migration Data

Efforts to address these challenges have recently increased. In 2020, UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR and OECD launched the IDAC,[5] a coalition of governments, international organisations, NGOs, think tanks, academics, and civil society with the aim of improving statistics and data on migrant and displaced children and supporting evidence-based policymaking. The alliance works on strengthening national data systems and capacities, developing child-specific indicators and metadata, improving data availability, and promoting innovative methods and solutions (IDAC 2023a).

UNICEF moreover developed guidelines for ethical research involving children, recommending the following four fundamental areas for ethical consideration: 1) harm and benefits, 2) informed consent, 3) privacy and confidentiality, and 4) payment and compensation (Graham et al. 2013). UNICEF also includes adolescent migrants in its U-Report survey platform, a digital platform launched in 2011 to involve young generations in programming, emergency responses and advocacy work (UNICEF 2018). IOM furthermore started including adolescents aged 14–17 in flow monitoring surveys conducted in some locations (UNICEF and IOM 2017). Flow monitoring is one of the four components of the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) methodology, aimed at providing quantitative estimates of the flow of individuals through a given location and qualitative information on mobile populations (IOM 2022). More specifically, DTM and the Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility have developed the Needs Identification and Analysis Framework (NIAF) approach, which focuses on combining different available data sources as proxy indicators, in order to produce an assessment of the situational factors increasing risks for children in an emergency (Pavone 2021).

2.4.3 Using Data for Humanitarian Programming

Data gaps are not the only barrier to evidence-informed programming and policymaking. Recently, researchers have explored the use of evidence for migration policymaking and argued that it is often mediated by socio-political processes, contextual factors, and interests (Boswell et al. 2011). It can be expected that this is also true for using evidence to inform programming, which is even less frequently explored in relevant literature. Existing studies have underlined the need to use data to inform humanitarian planning and decision-making while also building on data sharing and coordination between humanitarian agencies, standardised data collection methods, and involvement of local actors (OCHA Centre for Humanitarian Data 2021; Shalash et al. 2022). However, research has still not adequately explored the use of data on children and migrant children to inform humanitarian programming and its different phases (such as preparedness, response and humanitarian service provision, and transition to longer-term measures).

Building on lessons learned by DTM and the MMC Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative (4Mi), Murphy-Teixidor et al. (2020) identified five significant areas in which migration data can influence programming: (a) needs assessment and analysis, (b) strategic response design, (c) resource mobilisation, (d) implementation and monitoring, and (e) operational peer review and evaluation. They also identified three challenges regarding the use of migration data for programming: (i) timeline compatibility of research and programming, (ii) data representativeness, and (iii) information management and coordination. Regarding child migration data specifically, Turner and Burgess (2020) suggested that the low levels of trust that decision-makers have in data may be due to the fact that they perceive it to be of poor quality, falsified for political or funding-related reasons, collected through opaque methodologies, or biased as a result of children's caution towards participating in data collection exercises. In addition, data may not appear to be a priority in the context of humanitarian crises, data literacy within organisations may be limited, and actors may experience difficult access to data due to paywalls, data privacy concerns, or competition and territoriality between actors (Turner and Burgess 2020).

2.5 Case Study: Data on Child Migration for Humanitarian Programming in Northern Africa and Southern Europe

This section focuses on a case study of non-state humanitarian actors in Northern Africa and Southern Europe to further analyse the use of child migration data for humanitarian programming. To begin, it provides some contextual information on concerns, data and humanitarian needs related to child migration in the two regions based on an analysis of the literature, relevant policies and websites of humanitarian actors active in the regions. It then focuses on an empirical investigation of the case study based on interviews with nine representatives of non-state humanitarian organisations supporting child migrants (data users) and international organisations (data producers).

2.5.1 Child migration in Northern Africa and Southern Europe

There are an estimated 6.5 million child migrants in Africa. This means that one in four international migrants in the continent are children, more than twice the global average, with an even higher share in Western and Eastern Africa (UNICEF 2019). The total number of child refugees across Africa is estimated to be four million, half of the total refugee population in the continent. An additional seven million children are estimated to be internally displaced (UNICEF 2019).

Some estimates on child migration flow from Northern Africa to Southern Europe also exist. In the first half of 2020, IOM, UNICEF and UNHCR recorded the arrival of 5,968 child migrants to Italy, Spain, Greece, and Malta,

most of whom were of African origin and 2,215 of whom (approximately 37%) were unaccompanied or separated.[6] Of child migrants arriving in Greece, Italy and Malta, 70%, 95% and 94%, respectively, were between 15 and 17 years old, and 81%, 95% and 94% were boys. Age-disaggregated data on children arriving in Spain are not available (UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM 2020). The MMP recorded fatalities of 1,002 child migrants from Africa between 2014 and 2022, of which 416 were *en route* to or within Europe.[7]

Child migrants in Northern Africa and Southern Europe require different types of humanitarian assistance, ranging from meeting emergency needs, such as food and shelter, to addressing more long-term concerns, such as education. As mentioned above, different vulnerability and resilience situations shape their needs. Considerable percentages of child migrants arriving in Italy and Greece reported having been exposed to violence and exploitation or kidnapped and arrested with no charges in Northern Africa (REACH and UNICEF 2017). Upon arrival in Europe, child migrants also mentioned facing lengthy regularisation processes, difficulties understanding them, and lack of legal support. They also experienced difficult access to education, food, water, and income, exposure to violence and exploitation, and feelings of anxiety (REACH and UNICEF 2017). According to studies conducted by the MMC (2020, 2021) and IOM Libya (IOM 2021), in 2020–2021, following the COVID-19 pandemic, migrants in North and West Africa reported specific assistance needs such as income support, food, water, shelter, sanitary items, information, documentation, psychological support, childcare, accommodation, and support to return home. In 2023, a study on young refugees and migrants aged 18–24 in Tunisia found that the most common risks they faced were verbal abuse, physical and non-physical violence, insecurity, and forced labour. Ninety-one per cent of interviewees furthermore reported needing assistance, particularly in the form of cash and medical assistance (MMC 2023).

In the EU, children's rights are enshrined in the Treaty of the EU (Article 2), in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (Article 24), and in the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and the European Child Guarantee. As for Africa, the Migration Policy Framework for Africa calls on AU member states to ensure that children's and adolescents' rights are effectively protected under national laws, which should incorporate provisions from relevant international conventions. Nevertheless, as previously stated, conflicting child protection policies and migration policies, together with data and funding challenges, undermine states' ability to provide comprehensive assistance to child migrants and to ensure their protection. For instance, in 2022, 63% of refugee and migrant caregivers in Tunisia reported that children under their care had no access to childcare or education services (MMC 2022). Under such circumstances, non-state humanitarian actors in Northern Africa and Southern Europe contribute to addressing protection gaps and the humanitarian needs of child migrants.

The assistance provided by humanitarian actors working in Northern Africa and Southern Europe to child migrants includes safe shelter and

spaces, reception and transit centres, medical assistance, disability assistance, income support, human rights defence, legal counselling, and immediate crisis care, including in the case of conflicts and natural disasters. Humanitarian actors also facilitate access to food, water, sanitation, education and faith services and provide support against violence at home or at school, child labour, trafficking and gender-based violence. Their assistance to child migrants often goes beyond emergency interventions. Most humanitarian actors link emergency actions with longer-term transitional and development measures, including education, support for the transition to adulthood, vocational training, counselling, language courses, health and psychosocial support, access to justice and information, support for integration into communities, community work, child and gender empowerment, guardianship, and education regarding human rights. Non-state actors, furthermore, provided humanitarian assistance (such as temporary care arrangements, health support and income support) to child migrants and their custodians during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.5.2 Data on Child Migration and Use in Humanitarian Support: Insights from Interviews with Data Users and Producers

In the following paragraphs, we present insights from interviews with data users and producers based on four key areas: (a) assessment of the humanitarian needs of child migrants and the impact of difficult access to data, (b) data needs of non-state humanitarian actors, (c) challenges related to the collection of data on the humanitarian needs of child migrants in the two regions, and (d) good practices and the potential of operational data.

2.5.2.1 Assessment of the Humanitarian Needs of Child Migrants and the Impact of Data Access Difficulties

Interviewees identified different factors contributing to the humanitarian needs of child migrants in Northern Africa and Southern Europe. To begin, child migrants are not with their "normal community, social protection circles" (Interview 1, data producer). In cases where children are unaccompanied or separated from carers, face irregular migration status, or reside in humanitarian settings, they are more likely to be exposed to violence, abuse, and risks of trafficking or exploitation along the route. They may experience challenges related to accessing income, resources and assistance to cover their basic needs, finance onward travel, and cope with risks (e.g., through bribes against detention or through humanitarian assistance). They may also experience challenges in accessing education and healthcare. One interviewee highlighted the importance of circumstances prior to migration and suggested that trafficked children, for instance, may suffer from abandonment trauma (Interview 5, data user, Italy). Some interviewees furthermore suggested that as a result of their characteristics, adults travelling with children

are also likely to influence the levels of risk children face (Interview 7, data user, North Africa). As discussed in Section 2.3, policy, legal, and administrative frameworks contribute to shaping the risks that children encounter in transit and destination countries, as well as access to protection and assistance. Two interviewees mentioned that Libya provides insufficient alternatives to detention for irregular child migrants (Interview 4, data user, Libya and Interview 7, data user, North Africa). Others referred to slow bureaucratic processes contrasting with protection urgencies and risks of "ageing out of care" (Interview 9, data user, Greece).

At the same time, all interviewees noted that data and evidence on child migration in Northern Africa and Southern Europe are insufficient. This limits their ability to design and implement appropriate and comprehensive humanitarian responses. They also think that there is insufficient information on the humanitarian needs of child migrants and on factors shaping their vulnerability and resilience. They therefore lament the absence of data allowing for comprehensive development, fundraising, targeting, and assessment of effective and child-sensitive assistance measures options. As one interviewee stated,

> It's very difficult to say that we have sufficient data to understand the situation and adapt the projects or develop our projects accordingly. […] Our data, we are trying to use them as much as possible, but again, it's not a survey, it's not research, it is very much focused on a specific location. It's a random sampling exercise, so it is very difficult to say which [what] are the main needs. There are a lot of access issues in this specific population group, even for the adults, so it's very difficult to generalise the findings over the whole population group. […]
>
> (Interview 4, data user, Libya)

2.5.2.2 Data Needs of Non-state Humanitarian Actors

Data users stated that they would need better data to inform programming, consistently tailor measures to specific needs and situations with "do-no-harm" principles and establish operational priorities. Data are also needed to support fundraising activities: as one interviewee put it, "If you don't have data, you cannot verify the needs in the first place, and you cannot find funds for it" (Interview 4, data user, Libya). In addition, data users said that better data would support advocacy, lobbying and public awareness campaigns, in-depth analyses, prevent human rights violations, and inform multidimensional approaches to poverty. Longitudinal data and studies on evolving situations and conditions of children migrants would be specifically valuable to combine humanitarian aid with transitional development assistance.

Interviewees said they need more data, specifically on some aspects related to child migration. These include data on humanitarian needs and their

geographical distribution, children's coping mechanisms, and their preferred communication channels. One interviewee argued that collecting more data on children's resilience mechanisms would be important to better identify ways to strengthen them (Interview 4, data user, Libya). While interviewees would find it beneficial to know more about children's perspectives and motivations globally, some also said that they would like to have more information on children to whom they currently do not have access, such as unaccompanied, trafficked or missing minors, regardless of whether they are hidden or because they decided to abscond. In addition, they would like to have more data about other aspects that have a direct or indirect influence on child migration in the two regions, which would support the development of longer-term approaches:

> There are limitations to what humanitarian assistants can provide […] we can provide basic education services, basic material services, but there is nobody to pick up the long-term aspects, so dreams people might have of going to university, starting their first job, settling up with a partner, those are things that are very much neglected and are not necessarily taken up by the development actors
>
> (Interview 7, data user, North Africa).

2.5.2.3 *Challenges Related to the Collection of Data on the Humanitarian Needs of Child Migrants in the Two Regions*

According to the interviewed data producers, current data gaps regarding humanitarian concerns of child migrants are the result of different challenges, such as scarce disaggregation of data by age and sex, low data sharing, poor coordination, and political sensitivities. This is in line with evidence from relevant literature, as described in Section 2.4. In addition, interviewees highlighted that the collection of administrative data depends on the existence of administrative processes and, consequently, data such as on secondary movements within the EU free movement area are often not collected. Policy and legal frameworks and evolving political priorities also contribute to shaping data collection, sharing and dissemination processes.

> Although we know […] that there is an important group of children among these arrivals by sea, air and land, there is not official information on this. The specificity doesn't come on only on the administrative data on arrivals, but […] also about how the arrivals do translate into presence in the country or not and how they appear to be visible in the official statistics of people in reception. I'm saying this because […] children and unaccompanied children by all EU country laws are protected in a specific way, so they should be granted in any case, the right to stay […]. From administrative data, we do not know anything

> about them, except their numbers, if we have them, and the prevalent condition of being accompanied or not, depending on the nationalities.
>
> (Interview 2, data producer, international organisation)

> If a person is not identified as a minor, he/she can be detained in order to be expelled, because he/she is considered an adult, so he/she can be detained.
>
> (Interview 8, data user, Spain)

While international organisations also collect data on child migration in humanitarian settings, interviewees reported challenges, such as costly and lengthy data collection procedures, sensitivities of interviewing children and adolescents, and the need for trained enumerators. Funding challenges often hinder more in-depth and longitudinal analyses. In addition, access to child migrants can be difficult: as described by one interviewee,

> It's in at least two directions. So, on the one hand, we don't get data disaggregated enough to be able to tailor our support, and on the other hand, we don't have primary data because we are not there, everywhere, in all places where arrivals happen or where biggest groups of migrants, including migrant children and unaccompanied and separated children among them, are registered and hosted.
>
> (Interview 2, data producer, international organisation)

2.5.2.4 Good Practices and the Potential of Operational Data

Interviewees also identified possible solutions to the challenges outlined in previous sections. They suggested better use of existing data and combining different levels of data collection and analysis. For example, humanitarian actors could build upon data provided on a wider scale by international organisations to inform a broad understanding of where humanitarian assistance is needed, and they could collect more micro-level data on the situation in the field to inform programming. Interviewees also said that approaches based on proxy indicators, such as the NIAF (see Section 2.2), can be useful in overcoming difficulties in collecting data on sensitive topics, such as gender-based violence. This could involve looking at situational factors that have been found to lead to child protection risks to inform response services. In addition, both data users and producers said that international and whole-of-society efforts to improve child migration data, such as the IDAC, could be useful.

In some cases, operational data collected by humanitarian actors from their daily operations provide information that is difficult to collect for state actors, such as on humanitarian needs at the local level and in humanitarian emergencies, as well as children absconding from state actors. They are therefore

able to develop a better knowledge of child migration in humanitarian settings, particularly when it is combined and triangulated with other data sources. The extent to which such operational data are shared outside the organisation collecting them varies. Among the organisations consulted for this research, the biggest ones reported having internal data expertise, using operational data to inform studies and internal toolkits, sharing aggregate and anonymised data with donors and local authorities, and participating in consultations, exchanges and working groups with policymakers and non-state actors. However, smaller organisations mainly reported using these data for programming purposes only. Challenges identified by interviewees regarding a possible wider sharing of operational data are related to beneficiary data protection and safety and safeguards of non-state actors' independence.

2.6 Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter has investigated how non-state humanitarian actors use data and evidence on child migration. Empirical results confirm that there is currently insufficient data and evidence to provide a comprehensive picture of child migration in Northern Africa and Southern Europe. Most significantly, there is a dearth of data on factors contributing to children's vulnerability and resilience and their needs in terms of humanitarian assistance. All non-state humanitarian actors interviewed for this research reported that they do not have enough data to identify the humanitarian needs of child migrants or establish priorities. They also need data to inform programming, monitoring and evaluation, and fundraising activities. By influencing not only programming but also advocacy and public awareness initiatives, data gaps are likely to influence humanitarian assistance—both directly and indirectly. Data gaps also create obstacles to accessing humanitarian assistance for child migrants, especially those who are most vulnerable and invisible, due to factors such as irregular migration status and gender. In addition, data gaps hinder longitudinal, wider analyses of child migration and their links to other variables, particularly in humanitarian settings, as well as the development of longer-term assistance approaches.

According to the data users and producers interviewed for this research, reasons for data and evidence gaps are manifold and include broader challenges related to the availability and quality of stock and flow migration data, data infrastructures, data sharing and dissemination, cross-country harmonisation (including the application of common definitions and standard indicators that could facilitate international comparisons), and funding. They also include challenges specifically related to child migration data, such as rare availability of age disaggregation, difficult access to the target population and age-related sensitivities, and challenges related to data collection in humanitarian settings. Child participation remains scarce, as does attention to their resilience and coping mechanisms. Policy and legal frameworks

and evolving political priorities also have an impact on data collection and sharing, due to the ambivalent role of states in child migration policy. These findings are consistent with previous research (e.g., Bhabha 2018).

At the same time, some approaches could improve the use of data on child migration for humanitarian programming. These include practices recommended to improve migration data more broadly, such as harmonisation of definitions and standards, coordination within and across states, and age- and gender disaggregation (Schöfberger, Aggad, and Rango 2020). Improved participation of child migrants in data collection would also be important, with respect to UNICEF's guidelines for ethical research involving children (see above) and in line with researchers' observations of a "dearth of child migration research from a child- rather than State-centric perspective" (Bhabha and Abel 2020, 252). Useful approaches identified by interviewees also include using available data better, for example, through proxy indicators, combining macro- and micro-levels of analysis, and improving data sharing and combination. In addition, as non-state humanitarian actors often operate in spaces and domains with limited state presence, the operational data they collect could potentially be used to develop a more comprehensive assessment of the humanitarian needs of child migrants. In contrast, beneficiaries' safety and data protection would need to be safeguarded.

Based on the above discussion, the following recommendations are made:

1 **States should improve migration data disaggregation by age and other characteristics**: Developing migration data and related capacities is essential, specifically for the improvement of child migration data. In addition, states should improve the disaggregation of statistical and administrative data by age, gender, migration status, and other characteristics, such as their countries of origin, reasons to migrate, risks encountered during migration, and whether they are travelling alone or with others.
2 **State and non-state actors should improve data sharing:** Sharing and combining available data would improve knowledge of child migration and related humanitarian needs at different levels. State, non-state and international organisations could share different statistical, administrative, qualitative, operational and innovative data types. Aggregated and anonymised data-sharing practices would be needed to ensure data protection and the safety of child migrants. Non-state humanitarian actors could consider wider sharing and dissemination of operational data. Humanitarian operational data can provide precious information on the humanitarian needs of child migrants in areas with limited state presence. As this information could be useful for other actors beyond the organisation that collected it, humanitarian actors could consider sharing it more widely, for example, through publications, webinars and agreements with researchers. This would require appropriate safeguards to protect the privacy and safety of their beneficiaries, such as data anonymisation and aggregation.

3 **Researchers and data producers could increase children's participation and widen the focus of research and data collection on child migration:** Increased child participation in research and data collection processes would allow a more comprehensive understanding of children's agency, motivations and resilience mechanisms, as well as help to determine how these factors can be better supported. Data collection methods need to be child-sensitive and tailored to seek out more invisible children, also building on existing guidelines for ethical research involving children. In addition, a wider and longitudinal analysis of child migration and its links to other variables, particularly in humanitarian settings, would be essential to inform the development of longer-term assistance approaches.
4 **Humanitarian actors and donors could collaborate to improve the use of data and evidence for programming on child migration:** While data on child migration in humanitarian settings are often incomplete, it is essential to ensure that available information (including operational data) is adequately considered throughout the programming, implementation and evaluation phases. Improving internal data capacities would be an essential step in this direction. Ensuring adequate funding would also be crucial.
5 **Researchers could dedicate greater attention to links between evidence and programming on child migration:** While research attention to evidence-policy links has increased, evidence-programming links are still not adequately explored, with likely consequences for the impact and sustainability of humanitarian programming.

Notes

1 https://www.unhcr.org/glossary#m.
2 See, for example, the IOM Migration Data Portal, the UNHCR Emergency Handbook (2020), the IOM Glossary on Migration (2019), as well as UNICEF publications (2018).
3 Data provided from the MMP to authors.
4 For an overview of data sources on child and youth migration, please see Child and young migrants data (migrationdataportal.org).
5 https://data.unicef.org/resources/international-data-alliance-for-children-on-the-move/.
6 While arrivals to Greece and Spain decreased by 43% and 50%, respectively, compared to the same period in 2019, they more than doubled in Italy.
7 Data provided from the MMP to authors.

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3 Representative Humanitarian Data Collection

Women's Participation for Better Data on Migration and Internal Displacement

Alexandra Bate and Nikki Herwanger

3.1 Introduction

Data gathering and analysis drive operational planning, prioritisation, resource mobilisation and delivery of humanitarian assistance in displacement contexts. Unbiased, accurate and representative operational data should guide humanitarian action in line with the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. This study focuses on challenges and good practices for the inclusion of women in humanitarian data collection. We examine women's involvement as data collectors (enumerators) and data sources (key informants, hereafter KIs) and consider to what extent increased women's participation in humanitarian data collection could influence the content and quality of data collected on displaced and migrant populations.[1]

Humanitarian organisations, and in particular their respective data collection entities, are increasingly challenged in delivering aid and services to mobile populations due to the diminishing scope of their operational areas, caused by funding constraints, physical access barriers, and political sensitivities, among other factors. These challenges are exacerbated by the growing trend of criminalising migration (Roepstorff 2019). This has resulted in migration frequently leading individuals to move through or relocate to regions that are difficult to reach or where both those affected by the crisis and humanitarian workers face significant risks. This is important as effective data collection not only informs immediate response efforts but also supports the formulation of strategies for durable solutions and the transition from humanitarian assistance to long-term development interventions.

This research also recognises the challenges posed by the movement of populations, whether within countries or across borders, which can polarise public opinion and increase divisions within communities while also heightening the diversity of local demographics and cultures. These circumstances require those providing aid to be flexible in their service delivery, catering to the varied requirements of individuals who may differ in language,

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religious beliefs, and specific needs or restrictions concerning the distribution of essential items and services. As highlighted in the introduction to this volume, we also recognise that identities are formed by the convergence of various attributes and factors, which can significantly alter the impacts suffered in different situations, affecting individuals' particular vulnerabilities and risks during crises and in normal circumstances.

Although women represent—on average—50% of the global population, it is widely acknowledged that gender inequalities remain deeply entrenched in all aspects of societies (UN Women 2023). Efforts to improve gender-sensitive humanitarian responses are ongoing across the humanitarian sector, mostly in the form of calls for combining sex- and age-disaggregated data (SADD), with gender analysis imperative in yielding more reliable planning insights for gender-specific programming and responses (Mazurana et al. 2013). The lack of consistently available SADD has been rightfully lamented in these efforts. Even so, calls for additional SADD and gender analysis must be reconciled with the operational realities of executing large-scale data collection in crisis settings. The data collection process is littered with understudied obstacles affecting representativeness. Furthermore, barriers and enabling factors for women's participation and the resulting impacts on data content and quality have remained remarkably underexplored. Without addressing these issues, the limitations of currently available and future data, particularly in regard to SADD, are not fully understood.

Across different disciplines, studies tend to focus on participant involvement, putting the "burden" of data gathering on hard-to-reach groups and engaging participants without considering the operational obstacles arising throughout data collection operations (Bonevski et al. 2014). Frameworks developed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) concentrate on sex-disaggregated migration data, emphasising how "global data sources have shown that there are insufficient data to enable robust gender analysis of migration" (Hennebry, Hari, and Williams 2021). There is currently little documentation on the obstacles to building gender-balanced data collection teams, resulting in a sparse evidence base for informing good practices and recommendations. The *Gender in Humanitarian Action Handbook* advises the "use of mixed outreach groups or mobile teams to identify and engage groups not visible in the assessment" (IASC 2018, 34), specifically in order to collect SADD/gender-sensitive data. However, this recommendation is not supported by guidance on identifying and overcoming common operational or cultural constraints that make gender balance in enumeration teams a challenge.

Experienced data collection practitioners are an untapped source of insight into the data collection process. While much of their expertise is documented in methodological frameworks and technical standards, the contextual considerations when implementing data collection specificities in a crisis are primarily stored within the community of practice, at the country level,

as practical knowledge. This study documents and analyses practitioners' practical knowledge to address the following three research questions:

1 *What are the common challenges, root causes, and structural barriers to identifying and recruiting more women as enumerators and engaging women as KIs?*
2 *What practices can overcome these obstacles, and what recommendations do practitioners have for improving data collection practices that would enable tangible gains?*
3 *How is humanitarian data content, quality and accuracy impacted if there is a lack of equal representation of men and women among enumerators and KIs?*

The findings of this study are presented in line with these three questions, illustrating a range of context-specific challenges, practices, operational adaptations, and approaches to representative humanitarian data collection. While practitioners are central to enacting these improvements, significant buy-in and support from other stakeholders, including humanitarian donors, host governments, local communities, and the broader humanitarian coordination and response infrastructure, are required to make more representative humanitarian data collection a reality.

3.2 Literature Review

3.2.1 Humanitarian Action, Forced Migration, and Its Gendered Impacts

Humanitarian action, especially in the forced migration context, has increasingly put gender-responsiveness at the forefront of programming and policy-making. Gender-responsive programmes have been integrated into various areas of response, most notably within the protection sector, but areas such as water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), food security, health, shelter, and camp coordination still require attention (Daigle 2022). In order to support the integration of gender-responsiveness into humanitarian programming, calls have been made for improved SADD collection that reflects "gendered vulnerabilities and opportunities" (25). Collecting this data should not be a box-ticking exercise, especially in the context of forced migration, in which gender norms are affected by both displacement and humanitarian programming. On the one hand, these operational environments see the further intensification of gendered inequalities and vulnerabilities, especially at the community level. On the other hand, gender norms are also "transformed" in humanitarian settings, as highlighted by an increasing body of evidence. For example, who "earns income or interfaces with public officials" changes in response to displacement in humanitarian settings, as does increased power behind household decision-making, thus challenging many

prevailing assumptions related to gender stereotypes across contexts (Ortega et al. 2020, 17; Cazabat et al. 2020; Holloway Stavropoulou, and Daigle 2019). Efforts to improve data collection should be "challenging assumptions about sex, gender identity" and enhancing data representativeness—not merely generating more data (Holloway, Stavropoulou, and Daigle 2019, 31; Daigle 2022).

An increasing body of evidence shows how women suffer more from the indirect consequences of conflict, especially in contexts of forced migration. Heightened exposure to gender-based violence (GBV), limited availability of healthcare (particularly maternal) and other gendered socioeconomic hardships are amplified by displacement (Plümper and Neumayer 2006, quoted in Patel et al. 2020; Clarke and Ramalingam 2008). In camp-like settings, these inequalities and risks are further magnified.

Literature on barriers and facilitators for women working as frontline workers in humanitarian settings, specifically data collectors, remains scarce. Patel et al. (2020) estimate that 40% of frontline humanitarian workers are women (quoted in UN-OCHA 2019). In light of this fact, they highlight key sociocultural obstacles to female leadership and action in conflict-related humanitarian settings, particularly attitudes towards women's "participation in public space", "burden of unpaid work" and the "exclusion from emergency response decision-making" (Witter et al. 2017, quoted in Patel et al, 2020, 6). At the organisational level, it is widely recognised that the humanitarian sector operates in a "male-normed" way (Patel et al., 2020, 6). According to studies on diversity within the humanitarian sector, security concerns specifically affecting women are the main statistical reason why barriers to women's participation persist, with men occupying between 60% and 69% of leadership positions in "extreme security risk countries" (Blackney et al. 2019, quoted in Patel et al, 2020). However, these studies remain focused on how these dynamics play out in the highest leadership positions. This study looks across all roles and functions that contribute to designing and delivering a humanitarian response on the ground—a process beginning with data collection and with the work of enumerators.

3.2.2 The (Gender of) Enumerator Effect

Research on the data collection process for large-scale surveys has highlighted the "enumerator effect", whereby differences in data quality are observed based on enumerator characteristics such as gender, religion, ethnicity and social status (Di Maio and Fiala 2018). While the enumerator effect does not impact responses to all types of questions equally, some topics, especially gender-sensitive questions, often show significant bias in responses depending on the enumerator's sociodemographic characteristics, especially gender. The questions that show the strongest gendered enumerator effect are strongly dependent on the location and cultural context of the surveyed population (Di Maio and Fiala 2018).

Other studies have focused specifically on the gender of interviewers and enumerators as a factor determining variance in responses. For example, response variance was recorded in household surveys conducted in Mexico and the US comprising questions on gender equality, progressiveness regarding abortion laws and opinions on local political figures who were women (Huddy et al. 1997; Flores-Macias and Lawson 2008). This literature on the interviewer's gender notes that the "effects are not uniform" across all types of surveys and that cultural context and, in particular, the urban or rural locations of respondents matter (Huddy et al. 1997, 198). Flores-Macias and Lawson (2008) draw attention to how surveys conducted with female interviewers and male respondents in the cosmopolitan Mexico City elicited more progressive opinions than other more conservative cities in the country. This was followed by the finding that these effects were restricted to answers given on gender-sensitive questions such as on abortion and women's rights. The study also cautions that the "use of national samples may conceal or 'cancel out' differences that exist across different regions or between large cities" (107), emphasising the need for location and cultural context-specific analyses of response variance.

Other studies have tested this effect by interviewing two similar groups of participants and comparing results based on the interviewers' gender. Vollmer et al. (2021) compared the results of a survey conducted in two districts of Bihar, India, with mothers of children aged 0–59 months living in rural settings. Findings showed that interviewers who were women were more likely to "obtain accurate data on sensitive topics" relating to women's health (menstrual cycles, birth, contraception, domestic violence), while questions regarding child health were openly discussed with all interviewers (1–2). The analysis accounted for other factors, such as religion and caste, to deepen the comparison.

Another study conducted a cross-sectional survey of Haitian women (n = 304) on questions relating to sexual health and behaviours and evaluated the data based on the following outcomes: "question-specific response rates, total number of non-responses and differences in reported answers" (Kianersi et al. 2019). Findings showed that participants were 30% more likely to answer questions on, for example, transactional sex when interviewers/enumerators were women (5). On the other hand, questions on sexual health and other chronic disorders (i.e., HIV symptoms) were more likely to be described if interviewers were men. This is likely attributed to the fact that "participants recognize men as more 'doctor-like'" (Kianersi et al. 2019, quoted in Edwards & Berk 1993; West & Blom 2017). Finally, interviewers who were men were more likely to elicit a non-response: "Don't Know" or "Refuse", a finding consistent with similar studies undertaken on gender-sensitive sexual behaviour surveys conducted in the US and Taiwan (West & Blom 2017, quoted in Catania et al. 1996; Tu and Liao 2007).

The literature in this field highlights the different ways that interviewer gender can potentially bias results and, at the same time, how these dynamics are largely dependent on geographical location and cultural context. There is

no formula for determining how the gender of an enumerator might impact survey results, but these studies suggest that aiming towards a balance will help relieve some issues on data representativeness, although it might not address all biases.

3.2.3 Methods, Ethical Implications and Biases in Data for Humanitarian Planning

Data for humanitarian planning is collected through surveys that are also prone to various biases affecting the "results of the assessments and the determination of needs" (Alami 2014). Some of these biases can emerge due to the design of the methodology or questions used to collect data, but ultimately, the "experiences and skills of data collectors or respondents" matter. These biases can be addressed by having "female assessors on the teams" and ensuring sensitisation and awareness of how these biases may be formed (Alami 2014, 1).[2]

3.2.3.1 Remote Data Collection in Humanitarian Settings

In addition to the gender of the enumerator, the methodology behind data collection in humanitarian settings also counts. During the COVID-19 mobility restrictions, remote data collection became more frequent in the humanitarian sector. Vahedi et al. (2022) reviewed 21 peer-reviewed studies that used inclusive data collection in humanitarian and fragile settings, specifically on sexual and reproductive health, as well as GBV among women. Findings showed the digital gender divide that became evident in remote data collection (e.g., SMS surveys, phone interviews, and online surveys) was the main factor affecting data quality. Some studies had to actively mitigate against this, for example, by providing internet access or using a mix of SMS surveys (which requires less mobile data) and telephone interviews. Alongside data quality concerns, being able to reach respondents in remote data collection has been called into question. The overreliance on remote data collection has been highlighted, especially in rapid gender assessments, which, due to a lack of capacity and resources, "often rely on telephone access that may be unavailable to more vulnerable groups" (Badiee et al. 2022, 41). Therefore, advocating for the need to "recruit and train female enumerators to establish trust with female members of the household" is fundamental to obtaining more reliable and accurate data on gender-sensitive issues (41).

Together, these studies highlight individual, institutional, and larger ethical considerations for humanitarian actors directly involved in collecting, analysing and using operational data. This bears significance in the search for the solutions that will improve data quality and representativeness and better data use for humanitarian response. Overall, it remains clear that more research is required on how women's participation in humanitarian data collection is realised in each locality and, more broadly, how it affects data content and quality.

3.3 Methodology

The Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) is IOM's primary data collection programme. It is the main operational tool for collecting and analysing data to obtain essential, comprehensive information about the movement, conditions and needs of displaced and mobile populations. DTM data enables decision-makers and responders across the humanitarian and development sectors to provide targeted and timely responses. This study examines women's participation in data collection in five DTM country operations via semi-structured interviews with 37 DTM staff (enumerators, field coordinators, programme managers, and human resources [HR]). One interview with an operations specialist in the global DTM support team headquarters (HQ) was also conducted to provide a cross-cutting perspective.

3.3.1 Case Study Selection

DTM country programmes document the composition of their enumeration teams and KIs (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2) Based on the results from the 2021 Annual Global Survey conducted internally by DTM, four countries (Ethiopia, Haiti, Lebanon and South Sudan) represented higher and lower parity in the ratios of men and women in data collection teams and among KIs. In addition, Sudan was selected for the visible improvement in gender balance from 2020 to 2021 as a case study documenting the factors that contributed to this positive change. DTM teams from the selected countries provided a full breakdown by sex of enumerators and KIs for 2022, granting permission to use this data for this study. It should be noted that consent was given for the completely anonymised use of interview data. As such, all references to specific countries in the findings have been removed.

3.3.2 Overview of Case Study Contexts and Questionnaire Development

Based on a desk review of the context of the selected DTM operations, covering sociocultural factors and data collection access, questions were formulated to provide insights on the four research questions. In addition to gender ratios in teams, countries were selected depending on the population type assessed, urban/rural location of populations of interest, and displacement context (i.e., gang-related violence, conflict or disaster-induced, and migrant presence).

The questions were divided into two sections:

1 Practices to identify and recruit enumerators and KI, existing challenges and recommendations to address these barriers.
2 Insights on how humanitarian data content, quality and accuracy are impacted if there is (in)equality in the representation of men and women among enumerators and KIs.

Table 3.1 Ratio of men to women in enumeration teams by country

Gender composition of enumeration teams	*Country*	*Male*	*Female*	*Ratio (M/F)*
Lower parity	Ethiopia 2022	163	41	4:1
	South Sudan 2022	554	163	3.4:1
Medium to high parity	Haiti 2021 (statistics only available for 2021)	16	8	2:1
	Lebanon Multi Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) 2022	23	24 (Including 3 female team leaders and 1 male team leader)	1:1
Notable improvement in gender parity	Sudan 2022	228	54	4.2:1 14:1
	Sudan 2021	240	49	4.9:1 14:1 (in 2020)

Source: Authors.

Table 3.2 Ratio of men to women in KI networks by country

Gender composition of KIs	*Case study country*	*Male*	*Female*	*Ratio (M/F)*
Medium to high parity	Ethiopia Site Assessment (SA)2022)	10,729	5,572	1.8:1
	Haiti	17	4	4.3:1
Low parity	Lebanon	601	34	17.7:1
	South Sudan	5,723	905	6.3:1
	Sudan	1,450	50	29:1

Source: Authors.

3.3.3 Data Collection

In November 2022, the researchers conducted 37 remote semi-structured interviews with DTM coordinators, field coordinators, HR staff and enumerators (two women and two men per country). In addition, one thematic expert in humanitarian data collection operations from the DTM Global Support Team was interviewed to provide a cross-cutting picture of practices across DTM operations worldwide. Among the respondents, 19 were women, and 18 were men. Each interview lasted between 40 minutes and 1 hour. Respondents were prompted with the interview questions but were

encouraged to speak freely. Interviewers asked follow-up questions on points of clarification.

Lebanon and Ethiopia included interviews with HR, but in other countries where HR was not interviewed insights were gained on the recruitment process from other respondents. In Ethiopia and South Sudan, an additional field programme assistant was interviewed to provide more context-specific insights into sub-national dynamics. Interviews with colleagues in Haiti were mostly conducted in French; in Sudan, interviews with enumerators were conducted in Arabic. The coding of thematic insights for Arabic transcripts was based on translations. Transcripts were automatically generated and edited for clarity and accuracy.

3.3.4 Coding

NVivo qualitative analysis software was used to code and analyse the data collected. Using guidance on coding qualitative data (Charmaz 2006, quoted in Bryman 2012), this study combined inductive and deductive thematic coding. Initially, four coding groups were established as the main subjects of the codes: *Enumerators*, *Key Informants*, *Implementing Data Collection* and *Observations*. A set of inductive themes was then established for each group based on the interview questions. These formed the "parent codes" used, and the "child codes" emerging under these were developed based on deductive coding. Additionally, several categories of codes under "observations" were added based on deductive coding.

As new themes emerged during the coding process of the transcripts, new themes or codes were added following consensus between the researchers. This required consolidating the coding framework at three different times. Each consolidation was conducted after both researchers agreed on new deductive codes to be incorporated into the framework. The coding framework, organised by inductive and deductive codes, is available in the Annex. It seeks to outline connections between practices, challenges and recommendations on enumerator recruitment and KI identification. It also captures codes that fall outside the scope of this chapter, such as strategies teams employed to mitigate and compensate for the impact that a lack of gender balance in teams and KIs has on data collection.

3.3.5 Analysis

The study focuses on interviews as the unit of analysis for the key findings. The analysis presents the number of interviews where respondents referred to a given theme. Respondents' repeated references to a given theme were also recorded to complement this analysis. For some key findings, interviews were grouped by country as the unit of analysis, and a further review was then performed to show the number of countries where a theme was referenced in interviews.

3.3.6 Limitations and Ethical Considerations

The main bias identified in the process is that both interviewers were of one gender (women), and the interviewees could not choose which gender they would feel comfortable talking to about sensitive topics. While the partiality this introduces should not be ignored, it should be noted that a woman's social position may also have positively impacted the information presented in the findings.

Additionally, thematic coding is widely considered to introduce coding bias as researchers interpret text subjectively. To mitigate this, the research team met frequently to jointly define themes. The analysis phase could also have been affected by impact bias, whereby the significance of an event is overestimated based on its potential impact (ACAPS 2016). An example of this could be overestimating the effect that family care duties have on women's recruitment and retention just because it is seen as a gendered obligation when other factors concerning the nature of the enumerator job pose larger barriers in general.

No ethical ramifications were predicted for this data collection activity. All interviewees remain anonymous, and references to specific countries have been removed from the findings to protect anonymity.

3.4 Key Findings

3.4.1 Identified Challenges

3.4.1.1 Common Challenges, Root Causes, and Structural Barriers to Engaging Women as Enumerators and KIs

Respondents were asked to speak about challenges and barriers affecting potential enumerators, KIs' access to information about opportunities to participate in humanitarian data collection, and the enumerators' selection process. They were subsequently asked if these challenges might affect women and men differently and in what ways. The questions focused on core themes of how potential candidates learned of opportunities to participate, barriers associated with access to information about opportunities, and how candidates are identified and selected. The findings show that, for both enumerators and KIs, access to information about participation and opportunities to be selected for participation in the data collection process were greater for men than women. Questions were not asked about the impact of access to information on application rates or other areas of competition between candidates. These areas require further research.

Enumerators and KIs are identified and onboarded through processes specific to each role. While opportunities to be an enumerator are advertised, most commonly online or through word of mouth and social networks, KIs are usually identified by stakeholders with knowledge of the communities being assessed. Among these stakeholders, interviewees reported

DTM field staff, including other enumerators (62% or 23 respondents), local government authorities (35%), and community leaders (14%). The difference in how enumerators are onboarded and how KIs are identified is reflected in the findings on challenges and barriers to engaging women's participants for both enumerator and KI functions in data collection. In some cases, the same answers were given, but when respondents signalled those specific challenges impacted women more, they were coded with the "gendered" suffix (Table 3.3).

3.4.1.2 Findings on Access to Information about Enumerator Vacancies and Challenges Accessing this Information

Regarding access to information about enumerator vacancies, 35% of the responses to barriers identified were reported as impacting women differently than men (see Table 3.4). Several barriers were identified that had a greater impact on women. These included restrictions on access to public spaces leading to reduced exposure to advertisements, inequalities in internet access, and language barriers (e.g., local language speakers were required, but all advertisements were posted in English). Another significant barrier with a disproportionate impact on women was the use of social networks as a means of sharing information about vacancies. For example,

Table 3.3 Modalities of advertising enumerator opportunities

Modalities of advertising enumerator Opportunities	*Frequency of responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
Advert posted online	19	26.8	51
Word of mouth within the humanitarian community of practice	13	18.3	35
Operations team identifies candidates	13	18	35
Advert posted in a public space	10	14.1	27
Word of mouth IOM staff	7	9.9	19
Government authorities select/identify candidates	6	8.5	16
Emergency recruitment of pre-identified candidates	3	4.2	8

Source: Authors.

Note: Respondents were free to choose whether to answer questions and provide more than one answer to the same question.

Table 3.4 Challenges accessing information about enumerator opportunities

Challenges accessing information about enumerator opportunities	*Frequency of responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
Social networks used to share vacancies reach men more than women	6	22.2	16
Access to public spaces restricted (gendered)	4	14.8	11
Internet connectivity access issue (non-gendered)	3	11.1	8
Internet connectivity access issue (gendered)	2	7.4	5
Language barrier (gendered)	1	3.7	3
Barriers to access in rural areas	1	3.7	3
No inequalities in access	10	37	27

Source: Authors.

respondents reported that the over-representation of male field staff mirrored the structure of social networks that are more likely to include other men, particularly in cultural contexts with stricter norms regulating the interaction between men and women. Three country teams highlighted that this could mean fewer women were aware of vacancies and recommended wider advertisement of vacancies in culture and context-specific manners to reach interested women. Respondents were not asked about access to information to participate as KIs; candidates for this role are not recruited through a competitive process.

While processes for onboarding new recruits differ between enumerator and KI roles, respondents reported some similarities in the challenges faced in identifying suitable candidates for the roles. Candidate profile and availability posed the most significant challenge for KI roles, and most responses were associated with this topic. Many respondents also referred to difficulties finding interested or willing participants for KI roles (see Table 3.6). While the suitability of candidates was also relevant for enumerators, challenges associated with this area were only the second most relevant for enumerators. Challenges related to job appeal and identifying interested candidates for enumerator roles represent the greater proportion of responses (see Table 3.8). These recruitment challenges relate to factors inherent to the role, such as difficult working environments, lengthy travel requirements or exposure to hazards that make it less appealing. Contract and HR-related challenges were discussed by 35% of respondents.

Respondents were asked to speak about observed challenges in the recruitment process in general. They were then asked if these challenges affected

men and women differently. Respondents noted challenges that disproportionately affect women. For enumerators, 78% (29) of respondents reported some form of recruitment challenge, with 28 types of challenges raised. Of these, nine types of challenges (32%) were gender-specific. In terms of frequency of responses (references made by respondents), 65% of the total responses on challenges (106 of 162 references) referred to challenges which disproportionately affect women. This means that while only 9 of 28 types of challenges referred to in the interview disproportionately affect women, these represent the greater proportion of challenges referenced during interviews. For KIs, respondents pointed to 14 different types of challenges, 3 of which disproportionately impacted women, with the most significant challenge, "Social structures are male dominant" (reported by 41% of respondents), being gender-specific.

Tables 3.5–3.8 present the findings regarding these challenges. Tables 3.5 and 3.6 show the challenges involving KI identification and onboarding. Table 3.7 lists the factors that affect who applies for the enumerator job, while Table 3.8 shows the challenges associated with the nature of the enumeration job itself.

Table 3.5 Challenges in identifying qualified and diverse KIs

Challenges in identifying qualified and diverse KIs	*Frequency of responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
Social structures are male-dominated	15	25.4	41
Difference of access based on location	9	15.3	24
Challenges identifying objective KIs	8	13.6	22
Factors leading to more compatibility (dialect, ethnicity, etc.)	8	13.6	22
Diversifying the KI pool is a challenge	6	10.2	16
Hard to find KIs for certain population types	3	5.1	8
Time of data collection	3	5.1	8
High turnover of officials	2	3.4	5
KIs challenging each other (intercommunal tensions)	2	3.4	5
Majority of male field coordinators	2	3.4	5
Low educational level among women	1	1.7	3
No challenges in identifying women as KIs	4	6.8	11

Source: Authors.

Table 3.6 Challenges identifying interested KIs

Challenges identifying interested KIs	*Frequency of responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
General unwillingness to participate	8	61.5	22
Assessment fatigue, expectation of aid delivery not met	5	38.5	14

Source: Authors.

Note: For enumerators, "interest" in the role is related to job appeal and the nature of the job. For KI, the findings show that there are other factors impacting KI non-participation. These have been captured in Table 3.7 and are distinct from KI candidate profiles as outlined in the table above because they relate to "willingness" to be involved in data collection.

Table 3.7 Challenges related to enumerator candidate profiles

Challenges related to enumerator candidate profiles	*Frequency of responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
Lack of qualified candidates (gendered)	10	30.3	27
Location-specific challenges (highly context-specific factors at the subnational level e.g. presence of militias, or religious minorities in each location)	8	24.2	22
Family care duties (gendered)	7	21.2	19
Language issues (gendered)	3	9.1	8
Lack of qualified candidates (non-gendered)	2	6.1	5
Language issues (non-gendered)	2	6.1	5
Lack of retention (gendered)	1	3	3

Source: Authors.

3.4.1.3 Challenges in Identifying Interested and Qualified Candidates (KIs and Enumerators)

The findings around challenges in identifying qualified candidates show an interconnection between gender and opportunities in the recruitment process. Based on Table 3.7, for enumerators, the disparity in the technical qualifications between men and women (e.g., higher academic certificates) and

Table 3.8 Challenges related to job appeal and identifying interested candidates for enumerator roles*

*Challenges related to job appeal and Identifying Interested Candidates for Enumerator Roles**	*Frequency of Responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
Long distances travelled (gendered)	13	20.6	35
Harder to find candidates in rural settings than urban (gendered)	11	17.5	30
Security challenges (gendered)	10	15.9	27
Difficult working conditions (gendered)	7	11.1	19
Long distances travelled (non-gendered)	5	7.9	14
Security challenges (non-gendered)	5	7.9	14
Short-term work (non-gendered)	5	7.9	14
Unpredictable and time-consuming work (not gendered)	5	7.9	14
Difficult working conditions (not gendered)	2	3.2	5

Source: Authors.

**Notes:* Challenges marked as "gendered" disproportionately impact women, "non-gendered" challenges impact all equally.

women's gender roles as caregivers within families were reported as two of the top three challenges in this area.

For KIs, the challenge reported by most respondents was about social structures that prevent women's participation (see Table 3.5). This was the only challenge for KIs common to all case studies. Respondents explained the impact of social structures in relation to the stakeholders involved in the KI selection process. In contexts where men are more present in civil society and are overrepresented in DTM staff, local government, and traditional leadership, the inclusion of women can be overlooked or culturally unfeasible. Strict norms about women's access to public spaces and their association with men outside of their families were also highlighted as relevant features of social structures hindering women's participation as KIs.

The importance of sub-national variation in country contexts also featured prominently in the findings for both roles. Location-specific challenges were in the top three most reported challenges for enumerators operating in certain contexts and getting access to a diverse pool of KIs providing information (see Tables 3.7 and 3.8). When elaborating further on this topic, respondents argued that highly specific sub-national cultural, religious, and

ethnic diversity, as well as environmental factors—like physical access and security risks—posed unique challenges to identifying qualified candidates, whether men or women, in particular locations.

The findings summarised in Table 3.5 show other significant challenges to identifying KIs that transcend gender. Diversity within the KI pool, challenges in identifying objective KIs, and finding KIs able to provide information on marginalised or invisible populations all featured in the top five challenges. Many of the references coded under these themes were not dependent on gender and related to difficulties including KIs from a range of different roles (e.g., due to overreliance on local authorities for information) and problems identifying KIs without a vested interest in influencing the outcomes of aid delivery. References to difficulties in including specific population groups as KIs highlighted the challenges of diversifying KIs across multiple demographic traits, including age, ethnicity or nationality. Respondents reported that representation of these diverse groups among KIs may be more challenging to achieve than gender balance in some contexts.

For both roles, interest and appeal of the job posed challenges to recruitment (see Tables 3.6 and 3.8). The lack of interest in participating was not determined by gender. Rather, this was attributed to the lack of trust or willingness to engage with strangers and the perceived lack of benefit or impact of the exercise on aid delivery. For enumerators, job appeal-related challenges were referenced in almost two-thirds of the interviews and contained some of the most referenced challenges. Examples include working in difficult conditions, long distances travelled to remote locations, lack of adequate accommodation, and security risks faced in transit or locations of data collection. These factors affected the candidates' willingness to apply for enumerator roles and accept the offered positions. The short-term and unpredictable nature of enumerator work also affected the retention of enumerators. References coded under "rural settings harder than urban settings" relate to infrastructure and security challenges affecting women's recruitment in different areas and additional difficulties identifying candidates who were women in rural areas.

The challenges reported in identifying interested and qualified candidates illustrate the importance of diversity in both roles. In addition to gender, diversity across sociodemographic traits including age, ethnicity, religion, class and more is also important for data quality and content. While it is clear that these are vital considerations, on par with gender, respondents flagged that diversity across some of these traits can be more challenging to achieve than gender.

3.4.2 Practices and Recommendations from Practitioners

Respondents were asked about current practices employed and recommendations to overcome challenges related to the participation of women as enumerators and KIs. The findings show distinct practices for both roles.

Respondents also reported on contextual and environmental conditions that facilitated women's participation, even though no specific questions were asked on this topic. Comments of this nature were coded separately. Respondents were also asked to provide recommendations for improving practices. It is perhaps unsurprising that there was a high level of coherence between the current practices and the recommendations provided by practitioners (Table 3.9).

3.4.2.1 Practices in Place

Most of the practices reported to enhance the recruitment of women as enumerators are related to addressing challenges with candidate profiles or availability (see Table 3.10). The most common practice was setting quota-like structures in hiring practices. This was raised by three DTM country teams and the operations staff from the DTM global team. Monitoring the gender balance of the team and recruitment was important in increasing women's participation, even if teams faced other challenges in meeting recruitment targets. For example, HR teams in one country maintained an open vacancy

Table 3.9 Practices in place for recruiting women as enumerators

Practices in place for recruiting women as enumerators	*Frequency of responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
Gender quotas	8	38	22
Additional funding for improved working conditions	2	10	5
Community or government sensitisation on women's participation	2	10	5
Practices in place for retention and work regularisation (providing opportunities to work regularly)	2	10	5
University recruitment pipeline	2	10	5
Additional training to raise candidate capacity	1	5	3
No practices in place	1	5	3
Roster of women candidates	1	5	3
Considering transferable skills in applicants	1	5	3
Provision of transport and accommodation or stipend	1	5	3

Source: Authors.

Table 3.10 Conditions facilitating the recruitment of women as enumerators

Conditions for the recruitment of women as enumerators	*Frequency of responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
Women in management (DTM)	3	20	8
Data collection in urban areas vs. rural areas	3	20	8
Allocation of easier working locations for women (safer, better accommodation, etc.)	2	13.3	5
Context-specific enumerator profile means more applicants who are women	2	13.3	5
Economic need overrides sociocultural barriers	2	13.3	5
Supportive management team at all levels	2	13.3	5
Donor buy-in	1	6.7	3

Source: Authors.

Table 3.11 Conditions facilitating diverse KI participation across all sociodemographic traits

Conditions for diverse KI participation across all sociodemographic traits	*Frequency of responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
Consideration and mitigation of sociocultural restrictions on women's KI participation	10	35.7	27
Government sensitisation programme, sometimes together with other IOM units	6	21.4	16
Accessible interview locations	5	17.9	14
Timing of data collection	5	17.9	14
Physical presence	1	3.6	3
Separate interviews by population type, age category and other factors	1	3.6	3

Source: Authors.

for an enumerator roster that was regularly monitored for gender balance. In this context, DTM enumerators were also engaged as temporary staff by other programmes requiring short-term workers for activities like distributions in camps. These practices allowed for regular course correction in team gender balance and encouraged retention as enumerators were able to work

more regularly. Other examples of practices to address candidate profile challenges include a roster specific to women, adapting recruitment criteria to consider transferrable skills and conducting additional training to build specific technical capacities of candidates who are women (see Table 3.10).

Recognising the significance of security and travel-related challenges imposed by the nature of the job, respondents from three different teams highlighted that they had pursued additional funding to improve working conditions for enumerators with the specific aim of increasing women's participation. As shown in Table 3.10, these improvements included better transportation and accommodation options while travelling for work and additional security infrastructure.

Social norms and hierarchies were also recognised as a difficult challenge to overcome when seeking to increase women's participation. Two country teams referred to dedicated community and government sensitisation efforts as an attempt to mitigate this. In one context, this was done in partnership with other units in the organisation to maximise operational efficiency and establish a model that could serve as an example of how to implement this type of activity cost-effectively (see Table 3.11). While challenges persist, these teams reported a notable improvement in attitudes towards women's inclusion resulting from these efforts.

Eight interviewees (22% of interviews) from all five country teams discussed practices that were used to increase the participation of women as KIs. The practices referred to by each team were diverse and did not fall under identified themes. As a result, they were all coded under "other practices in place for identifying more women as KIs". One common element between all the practices shared was that they required additional time, resources, and stakeholder buy-in for teams to explore the context-specific modalities for reaching women who could act as KIs. It should be noted that time pressure in data collection, particularly in emergency settings, was reported as reducing teams' ability to take these extra steps. Interviewees argued that better planning and increased deployment of staff to identify KIs could mitigate this.

One country team raised the importance of prioritising the inclusion of women as KIs from the preparatory research stages of the data collection exercise. Two more country teams reported engaging with additional stakeholders to diversify KI networks. One of these teams worked with local women's and girls' associations to identify potential women as KIs in communities. The interviewee stated that this was an effort to expand the pool of KIs beyond the usual candidates that were traditional and religious leaders or local government officials, roles usually filled by men. Yet another team alluded to coordinating with leadership structures within camps or through church groups. In this context, these groups were identified as well-placed to help data collectors find suitable women to be KIs.

Two country teams pointed out that where women could not be included equally as KIs (for example, where governance structures are male-dominated),

focus group data collection could be used to include women's perspectives. One of these country teams had implemented compulsory quotas for women's participation in the focus group discussions (FGDs) and regularly verified that quotas were being implemented. It should be noted that respondents referred to challenges in ensuring equal opportunity for participation, even in focus groups where women were present. These include methodological and context-specific challenges (e.g., cultural norms associated with elders holding all authority to speak on behalf of a community or restrictive dynamics between men and women in social settings).

3.4.2.2 Conditions Facilitating women's Participation

Respondents also pointed to context-specific environmental or cultural factors that impacted women's participation (see Table 3.10). As far as recruitment of women as enumerators is concerned, one team stated that they targeted university students or recent graduates and that this worked well because women's enrolment in the country was high. Another team reported that conflict-driven economic needs in a specific region had reduced the impact of social barriers on women's participation. Three teams also noted that increased assessment coverage in urban areas had allowed them to recruit more women. Women in management, buy-in from management in general and additional support provided by HR with expertise in gender-balanced recruitment practices were also raised as relevant context-specific factors.

The most frequently noted contextual factor enabling the recruitment of women as KIs was teams that could understand the sociocultural limitations on women's participation and plan accordingly (see Table 3.11). Their ability to do this was based on a range of factors, including how established the data collection exercise was, the level of urgency, the composition of the enumeration teams, the level of experience within field teams, and management buy-in. Other reported factors included conducting interviews in locations that were accessible to respondents and conducting assessments at times of the day when the target respondents were at home.

3.4.2.3 Recommendations for Overcoming a Lack of Gender Balance

Interviews with DTM country teams show diverse challenges to women's participation in humanitarian data collection. Interviewees highlighted interconnected factors contributing to low participation. For example, the absence of women as enumerators may reduce access to women as KIs in some contexts. However, the over-representation of men in local leadership positions and overreliance on KIs in these roles can also reduce women's participation as KIs, even when enumeration teams are more gender-balanced. In addition, status, sociocultural hierarchies, and non-gender-related factors affect access to KIs with diverse sociodemographic traits. These findings explain the differences in the effect of gender parity between enumeration teams and

KIs across the different case study countries. Findings suggest that efforts to increase women's participation must simultaneously target a combination of barriers across both roles in each context.

3.4.2.3.1 ENUMERATORS

Following the discussion of barriers and challenges, 18 respondents across all five countries and the global DTM team offered specific recommendations for recruiting more women as enumerators. Instituting mandatory quotas was the most common overall recommendation (six interviewees in three countries), complemented by references to more direct encouragement for women to apply in job adverts (three interviews in three countries). More inclusive data collection practices, such as phone interviews (five interviewees), were recommended across all but one of the countries. However, it should be noted that some drawbacks of remote data collection modalities were highlighted, including lower data quality and less engagement from respondents.

More funding for capacity building was raised in five interviews; however, three were from a single country team, which shares its enumerator pool with other IOM programmes when not engaged in DTM data collection. The other three most reported recommendations included: improved contracts, more comprehensive vacancy advertisement, better planning in emergency contexts, and improved security and work infrastructure.

Two interviewees from two country teams specifically discussed more localised recruitment for data collection to limit long travel times. This is consistent with the finding that long-distance travel is a barrier (35% of interviews) influencing the recruitment of women as enumerators. Instituting a pipeline to train university students as enumerators was raised twice. Finally, recommendations included increased donor buy-in and ensuring the presence of women in management positions as a factor facilitating the development of longer-term mechanisms to recruit more women for enumerator positions.

3.4.2.3.2 KIS

In total, 11 respondents across all five country teams gave specific recommendations for identifying more women as KIs. Most respondents reported deploying more staff to locate KIs and contacting more women's associations (four respondents in three countries, respectively). Instituting a mandatory quota for women in KI networks, creating better incentives for KIs, and adjusting timing to match KI schedules when employed in daily wage labour were alternative recommendations made by interviewees.

Finally, recommendations were made to build the capacity of enumerators to expand and diversify the KI pool. The importance of diversity across multiple demographic traits was raised, with respondents recommending adapting data collection approaches to allow for meaningful participation from KIs with a broad spectrum of profiles. One interview stated that having more

women in coordination positions would make it easier to understand how to navigate sociocultural restrictions and ensure the participation of diverse KIs in providing more nuanced data beyond what mandatory quotas in FGDs guarantee.[3]

3.4.3 Impacts on Humanitarian Data Content, Quality and Accuracy

Interviewees were asked about the impact of the unequal representation of men and women among enumerators and KIs on data content, quality, and accuracy. The responses highlighted notable data quality gains resulting from balanced enumerator teams and increased women's participation as KIs. Importantly, for KIs, diversification across social hierarchies and demographic characteristics was as important as gender considerations where data content, quality, and accuracy are concerned. Respondents reported data gaps introduced by a lack of representativeness in teams. These gaps were due to questions that cannot be asked or are not answered, as well as differences in spheres of knowledge between the genders across different contexts.

All five country teams and the global staff agreed that balanced enumerator teams offered great potential for enhancing data quality. The tables below present the number of interviews highlighting the necessity of balanced enumerator teams and increased participation of women as KI.

Of the 37 interviewees, 24 (65%) commented on the advantages of balanced enumerator teams, even though this question was not explicitly asked. Table 3.12 above shows the breakdown of the types of advantages stated by the 24 interviewees. This group of respondents noted that balanced enumerator teams resulted in enhanced data completeness, better access to respondents, additional operational effectiveness, and greater cooperation from respondents. Most respondents felt there was "better or more data" as a result of having balanced teams, pointing to the fact that the presence of women in both roles makes it possible to ask and receive answers to specific questions.

Table 3.12 Advantages of balanced enumerator teams

Advantages of balanced enumerator teams	*Frequency of responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
You can collect better or more data	18	39.1	49
It is easier to get access to respondents	12	26.1	32
Operations are more effective (run smoother)	6	13	16
Respondents are more cooperative	6	13	16
General positive comments	4	8.7	5

Source: Authors.

Respondents from one country reported that balanced enumerator teams proved valuable for gathering data on sensitive topics that could not be addressed in FGDs. In another context, emphasis was placed on the importance of balanced teams to gain access to respondents. The presence of women during household interviews made respondents more cooperative and willing to participate. For example, in a context where men and women worked in pairs as enumerators, women were more likely to get a friendly response when knocking on doors, as it was women of the household who often answered without their head scarves.

> This happened two to three times for them to realise that it was maybe better that she would be knocking on the door all the time and he would be turning his back….
>
> (Country Team 1, Interviewee 3, November 25, 2022)

Nineteen of the 37 interviewees discussed specific advantages of increasing women's KI participation. Table 3.13 shows the breakdown of the types of advantages stated by these interviewees. Their comments were not solely about gender but also about diversifying across other demographic traits and social hierarchies. In all five countries, respondents reported that men and women had better access to information about different topics. In different contexts, questions on child needs, protection, school attendance, food consumption, water access, and other areas were provided as examples of spheres of knowledge influenced by gender. One respondent suggested that women as KIs provided more objective information on conflict and security concerns.

> …women (KIs) tend to be less biased with respect to the conflict dynamics …. Other tribes speaking about a certain conflict that has taken place may present biases with the narrative that is offered and the data that can be offered… KI who are women are less susceptible to this

Table 3.13 Advantages of women KI participation

Advantages of women's KI participation	*Frequency of responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
Different spheres of knowledge between the genders	13	54.2	35%
Gender-specific data availability	10	41.7	27%
Women as KIs are more objective (relating to conflict)	1	4.2	3%

Source: Authors.

> kind of bias and more willing to provide harder truths… we noticed that when there are more women as key informants, the information is more robust.
>
> (Country Team 2, Interviewee 1, 16 November 2022)

Respondents also reported the importance of obtaining data on women's experiences and needs. A total of two respondents remarked on how a less diverse KI pool can lead to obscured results. For example, underreporting due to a lack of diverse participation was identified as a concern, especially in contexts with a significant youth presence, and during data collection when certain individuals might be overlooked.

> Let's say if you're doing a survey on a household, they [girls] can be the ones that do quite a lot of work, but you don't necessarily talk to them.
>
> (Country Team 3, Interviewee 1, November 22, 2022)

3.4.3.1 Data Gaps

Respondents were asked if they had experienced being unable to ask questions due to their sensitivity and which questions were likely to elicit non-response. These were proxy questions to determine how data content was impacted by gender balance. Findings in this section were mixed and indicated that further research is required. On the one hand, information on sensitive topics like pregnancy or hygiene was more likely to be shared with women. On the other hand, depending on the context, some general questions (food consumption, power availability, access to services) proved sensitive from a non-gendered perspective, showing the importance of the context in determining which questions can be asked by whom and what impact this has on the data collected.

Twenty-one respondents discussed reasons enumerators may not receive a response during data collection. Table 3.14 above shows the breakdown of the types of reasons stated by the 21 interviewees. The explanations provided show a distribution of gender-related and other hindering factors impacting which questions elicited non-responses. Eleven interviewees (30%) said that generally sensitive (non-gendered) questions often received non-responses. For example, questions on food intake and electricity availability were particularly sensitive in one context. In other contexts, security, poor housing conditions and declining income were sensitive areas, leading enumerators to alter the directness of questioning. Gender-specific sensitive questions were also reported and covered different topics, depending on the context (Table 3.15).

> There were some instances of the respondent, who was a woman, saying I would prefer if a woman was talking to me or if a woman asked me this question, or I would prefer if a different member of my household

Table 3.14 Reasons why questions enumerators asked elicited non-response

Reasons why questions enumerators asked elicited non-response	*Frequency of responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
General sensitive (non-gendered)	11	44	30
General sensitive (gendered)	8	32	22
No, all questions are answered	5	20	14
Yes, because of assessment fatigue	1	4	3

Source: Authors.

Table 3.15 Questions that enumerators cannot ask

Questions that enumerators cannot ask	*Frequency of responses*	*Percent of responses (%)*	*Respondents (%) (n = 37)*
There are no questions that cannot be asked	9	21.4	24
Some questions cannot be asked (gendered in general)	9	21.4	24
Pregnancy or hygiene-related questions cannot be asked	9	21.4	24
All questions can be asked because a woman is present as an enumerator	8	19	22
Some questions cannot be asked, but they are not gender-related	6	14.3	16
Questions are asked, and answers are provided, but the quality of responses is uncertain	1	2.4	3

Source: Authors.

> answered this question, a male member of my household answered this question, things like that.
>
> (Country Team 2, Interviewee 1, November 16, 2022)

Of the interviewees, 29 reported that some questions could not be asked due to the topic's sensitivity. An equal number of respondents stated that all questions could be asked but that some questions could not be asked due to the gender of the interlocutors. In further support of the latter statement, respondents in four out of the five countries also stated that when women were present as enumerators, all questions could be asked, especially those requiring gender-specific information to be disclosed. For example,

women were preferred for discussing sensitive topics such as pregnancy or hygiene-related matters.

Six respondents commented that other sensitive questions could not be asked but these were unrelated to gender-specific issues. Examples included questions that could upset respondents (e.g., on members of the household who passed away or on security).

> For example, in an area affected by tribal or political conflicts, some questions are not asked directly, like a question on the participation of the community in the security initiatives and arrangements, which could be interpreted as an alliance to a part of conflict and not another
> (Country Team 2, Interviewee 1, November 16, 2022)

Finally, one interviewee noted that while no questions were off-limits, the quality of the answers provided by respondents in some instances was uncertain, possibly due to discomfort or reluctance.

3.5 Conclusions

This chapter documents findings on DTM data collection practitioners' expert understanding of the challenges and good practices for the inclusion of women in data collection for humanitarian planning and response, both in their roles as data collectors (enumerators) and KIs. It also explores the impact of women's participation on humanitarian data content and quality, recognising the importance of data in informing responses in forced migration contexts.

The challenges and barriers faced in recruiting women as enumerators and KIs were context-specific, influenced mainly by the nature of the job, difficult working conditions and male-dominated sociocultural hierarchies. Barriers to identifying women as KIs and mitigating mechanisms for low women's participation in data collection were also examined. Male-dominated social structures, including those within government at different levels, were the main context-specific social and cultural barriers to women's participation. Examples include predominantly male local government officials/traditional leaders, civil society representatives, and overreliance on these groups to identify KIs.

Recommendations to improve gender balance among enumerators included quotas, considering the transferable skills of candidates who apply, more inclusive data collection practices (i.e., phone interviews when possible), funding for potential applicant and existing enumerator capacity building, contract-related recommendations, wider vacancy advertisement, and better planning in emergency contexts (especially for more localised data collection). Recommendations for improving women's participation among KIs involved deploying more staff to locate women as KIs and working with local organisations such as women's associations (among others), mandatory

quotas, and navigating sociocultural restrictions on women's participation in mostly public data collection activities such as FGDs.

In isolation, these recommendations are not holistic solutions. Countries with a high presence of women as enumerators may still have fewer women as KIs. This is due to barriers that cannot be fully overcome by adjusting operational choices because they relate to features engrained in the sociocultural fabric. The opposite is also true: less gender-balanced enumerator teams may collect information from a KI base with a high proportion of women as KIs. However, given the frequent replication of sociocultural hierarchies in interview settings (e.g., males may still dominate the conversation, or the presence of women as KIs does not necessarily result in the disclosure of gender-sensitive information in that location) and other factors, limitations are imposed on the representative exchange of information.

It is also clear that participation in data collection is not only a gendered concern. For this reason, it is important to diversify KIs across multiple demographic traits, including age, ethnicity or nationality, and other intersecting identities. As highlighted in the recommendations for overcoming the lack of gender balance, it was easier to achieve gender balance for enumerators in contexts where they could be drawn from younger talent pools. KIs, conversely, are normally respected community members with class, profession/expertise and age-based status and thus this category tends to be more male-dominated across different contexts.

Finally, the analysis of how gender-balanced participation (via enumerators and KIs) affects humanitarian data content, quality and accuracy shows the advantages of having balanced enumerator teams regarding access to respondents and the effectiveness of operations. The positive impact of more gender-balanced KI pools was also demonstrated, a consequence of the different spheres of knowledge of responders of different genders, which could affect data availability and quality for multi-sectoral planning and response.

To conclude, identifying and addressing the challenges and barriers to achieving higher gender parity in enumeration teams and KIs is a largely context-specific endeavour. Going forward, this requires a multi-pronged approach to addressing the barriers women face in both groups (enumerators and KIs). While this study could only cover five of the more than 90 active DTM operations, the findings indicate some concrete actions that could be corroborated by a more comprehensive investigation across different country contexts. Identifying what other barriers and enabling factors affect representative humanitarian data collection and the replicability of recommendations across contexts requires further investigation.

First and foremost is the dedication of appropriate resources and time for country teams to identify obstacles at the most granular and context-specific level to understand what impedes a growing gender parity across enumerator teams and KIs. Implementing recommendations that are feasible in the short term will also require teams to be allocated additional resources. Following

this, a long-term plan that addresses issues faced by both groups is essential to improving the representativeness of humanitarian data collection on diverse populations subject to different forms of humanitarian crises with a human mobility dimension. If humanitarian action is to evolve further, it needs to start with the data collection process and the context-specific challenges within, as this process forms the basis of humanitarian planning, response and policy.

Put simply:

> *…a lot of times women, the young women or the women that I've encountered feel like they have to prove that they deserve to be there.*

This study has contributed to the growing and undeniable body of evidence showing that it is well past the time for this to change.

Notes

1 Terminology Disclaimer: The term "gender" encompasses more than male and female binary designations. The terms "gender balance" and "gender parity" are used consistent with the European Institute for Gender Equality (n.d.) and UN Women's (n.d.) definition of gender as "equal participation of women and men." From a data collection perspective, gender concerns are not only related to women's issues but also to the broader sectoral indicators collected for humanitarian aid and service delivery.
2 For the wider debate on biases in humanitarian data collection between interviewer and respondent along the intersections of race, gender and age power hierarchies, see Lokot (2022). For a discussion of institutional accountability against "extractive forms of research" during empirical data collection with displaced and returning populations in camp-like settings, see (Squire, Trigwell, and Hirani 2022, 19).
3 For reference to FGDs, see the final paragraph of Section 4.2.1.

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4 From Policy to Practice

The Evolution of Disability-Inclusive Humanitarian Action on Internal Displacement in Vanuatu and Nigeria

Oliver Neuschaefer and Louisa Yasukawa

4.1 Introduction

At the end of 2022, there were 71.1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) worldwide, the highest figure ever recorded (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) 2023, 3). IDPs are individuals forced to leave their homes due to conflict, violence, disasters, or human rights violations but who have not crossed an international border (UN Commission on Human Rights 1998, Introduction). While the impacts of internal displacement can be devastating for everyone, they are often most severe for persons with disabilities. Available evidence indicates that persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected by internal displacement and are at greater risk of exclusion from humanitarian planning and responses (IDMC 2022a). The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 1.3 billion people, or 16% of the global population, have a significant disability, of whom nearly 80% live in low- and middle-income countries (2022, 3). Although the number of IDPs with a disability is unknown, the global disability prevalence rate suggests it could be about eleven million. Despite being referred to as a homogeneous population, persons with disabilities are a diverse group whose experiences of displacement vary depending on their age, sex, gender, disability and other characteristics.

Reports reiterate how environmental, attitudinal, and institutional barriers that persons with disabilities encounter daily are amplified during crises. Persons with disabilities are often excluded from early warning systems and evacuation planning, increasing their risk of injury and preventing them from fleeing from conflict or disasters altogether (Yasukawa 2021). They are more likely to be left behind in their home communities or abandoned by family members during displacement (Pisani and Grech 2022, 205). IDPs with disabilities commonly face barriers to accessing humanitarian assistance, including food, shelter, and healthcare (UN Human Rights Council 2020). The lack of disaggregated data on their diverse experiences compounds their invisibility.

These concerns have not gone unnoticed, reflecting significant global and national policymaking developments to enhance the inclusion of persons with

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disabilities in humanitarian action on internal displacement in recent years. However, only a few studies have sought to assess the extent to which such policy commitments have been effectively implemented in practice. Complementing these analyses, this chapter examines the gap between policy and practice from the perspective of humanitarian actors and their evolving roles in supporting IDPs with disabilities.

Given that the challenges and issues faced by IDPs with disabilities vary depending on the context and drivers of displacement, two distinct case studies are used to assess and compare progress in policy implementation. The first case study focuses on disaster displacement in Vanuatu, while the second focuses on displacement linked to conflict and violence in Nigeria. The chapter begins with a brief overview of the concept of disability and the relevant international normative framework. It then uses the case studies of Vanuatu and Nigeria to answer the following research questions:

1 How has humanitarian action on internal displacement evolved to be more inclusive of persons with disabilities?
2 What strategies have enabled greater disability inclusion? and
3 What are the remaining gaps and challenges?

It concludes by discussing the implications of the findings for policy and practice.

4.2 Conceptualising Disability

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which entered into force in 2008, recognises *disability* as an "evolving concept"[1] (UN General Assembly 2007, Preamble (e)). Article 1 of the CRPD states that *persons with disabilities* include those with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments that in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (UN General Assembly 2007). Likewise, the same convention recognises disability as the result of barriers imposed on persons with impairments by society, restricting their participation in everyday life.

The CRPD represented a paradigm shift from the traditional medical model of disability, which reduces disability to a health condition, towards a social model of disability that understands disability as resulting from barriers, attitudes, and social exclusion (Barnes 2012). Following the social approach and based on the understanding of the CRPD, there are three main types of barriers (UN General Assembly 2007):

1 **Institutional barriers**: These include laws, policies, strategies, or institutionalised practices that discriminate against persons with disabilities or prevent them from participating in society. For example, curtailing the

right of persons with disabilities to open and manage bank accounts, which is an essential requirement to access cash-based humanitarian support.

2 **Environmental and communicative barriers**: These include physical obstacles in the natural or built environment that prevent access (e.g., steps and narrow doors that prevent access for wheelchair users in cyclone shelters) and inaccessible communication systems (e.g., early warning sirens that are inaudible for persons with hearing impairment).

3 **Attitudinal barriers**: Prejudice, discrimination and stigma cause the most significant obstacle for persons with disabilities, who often are assumed to be one or more of the following: incapable/inadequate, of low intelligence, in need of a "cure", needing "special" services or support, or dependent.

The CRPD is also credited with codifying a human rights model of disability that recognises persons with disabilities as subjects with rights and capacities rather than objects of charity (Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) 2014, 10). While the CRPD and its optional protocol have been ratified by most countries worldwide, many governments still tend to follow a medical perspective and are not yet fully applying the rights-based approach (Lawson and Beckett 2021).

These policy developments have been reflected in—and further supported by—data work. The Washington Group on Disability Statistics has developed different sets of questions that can be included in censuses and surveys to measure disability in a consistent and internationally comparable way (Washington Group on Disability Statistics 2020). The tools avoid the term disability and ask respondents about the level of difficulty they face in different domains of functioning. Humanitarian organisations tend to use the Washington Group Short Set of Questions, comprising only six questions.

A key concept of disability inclusion to which this chapter refers is accessibility. Accessibility is often misunderstood to refer only to physical access to buildings and public infrastructure. In line with Article 9 of the CRPD, accessibility is about ensuring that persons with disabilities have access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications (including information and communications technologies and systems) and other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas (UN General Assembly 2007). In recent years, digital accessibility to mobile apps, websites and other online services has been an emerging theme (CBM International 2017).

4.3 International Normative Framework in Humanitarian Settings

The UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement recognise that certain groups of IDPs, including those with disabilities, are entitled to "protection and assistance required by their condition and to treatment which takes into account their specific needs" (UN Commission on Human Rights 1998, Principle 4). Since their adoption in 1998, several policies have called

for protecting persons with disabilities in humanitarian settings, including those internally displaced by conflict, violence, and disasters. Article 11 of the CRPD obliges all state parties to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in risk situations, including armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies, and disasters (UN General Assembly 2007). Likewise, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 emphasises the need to empower persons with disabilities to play a leading role in the assessment, design, and implementation of disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures (UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015, 19(d)). The Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, launched in 2016, recognises "the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that further exacerbate the exclusion of persons with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies", including IDPs (para 1.8).

In November 2019, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action (IASC Guidelines) were published as the first system-wide, globally accepted guidance on the actions that humanitarian actors must take to effectively identify the needs of persons with disabilities and to adequately address them in humanitarian settings, including in situations of (mass) displacement (IASC 2019). The IASC Guidelines set out four "must do" actions to be applied in all stages of humanitarian action, including the preparedness, response, and recovery phases (19–21). These four actions are as follows:

1 **Meaningful participation**: Persons with disabilities are entitled to actively participate in humanitarian decisions that affect them.
2 **Remove barriers**: Removing attitudinal, environmental, and institutional barriers is critical to addressing the risks faced by persons with disabilities in humanitarian crises.
3 **Capacity Development**: Humanitarian stakeholders and organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs)[2] need to develop their awareness of the rights and capacities of persons with disabilities. Humanitarian actors must collaborate with persons with disabilities to strengthen and extend their capacities.
4 **Data disaggregation**: To monitor inclusion, data on barriers and the specific needs of persons with disabilities are essential. Humanitarian data should be disaggregated by sex, age, and disability.

As a growing number of humanitarian organisations are aligning their analysis and programmes along the four "must do" actions as formulated by the IASC Guidelines, the case studies set out here deploy them as a common framework to examine gaps in policy and practice for disability-inclusive humanitarian action for IDPs. By examining disability inclusion for conflict- and disaster-affected IDPs, the study aims to present findings that humanitarian practitioners can easily adopt into their frameworks and practices.

4.4 Methods and Limitations

This chapter assesses the extent to which developments in global policymaking on disability-inclusive humanitarian action have been implemented at the national level. To accomplish this, the authors will focus on the cases of Nigeria and Vanuatu based on the following four main criteria:

1 Countries that are affected by internal displacement but with different triggers. The authors selected Nigeria for displacement linked with conflict and violence and Vanuatu for disaster displacement (i.e., in the context of volcanic eruptions and cyclones).
2 Countries for which an initial literature review has shown that there is a solid basis of secondary data related to disability and displacement.
3 Countries with active humanitarian actors, who can share insights via key informant interviews.
4 Countries from two separate regions with different geographical contexts.

As a first step, we reviewed existing policies, guidelines, literature, and qualitative and quantitative data collection related to disability and displacement. To complement this research, we conducted additional qualitative key informant interviews with humanitarian staff from different organisations as well as representatives from OPDs. A total of 13 interviews with different stakeholders from local NGOs, international NGOs, UN agencies and governmental institutions were conducted in person in Nigeria in October 2022. In contrast, five remote interviews with representatives from NGOs, OPDs, disability inclusion experts and government institutions were conducted in Vanuatu in January and February 2023.

Linked to the overarching framework of the four "must do" actions as formulated by the IASC Guidelines this study adopted a grounded theory approach to analyse the qualitative data gathered from key informant interviews. Grounded theory is particularly suited to explore complex phenomena such as disability-inclusive humanitarian action, allowing for the emergence of theoretical insights directly from the data. Through iterative data collection and analysis, more specific themes and patterns where identified, facilitating a deeper understanding of the implementation of disability-inclusive policies and practices in Nigeria and Vanuatu.

While the authors were able to reach out to diverse stakeholders, issues such as entry restrictions and travel arrangements (such as in the case of Vanuatu) limited the research to respondents with access to online conference platforms. More so, the initial plan to conduct focus group discussions with displaced persons with disabilities was also cancelled due to security concerns (Nigeria) and difficulties accessing the affected population (Vanuatu). This research limitation should be addressed in future studies to better understand the outcomes of disability-inclusive action.

It is also important to note that persons with disabilities are not a homogeneous group and face diverse types of barriers (but also receive diverse

forms of support) depending on the type and severity of impairment, gender, and age. Persons with hearing, intellectual or psychosocial impairments are regularly neglected or overlooked as their impairment is not as "visible" as other impairments. Within the scope of this study, it has been impossible to develop a more detailed analysis of these aspects and how diverse groups of persons with disabilities are differently affected by humanitarian crises and assisted by humanitarian actors.

4.5 Case Studies of Disability-Inclusive Humanitarian Action

4.5.1 Case 1: IDPs in Vanuatu

Vanuatu is an archipelago of 83 islands located in the South Pacific Ocean. In 2021, it ranked as the country with the highest disaster risk worldwide and was one of the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change (Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV) 2021, 6; Government of the Republic of Vanuatu 2015, 1). Tropical cyclones and flooding are common in Vanuatu, and the likelihood of earthquakes, landslides, volcanic activity, and tsunamis is high (Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction 2020). About 64% of Vanuatu's population live within a kilometre of the coast, where they are highly exposed to extreme weather events, sea level rise and coastal erosion (Andrew et al. 2019, 8). Development challenges, rapid urbanisation and poverty compound the population's vulnerability to disasters, increasing the likelihood of displacement and its consequent negative impacts (IDMC 2021; IDMC 2022b, 7).

Over the last decade, over 175,000 internal disaster displacements have been recorded in Vanuatu (IDMC 2022b, 6). Cyclones and volcanic eruptions caused most of these displacements. In 2015, Tropical Cyclone Pam (TC Pam), the strongest storm ever to reach Pacific shores, triggered 65,000 internal displacements (7–8). Increased volcanic activity on Ambae Island prompted the mandatory evacuation of the island's 11,000 residents, first in 2017 and again in 2018 (IDMC 2022b). Subsequently, in 2020, Tropical Cyclone Harold (TC Harold) struck three provinces in Vanuatu, triggering over 80,000 displacements (IDMC 2022b). Based on the interviews with 1,724 individuals displaced by TC Harold, 9% had previously been displaced, including those forced to leave due to TC Pam and the Ambae volcanic eruptions (International Organization for Migration (IOM) 2020, 9).

4.5.1.1 Policy and Institutional Framework

Vanuatu has positioned itself as a global leader in developing policies to address the risks and impacts of disaster displacement. It was also the first Pacific Island state to ratify the CRPD in 2008 and has made strong international and national commitments towards disability-inclusive humanitarian

and development efforts (Vanuatu Ministry of Justice and Community Services 2018, 10). After TC Pam in 2015, several new policies and guidelines were introduced to enhance responses to disaster displacement, many of which call for inclusive action. For example, the National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-induced Displacement recognises that persons with disabilities experience specific risks during displacement (NDMO 2018, 10). It calls for better tracking of the number of persons with disabilities displaced by disasters, training, and capacity building for OPDs, and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in decision-making on displacement, amongst other things (30). The Vanuatu Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2016–2030 and the National Disability-inclusive Development Policy 2018–2025 emphasise that the inclusion of persons with disabilities in DRR should be prioritised (Government of the Republic of Vanuatu 2015, 26; Vanuatu Ministry of Justice & Community Services 2018, 17). Other relevant instruments include the National Guidelines for the Selection and Assessment of Evacuation Centres (NDMO, IOM, NORCAP, ECHO 2016).

National and international stakeholders have invested significant institutional and financial resources to implement policies on disaster displacement in Vanuatu (IDMC 2022b, 24). The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) coordinates responses at the national level. At the sub-national level, the Provincial and Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (PDCCCs and CDCCCs) coordinate DRR activities, including managing evacuation centres and ensuring displaced persons in evacuation centres receive life-saving assistance and protection (Zebeta et al. 2022, 9; Care International and World Vision Vanuatu 2018, 6–7).

At the international level, the Australian government is the largest provider of development and humanitarian assistance to Vanuatu and implements various programmes in the country through the Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) (Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2023; AHP 2022). The AHP's Disaster READY programme brings together the NDMO, Australian NGOs and local partners to implement DRR, adaption, resilience, and emergency response programming across Vanuatu (AHP 2022). The inclusion of persons with disabilities and women and girls were cross-cutting themes of the first phase of Disaster READY (2017–2022) and continue to be emphasised in the second phase of the programme (2022–2027) (Baker 2021, 1). In Vanuatu, the cluster system has been activated to support the national government in preparedness, disaster response, and early recovery.

4.5.1.2 Implementation of Disability-Inclusive Humanitarian Action

TC Pam highlighted the significant physical, informational, and attitudinal barriers persons with disabilities confront during a disaster and the

devastating repercussions they can have if left unaddressed (CBM New Zealand and Pacific Disability Forum 2017). An assessment conducted by the CBM-Nossal Institute Partnership for Disability Inclusive Development and others found that persons with disabilities had poorer access to DRR activities and were 2.45 times more likely to be injured during TC Pam than persons without disabilities (Baker et al. 2017, v). Based on this assessment, about 60% of persons with disabilities reported a lack of information on what to do in an emergency (23). Women with disabilities were particularly marginalised, with 74% reporting barriers accessing evacuation centres, compared to 50% of men with disabilities (19). In general, persons with disabilities were left out of formal mainstream assessments led by the NDMO (2). Where their needs were identified, they were not systematically included or prioritised in the response, and some missed out on distributions altogether. Such findings highlight the importance of ensuring persons with disabilities can evacuate in a safe and timely manner, and access information and assistance once displaced. This led to various recommendations for government and humanitarian actors, including to:

- Mainstream disability inclusion in DRR.
- Promote the leadership of persons with disabilities, particularly women, in community preparedness forums and committees.
- Strengthen the capacity of all actors to work in a disability-inclusive way and establish effective partnerships with persons with disabilities and their organisations.
- Ensure persons with disabilities are identified and included in risk assessments and needs assessments immediately following a disaster.
- Remove the barriers that increase the risk for women with disabilities and ensure their meaningful participation in DRR policy and programming (Baker et al. 2017, vi–vii).

The following section assesses the extent to which such recommendations were implemented in humanitarian responses to displacement linked with the Ambae volcanic eruptions and TC Harold, using the four "must do" actions of the IASC Guidelines as a framework.

4.5.1.2.1 MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

There has been considerable progress regarding the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in preparedness and responses to disasters and displacement since TC Pam. Key informants noted that this has been particularly evident at the community level, where the membership of persons with disabilities in CDCCCs has been increasing, albeit slowly. The Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association (VDPA), the national umbrella organisation of 22 local OPDs, has played a pivotal role in increasing the participation of its members in decision-making, particularly during the TC

Harold response. OPDs joined all cluster meetings for the first time, and a new dedicated disability sub-cluster was established under the protection cluster. As a representative of an OPD noted,

> For example, [there are] two [VDPA] members who attended the food cluster, and even though they didn't talk, their presence was there and you could see [the others] say 'Oh, let's not forget persons with disabilities'.[3]

The VDPA and the Vanuatu Society for People with Disability co-led a mapping exercise of persons with disabilities on Santo to identify their location and needs and inform the actions of the disability sub-cluster (CBM Global Inclusion Advisory Group et al. 2022, 23). The information was relayed to the other clusters to enable the provision of more targeted shelter, food, and hygiene packs to persons with disabilities after the disaster.

Although the participation of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action on displacement has increased in recent years, there is evidence that many are still not being consulted in the design of humanitarian interventions. For example, only one out of six IDPs IDMC interviewed in 2022 said they had ever been consulted about how assistance provided during their displacement could be adapted to their needs (IDMC 2022b, 15).

Additionally, several key informants voiced concerns that the VDPA's resources are stretched and that its lack of core funding means it must dedicate significant time to fundraising. Resource constraints also limit the ability of the VDPA to reach and consult its disaster-affected members. One of the reasons why the VDPA was able to play such an active role in the TC Harold response was because the cyclone made landfall on Santo, which is where the VDPA is based. However, as a representative of an OPD argued,

> The main challenge here is that geographical locations make it so expensive to move from one island to another … what if another category five cyclone hits some other province? How will we get to other provinces to advocate for their rights?[4]

Informants, therefore, stressed the need to ensure that the VDPA has an adequate core budget to cover its operational and institutional costs rather than relying primarily on activity-based funding. Finally, while attending committees and cluster meetings is an important first step, greater efforts are also needed to address attitudinal barriers to ensure participation is genuinely "meaningful". As a representative of an OPD stated, persons with disabilities are "not only warming the seat" but should feel confident to speak up and be actively engaged in the design of programming.[5] Finally, various persons with disabilities should be encouraged and supported to participate in forums and committees so it is not always the same individuals whose voices are heard.

4.5.1.2.2 REMOVING BARRIERS

There have been promising signs of more inclusive and tailored preparedness and responses to disaster displacement since TC Pam. During the Ambae response, Oxfam led a cash transfer programme, providing short-term assistance to 2,165 displaced households and prioritising persons with disabilities for assistance (Salerua 2019). As part of the Disaster READY programme, maps of evacuation centres were provided to residents with information about safe and accessible evacuation points shortly before TC Harold hit (AHP 2020, 9). Persons with disabilities were also prioritised in the distribution of dignity and hygiene kits (Baker 2021, 26). According to a representative of an OPD,

> We could see the changes—like before, persons with disabilities were left out in relief supplies, but with TC Harold, they were prioritised by first responders.[6]

Various enabling factors contributed to these improvements. Disability inclusion was a priority area under the UN Central Emergency Response Fund's (CERF)[7] rapid response window for TC Harold, and efforts were made to ensure aid distributions were made in easily accessible locations, during convenient daylight hours and through barrier-free facilities (UN CERF 2020, 16).

There was also greater coordination amongst humanitarian actors in the TC Harold response than during TC Pam. Various humanitarian actors had flown into Vanuatu to assist in the TC Pam response. This contributed to a fragmented response in which persons with disabilities were largely overlooked. In contrast, COVID-19 travel restrictions prevented external aid from entering when TC Harold hit (Du Parc and Bolo Speigth 2020). Although these restrictions posed challenges by hindering the arrival of resources and personnel, they also contributed to a more locally driven and harmonised response.

Despite promising efforts, however, several key informants expressed doubts that the growing awareness about disability inclusion is being systematically translated into action. As one informant noted,

> I think there's broad agreement that, of course, persons with disabilities should be included. But I'm not sure humanitarian agencies or the NGOs that are implementing understand what you need to do to adjust the work you're doing or to add to the work you're doing so that persons with disabilities can benefit as well. I think that's partly a product of the pace and the rapidity of humanitarian work.[8]

Informational barriers persist despite the lessons that emerged from TC Pam. Early warnings about oncoming disasters tend to be sent via text messages, which means many persons with disabilities continue to miss out on life-saving information.

4.5.1.2.3 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The first phase of the Disaster READY programme made important strides in developing the capacities of humanitarian actors and persons with disabilities regarding inclusive action on displacement. The AHP has funded a DRR officer position within the VDPA to facilitate NGO access to local technical assistance and capacity development on disability inclusion (AHP 2021). The VDPA also trains representatives of persons with disabilities in different cities, who develop evacuation plans and disaster emergency packs for the persons with disabilities living in their areas. A specialised organisation, CBM Australia, provides technical support to strengthen the capacity of OPDs in Vanuatu in various areas, including DRR (CBM Australia 2021).

While such efforts are promising, one key informant noted that there is still a tendency for some NGOs to view the VDPA and other OPDs as service providers and outsource disability inclusion to them rather than mainstreaming it into all their activities. This is a failure to recognise OPDs' primary purpose as advocacy organisations and instead expect them to be involved in delivering services or assistance. For this reason, phase two of the Disaster READY programme focuses on developing and implementing a more sustainable and strategic approach to working with the VDPA and other OPDs.

To further develop capacities, informants recommended appointing a disability focal point in the NDMO. They also emphasised that although training humanitarian actors on disability inclusion is essential from a technical perspective, it needs to be complemented by other forms of capacity building. One informant suggested that greater investments in media and communications are needed to identify good practices, particularly to replicate and scale up community efforts to the provincial and national levels.

4.5.1.2.4 DATA DISAGGREGATION

The government's initial community assessment forms, used by CDCCCs, community members, area councils, and civil society organisations in the first round of needs assessments following a disaster, are not designed to collect disability-disaggregated data. Instead, the form asks responders to simply tick whether anyone is "disabled" in the village or community (NDMO 2013, 73). Disability data, including the number of persons with disabilities in a community, tend to be captured only in the second and third rounds of assessments via the rapid technical assessments and detailed sectoral assessments conducted by the clusters.

Recently, there have been solid advancements in the collection and use of disability-disaggregated data on displacement. IOM and the NDMO first published disaggregated data on the number of persons living in evacuation centres by disability status during the Ambae evacuation in 2017 (IOM 2017). This was expanded during TC Harold to include the number of IDPs with disabilities living with host families (IOM 2020, 10). Other actors, such as World Vision and the VDPA, have also expanded their collection and use

of disaggregated data to inform distribution points and effectively advocate for the prioritisation of IDPs with disabilities in assistance.

Cost is often cited as a barrier to disaggregation. Although some NGOs collect disaggregated data using the Washington Group Questions as standard practice, for many it depends on whether it is a requirement under their grant agreements. Moreover, no single data information management system in the event of a disaster brings together the various data systems, such as census data, education and health information management systems, and other data collected by the government, OPDs and NGOs. In addition to improving coordination, a comprehensive data system could encourage more inclusive anticipatory action. As one key informant noted, if a cyclone were forecasted:

> …the NDMO working with the [offices of disaster management] can say, yes, there's X number of people living with disabilities in that location, and then we know the history around the higher risks of people living with disabilities and what additional services they may need.[9]

An initiative is underway to use national ID card numbers as unique identifiers to link the different information management systems NDMO and other actors could use to inform disaster preparedness and response. Looking ahead, key informants called for greater standardisation of data collection and annual updates of rapid assessment tools to include information on collecting disability-related data. They also noted that qualitative information must complement quantitative data to understand individuals' diverse and intersecting needs. As a representative of an NGO said:

> With a move to greater data on disability, there is a tendency to treat those people as statistics and fail to understand that the needs of persons with disabilities are often bespoke.[10]

4.5.1.3 Overall Progress in Vanuatu

Since TC Pam, there has been significant progress in implementing the four "must do" actions in all stages of humanitarian action on disaster displacement in Vanuatu (see Figure 4.1). Thanks to the commitment of national and local stakeholders and support from initiatives such as Disaster READY, there is greater awareness and better coordination amongst government and humanitarian actors and OPDs on inclusive disaster preparedness and response. Improvements in the participation of persons with disabilities and in collecting and using disaggregated data have also contributed to more targeted programming.

While more inclusive processes are evident, the outcomes for persons with disabilities remain unclear. As one informant noted:

> [Y]es some NGOs have worked in some communities to help persons with disabilities and to enable them to become members of the

> CDCCCs and have their voices heard. But what does that actually lead to? In what ways are we seeing community disaster plans, for example, that are considering the particular requirements of persons with disabilities?[11]

Rather than reporting on outputs, such as the number of trainings delivered or facilities they adapted, there is a need for reporting on the outcomes of inclusive programming, including how it has actually affected the lives of persons with disabilities and their level of satisfaction.

Key informants also noted that although there is a strong will to include persons with disabilities in humanitarian action, the frequency of sudden-onset disasters means humanitarian staff often lack time to do so. This challenge was highlighted in March 2023, when two category 4 cyclones struck Vanuatu within days of each other (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) 2023a). Since TC Pam, there have been growing efforts to strengthen preparedness and local capacities during the pre-cyclone season, including by pre-planning emergency shelters and pre-positioning relief supplies (Climate Centre 2015). Nevertheless, greater investments in risk-informed programming are needed to ensure more inclusive anticipatory action and responses.

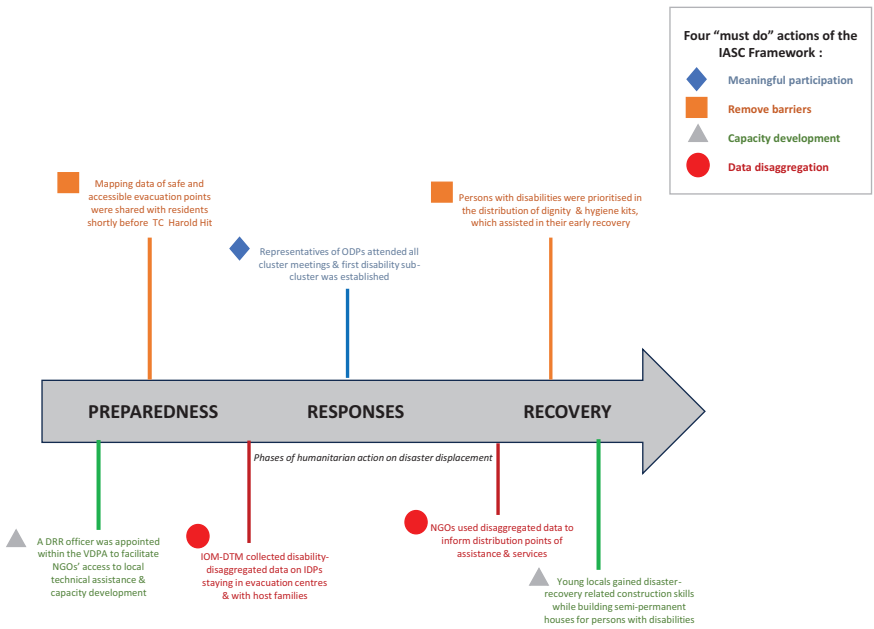

Figure 4.1 Examples of the implementation of the four "must do" actions from the IASC Guidelines in humanitarian action before, during and after TC Harold in 2020

Source: Authors.

Inclusive programming that focuses on providing medium- to longer-term solutions and recovery for IDPs with disabilities is critical and can assist in strengthening their resilience to future shocks. One promising example is the Vanuatu Skills Partnership, which has supported persons with disabilities displaced by the Ambae eruptions to rebuild their livelihoods and start small businesses on Ambae (Barley 2020). The Malampa Provincial Disability Officer reportedly played a key role in ensuring that recovery efforts following TC Harold included persons with disabilities (McNaughton and Kinsella 2021, 25). Efforts have also been made to build the capacities of individuals without disabilities to contribute to inclusive recovery. In the aftermath of TC Harold, a group of young local construction trainees built four semi-permanent houses for persons with disabilities through an innovative multi-partner collaboration (Vanuatu Daily Post 2020). The project equipped trainees with the skills necessary to contribute to locally-led disaster recovery work in the future and meet the demand for inclusive and resilient housing.

4.5.2 Case 2: IDPs in Nigeria

Internal displacement is a recurring phenomenon in Nigeria. Most situations of internal displacement are caused by communal conflict, disasters (such as flooding) and human rights violations (Okon 2018, 1). Since 2009, there have been violent insurgencies in north-eastern Nigeria by Boko Haram. Yobe State, Borno State and Adamawa State are most acutely affected by this crisis. More than 339,000 people have fled Nigeria to neighbouring countries (UNHCR 2022). However, most displaced persons stay within the national borders. As of December 2022, there were a total of 3.2 million IDPs in Nigeria, with approximately 2.2 million living in the northeast (UNHCR 2022). Comprehensive data on the number of households with persons with disabilities among the internally displaced population is still lacking. Assuming that, based on the global average, the internally displaced population includes about 16% of persons with disabilities, the total number of internally displaced persons with disabilities in Nigeria should be at least half a million (WHO 2022, 2).

While Borno, Yobe, Adamawa and Tabara States host the highest number of IDPs and refugees, other states of Nigeria are also regularly affected by internal displacement. Benue, Jos, and Nasarawa States have experienced increased communal conflicts in recent years, culminating in an extreme escalation of violence between nomads (Fulani) and pastoralists in 2018. The humanitarian situation is still tense, especially in the northeast, with 8.3 million people in need of humanitarian aid in the country at the end of 2022, according to the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) (UNOCHA 2023b, 9).

4.5.2.1 Policy and Institutional Framework

The federal government of Nigeria adopted the National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria in October 2012 (Federal Government of

Nigeria 2012). The policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of the federal, state, and local governments, host communities, humanitarian organisations, and other relevant local and international actors before, during and after displacement.

Notably, the Nigerian IDP policy includes a specific chapter that addresses the situation of IDPs with disabilities. The chapter highlights the needs of persons with disabilities for assistive devices, specialised health care and rehabilitation services, and accessible adaptation of camp settings (Federal Government of Nigeria 2012, 33). While the IDP policy is a major step forward on the policy level, it has not led to any significant practical impacts since its adoption, mostly due to its unclear status and the lack of funding for its implementation (Kanu, Bazza, and Omojola 2021, 13).

Nigeria ratified the CRPD in 2007 and its Optional Protocol in 2010. Nevertheless, it took almost nine years before Nigeria's president signed the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act into law in January 2019. Based on this law, a National Commission for Persons with Disabilities will be established to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to housing, education, and healthcare. Since the law entered into force, there has also been some progress in its implementation at the state level, and more states have adopted the national law. Plateau State is an extraordinary case, featuring the adoption of a state disability act and the establishment of a "Disability Rights Commission" at the state level.

The HRP is the institutional framework for UN agencies and international and national NGOs to collaborate with the Government of Nigeria to address the humanitarian needs of the crisis-affected population. The HRP also outlines specific activities and target figures for persons with disabilities.

Humanitarian response in Nigeria primarily relies on external funding, with a total estimated humanitarian need for 2023 of 1.3 billion USD, up from 1.1 billion USD in 2022. Key humanitarian donors in 2022 have been the Governments of the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the European Union. The largest recipients of this funding in 2022 have been the World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF and UNHCR.[12] There is no clear information on the budget under the 2023 HRP allocated towards disability inclusion. According to the overall targets of the 2023 HRP, 12% of the targeted population will be persons with disabilities. This is still below the global average of 16% of persons with disabilities and contradictory to most of the sector-specific targets of the 2023 HRP, where persons with disabilities rarely represent more than 5% of the target group (UN OCHA 2023b).

4.5.2.2 Implementation of Disability-Inclusive Humanitarian Action

The North East Nigeria Transition to Development programme (NENTAD) Disability Audit (CBM, JONAPWD 2019) provides a baseline to better understand the state of disability inclusion in the humanitarian response in the northeast of Nigeria in 2018. The audit was mainly comprised of a

qualitative analysis based on interviews with staff from humanitarian organisations and OPDs. The audit revealed the following:

- Identification of persons with disabilities was mainly based on visual observations or by selecting "disabled" or "non-disabled". The use of the Washington Group Short Set of Questions was not observed at that time (44).
- There was evidence in 2018 that persons with disabilities were largely excluded from consultations and decision-making in matters directly affecting their lives in host communities and camps (70).
- Within the humanitarian coordination system, disability issues were not systematically addressed (10).
- Collaboration between humanitarian agencies and OPDs was almost non-existent. This was exacerbated by the fact that the capacity of the OPDs to engage with humanitarian actors and assist displaced persons in the northeast was weak.
- None of the interviewed humanitarian organisations knew about the budget allocated to take disability into account in their projects, nor was there a systematic approach to inclusive budgeting.

Based on the above findings from the NENTAD Disability Audit, the following sections assess the extent of progress made towards more inclusive humanitarian action between 2019 and 2022.

4.5.2.2.1 MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

The meaningful participation of displaced persons with disabilities, especially through their self-representative organisations, across all stages of the humanitarian programme cycle remains inadequate. While most humanitarian actors are well sensitised to the need to involve persons with disabilities actively in their programmes, meaningful participation of persons with disabilities remains rare. According to a key informant from a disability-focused humanitarian organisation, some NGOs gradually begin to communicate with the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) and other OPDs. These stakeholders take action to ensure that meeting spaces are accessible and OPDs are invited to consultation meetings. However, without a budget for transport (to the meeting venues and back) or sign language interpretation during meetings, persons with disabilities cannot participate actively participate in such meetings.

On the positive side, there is an encouraging example from Plateau State, where the Disability Rights Commission (see Section 4.3.1) assigned a desk officer to a camp of IDPs in 2018. This person served as an entry point for IDPs with disabilities.

Even with proper tools in place, there are certain attitudinal barriers that humanitarian organisations rarely tackle. As Barbelet, Njeri, and Onubedo

(2021, 26) point out, heads of households are often reluctant to report the presence of family members with disabilities due to the social stigma of speaking about the disability to people outside the household. This hinders the active participation of persons with disabilities in humanitarian processes. Overcoming such attitudes will require long-term approaches, which can hardly be included in short-term humanitarian projects or funding cycles.

4.5.2.2.2 REMOVING BARRIERS

The key informant interviews revealed progress when it comes to the removal of environmental barriers. Much of the progress in the northeast of Nigeria was identified in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector, where most actors follow models for accessible construction of latrines and water points. Other sectors also show heightened awareness of inclusive programming and removing barriers—for example, by delivering cash or in-kind support to the households of persons with disabilities (Nigeria Humanitarian Fund [NHF] 2021, 42) or organisations working to improve the accessibility of shelters (IOM 2021).

Despite these efforts, key informants also pointed out that measures for disability inclusion come along with additional costs, and donors seldom prioritise budgeting for disability-inclusive activities. It is difficult to assess if the call for more (or dedicated) funding for disability inclusion is sincere or if it is an excuse for oversights in the budgeting process of those organisations. While there seems to be an ongoing tendency of donors on output-oriented indicators measuring the total numbers of people reached, more and more institutional donors such as the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office of the United Kingdom (FCDO 2022) or the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO 2019) are including attention towards persons with disabilities in their strategies and guidelines. This raises the question of whether the (non-) availability of "inclusive" funding remains the largest barrier to mainstreaming disability in humanitarian action (Lough, Barbelet, and Njeri 2022, 40) or if funding is over-emphasised as a barrier to more inclusive responses (43).

Humanitarian actors also said that the ongoing volatile situation and security constraints, particularly in Borno State, remain significant barriers. This is especially the case for staff who are at risk of being attacked by non-state armed actors when attempting to access certain areas. The lack of access to the affected population significantly impacts persons with disabilities living in those areas. Key informants mentioned that the lack of access to health services increases the backlog of treatment and surgeries for obstetric fistula or cataracts. Furthermore, certain psychosocial conditions and neglected tropical diseases (e.g., trachoma) cannot be treated well without the necessary medication, thus increasing the risk of worsening health conditions.

4.5.2.2.3 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

All key informants declared that humanitarian actors generally have a good understanding of disability inclusion. For Borno State, the highest level of sensitisation is with the actors working in the WASH, protection and food security sectors, with specialised organisations carrying out sensitisation sessions during relevant cluster meetings. This finding underscores that efficient humanitarian coordination is a pre-condition for mainstreaming disability inclusion in the broader humanitarian response.

Significant gaps remain in the capacities of OPDs due to a lack of infrastructure, such as office space or laptops, coverage of communication and transport costs, and limited technical capacities. Key informants also mentioned that the capacity development of OPDs takes time and that long-term capacity-building measures cannot be aligned with short-term humanitarian cycles.

In September and October 2022, CBM Global Disability Inclusion and JONAPWD also mapped OPDs in northeast Nigeria to better understand their capacities and potential interest in engaging more with the humanitarian sector. As one outcome of the mapping, a contact list of 63 OPDs from six states in the northeast has been compiled, which will allow humanitarian actors to contact OPDs within their geographical areas of operations.

4.5.2.2.4 DATA DISAGGREGATION

Regarding data disaggregation, the findings from the interviews were partly contradictory. All humanitarian actors state they are committed to sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data collection for needs analysis, planning and monitoring. However, only a few organisations have already adapted their tools to support disability-disaggregated data collection by applying the Washington Group Short Set of Questions. Moreover, disability-disaggregated data are not systematically analysed, and only a few examples were given by the interviewees on how data were used to inform concrete actions. Publicly available documents, such as HRPs and Humanitarian Needs Overviews, show no clear evidence that disability-disaggregated data is systematically collected using the Washington Group Short Set of Questions. One key informant said that a potential explanation for the slow progress on disability-disaggregated data is that many humanitarian organisations have standard tools provided by their headquarters, and country teams cannot simply include disaggregation by disability until such changes come from the top.

It must also be noted that Nigeria does not have a formal registration process for persons with disabilities at the state or federal levels. Thus, there is no official database of persons with disabilities.

4.5.2.3 Overall Progress in Nigeria

Looking at how disability-inclusive humanitarian action on internal displacement in Nigeria evolved between 2018 and 2023, it can be concluded that

some progress has occurred. Most humanitarian actors nowadays are better sensitised than in 2018 and understand the most significant barriers that persons with disabilities face. Thus, many organisations have also started mainstreaming disability in their core activities, e.g., through accessible latrine construction and food distribution.

The positive tendency towards a stronger and more systematic consideration of disability inclusion is also underlined by an analysis of the HRPs for Nigeria for recent years: The analysis shows that, in 2018 and 2019, there were very few references to disability inclusion, but a substantial increase can be seen between 2020 and 2023 (see Figure 4.2).

This positive development is also reflected in the annual reports of the NHF, which show an increasing consideration of persons with disabilities in programmes funded through the NHF between 2018 and 2021 (see Figure 4.3). In 2021, Nigeria was also among the seven countries that received an earmarked contribution of 1.5 million euros from the UN CERF for addressing the needs of persons with disabilities.

Many key informants emphasised that humanitarian coordination is important in strengthening disability inclusion in the wider response. While it was stated by one key informant that there is substantial progress in Yobe and Borno States in terms of general sensitisation on disability inclusion, Tabara State currently lacks a humanitarian coordination system. Hence, it is also difficult to reach out to humanitarian actors and to sensitise them towards disability inclusion.

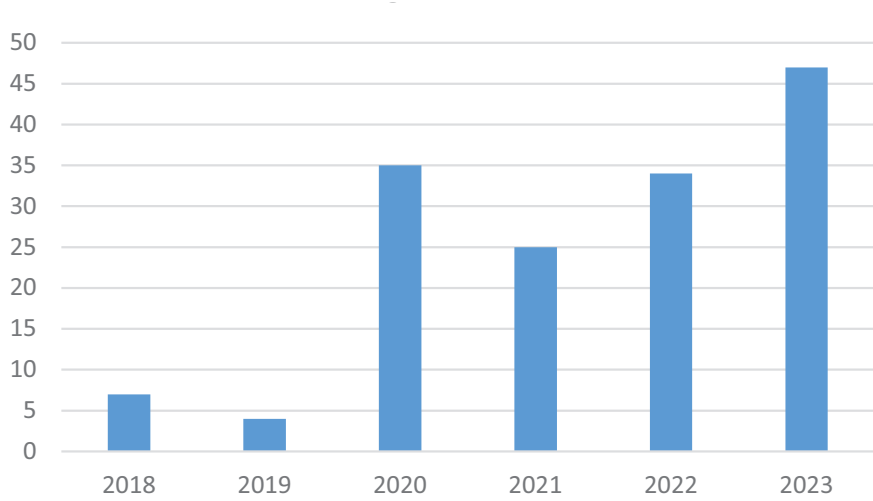

Figure 4.2 Occurrence of the word "disability/disabilities" in Nigeria HRPs (2018–2023)
Source: Authors.

The interviews also revealed that specialised organisations like CBM need to act as "catalysts" for strategic approaches to disability mainstreaming in the wider humanitarian response. This resonates with earlier research findings highlighting that specialist organisations play a key role in advocacy efforts at both global and local levels, and in raising awareness and building constituencies for action around inclusion (Lough, Barbelet, and Njeri 2022, 32). We can assume that without a specialised disability-related actor such as CBM, the pace towards a more systematic consideration of disability inclusion in northeast Nigeria would have been much slower. In this context, OPDs, which could play such a catalyst role, have not yet reached the level of capacity to engage systematically in humanitarian coordination.

When we look at the four "must-do" actions, it becomes obvious that progress has been made between 2018 and 2022 in identifying and addressing barriers, especially environmental ones. We also see in the Nigerian case that more organisations have started to collect disability-disaggregated data. However, how such disaggregated data is analysed and used to inform

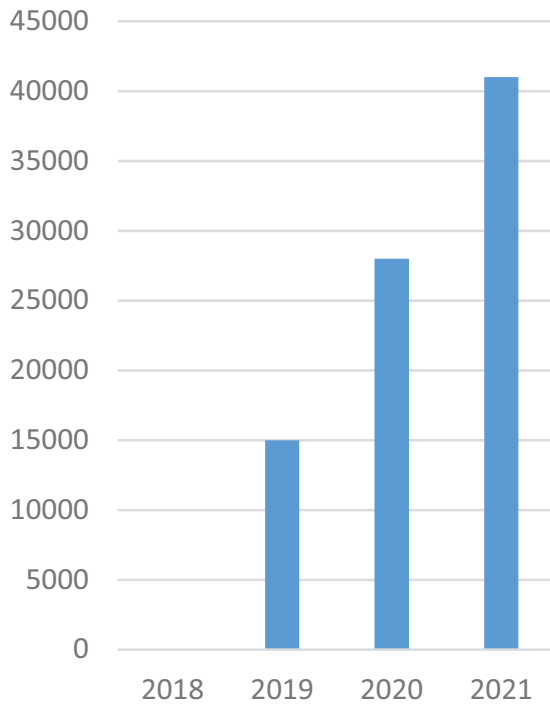

Figure 4.3 Total number of persons with disabilities addressed by the NHF (2018–2022)

Source: Authors.

concrete programming was unclear. Furthermore, applying the Washington Group Short Set of Questions does not always lead to improved data output (Barbelet, Njeri, and Onubedo 2021, 26). Larger gaps remain in the areas of capacity development and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their self-representing organisations. Funding constraints and the lack of inclusive (and longer-term) budgeting, e.g., for transport to meetings or sign language interpretation, seem to be the main reason for the limited progress in these two areas.

4.6 Conclusion

In line with progress at the global level, the two case studies in Vanuatu and Nigeria demonstrate there has been greater recognition in national policies of the need to promote disability inclusion in humanitarian action. While this has resulted in greater awareness amongst governmental and non-governmental humanitarian actors, the systematic translation of these commitments into practice remains limited. The analysis of the case studies leads to the following key findings:

Meaningful participation: In both cases, participation of persons with disabilities and OPDs remains very much at the "information" and "consultation" level but has not yet reached the level of joint decision-making and action on a common agenda. At the same time, certain types of impairments (e.g., physical and visual) are often given more consideration when it comes to guaranteeing meaningful participation than other types of impairments (e.g., psychosocial and hearing). A comparison of the case studies reveals that OPDs are more involved in the humanitarian response in Vanuatu than in Nigeria. However, one major challenge in both countries is that OPDs often lack core funding and tend to receive funding for specific humanitarian activities. In Nigeria, this could be because of short funding cycles. In Vanuatu, there is also confusion over the role of OPDs, with some humanitarian actors viewing them as service providers rather than primarily advocacy organisations. Reshaping how humanitarians work with OPDs and ensuring OPDs have longer-term funding to develop their institutional capacities is important to enhance their involvement in humanitarian action.

Removal of (attitudinal) barriers: While there is a strong focus on addressing environmental barriers—and to some extent also an emphasis on removing institutional ones—the issue of social stigma (attitudinal barriers) towards persons with disabilities was identified as an ongoing major barrier by many key informants. Surprisingly, it looks like little action is being taken to tackle this aspect in either context, although it has already been identified in existing research as a significant barrier towards participation (Smith-Khan et al. 2015, 55). Few humanitarian organisations are dedicating resources to addressing social stigma because it is not seen as a humanitarian concern to be addressed through "lifesaving" activities.

Data disaggregation: Both case studies demonstrated that there is a strong emphasis on collecting quantitative data, especially identifying disability prevalence, but that there should be a greater focus on analysing available data and using it in a way that can inform concrete actions. Quantitative data should be complemented by qualitative information to better understand the diversity of needs and experiences of diverse groups of persons with disabilities and shape effective programming. When it comes to monitoring inclusion, humanitarian actors tend to report on outputs (e.g., the number of people reached) rather than qualitative outcomes.

Capacity Development: In both case studies, the importance of humanitarian coordination as an entry point for reaching out to a larger number of humanitarian organisations, as well as for capacity-building initiatives, was apparent. In addition, having an entity or organisation that initiates discussions about disability inclusion is another pre-condition to mainstreaming disability inclusion in the wider humanitarian response, as also stated by Lough et al.:

> At best, a critical mass of specialist organisations in a response can also contribute to a greater sense that inclusion is a collective responsibility and not something that any one organisation can achieve alone or in-house. […] At worst, this can mean that whether the needs of entire population groups are properly considered or addressed can be heavily dependent on whether a handful of small organisations manage to gain a foothold in a response
>
> (Lough, Barbelet, and Njeri 2022, 32).

Inclusive preparedness and anticipatory action: Humanitarian actors in Vanuatu noted that the frequency of disasters and the need to respond rapidly mean there is often insufficient time to mainstream disability inclusion in humanitarian action. In contrast, in Nigeria, time was not raised as a challenge by any of the informants due to the protracted nature of the crisis. Greater investments in preparedness and anticipatory action in Vanuatu are needed to break the cycle of repeated rapid responses. Improving disability inclusion between the forecast of an extreme weather event and its arrival requires funding risk-informed programming and strengthening local capacities (Climate Centre 2023).

Humanitarian/development nexus: Both case studies highlighted the need to move beyond humanitarian responses to achieve durable solutions and support longer-term recovery for IDPs with disabilities as well as to enhance their resilience to future shocks. The Vanuatu Skills Partnership stands out as a promising example in this regard. Development stakeholders should invest in inclusive DRR in reconstruction efforts to advance such efforts and incorporate a disability lens in social cohesion and peacebuilding programming (e.g., JICA 2021). The longer-term impact of inclusive humanitarian support is to address the socially engrained patterns of exclusion and marginalisation

that persons with disabilities face in both crisis and non-crisis times. Therefore, when designed correctly, humanitarian action has the potential to save and improve lives in the short-term, and prompt lasting social, cultural and political change.

Despite the persisting gaps and challenges, the two case studies highlight several promising examples of inclusion that can inform programming in other displacement contexts, especially when working in situations of protracted displacement. Practical materials and toolkits are emerging to guide inclusive action and ensure it reflects local specificities (e.g., Council of Europe 2015; CBM International, Humanity & Inclusion and the International Disability Alliance 2019). As Vanuatu continues to be devastated by frequent disasters and with few signs of the conflict easing in Nigeria, advancing disability inclusion in all phases of humanitarian action will be crucial.

Notes

1 By using the term "evolving concept" the CRPD highlights how the concept of "disability" has evolved over time and is not fixed. Using the term also acknowledges that concepts of disability such as the medical model are still quite common.
2 Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) represent the interests of their members with disabilities and have a mandate to advocate for the realisation of their human rights and lobby for the consideration of their interests. Typically, OPDs are led, directed, and governed by persons with disabilities themselves. While in some cases, OPDs play the role of direct (humanitarian) responder/service provider, their main role is to represent the perspectives and priorities of crisis-affected persons with disabilities throughout the humanitarian programme cycle. Thus, OPDs should not be misperceived as traditional humanitarian actors that provide humanitarian support/services.
3 Remote key informant interview, January 25, 2023.
4 Remote key informant interview, January 25, 2023.
5 Remote key informant interview, January 25, 2023.
6 Remote key informant interview, January 25, 2023.
7 The CERF is a humanitarian fund established by the United Nations General Assembly. It is managed by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.
8 Remote key informant interview, February 3, 2023.
9 Remote key informant interview, February 5, 2023.
10 Remote key informant interview, January 24, 2023.
11 Remote key informant interview, February 3, 2023.
12 A detailed analysis of humanitarian funding streams for Nigeria is provided by the UN OCHA Financial Tracking System. See https://fts.unocha.org/countries/163/summary/2022.

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5 Inclusion of Displaced Older People in Research and Practice

Insights on Humanitarian Action for Older Filipinos

Lisette R. Robles and
Rogie Royce Z. Carandang

5.1 Introduction

Ageing is a natural life process during which people, as they advance in age, accumulate valuable assets derived from their life experiences, knowledge, skills and capacities. Seniority confers respect and power and is often associated with influence and the ability to determine resource allocation, choices and well-being (Chan 2020, 110). Despite this, older people are among the most vulnerable during humanitarian crises and emergencies, experiencing specific challenges across several domains, including health, sanitation, psychosocial support and economic security. Older people are not a homogenous group, and humanitarian experience shows that certain groups of older people are especially vulnerable in crisis situations, including frail older people, those living alone, those who lack specific skills (i.e., literacy, life-saving skills) or face cultural or religious restrictions, and older people who are caregivers (Ferris and Petz 2012). It is important to reflect this diversity in humanitarian action as these characteristics can overlap, leading to acute and cascading challenges.

All these challenges are, however, magnified and prolonged in displacement situations, especially when older people are not provided with a durable solution for protracted periods. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR 2022) reported that out of the 108.4 million people worldwide forced to leave their homes due to conflicts, violence, fear of persecution and human rights violations at the end of 2022, about 3.8% were above 60 years old.[1]

The issues surrounding older people in crisis have not remained unnoticed. The need for inclusive approaches that prevent discrimination on the grounds of old age has been highlighted by numerous global human rights instruments, such as the Convention on the Status of Refugees (1951) and the Protocol on the Status of Refugees (1967), as well as humanitarian policies and principles (i.e., UNHCR Policy on Older Refugees), and sector standards and guidance (UNHCR 2021). While there is extensive evidence on how older people continue to experience critical challenges in ensuring their

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safety, security and ability to survive during crises (UNHCR 1998; 2021; HAI 2000, 2016, 2019; Barbelet 2018; Lange 2019), these policies are not fully implemented. The continued operational constraints to collecting disaggregated data, delivering targeted services, opening opportunities for inclusion and creating older people-specific durable solutions warrant further examination of humanitarian action for older people in crises, particularly in displacement situations.

Older people account for a small proportion of the global humanitarian caseload, partly due to the disproportionate occurrence of humanitarian emergencies in countries that are still in the early stages of the ageing process. However, this pattern is changing, and many of the most disaster-prone countries are now ageing at a fast pace (Ferris and Petz 2012, 129).

The Philippines is a good case in point. A 2014 report indicated that the Philippines had one of the slowest ageing rates among the ASEAN countries (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare 2014). This could imply that including older people in humanitarian action is a less salient concern than for other countries in the region. However, a specific attention is warranted for two interconnected reasons. First, the Philippines, together with Cambodia, Mongolia and Timor Leste, is projected to have the region's highest rate of increase in the older population between 2020 and 2050 (Harris and Mihnovits 2015). Second, the frequent occurrence of disasters in the country, which inevitably result in repeated displacements, coupled with conflict- and violence-driven displacement in the southern Philippines, routinely reveal and compound the vulnerability of older people throughout the country. While older Filipinos represent a small percentage of the country's total population,[2] their actual number is large enough for them to be a group of significant concern when a conflict or disaster occurs.[3] These combined factors demand closer inspection and a better understanding of existing gaps and available strategies to address the needs of older people in humanitarian crises, and actively involving them in the humanitarian response. Thus, examining the current work to support and assist older people in the Philippines can provide realistic reflections on the current practices and gaps in responding to their needs, both in normal times and in emergencies. This can help to assess and prevent further marginalisation among this particular at-risk population in future crises.

The recognition of the fundamental obligation to provide comprehensive humanitarian assistance for older people in displacement exists, although it can be challenging to identify how humanitarian actions should be adapted to ensure the needs of older people are adequately met, particularly in areas beyond health-related services. Thus, this chapter examines the features of humanitarian action for displaced older people as elaborated in existing academic studies and observed in its practical implementation and reflects on the outstanding gaps in fulfilling more comprehensive support for this particularly vulnerable demographic. To do so, this chapter will focus on the following question: ***What characterises humanitarian action for displaced older***

people in research and practice? This inquiry is expounded by addressing the following components: (1) identifying the specific needs of older people during normal times and crises, (2) understanding how humanitarian action for displaced older people is represented in scholarly/academic research, (3) mapping current practices and limitations of humanitarian actions in supporting older people in displacement, and (4) highlighting how these innovative strategies can be applied to address the evolving needs of displaced older people in crisis response.

This chapter initiates its analysis by discussing the definition of older people and surveying the existing global policies that safeguard their rights and address their needs during humanitarian emergencies. Subsequently, it offers a comprehensive overview of humanitarian efforts targeted at displaced older people. It combines research insights from a scoping review with practical observations obtained through key informant interviews in the Philippines. The findings from these methodologies are then synthesised, integrated and discussed to address the research question and pertinent concerns outlined earlier. The chapter concludes by offering insights into the critical aspects of humanitarian action necessary to support older people experiencing crises and displacement.

5.2 Ageing, Displacement and Global Policies

5.2.1 How Old Is "Old"?

The perception of "old age" varies across cultures, with most societies revering and valuing the wisdom that comes with age. Taylor (2011) dissects the appropriateness of terminologies referencing ageing. She argues that conventional terms such as "elderly", "senior" and "older adults" do not acknowledge people's capacities and wisdom that come with their age.[4] Terms such as "older person" or "older people" are more suitable as they generally refer to older members of families and communities. This usage and understanding are reflected in international standards, including UN instruments and programmes.[5]

It is often easy to characterise someone as "old" without reference to objective, defining elements, as conceptions of "oldness" can be predicated on factors such as chronological age, physical attributes, biological relationships and social position (see Chan 2020, 2). The Canadian Red Cross and HelpAge International (HAI) (2008, 10) flag that the inclusion of individuals in the "older people" group is contingent on context-specific perspectives. From a chronological perspective, old age begins at 55 years in developing countries and 60–65 years old in developed countries. From a health perspective, older persons are those above 60 years of age, with people from 45 to 60 identified as "pre-senile" and those above 70 as "older people at risk". UN documents consistently describe older persons as those aged 60 years and above (UNHCR 2015a; UNDESA 2017) and highlight that the

population aged 65 and above is growing faster than any other age group at the global level.[6]

The World Health Organization (WHO 2015, 8) presents two conceptualisation models of old age to explain the process of ageing and the role of older people in society: (1) the *deficit conceptualisation*, which considers old age as a period of vulnerability, and (2) *the value of social engagement*, which focuses on the contributions of older people to the society. These models represent two contrasting perspectives on ageing, with the former focusing on older people's limitations and losses and the latter highlighting their strengths and contributions. Both models have influenced the way older people are perceived and treated in society, but there is a growing recognition of the importance of promoting the social engagement model to foster a more positive and inclusive approach to ageing. Precarious conditions and dependency, however, are prerequisites of humanitarian action. Unsurprisingly, the consideration of older people in crises heavily leans towards the deficit model, emphasising their physical and cognitive decline and specific conditions of vulnerability. This inevitably reinforces negative stereotypes and further undermines individual capacities.

While it is often said that "age is just a number", it is also an essential numerical referent for the specific provision of assistance during crises. Having this in mind, the authors of this chapter subscribe to the usage of "older people" to refer to persons who are above 60 years of age, consistent with the UN definition (UNHCR 2015a), acknowledging that displaced persons, such as refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), can "age" faster compared to settled population, with challenges associated with old age present for displaced people under 60 years old.

5.2.2 Older People in Policies

The need to pay attention to older people has become more apparent at the global policy level since the late 1970s. The UN General Assembly's Resolution 33/52 called for worldwide attention from member states and specialised agencies to the issue of ageing. The first World Assembly on Ageing in 1982 resulted in the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing, the first international instrument for governments and civil society actors to deal effectively with ageing, highlighting older people's developmental potential and dependency needs. The UN Principles for Older Persons (UNGA Res. 46/91) further built on this approach, acknowledging the diversity of situations of older people between and within countries. The resolution identifies independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity as principles that must be integrated into relevant national programmes.

The most notable international document on improving older people's lives was the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing of 2002 (MIPAA), the first global agreement recognising older people as contributors to development. Governments are encouraged to commit to the inclusion of ageing

in their policies and programmes through three priority areas: old people and development, health and well-being, and ensuring enabling and supportive environments for older people. These international plans and principles are designed to mainstream attention towards older people while also considering their inclusion in developing and promoting healthy ageing.

The need to fully support older people is also expressed in their proper protection during emergencies. The Vienna Plan of Action covers both the ageing of the individual and the population as a whole, with specific notes on both the developmental and humanitarian aspects of ageing. The MIPAA has specific provisions on older people in emergencies, aiming for equal access to services and assistance and the recognition of their enhanced, specific contributions. These global policies are complemented by the inclusion of older people in operational standards and frameworks for coordination in humanitarian response (e.g., The Sphere Handbook and IASC 2008) and the works of non-governmental organisations like HAI[7] that promote older people's rights in both development and humanitarian contexts.

Key policies and frameworks on humanitarian action and displacement also touch upon displaced older people. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, in particular, recognises the challenges faced by vulnerable groups of IDPs, including older persons, and stresses the importance of providing them with necessary protection and assistance that reflects their special needs (Kälin 2008). The 2016 World Humanitarian Summit resulted in commitments to address displacement and migration while ensuring no one, including older people, is left behind (OCHA 2016, 32). The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) programme of action also emphasises the strong partnership and participatory approach to respond to refugee movements, ensuring the inclusion and participation of older persons.[8] Likewise, the NGO Committee on Ageing, a key advocate, called upon the GCR to recognise the specific needs of older refugees, their contributions, and their roles in their families and communities per the UN Principles for Older Persons.[9] The UN Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement[10] considers the rights and agency of IDPs and host communities, highlighting the importance of considering age, gender, and diversity, including disability (AGD), when addressing displacement.[11]

5.2.3 Older People in Displacement

Like other vulnerable and marginalised populations, older people are not a monolithic entity; instead, they present diverse levels of vulnerability and capacities that evolve over time. In general, however, older people are at heightened risk during crises and in displacement. They are often left behind in crisis-affected areas, being forced to make particularly difficult decisions on whether to stay or flee, and face specific concerns while in displacement (Wells 2012). At the onset of a crisis, functional limitations can leave them trapped in high-risk areas, exposing them to the direct impacts of natural

hazards and violence, including crimes such as robbery and theft. Their decision to stay or flee can result in separation from other family members and loss of essential support and assistance from their networks. While in displacement, older people's social status erodes as their specific role within their families and communities is diminished, and they relinquish control over assets and natural resources. These processes are often compounded by their exclusion and discrimination in humanitarian protection and assistance, including the provision of shelter, food and nutrition, livelihood and recovery support and healthcare (Wells 2012; Barbelet 2018).

The presence of older people within a displaced population is a dynamic phenomenon, comprising both individuals who were already old when they became displaced as well as those who became old while in protracted displacement (Bolzman 2014, 409). The proportion of displaced older people is, therefore, not a one-off statistical feature—the duration of displacement needs to be considered as a driver of both the accumulation of older people and their compounded vulnerability. The exposure to (and impacts of) specific challenges for older people across the displacement cycle has been long assessed by UNHCR (1998) and forced migration scholars (among others, Couldrey and Morris 2002), but their needs are yet to be adequately addressed.

Despite all this policy progress, research on older displaced persons has not progressed significantly (Bolzman 2014). Thus, bridging ageing and forced migration to comprehend patterns and impacts of the forced movement of older people can serve as a rich academic inquiry and an opportunity to make actionable recommendations to advocate for displaced older people.

5.3 Methodology

The study builds upon two complementary data collection methods to identify and present the characteristics and features of humanitarian action for displaced older people: a scoping review and a detailed case study. The scoping review serves as a foundational tool, enabling the authors to map the existing body of literature to identify the gaps and highlight the areas that require further investigation to understand humanitarian action for displaced older people. The case study, facilitated by interviews with humanitarian and development actors supporting older people in crises in the Philippines, lends invaluable depth to this analysis. Through this qualitative approach, the study deepens the understanding of the challenges and opportunities inherent in humanitarian action and provides insights to develop more informed and practical strategies to address them. This chapter will use these combined instruments to attempt to capture the scope, features and limitations of humanitarian action for displaced older people.

5.3.1 Scoping Review

The scoping review in this study follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) reporting guidelines.[12]

A review protocol was developed and registered in the Open Science Framework (DOI 10.17.605/OSF.IO/H5STJ; Text S1). The review included research studies published in English and conducted using various study designs, such as randomised controlled trials (RCTs), observational studies (quasi-experimental, cohort and cross-sectional), case studies, qualitative studies and evaluation reports. Letters, editorials, reviews, conference abstracts and books were excluded from this review. Inclusion criteria were defined based on the Population, Intervention, Comparator, and Outcome (PICO) framework. The authors included studies conducted with older displaced people aged 60 years and above, including both refugees and internally displaced older people. The exposure of interest was crises and emergencies, including but not limited to disasters and armed conflicts, and the comparator included displaced people aged less than 60 years. The primary outcomes included humanitarian action for older displaced people and this group's needs (including unmet needs) during normal times and crises. Secondary outcomes comprised current practices, innovative strategies and limitations of national non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other humanitarian actors supporting this demographic.

Electronic databases were searched for articles published in English up to October 4, 2022, using a search strategy developed by the authors using Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) terms and keywords (Text S2) without date restrictions. Seven databases were searched: PubMed/MEDLINE, Academic Search Premier, CINAHL Plus, PsycArticles, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, SocINDEX and Web of Science. Grey literature was also examined using Prevention Web, ALNAP Help Library, Humanitarian Library and the UN Library. The authors manually searched the reference lists of retrieved articles and uploaded all records to an online reference-managing software (Endnote Web). This helped to identify and select relevant articles for this scoping review.

This search strategy yielded 9,001 articles, of which 22 were identified through manual searching. After removing the duplicates, 7,546 articles remained. Titles and abstracts were screened in a standardised and blinded manner, with disagreements resolved through discussion among the authors. After that, 7,495 articles were excluded. The remaining 51 articles were obtained from the University of Connecticut Library System for further analysis.

Subsequently, 31 articles were excluded for the following reasons: sample not specific to older displaced people (n = 7), not related to humanitarian action (n = 17), not related to the needs of older displaced people (n = 6) and inappropriate study design (i.e., review) (n = 1). Finally, 20 articles were considered eligible for inclusion in the narrative synthesis. Figure 5.1 shows the PRISMA flow diagram of the screening process.

The authors used Endnote to create a library of PDF versions of included articles, extracting data such as citations, study design, country and settings, population and sample size, exposure (e.g. natural hazard, conflict), comparator and relevant outcomes (see Table 5.1). A narrative synthesis of the

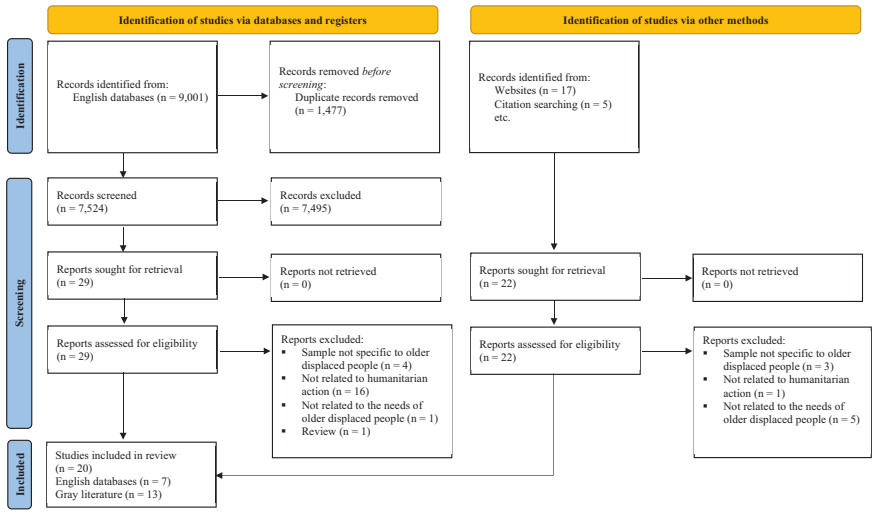

Figure 5.1 PRISMA flow diagram of the screening process

included studies was conducted owing to the heterogeneity of their designs and the lack of pooled data for meta-analysis (i.e. no RCTs were identified). Therefore, the authors followed the synthesis without meta-analysis (SWiM) reporting guidelines for the narrative synthesis of findings (Campbell et al. 2020). Quality appraisal was not performed as a scoping review examines the relevant literature regardless of its risk of bias.

5.3.2 Key Informant Interviews

Complementing the scoping review, the authors interviewed practitioners working with older people and, whenever possible, older people in displacement in the Philippines. These interviews intend to gain insights and locate the presence of older people in humanitarian programming based on these actors' firsthand experiences of supporting older Filipinos in crises.

For this part of the study, an application for human research ethics approval was lodged and approved at the JICA Ogata Research Institute before commencing data collection.[13] Key informants were selected and contacted based on their work with older people in the Philippines, including staff of the lead non-governmental organisation working for older people in the country (NOP1, NOP2), three local humanitarian organisations (HA1, HA2, HA3), academic and research institutions (AC1, AC2, AC3), two older people organisations (OPO1, OPO2) and a local government office (GA1).[14]

The authors conducted 11 key informant interviews with relevant resource persons from August to November 2022. Interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes and were conducted either in person or online in a mix of Filipino and English. All participants consented to the use of the recorded interviews.

Table 5.1 Characteristics of included studies

Study	*Study design*	*Study setting*	*Study population*	*Sample size*	*Exposure*	*Comparator*	*Reported outcomes*
Allaire (2013)	Case report	Colombia, Haiti, Palestine, Congo, Sudan	Older displaced people	None reported	Disaster and conflict	No comparison group	Colombia: Provided legal support for older internally displaced people in Aguablanca. Haiti: Worked with older adults to reach and assist the most vulnerable. Palestine: Held group activities for older adults in Age-Friendly Spaces. Congo: Held intergenerational activities in social centers; Provided older adults and their families with safer income-generating activities, such as mat and basket weaving to prevent their granddaughters engaging in transactional sex to earn money to buy food for the family. Sudan: Improved the protection of older refugees in South Sudan and provided recommendations to ensure the inclusion of older adults in the humanitarian response.
Amnesty International (2019)	Case report	Myanmar, Bangladesh	Older displaced people	146	Conflict	No comparison group	In Myanmar, psychosocial care and medical care remain underfunded and understaffed to meet the needs of older adults. In Bangladesh, the humanitarian response has been undermined by a lack of inclusion in data collection and by insufficient disaggregation of data by age, sex and disability. Among older Rohingya refugees, one of the most frequently cited problems in the camps is the lack of access to a latrine or bathing facility.

(*Continued*)

Table 5.1 (Continued)

Study	*Study design*	*Study setting*	*Study population*	*Sample size*	*Exposure*	*Comparator*	*Reported outcomes*
Barbelet (2018)	Qualitative	Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia	Older Sudanese displaced people	42 focus groups	Conflict	No comparison group	Older people relied heavily on formal assistance and services provided by aid agencies. There is a lack of systematic age disaggregation and inadequate inclusion of older adults in assessments. Data on disability among this age group was also missing. Older adults also see their role as changing during displacement, they experience a significant loss of influence and power within their communities and households.
Burton (2002)	Case report	Multi-countries	Older refugees 60 years and above	None reported	Conflict	No comparison group	Older refugees' ability to meet their basic needs (e.g., food, water, shelter) can be compromised by physical disability, mental or social impairment and the loss of support mechanisms—especially in the early stages of a humanitarian emergency when resources are scarcer. Malnutrition in older refugees is a problem in several settings.
Calvi-Parisetti (2013)	Case report	Multi-countries	Older displaced people	> 500	Conflict and disaster	No comparison group	Access to adequate food is often a major problem for older displaced people. They often have problems with the way the food rations are distributed as much as with the nature of food itself. In Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya in 2011, more than 500 older adults were found to need nutritional support. This need was attributed to exclusion from or a lack of access to the general food distribution, low diversity in their diet and infrequent meals.

Study	*Study design*	*Study setting*	*Study population*	*Sample size*	*Exposure*	*Comparator*	*Reported outcomes*
Chan (2017)	Case report	Haiti, Bolivia	Older displaced people	None reported	Disaster	No comparison group	Haiti: Some displaced older people living in camps acted as 'focal points' for the affected older population by identifying the most vulnerable population, collecting data related to older people's health needs and delivering aid to those with minimal mobility. Bolivia: Established 'White Brigades,' a regular association of older adults that assist in registration, are involved in emergency planning, participate in drills, and identify older adults' needs during emergency.
Du Cros (2013)	Cross-sectional	South Sudan	Older refugees	>100,000	Crisis	No comparison group	Data on the older adults are rarely collected in humanitarian emergencies. During a refugee crisis in South Sudan, Médecins Sans Frontières developed a prospective mortality surveillance system collecting data for those aged ≥50 years and found that the older adults were dying at five times the rate of those aged 5–49 years
Duggan (2009)	Qualitative	Sri Lanka, US	Older displaced people	17	Disaster	No comparison group	Many older adults are not getting nearly enough assistance and protection, while others are not being asked if what they have received was useful. In Sri Lanka, agencies failed to consult with them on age-specific issues such as chronic health problems, mobility and psychosocial needs.

(*Continued*)

Table 5.1 (Continued)

Study	*Study design*	*Study setting*	*Study population*	*Sample size*	*Exposure*	*Comparator*	*Reported outcomes*
Godfrey (1989)	Cross-sectional	Ethiopia, Sudan	Older adults defined as >45 years; elderly defined as ≥60 years in displacement	502	War and famine	Children and adults	Disability, illness or both, forced many older adults, particularly those most in need, to remain in Tigray, Ethiopia. Among older adults in Sudan, there were high levels of minor disability, social isolation and total economic dependency, which indicated vulnerability. Still, they had not been considered explicitly in health policies and plans. The primary needs are basic—clothes, food, shelter, transport, seeds, oxen and farming tools. Relief efforts were primarily given to those who had been displaced in Sudan.
HelpAge International (2019)	Cross-sectional	Sudan	Older displaced people	416	Conflict	No comparison group	Most older adults were not consulted by other humanitarian agencies. Nearly half of them do not know how to make a complaint or provide feedback on humanitarian services. Majority (85%) reported that they do not have access to sufficient food. Nearly a quarter reported safety as their main concern. One-third of older adults do not have or cannot afford shelter materials and cannot build a shelter without physical assistance from family members and friends.
HelpAge International (2020)	Mixed methods	Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan	Older people with disabilities in displacement	252	Disaster	No comparison group	The functional difficulties cited by older people are mobility, vision and self-care. More older people need assistive products after an emergency. Assistive technology can be a powerful tool for the reduction of dependence and vulnerability and increase protection and resilience building in humanitarian response and disaster risk reduction.

Study	*Study design*	*Study setting*	*Study population*	*Sample size*	*Exposure*	*Comparator*	*Reported outcomes*
Karroum (2018)	Case report	Lebanon	Older Syrian refugees	None reported	Conflict	No comparison group	More than 30% of international funding in Lebanon has gone towards cash-based assistance, which has proven to be very effective and efficient. Refugees are often denied treatment for chronic and non-communicable diseases unless they are in a very serious situation.
Khan (2022)	Qualitative	Bangladesh	Older Myanmar Rohingya refugees	4	Rohingya crisis	No comparison group	Age-friendly support centres provide basic medical treatment, counseling, education, health and well-being services, indoor games and recreational services/activities. Most of the older adults reported that they would like to return to Myanmar and receive justice from the international community so that the Rohingya crisis could end soon.
Lupieri (2018)	Case report	Jordan	Older Syrian refugees	None reported	Conflict	No comparison group	Older refugees are often a neglected population, particularly when it comes to health. In Jordan, the specific health needs of older Syrian refugees tend to be overlooked, due in part to a lack of data, institutional biases and the nature of the humanitarian response. An estimated 77% of all refugees 60 years and above have specific needs related to mobility, nutrition and health care, and more than 50% reported suffering from psychological distress. In addition, 57% of refugees with chronic conditions in Jordan say they cannot afford the care they need.

(*Continued*)

Table 5.1 (Continued)

Study	*Study design*	*Study setting*	*Study population*	*Sample size*	*Exposure*	*Comparator*	*Reported outcomes*
Okamoto (2013)	Cross-sectional	Japan	Older displaced people	52	Earthquake and tsunami	No comparison group	Distributions of basic items were often inappropriate or difficult to access, and older adults were challenged with unfamiliar food, ill-fitting clothes and water supplies too heavy to carry. Forty percent of them reported that toilets and bathing facilities were difficult to use and often lacked appropriate privacy. Access to medical care and treatment was a major concern, particularly for those with chronic health conditions.
Skinner (2014)	Case report	Jordan, Lebanon	Older Syrian refugees	None reported	Armed conflict and natural disaster	No comparison group	Traditional health responses in humanitarian crises largely fail to address the needs of those with non-communicable, manageable chronic health conditions. Limited access to care and interruptions in treatment can result in severe complications and increasing levels of both morbidity and mortality. For many refugees, the cost of accessing health services is a major barrier.
Tanyang (2019)	Document review, cross-sectional study	Selected countries in South and Southeast Asia	Older displaced people	72	Disaster	No comparison group	In most emergency responses, data concerning older adults is collected using a single category, such as 'above 60', instead of distinguishing between people aged 60-70, 70-80 and above 80. Older adults are often only mentioned as part of a 'household', 'vulnerable group' or 'affected population'. In many cases, "priority" for older adults only meant they should be first to receive assistance, but the types of assistance were the same for all vulnerable groups.

Study	*Study design*	*Study setting*	*Study population*	*Sample size*	*Exposure*	*Comparator*	*Reported outcomes*
Wells (2012)	Case report	Haiti, Congo, Colombia, Sudan, Uganda, Serbia	Older displaced people	None reported	Disaster and conflict	No comparison group	Haiti: Established a network of community outreach agents working at the camp level and known as "friends". Eastern DRC: Constructed "social spaces" or community centers under the management of older adults in camps and return areas. Colombia: Provided legal and psychosocial support in an urban context. Sudan: Improved access to health services for older people. Uganda: Supported return of IDPs by monitoring the return process. Serbia: Performed profiling exercise and local integration.
Wells (2005)	Case Report	Sudan, Sri Lanka	Older displaced people	None reported	Disaster and conflict	No comparison group	Sudan: Established Older People's Committees to allow older adults to participate in decisions that affect their lives. Sri Lanka: Organized a two-day pilgrimage to a holy site in north-east Sri Lanka for older adults who had been affected by the tsunami. The results were very positive: people spoke of how the trip had lifted their spirits as they concentrated on completing their religious duties to the dead.
WHO (2013)	Case Report	Japan	Older displaced people	None reported	Disaster	No comparison group	Established temporary housing with support service and a 24-hr life-support adviser for older adults with Activities of Daily Living (ADL) needs. Emergency short-stay beds established in nursing homes for older adults needing special care. Poor nutrition, "dry boxed meals" resulted in diarrhoea in temporary shelters and inadequate water supply.

The interviews were then transcribed verbatim using NVivo (for English interviews) and a HIPAA 1996 Compliant[15] transcription service (for Filipino interviews). These qualitative data were subjected to a thematic analysis addressing the questions raised in this study.

5.4 Results

The chapter aims to provide a comprehensive portrayal of humanitarian action for displaced older people through a synthesis of findings from both a scoping review and a case study in the Philippines. While the scoping review affords a broader perspective on the assistance available to displaced older people, the case study delves deeper into the practical strategies implemented by humanitarian and development actors supporting older people amidst crises in the Philippines. This includes an examination of the challenges faced by older people and operational actors, as well as recommendations for the enhancement of operations.

5.4.1 Displaced Older People in Existing Literature

The outcomes of the comprehensive review of existing literature are summarised in Table 5.1. Among the included studies are five cross-sectional studies, three qualitative studies, one mixed-methods study, and 11 case reports conducted in multiple countries. Countries and territories covered by the review include Bangladesh, Bolivia, Cambodia, Colombia, Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uganda, Vietnam and the United States. In terms of the type of crises covered, seven studies refer to disasters caused by natural hazards, eight to conflicts, and five to a combination of the two. Six studies highlight different humanitarian actions conducted for older displaced people (Wells 2005; Allaire 2013; WHO 2015; Chan, Hung, and Chan 2017; Khan et al. 2022). Twelve studies report older displaced people's needs and unmet needs (Godfrey and Kalache 1989; Burton and Breen 2002; Calvi-Parisetti 2013; DuCros, Venis, and Karunakara 2013; Okamoto and Godfred 2013; Skinner 2014; Barbelet 2018; Karroum et al. 2018; Lupieri 2018; Amnesty International 2019; HAI 2019, 2020). Seven studies discuss humanitarian actors' current practices, innovative strategies and limitations (Duggan et al. 2009; DuCros, Venis, and Karunakara 2013; Skinner 2014; Barbelet 2018; Amnesty International 2019; HAI 2019; Tanyang and Ventures 2019).

The results of the scoping review confirm that specific humanitarian activities are implemented in support of displaced older people but that relevant efforts are often inadequate. The discussion on the situation in the Philippines is limited to a single study: a multi-country analysis of disaster data conducted by Tanyang and Ventures (2019). This highlights the fact that the situation of displaced older Filipinos has yet to be fully analysed by the literature on humanitarian action.

5.4.2 Ageing and Displacement in the Philippines

Available analyses on "Ageing and Health in the Philippines" (Cruz, Cruz, and Saito, 1994) acknowledge that the Philippine population has not yet started ageing, but a significant portion of the population is projected to reach 60 years old between 2025 and 2030. This longitudinal study provides the context of older Filipinos, which can aid in offering better support during normal times and even during crises. The study highlights that many older Filipinos are in poor health, with limited access to and awareness of government health programmes that could potentially benefit them. Moreover, the service utilisation of programmes that older people are aware of is low. Long-term care for older Filipinos often falls on their family and kin, which can be a challenging task for many, especially considering that many older Filipinos experience economic difficulties and are highly dependent on their children. Despite existing health and economic challenges, older Filipinos are found to have high life satisfaction and are socially integrated (215–221).

Displacements in the Philippines are triggered by disasters, conflict and development projects. As further described in a key informant interview, in Mindanao—the country's second-largest island—displacement drivers mainly include armed conflict, crime and violence from clan feuds, and natural hazard-induced disasters [HA1]. Between 2008 and 2021, the country endured 402 combined geophysical and weather-related disasters, leading to 53.7 million displacements (IDMC 2022). The concurrence of multiple drivers and the country's capacity to anticipate and manage the impacts of disasters result in displacements with very diverse characteristics. Strong institutional and community preparedness results in the extensive use of evacuations as a life-saving measure in the face of foreseeable hazards. This leads to displacement that is largely short-term and takes place mostly in an orderly, dignified manner, with IDPs staying both in shelters or camps and out-of-camp locations. However, more significant challenges are associated with longer-term displacement, which is a matter of recovery capacity [AC3].

In general, older Filipinos enjoy the respect of their households and communities, and, whenever possible, are generally able to access adequate support and resources in their daily lives. However, during disasters and other crises, older Filipinos face mobility challenges and reduced access to assistance from families and communities, which consequentially impacts their displacement. Those who opt to flee from disasters face risks, including separation from their family and community networks. In some cases, older people serve as custodians of family properties during disasters. As observed during Typhoon Haiyan, many older Filipinos did not evacuate because they believed that their homes could withstand the storm, just as they had done for decades (Kulcsar 2013). Providing humanitarian assistance for displaced older people can involve granting specific access to various kinds of support, such as healthcare, social services, financial aid, and other assistance, to help them retain their independence and dignity. Thus, we must pay attention to these aspects of humanitarian action for displaced older people in great detail.

5.4.3 Humanitarian Action and the Displaced Older People

Four key themes have emerged from the scoping review and the case study conducted in the Philippines: the availability of data on displaced older people, the interactions between humanitarian actors and displaced older people, meeting the needs of older people, and engaging older people in humanitarian programming.

5.4.3.1 Data on Displaced Older People

The absence of older people from data equates to their absence from service provision, as affirmed by the humanitarian practitioners interviewed. Data is a critical resource for informing humanitarian assistance and delivering it over time to the affected population, older people included. Current humanitarian practices need improvement to address the lack of systematic age disaggregation and the inadequate inclusion of older people in assessments (Barbelet 2018). For example, in most emergency responses, data concerning older people is collected using a single category, such as 'above 60', instead of distinguishing people aged 60–70, 70–80 and above 80 (Tanyang and Ventures 2019). This lack of further disaggregation results in an oversimplification of the needs of the different segments of older people. Moreover, older people are only mentioned as part of a 'household,' 'vulnerable group,' or 'affected population'. In many cases, the fact that older people are considered a 'priority' only means that they are among the first to receive assistance, while the types of assistance remain the same for all vulnerable groups (Tanyang and Ventures 2019).

One protection officer [HA1] elucidated how protracted displacement impacts the lived experience of affected persons as they age and the demographic composition of the caseload undergoes a shift and how this has implications on people's evolving conditions and the need for new forms of assistance and solutions. It is, therefore, important to keep age-disaggregated displacement data updated through iterative assessments. Innovative strategies have been identified to address these data collection challenges. During the South Sudan refugee crisis in 2012, Médecins Sans Frontières developed a prospective mortality surveillance system, collecting data for those aged ≥50 years; they found that older adults were dying at five times the rate of those aged 5–49 years (DuCros, Venis, and Karunakara 2013). After the Haiti earthquake in 2010, some displaced older people living in camps acted as 'focal points' for the affected older population by identifying the most vulnerable individuals, collecting data related to older people's health needs, and delivering aid to those with minimal mobility (Chan, Hung, and Chan 2017).

5.4.3.2 Humanitarian Actors and Displaced Older People

The interviews with humanitarian practitioners showed how there are few advocates dedicated to the humanitarian needs of older people both in

normal times and in crises in the Philippines. Humanitarian work for older people—and even more so for those displaced—is not the sole responsibility of any single entity in the country. Together with designated government offices, older people in displacement are supported by national NGOs and international humanitarian actors.

The Coalition for Services for the Elderly (COSE) is the leading non-governmental organisation working with and for older people in the Philippines. Their work is not limited to humanitarian responses for older Filipinos but covers the issues of poverty, exclusion and invisibility, especially for the most disadvantaged. NGOs like COSE complement the work of dedicated humanitarian actors who protect and support older people along with other groups with specific needs during emergencies.[16] A Protection Officer working with IDPs in Mindanao detailed how, when it comes to distributions, assessments and other responses, they always include older people and other vulnerable groups such as pregnant women and people with disabilities as priorities [HA1]. Both national NGOs and humanitarian actors recognise the urgency of considering and addressing older people's needs during crises and emergencies. However, the differences in their operational approaches contribute to the persistent limitations in humanitarian assistance for older people. National NGOs that focus on providing assistance for older people face the challenges of resource constraints, in contrast to humanitarian agencies with mandates and resources to support the entire population, who are not always equipped to meet the needs of specific vulnerable individuals and groups.

Given their limited resources and reliance on project funding, NGOs working directly with older people during emergencies can only do so much to meet their needs. For example, after Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, COSE secured a three-year project to support affected older people in Leyte Province with recovery and reconstruction. Once the project had been approved and resources made available, targeted assistance for older people was implemented, which included shelter assistance, food and non-food items and cash transfers[17] [NOP2]. In contrast, humanitarian actors are mandated to support older people by prioritising people with special needs in the distribution of non-food items and engaging in rapid-impact projects, which are visible implementations of older people's inclusion [HA1]. A local officer [GA1] and a member of an older people's organisation [OPO1] affirmed that the 2013 Typhoon Haiyan experience improved the attitude of older people toward evacuation, as well as their communities' disaster risk reduction practices. Barangay health workers are now more conscientious in ensuring that older people with limited mobility are assisted, and preparedness and local disaster coordination have been strengthened for people experiencing recurrent disasters and for whom relocation is not an option [NOP2].[18]

The consideration for older people during emergencies inevitably includes the issue of disability. While ageing implies a natural process of life, disability describes functional limitations not confined to any particular age group.

Burton and Breen (2002) noted that older refugees' ability to meet their basic needs (e.g. food, water, shelter) could be compromised by physical disability, mental or social impairments and the loss of support mechanisms—especially in the early stages of a humanitarian emergency when resources are in shorter supply. During disaster evacuations, the differences among older people, people with disabilities, people with trauma and the whole range of people with special needs continue to be neglected [HA2]. Hence, after recognising the limited number of older individuals within the affected population, the few organisations dedicated to assisting older people during disasters expanded their efforts to aid other marginalised community members, including individuals with disabilities and those in difficult-to-reach and remote areas. [NOP2].

5.4.3.3 Meeting Older People's Needs

During crises, older people rely heavily on formal assistance and services provided by aid agencies (Barbelet 2018). However, psychosocial and medical care remain underfunded and understaffed to meet the needs of older people (Amnesty International 2019). Access to adequate food is often a significant problem for displaced older people. They often struggle not only with the quality of the food but also with how food rations are distributed. In the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya in 2011, more than 500 older adults were found to need nutritional support. This was attributed to exclusion from or limited access to the general food distributions, low diversity in their diet and infrequent meals (Calvi-Parisetti 2013). Distributions of basic items were often poorly targeted or difficult to access, and older people received unfamiliar food, ill-fitting clothes and water supplies that were too heavy to carry (Okamoto and Godfred 2013). Moreover, traditional health responses in humanitarian crises largely fail to address the needs of older people with non-communicable, manageable chronic health conditions (Skinner 2014).

As detailed in the interviews, barriers to accessing humanitarian services and recovery assistance specific to older people include constraints to physical mobility, structural impediments, limited access to civil documentation and the absence of economic opportunities [HA2]. Sudden and forced movements result in the loss and destruction of civil documentation, including birth certificates and passports. Cumbersome bureaucratic procedures, made even more challenging by older people's limited mobility, reduce their ability to obtain and renew documents, thereby limiting their access to essential services, including health care, social services and economic opportunities.

Older people's needs go beyond the initial phase of displacement. The challenges people endure are further amplified in protracted displacement, including concerns over their hygiene, shelter and livelihoods. Continued, evolving support to improve their lives while in displacement is necessary. Some examples include legal support for newly arrived older IDPs in Colombia through priority appointments with the national service in charge of IDP registration

or the organisation of group activities (e.g., recreational activities, cooking sessions and group discussions) for older adults in age-friendly spaces in Palestine (Allaire 2013). In Bangladesh, age-friendly support centres provide basic medical treatment, counselling, education, health and well-being services, indoor games and recreational activities in displacement settings (Khan et al. 2022). In Japan, as part of the Activities of Daily Living needs, temporary housing and support were provided to older people, along with access to a 24-hour life-support adviser (WHO 2013).

In the interviews, NGO practitioners [NOP2], academics [AC1] and staff from older people organisations [OPO1, OPO2] emphasised how health needs are entangled with the economic insecurity that older people face. Despite all efforts, older people in the Philippines are not always unable to meet their basic needs even in normal times, a situation that is only exacerbated when crises occur. The fact that the poverty rate is higher for older people than for the general population is a cause of this [AC1]. Despite provisions for discounts on medicines, food and medical services, as well as value-added tax exemptions for older people being institutionalised into law, they do not necessarily target the poorest of the poor.

Older people face barriers linked to physical mobility, financial capacities and their limited prioritisation by humanitarian actors. An NGO staff member [NOP2] explained that the problem with disaster response is that it targets the general population, consequentially overlooking the harder-to-meet needs of older people (for example, specific medicinal and nutritional needs related to chronic disease management as well as hygiene kits for older people). The inaccurate assessment of the composition and contexts of the at-risk populations can also lead to discrepancies between the available humanitarian assistance and its appropriateness for the intended recipients. The inability to understand the age-specific issues of older people and their changing roles during displacement limits the services provided by humanitarian actors (Duggan et al. 2009; Barbelet 2018).

All these issues challenge not just the visibility of older people but their ability to access equitable and adequate assistance during crises and displacement. Academics and practitioners recognise that even in normal times, a specialised helpline/helpdesk to support older people against abuse and discrimination is necessary [AC3, NOP1]. The identification of safe spaces for older people is vital in crises and displacement of any duration [AC3]. Similar initiatives have been operationalised for children and women, with the innovation in this case deriving from having these platforms available for older people as well.

COVID-19 was perhaps the best example of a large-scale humanitarian crisis with a direct and specific impact on older people, and the Philippine experience was no exception to global trends. Many older people in the country experienced social isolation at the height of the pandemic and faced challenges to their everyday survival [OPO2]. Pre-pandemic activities for older people were suspended and, in some cases, discontinued [NOP1].

Humanitarian actors were also challenged by restrictions impacting their operations in their ability to provide assistance to communities in need [HA3].

5.4.3.4 Engaging Older People in Humanitarian Programming

Effectively confronting crises requires considering the need for active participation among older people, recognising their knowledge and capacities rooted in their experiences from previous crises and disasters. Their understanding of the local context can contribute to guaranteeing the implementation of well-suited assistance and programmes during emergencies. However, there are multiple barriers to realising this. Research from Sudan showed that older adults were not systematically consulted by humanitarian agencies, and nearly half did not know how to make a complaint or provide feedback on humanitarian services (HAI 2019). During crises, the limited mobility of older people creates physical and economic dependence on their families. For instance, older people are forced to go with their children during disasters, serving as surrogate parents to their grandchildren while relying on their income-generating children [AC1].

Many older people need to receive care, but many also serve as caregivers—as demonstrated in all the situations in which older people take responsibility for raising orphans and vulnerable children who have lost either one or both parents (Ferris and Petz 2012). Their role as caregivers is sometimes underappreciated, leading to neglect and abuse, but it continues in the aftermath of disasters and can even be amplified by the displacement of individuals and the depletion of community resources. Older people in developing countries face the disproportionate impacts of poverty, while older people caring for dependents experience additional strains. In the case of the Philippines, the economic impacts of disasters compel many Filipinos to seek job opportunities abroad, leaving older family members such as grandparents to assume surrogate parental roles (Lucentales, n.d.).

During crises, the primary focus is placed on recognising the conditions of vulnerability and addressing the needs of older people, leading to a tendency to overlook the many positive contributions they make to their families, communities and society as a whole (see Box 5.1). Assisting older people can also be an effective way to support their whole households and communities. In Congo, intergenerational activities were set up to provide older adults with opportunities for safe income-generating activities, such as mat and basket weaving, to prevent their granddaughters from having to resort to transactional sex to earn money to buy food for the family (Allaire 2013). Following Typhoon Rai in Central Philippines in 2021, cash transfers were the most appreciated intervention to address the specific needs of older people, especially considering that many were also facing the insecurities brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Social researchers [AC1] and practitioners [NOP 2] affirm that the financial support that older people

received was readily shared to address the household's collective needs and longstanding insecurities.

Box 5.1 Capacity of Older People

What's important is to recognise that the community has this capacity, especially the vulnerable persons. During [disaster] planning, the input of older persons is important, especially in identifying what they need since they are the ones most affected by disasters or hazards. Engaging them in implementing projects that matter to their livelihood is also important. They are the ones who know the area, including local knowledge. They are glad to be included because usually, when it comes to livelihood activities, the priorities are the younger and more capable ones. [Older people should also be considered in these activities] since some older persons are heads of household or live alone [HA3].

Older people can proactively ensure their safety and address their insecurities during emergencies. Moreover, their accumulated experiences of disasters and crises allow them to bring an informed perspective in planning for and confronting future crises. In order to facilitate older IDP participation in decisions that affect their lives, Older People's Committees were established in Sudan (Wells 2005). In Bolivia, 'White Brigades'—standing associations of older people—assist with the registration of crisis-affected people. They are also involved in emergency planning, participate in drills, and identify older people's needs during emergencies (Chan, Hung, and Chan 2017). The contributions of displaced older people should also be acknowledged throughout the recovery process and when pursuing durable solutions (see Box 5.2).

Box 5.2 Inclusion of Displaced Older People in Recovery and Reconstruction

[The] inclusion of older people is also important, for example, in the [disaster] shelters. Since resources are limited, our implementation of shelter repair is to really engage the community by training them in building back better through safer techniques. But of course, you have limited physical capacity when you are older. So, while the others are doing what they can do in building shelters, [older people] are the ones who list what else is needed or cook for the builders. I think the key here is to engage them in the first place. Don't immediately say, "Ah, they're old; let's not involve them anymore" [HA3].

An essential means of empowering and engaging older people is strengthening older people's organisations (OPOs). OPOs are vital channels for supporting older individuals, including by performing activities that enhance their capabilities and encourage community-based initiatives tailored to meet their needs. OPOs are often informed primary data providers during disasters and are able to identify the number of older individuals affected and requiring assistance. For example, after Typhoon Haiyan, some OPOs received training on pre-emptive evacuation and first aid [from NGOs], furthering their disaster risk awareness and improving their attitude towards disaster evacuation [NOP1]. Hence, the coordination between humanitarian practitioners and older people organisations needs to be enhanced and more systematically leveraged in support of more inclusive crisis response.

In order to empower older people in displacement, it is also vital to equip service providers [HA2, NOP2]. Increasing the competence of NGO staff, humanitarian actors and emergency volunteers is key to ensuring the delivery of inclusive and age-friendly support for displaced older people. Activities should not be exclusively dedicated to training programmes for specialised care but equally to increasing awareness and sensitivity toward the rights and dignity of older people.

Displaced older people face compounded challenges during crises. Nonetheless, seeing beyond these deficits, they have strengths (rooted in accumulated memories, assets and culture) that can contribute to improving their own (and their communities') lives in displacement. What remains missing are sufficient opportunities to overcome the specific challenges they face and more opportunities to fully leverage their capacities.

5.5 Discussion: Ensuring Visibility, Inclusion and Equity in Humanitarian Action for Older People in Displacement

Combining scoping review and key informant interviews allowed us to identify what characterises humanitarian action for older people in displacement, giving evidence on three critical issues for (displaced) older people: *visibility, inclusion and equity*. The presence or absence of these elements defines the degree of attention older people receive in humanitarian crises and related displacement.

First, older people's *(in)visibility* in humanitarian emergencies has been the subject of reports and studies (UNHCR 1998; HAI 2000, 2016), underpinning the key concerns that older people face during crises and the search for durable solutions. For example, health risks are easily identified as a primary source of insecurity for many older people in crises, resulting in numerous projects geared toward protecting the health and well-being of older people. Skinner (2014, 40) notes how traditional health responses largely failed to address the needs of those with chronic diseases, including disabled, injured and older Syrian refugees. Economic concerns loom as an equally important concern for older people. The WHO projects that by 2050, 80% of older

people will live in low- and middle-income countries (WHO 2022). This reality, combined with the misconception that older people are economically inactive and considered a welfare issue (HAI 2000, 1), means that more older people will be likely to live in more marginalised positions.

Scholarly inquiry into older people in displacement remains inadequate in scope and plurality. The scoping review affirms the scarcity of academic exploration into the intersecting themes of humanitarian action, older people and displacement. Moreover, the range of topics explored remains limited, often confined to the problematisation of humanitarian action for displaced older people (primarily refugees), their invisibility in data (DuCros, Venis, and Karunakara 2013; Lupieri 2018; Amnesty International 2019), and the inadequacy of service provision (Godfrey and Kalache 1989; Wells 2012; Calvi-Parisetti 2013).

Calvi-Parisetti (2013, 77) describes the support that displaced older people specifically receive from governments and international or national organisations as minimal or non-existent, as it is frequently merged into programmes targeting displaced persons as a single homogenous group. As mentioned above, humanitarian action for older people during displacement is part of a blanket provision of assistance to "persons with specific needs during emergencies", including other categories of persons at heightened risk.[19] Thus, older people's needs and risks during crises disappear in the humanitarian response system, and targeted assistance is rarely provided. This issue is also the result of the limitations encountered by local non-governmental actors, who have the comparative advantage of knowing these community members well and being able to effectively communicate and reach out to them. For instance, COSE, the lead national NGO that caters to the needs of older people in the Philippines, is only able to provide humanitarian assistance for older people on an ad hoc basis. The absence of a standby fund to immediately respond to emergencies delays their interventions aimed at assisting older people in humanitarian contexts.

Secondly, the demand for increased *inclusion* of displaced older people in humanitarian programming stems from the need for improved visibility in data, service provision and advocacy. It is critical to engage older people for them to gain ownership of crisis response and recovery. Many older people are not receiving sufficient assistance or protection, while others are not being asked if what they receive is useful (Duggan et al. 2009, 13), leading to inconsistencies between the problems perceived by older people and those identified by crisis response actors (HAI 2000). Following a crisis, efforts can be undertaken to ensure the financial inclusion of older people through expanded financial assistance in the form of cash-transfer schemes. A case study on older Syrian refugees in Lebanon showed that more than 30% of international humanitarian funding in Lebanon has gone towards cash-based assistance, which has proven very effective and efficient (Karroum et al. 2018, 7). Through cash transfers, the affected population, including older people, are empowered to consider and decide on their priorities following a

disaster. Cash transfers targeting older people can more flexibly address their specific needs, which are often unnoticed in conventional emergency assistance. Older people can spend cash accessing items they particularly need (e.g. medicines for chronic diseases) as well as meeting the priority needs of other family members. In addition, it is imperative to recognise the capacities of older people and the ways in which they significantly contribute to their various spheres of engagement—they are caregivers to their families and the custodians of indigenous knowledge in the community (Peachey 1999; Burton and Breen 2002; Ferris and Petz 2012). Displaced older people deserve to be included in opportunities to practice their agency through age-friendly spaces (Wells 2005; Khan et al. 2022) and financial literacy [NOP1] and be acknowledged in community disaster risk planning [HA3].

Lastly, the issue of *equity* calls for the need to provide older people with fair opportunities (for response and recovery assistance) beyond the disproportionate structural barriers they face. Older people do not seek exceptional treatment during crises but [aspire] to have fair access to the necessary services, given their capacities and limitations (UNHCR 1998, No. 17). Older people in displacement sites are often subject to "negative social selection", [20] wherein the younger, healthier and more abled-bodied people find their own durable solutions sooner, leaving behind the most vulnerable. Displacement triggered by earthquakes and flooding in Japan has led to problems with care and support, social isolation and even financial capacity to secure permanent housing (WHO 2013; Yonetani 2016; Robles, 2024). The pandemic confirmed this trend: older people lamented inequities in the distribution of COVID-19 social relief [OPO2].

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the authors attempt to locate the inclusion of displaced older people in the existing literature and relevant humanitarian programming. Through an examination of the provision of aid to older Filipinos in crisis and related displacement, the authors confirmed that significant work remains to be done to increase the visibility and inclusion of older people in humanitarian programmes and ensure their equitable access to appropriate programmes and adequate resources.

Protecting and upholding the rights of older people in crisis settings and in displacement are essential objectives of humanitarian action. However, there is a need to consider that not every older person is inherently vulnerable. This has been explicitly pointed out in international instruments for older people. Yet, older people are trapped in the misconstrued notion of vulnerability and frailty, resulting in their exclusion from planning and decision-making. As stated in a 1998 UNHCR study,

> *The tragedy of older people who have been forcibly displaced is not so much that they become dependent on others but that they have been robbed of the means to provide for others as they wish (No. 38).*

Displacement is a dynamic process, bringing many changes to the affected population's physical situations and material circumstances. Being forced to move uproots people from familiar surroundings, impacting livelihoods and disrupting nurtured social networks and support systems. For older people, the situation becomes particularly disempowering, challenging their ability to maintain the roles within their families and communities they held before their displacement. These changes can lead to frustration, isolation and loss of identity. Thus, humanitarian assistance should not just entail providing them with appropriate support for their physical well-being but also ensuring that resources are in place to empower them to navigate their new roles in inclusive and dignified ways.

This is a pressing concern, motivating ongoing calls to further the rights of older people during crises. Despite the disproportionate impacts they suffer in disasters, conflicts and other crises, older people have strengths (rooted in their accumulated memories, assets and culture) that should be leveraged through meaningful participation to allow them to contribute to the lives of all their displaced communities. Opportunities to overcome their insecurities and continue their lives beyond displacement remain scarce. Enhancing displacement data-gathering tools to include disaggregated data on sex, age and diversity, including disability, is necessary to accommodate people with differentiated capacities and vulnerabilities. Crises, particularly displacement, should be understood as intergenerational concerns by recognising older people's limitations and competencies in finding and creating durable solutions for themselves and their communities. Policies, initiatives and concrete actions to respond to and address displacement should work towards mainstreaming the inclusion of older people.

The authors' search for what constitutes humanitarian action for displaced older people has demonstrated the lack of evidence and the limited implementation of targeted assistance during crises. Lupieri (2018, 26) explains that while the specialisation [of humanitarian and development agencies] can bring about positive consequences for some of the most vulnerable populations, for older people, it means they have a few advocates for their cause. The fact that so few entities provide effective support hinders the quest for further visibility, inclusion and equity for older people. Nonetheless, the complementary works of scholars researching older people and humanitarian actors and national NGOs supporting them can drive a more comprehensive and multidimensional understanding not just of their needs but of their contributions in their specific contexts of displacement.

Notes

1 UNHCR reported 2,205,500 female and 1,880,112 male-displaced persons above 60 years old, respectively, including all people covered in the UNHCR's mandate. See https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=2bxU2f (excl. host community).

2 Based on the Philippine Statistics Authority National Quickstat Report (March 2023), 9,222,672 of the total population of 108,667,043 Filipinos were

60 years and above as of May 1, 2020. See https://psa.gov.ph/statistics/quickstat/national.

3 Government data showed that 38.4% of Typhoon Haiyan fatalities were 60 years old and above (Harris and Mihnovits 2015, 14).

4 Taylor (2011) presents the use of "elderly" as equated to frailty, and "senior" for people 65 years old and over in a government context, and "older adult" as an uncomfortable expression in an excuse not to offend.

5 As listed in the Migration Data Portal, the UN has adopted 60 or 65 years and older as a lower cut-off age for "older person" to extend the eligibility criteria for ageing-related development projects (UN DESA 2020). See https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/older-persons-and-migration#definition.

6 See https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/ageing.

7 HelpAge International functions as the secretariat to the global network of organizations promoting the right of all older people to lead dignified and secure lives. See https://www.helpage.org/who-we-are/our-values-and-ambitions/.

8 See A/73/12 (Part II).

9 See https://www.unhcr.org/au/media/rights-older-persons-global-compact-refugees-0.

10 See "The UN Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement" (United Nations 2022).

11 See https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/research-resources/ensuring-age-gender-diversity-inclusive-joint-submission-high-level-panel-internal-displacement/.

12 See Tricco et al. (2018).

13 Ethics Approval was granted on October 11, 2022, lodged as JICA (DI) 202211040002.

14 The following notations were used to record the interviews: [NOP] NGO for older people, [HA] humanitarian actors, [AC] academics/researchers, [OPO] older people organisations, and [GA] government agency/office.

15 National standards to protect sensitive patient health information from being disclosed without the patient's consent or knowledge.

16 See https://www.unhcr.org/lb/persons-with-specific-needs.

17 UNICEF describes humanitarian cash transfers as payments (either on-off payments or as regular monthly transfers) made in the form of physical currency or e-cash that can be used to address humanitarian needs in any emergency. It's a cost-effective way to get support to those who need it most (see https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/humanitarian-cash-transfers-explained).

18 *Barangay* is the smallest unit of government in the Philippines.

19 The UNHCR is cautious in using the term "person with specific needs", as it carries a disempowering connotation that may not always accurately reflect persons categorised as having specific needs as requiring specialised assistance (2015b).

20 "Selection" is used in the former Yugoslavia to describe the manner in which camps and collective centres have been observed to empty over time (UNHCR 1998, No.8).

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6 Protecting Forced Migrant Workers

A Case Study of Rescue Operations for Fishermen Trafficked from Thailand to Indonesia

Tatsuya Hata and Kaito Takeuchi

6.1 Introduction

Trafficking in Persons (TIP) is an international crime that involves serious human rights violations, and substantial efforts to eradicate it have been undertaken globally. TIP is a modern form of slavery with severe consequences for people's physical integrity, dignity and agency, including reducing freedom of choice for migrants and transforming voluntary migration into forced migration through coercion or deception. According to the International Labour Organization (2021), there were an estimated 169 million migrant workers worldwide in 2019, which equates to 4.9% of the global workforce. Trafficking can happen to anyone regardless of age, ethnicity, gender or nationality, but it is more likely to affect some groups of migrants who show heightened vulnerability—often as a consequence of their gender, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or employment status.

In recent years, Thailand's fishing industry has received international attention due to its issues with human trafficking. The Global Slavery Index 2018 revealed that the National Fisheries Policy and Wealth and Institute Capacity could be a specific source of vulnerability for those employed in Thailand's fishing industry (Walk Free Foundation 2018, 52–54, 87–88). The report notes the importance of establishing platforms that protect labour standards, recognise and respond to serious organised crime, and improve the traceability of "net-to-table" seafood and labour to reduce the relevant risks. Thailand hosted an estimated 401,000 modern slaves, including victims of trafficking (VoTs), in 2021 (Walk Free Foundation 2018, 118).

These problems of human trafficking and forced labour in the Thai fishing industry affected the US and the EU, major foreign markets and export destinations for the country. In 2014 and 2015, the US placed Thailand at the lowest tier on its TIP Watchlist, meaning it could impose trade sanctions on the country (US Department of State 2014). Similarly, in 2015, the EU issued a yellow card to Thailand's fishing and seafood industry, which could have significantly impacted the balance of trade with the EU (European Commission 2015). In March 2015, the Associated Press published a report

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that shed light on the situation of Thai, Myanmar, Cambodian and Laotian fishermen trafficked into forced labour on Thai fishing boats and trapped in the Indonesian islands of Benjina, Tual, and Ambon (Mendoza et al. 2016). Large-scale rescue operations were undertaken by various state and non-state actors from 2014 to 2016 to protect and assist more than 3,000 trafficked fishermen. These rescue operations triggered significant progress in developing anti-trafficking mechanisms in Thailand.

Most research on TIP in Thailand has focused on the trafficking of women and children and its effects (Jones et al. 2009; Smith 2010; Weitzer 2011; RATS-W Team 2012). However, the issue of forced labour in Thai's fishing industry required an approach that has brought other concerns under scrutiny, including the working conditions and forced labour of migrant fishermen, the situation of VoTs and related policies (Chantavanich et al. 2016; Marschke and Vandergeest 2016; Pocock et al. 2016; Pocock et al. 2021); human security and state sovereignty in Southeast Asia (Jumnianpol et al. 2019); and the analysis of migrant fishery workers from a political economy perspective (Yusriza 2020). However, research on the needs and conditions of vulnerability of migrant workers and the challenges they face in accessing humanitarian assistance and protection remains limited (examples include Tillinac et al. 2015; Koser 2014, 2016). Moreover, studies from a "counter-trafficking action" perspective are limited to those based on the practical work of NGOs (EJF 2014, 2015; Tran, Marschke and Issara Institute, 2017; Rousseau 2018, 2019; LPN 2019, 2020) or international organisations (IOM 2016). There has not been much focus on the perspective of counter-trafficking actors, particularly the provision of immediate life-saving and protection assistance. Thus, this chapter aims to explore the question: what are the needs and challenges of counter-trafficking actors when protecting trafficked migrant workers? In examining this question, this chapter recognises the specific conditions of trafficked migrants—as a subset of the category of "forced migrants"—the risks they face, and the responses that are required by actors supporting and protecting them. This question will be addressed by examining the operations to rescue fishermen trafficked in Southeast Asia from 2014 to 2016 as a case study to draw out possible implications for other trafficking contexts and forced migration contexts in general.

This chapter begins by describing the analytical framework of TIP and the counter-trafficking measures based on existing conventions from the perspective of humanitarian action and then explains the issues of trafficked migrant workers in Thailand from a protection and partnership paradigm. It then examines the protection mechanisms enacted and partnerships built to carry out rescue operations of trafficked migrant fishermen between 2014 and 2016. Lastly, the chapter identifies key implications for the work of counter-trafficking actors to protect and assist trafficked migrant workers.

In order to highlight the complexities of the implementation process in the three-year intensive counter-trafficking responses for migrant fishermen and to identify the challenges and implications of the humanitarian action,

the case study used a mixed-research methodology, with qualitative analysis as the mainstay but also incorporating existing statistical data to supplement and refine the evidence (Smith and Blanchet 2019; Bryant and Landman 2020). The main analysis was based on a literature review and in-depth interviews, as well as the use of field observation techniques. The literature review included a collection and compilation of publications on the migrant workers' trafficking and counter-trafficking of fishermen in Thailand, focusing mainly on the efforts of the organisations involved in the rescue operations. Empirical data for this study was also collected through in-depth interviews with 24 resource persons and experts in Samut Sakhon, Patumtani and Bangkok during fieldwork in 2022. The interviewees were selected based on their experience with the operations (including rescue and protection of VoTs) relevant to this case study, as well as their roles and expertise. Then, the authors optimised the snowball sampling method to reach other appropriate experts and resource persons via the initial interviewees. Interviewees include personnel from the Royal Thai Government (RTG) and the United Nations, scholars, and representatives from NGOs and civil society organisations. Interviews were conducted in Thai and English. Given the sensitivity of the research topic, the data collected were handled and treated with confidentiality; the authors took interview notes, but no audio and video recordings were made. All the interviewees were anonymised in the notes to avoid the identification of the informants. The interviewees gave informed consent to participate in the research and to be quoted anonymously.

6.2 Conceptualising Counter-Trafficking Action

6.2.1 Definitions

TIP was first defined as a crime in international law in 2000 through the adoption of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, also called the "Palermo Protocol", supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (United Nations 2000).[1] The definition of TIP provided by the protocol was groundbreaking in encompassing all forms of human trafficking, regardless of the gender of the victims and type of exploitation in the context of forced labour,[2] in contrast to the traditional recognition of TIP as referred to the sexual exploitation of women and girls (Gallagher 2010). The Palermo Protocol highlights the relationship between migration and trafficking, especially the instance of migrant workers becoming victims of forced labour and trafficking, which is widely recognised as modern-day slavery (ILO, Walk Free Foundation, and IOM 2022) and elaborates provisions for the protection of victims of TIP.

The criminalisation of TIP served as the basis for trafficked persons to be acknowledged as "Victims of Trafficking" (VoTs). This is intended to identify the perpetrators as responsible for the criminal act and to identify victims who should be protected and assisted by law (IOM 2007). In this chapter,

the term "trafficked migrant workers", or "trafficked fishermen", refers to migrant workers who have experienced TIP. It should be noted that legal recognition of VoTs requires screening in court, according to criteria that vary by country, resulting in some cases being recognised while others are not. Even in the cases discussed here, the number of trafficked migrant workers does not necessarily correspond to that of legally verified VoTs.

6.2.2 Humanitarian Action and Counter-Trafficking Approach

According to Bradley (2017, 98), humanitarian action encompasses all efforts to respond to emergencies and their aftermath, typically including saving lives, alleviating suffering, and preserving human dignity. Obertová and Cattaneo (2018) note that the risk factors associated with human trafficking stem from a variety of crises in recent years. These crises include those related to large migration flows, armed conflict and disasters to which humanitarian organisations have traditionally responded. IOM (2015) considers counter-trafficking to be a life-saving response and calls for its inclusion in protection assistance in humanitarian crises. The growing attention to the interrelationship between humanitarian action and anti-trafficking action affirms that counter-trafficking action can save lives, reduce the suffering of trafficked victims, and ensure their dignity—just like other elements of humanitarian action.

The Palermo Protocol adopts a criminal justice approach to counter-trafficking response, promoting measures to prevent people from becoming victims of transnational organised crime, mandating actions to protect and assist trafficked persons based on their rights, and calling for the criminalisation, investigation and prosecution of traffickers, strengthening national cooperation and coordination. This approach introduced the concept of "3Ps", comprising *Prevention, Protection and Prosecution,* to facilitate comprehensive anti-trafficking measures (UNODC 2009). Furthermore, an additional P comprising *Partnership* among states and relevant agencies is identified as a foundational element that promotes and strengthens the integrity of the criminal justice approach (UNODC 2021). The "4Ps" approach has served as a common framework for countering TIP in recent years. Each of the Ps represents an essential area in the fight against TIP, allowing governments and counter-trafficking agencies to address all stages of trafficking at the national, regional and international levels.

Protection encompasses a wide range of responses, including identification, shelter, recovery, safe return and repatriation, rehabilitation and reintegration of VoTs. Identifying the potentially trafficked person is foundational to all other protection actions. Through the identification process, people's needs are assessed, and VoTs can be granted access to available services through referral mechanisms[3] (Guajardo 2019). In the case of trafficked migrant workers, protection may encompass safe repatriation to their home country. McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou (2021) warn that this activity requires careful consideration. Trafficked persons might not want to return for several reasons, such as stigma in their home community, concerns about

reintegration after return, or simply wanting to continue their new life in the destination country (Pandey 2018). Moreover, upon their return, trafficked persons may be exposed to threats from traffickers and the risk of re-trafficking. As Heinrich (2010) points out, when protecting trafficked persons, all durable solutions should be considered to accommodate victims' rights, needs, and circumstances rather than making them return to their home country as the default goal.

The partnership paradigm has been developed reflecting the fact that TIP is often a transnational crime, which requires the cooperation of all states involved, as well as of national and international agencies, civil society organisations, and experts that are essential in the prevention of TIP, protection of victims and prosecution of perpetrators. The cooperation among actors reflects differently at different levels. At the international level, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against TIP is the coordination body for international agencies on human trafficking. The Bali Process on People Smuggling, TIP and Related Transnational Crime is a multi-regional mechanism for states to coordinate anti-trafficking responses. The vital role of civil society organisations and NGOs has long been recognised, expanding their involvement not only in conventional trafficking domains like sexual exploitation of women and children but increasingly on issues related to migration and forced labour.

Among the "4Ps", this chapter focuses primarily on Protection because it directly involves undertaking life-saving actions for trafficked persons, which more directly fits within the domain of humanitarian action. The risks that humanitarian protection typically addresses mirror those covered by counter-trafficking protection, including impediments and restrictions on access to legal identity, remedies and justice; psychological or emotional abuse or inflicted distress; unlawful impediments or restrictions to freedom of movement and forced displacement; and forced labour or slavery-like practices (GPC 2023).

In humanitarian action, humanitarian coordination is positioned in the same way as partnership in counter-trafficking action. Partnership involves coordination and cooperation among all stakeholders (UNODC 2009). Humanitarian coordination is essential in ensuring a coherent and principled humanitarian response in assisting those in need of relief and protection (OCHA 2018). For both humanitarian and counter-trafficking actors, promoting partnerships is essential to protecting people with diversified assistance needs and coordinating responses. For this reason, this chapter also focuses on Partnerships.

6.3 Addressing TIP in Thailand

6.3.1 Different Migration Patterns and the Risks of TIP

For centuries, Thailand has been a crossroads for migration in Southeast Asia. Many migrants entered and settled in Thailand long before a state system regulating cross-border movements was established. Thailand's

population composition is, therefore, very diverse, including Chinese, Mon, Karen, Shan, Khmer, Lao, Indian, Malay and other ethnic minorities, and it remains a major country destination for migrants originating all over the region (Harkins 2019).

Due to political instability in the Indochina Peninsula, many refugees and displaced persons arrived in Thailand during the Cold War. In addition, the country became the destination of choice for millions of migrant workers from neighbouring countries in the 1980s and 1990s, triggered by the "Turning Indochina from a battlefield to marketplace" policy shift, which greatly expanded wage differences between Thailand and its neighbours (Phonprapai 2021). Thereafter, intra-regional migration to Thailand increased and shifted from politically driven to economically induced, with the RTG cyclically alternating between increased crackdowns and encouraging registration, depending on the state of the business community and public opinion (Muntarbhorn 2005; World Bank 2006). Thus, Thailand became the largest destination for migrants in the sub-region, attracting, among others, many undocumented migrant workers and their families from Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar (CLM) (Sciortino and Punpuing 2009).

Migration pathways into Thailand are diverse, driven by political and economic causes, disasters and environmental factors, and include cases of kidnapping and other forms of force and coercion (UNODC 2017). Different migrants also adopt different means and conditions of entry into the country. While the boundary between migrants in regular and irregular status may be blurred and variable, the informality of many of these movements is apparent in relevant research. Harkins, Lindgren, and Suravoranon (2017) analysed a sample of 1,808 migrant workers returning from Thailand and Malaysia to CLM and Viet Nam. Their study indicated that 74% of the total used irregular channels, often finding support through friends and family, and only 26% used regular channels, such as licensed private recruitment agencies, direct hiring by employers, and government agencies. Migrants to Thailand were way more likely to use irregular channels than migrants to Malaysia (88% of the total surveyed compared to only 22% in Malaysia).

As of 2022, Thailand hosted 2,736,486 CLM migrant workers registered through official processes, including national verification, memorandum of understanding, One Stop Service Centre, and cabinet resolutions. Of these, 72.4% were from Myanmar. Following mobility restrictions and forced returns due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of registered CLM migrant workers rapidly decreased in 2020 and 2021 (see Table 6.1). Total numbers, however, returned to pre-pandemic levels after restrictions were lifted in 2022.

Besides these migrant workers, UNHCR reports the presence of a population of concern in the country of 662,139 persons at the end of 2022, including 566,686 registered stateless, 90,617 refugees from Myanmar, and 48,121 urban asylum seekers (UNHCR 2022).

Table 6.1 Number of CLM migrant workers registered through official procedures

Year	*Cambodia*	*Laos*	*Myanmar*	*Total*
2014	342,461	122,437	1,031,643	1,496,541
2015	648,880	202,972	1,427,224	2,279,076
2016	990,492	328,442	1,597,878	2,916,812
2017	723,911	223,827	2,062,277	3,010,015
2018	814,751	285,306	1,985,737	3,085,794
2019	693191	281,247	1,825,921	2,800,359
2020	509,949	220,577	1,574,324	2,304,850
2021	455,476	213,203	1,462,935	2,131,614
2022	519,762	234,985	1,981,739	2,736,486

Source: Compiled by the authors based on Foreign Workers Administration Office, Department of Employment, MOL, RTG (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022)

6.3.2 Responses to TIP and Partnership between Actors

TIP in Thailand has been primarily associated with sexual exploitation, but other sectors at high risk of trafficking that require the use of arduous labour have become increasingly concerning over the years. These include many lucrative industries, such as agriculture, construction, fisheries, and manufacturing (UNIAP 2013). Addressing these forms of TIP has often requested leveraging innovative partnerships. In their response to the TIP of undocumented migrant workers in fisheries, NGOs played a leading role, as described below, and the rescue operations of trafficked fishermen from Thailand to Indonesia became a factor in facilitating the partnerships between actors.

The issue of TIP and forced labour on Thai fishing vessels was first recognised after Typhoon Gay in 1989, when more than 200 fishing boats sank, killing at least 458 people (with an additional estimated 600 people missing and dead), most of whom were poor fishermen from northeastern Thailand (IOM Thailand 2011; LPN 2019). Following this tragic incident, the trafficking of fishermen and forced labour in fishing boats off the coast of Indonesia began to be identified and reported by NGOs. Founded in 2004, The Labour Rights Promotion Network (LPN), a Thai NGO, has been providing support to CLM migrant workers and their families near Mahachai Port in Samut Sakhon province since that time. Subsequently, the Missing Persons Centre was established in 2006—it gathers information, undertakes research and informs the operations of other bodies. Their collaboration with LPN led to the rescue of 200 Myanmar nationals in 2009. LPN played a leading role in the rescue operations of over 3,400 Thai and CLM migrant labour fishermen trafficked from Thailand to Indonesia, triggered by consultation with 128 trafficked fishermen between 2006 and 2014 (LPN 2019).

Besides LPN, Stella Maris Seafarers Centre Songkhla, Foundation for AIDS Rights (FAR), Raks Thai Foundation (RTF), World Vision Foundation of Thailand (WVFT) and other Thai NGOs have recognised the problem

of trafficking fishermen and developed responses. Moreover, in 2013, the London-based Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) published a report that further exposed the harsh working conditions of migrants in Thailand and the direct responsibility of major food retailers internationally. The media publicised this report widely, attracting considerable public attention. This contributed to significant coverage of LPN rescue operations (Marschke and Vandergeest 2016).

Meanwhile, the RTG established the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) in 2002 and opened the Department of Anti-TIP (DATIP), the main government body responsible for combating TIP. DATIP coordinates its activities with the Ministry of Labour (MOL), the Royal Thai Police (RTP), the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), the Office of the Attorney-General (OAG), and the Thai Task Force for Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT) to provide shelter, protection and support to trafficked persons.[4] In 2008, the country approved The Anti-TIP Act B.E. 2551 (2008), which provides a broader definition of human trafficking—covering the whole dimension of human trafficking—and imposes heavier penalties on persons involved in human trafficking (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Royal Thai Government 2009). Since 2009, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has also started working with MSDHS/DATIP to carry out a project to assist multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs) made up of social workers, police, judicial workers, immigration officers, MOL officials, educators, medical personnel and NGO personnel. The project aimed to strengthen inter-agency coordination and the capacity of the teams to listen to victims and provide rapid and comprehensive protection (Damme 2019).

6.4 Rescue Operations 2014–2016

6.4.1 Needs of Trafficked Fishermen

The rescue operations of trafficked migrant fishermen from 2014 to 2016 illustrated diverse assistance needs at every stage of the counter-trafficking operations, with migrant workers having distinct characteristics, such as nationality, circumstances and duration of labour migration, and contexts that led to their differential experiences of trafficking and forced labour. As shown in Table 6.2, 3,413 trafficked Thai nationals and migrant workers from CLM countries were assisted and repatriated to their respective countries over three years. There were also children among the victims, 13- and 14-year-old Cambodians rescued by LPN in 2014 (LPN 2019) and children from Myanmar, Cambodia and Thailand under the protection of IOM (IOM Indonesia 2017).

The assistance needs of trafficked migrant workers differed between documented and undocumented migrants. For trafficked migrants with regular documents, a pathway for assistance from identification to eventual repatriation could be established in coordination with NGOs, the Indonesian

Table 6.2 Number of fishermen rescued in Indonesia (2014–2016)

Nationality/year	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*	*Total*
Thai	27	1,236	654	1,917
Myanmar	158	1,004	75	1,237
Cambodian	22	138	74	234
Lao	0	13	12	25
Total (by year)	207	2,391	815	3,413

Source: Compiled by the authors based on IOM Indonesia Counter Trafficking Data Base 2011–2015, Thailand's TIP 2014, 2015, 2016 Reports.

government and other national governments. However, the majority did not have regular or authentic documentation.

Migrants' experiences leading to trafficking varied widely: some undocumented people were smuggled into Thailand by brokers; others had identity documents, but the ship owner or company took them away; others entered Thailand irregularly from CLM countries and had no regular immigration documents. One of the victims was 23 at the time of rescue but had never had an identity card because he had been smuggled into Indonesia at the age of 14.[5] Some Thai citizens were given false Cambodian passports.[6] Such cases were identified through referral to the Cambodian Embassy. Some victims were dual nationals; in some cases, the RTG assisted those who held Thai nationality upon their request.[7] Seafarers usually have a Seaman's Book as their identity card. However, many did not have one because the shipowner withheld it. In one specific case, a Myanmar national was registered as a Thai national in the Seaman's Book. Some of those who fled their employers lied about their nationality, identity and name at the time of rescue, fearing that they would be identified and hunted by their former employers or punished as illegal immigrants (LPN 2019).

Language was another element of diversity in the experiences and identities of trafficked migrant workers and of complexity in rescue operations. A Thai government official told the authors, "People said, 'I don't speak Thai; I don't speak Myanmar. I can't write Thai documents; I can't write Myanmar documents.' Many Myanmar people use nicknames. In this context, identifying [nationality] was very difficult".[8] In the identification process, undocumented trafficked fishermen had to be interviewed in several languages to obtain the necessary information and produce various documents to prove their identity, requiring considerable interpretation and translation work. Several victims had been captured in Indonesia for long periods—up to 25 years. In some cases, they had forgotten their mother tongue or were illiterate because they had been brought to Indonesia at a young age.[9] While English forms were also used to standardise the procedures, most people did not know English spelling.[10]

Many of the rescued fishermen could identify their country of origin, but some ended up being considered stateless following the investigation.

In several cases, although the trafficked fishermen spoke Indonesian, Thai, or Cambodian, their nationality could not be identified. The exact figure of stateless persons rescued and assisted could not be ascertained. Statelessness has always been an issue in the context of migration between Thailand and CLM countries, and human trafficking in the fishing industry was no exception.

6.4.2 Protection Approaches

Counter-trafficking protection in rescue operations is carried out in four stages: (1) rescue and identification, (2) shelter and recovery, (3) safe return and repatriation, and (4) rehabilitation and reintegration.

6.4.2.1 Rescue and Identification

TIP poses specific operational challenges, making it difficult to uncover, as individual cases may be hidden in plain sight. In the case of the trafficked fishermen, LPN started researching their situation, relying on information provided by the families of those who had not returned from fishing. Consequently, LPN also began receiving critical information from the fishermen, including what fishing tools Thai fishing boats use and where they fish and anchor in Indonesian waters. LPN also received help from rescued trafficked fishermen, who provided detailed and reliable information on their forced labour experiences. The information included which islands the fishing boats headed to, where they disembarked, and if they saw anyone captive on the islands. This information helped in finding other trafficked fishermen through a sort of snowball effect. The cooperation with the formerly trafficked fishermen became an integral part of the LPN investigation.[11]

Identifying the trafficked persons was an essential first step to protecting them and ensuring that they could receive appropriate support. As mentioned earlier, many trafficked migrant fishermen were undocumented and needed official documents proving their identity and nationality. In particular, temporary or emergency passports were necessary to permit repatriation. National governments undertook the profiling of CLM migrant victims in collaboration with NGOs.

LPN was responsible for nationality verification, looking for clues on the victims' place of origin through in-depth interviews. Once this was identified, LPN sent their headshot to the village head through social networking services to confirm their origin and locate their relatives. LPN also sent Polaroid photographs of the trafficked fishermen to embassies, and in some cases DNA testing was used to prove their relationship to their place of origin.[12]

Following identification, processing methods varied from government to government. The RTG had an official mission onsite, comprising officials from various agencies, to work with LPN and provide the necessary documents rapidly. For Myanmar nationals, applications for identity documents

had to be sent to Yangon, which could take three to six months as the Myanmar government then administered citizenship through paper records. In some cases, the RTG used the certificate of identity (CI) system[13] for CLM countries to assist in identifying forced migrants from CLM countries and issue documents.[14] Differences in managing the identification and documentation of citizens in their home country were significant factors in delaying rescue and protection efforts.[15]

For those whose nationality could not be verified, a survey was undertaken to provide proof of statelessness in Indonesia if the necessary information could be provided.[16] Through the interviews, the authors learned that the RTG provided humanitarian protection to some stateless trafficked migrant workers.[17] In other cases, even when the nationality of trafficked migrant fishermen was unknown, they could fall under the assistance framework of a third country based on the national flag of the fishing vessel on which they worked.

6.4.2.2 Shelter and Recovery

Ensuring the safety and security of trafficked migrant workers was the priority upon rescue. The rescued VoTs initially received safe shelter and life-saving assistance, including food, non-food items, and healthcare, provided by various organisations involved in the rescue operations. It was discovered that several trafficked persons suffered from severe physical injuries, including partial amputations, due to the dangerous working conditions and environment. Some trafficked fishermen had contracted malaria and other infections at the time of rescue. Many others were diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental illnesses due to their experiences of forced labour, abuse, living on the run in the jungle and in villages on the islands, or witnessing the deaths of their colleagues on the boat. To this end, LPN worked with an NGO specialising in mental health care in Indonesia to provide psychosocial support.[18] However, LPN reported a need for additional health centres and dedicated capacities to provide both intensive treatment for physical ailments and mental health issues and medium- and long-term support (LPN 2019).

6.4.2.3 Safe Return and Repatriation

The assistance provided to trafficked fishermen during repatriation varied according to their nationality. Through the identification process, many rescued trafficked fishermen could receive temporary passports from their national embassies and return to their countries of origin.[19] Trafficked fishermen identified as Thai nationals were repatriated to Thailand by chartered or military aircraft. If their nationality was not determined, but they were on a Thai boat and could speak Thai, the RTG decided to protect them and sent them to shelters in Thailand, where they were protected and given

time to recover. They also received rehabilitation and legal assistance in line with the government's VoT support programme.[20] For trafficked fishermen from CLM countries, IOM arranged chartered flights for repatriation based on existing bilateral coordination frameworks and in consideration of their governments' capacities. Some trafficked fishermen, who had been living in Indonesia for an extensive period, already had families in Indonesia and chose not to return.[21] However, in one case, a Myanmar fisherman returned to his home country with all of his children, who were born in Indonesia.[22] LPN and the RTG supported family reunification by providing information on the returns of the trafficked fishermen.

6.4.2.4 Reintegration and Rehabilitation

As many victims were undocumented migrants, the first component of reintegration assistance provided in their country upon return was the issuance of identity documents.[23] The Issara Institute provided financial assistance to returned trafficked fishermen through the Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) programme in Thailand and Myanmar (Tran et al. 2017). Both the LPN[24] and the RTG[25] stated that the majority of the returned fishermen could go back to their villages of origin; however, neither institution could provide extensive post-return assistance nor carry out detailed follow-up monitoring.[26] The authors could not verify any records concerning reintegration assistance of fishermen who returned to Laos. On the other hand, the situation in Cambodia is quite specific in that the local IOM office could track the reintegration assistance provided to returned fishermen, including collaboration with Cambodian NGOs. IOM noted:

> In Cambodia, the main focus was on monitoring the rescue, identification and return, but the [key] characteristic is that they provided post-repatriation support. What we found was that returning victims needed not only economic reintegration but also cultural reintegration. They also required psychosocial support [to recover from their tragic experiences]. These are equally important as economic programmes.[27]

6.4.3 Multi-stakeholder Partnerships and Approaches

Different stakeholders, including governmental agencies of Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos, as well as IOM and other international organisations, NGOs, faith-based organisations (FBOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs), were involved in efforts spanning all phases of the protection of VoTs. Counter-trafficking actions inherently require a range of expertise and procedures to deal with the complex nature of the trafficking situation. Effective coordination of various agencies—each specialised in different areas of work—was essential to provide appropriate services to VoTs in the case of rescue operations.

Since the discovery of stranded migrant fishermen in Indonesia, LPN has worked with other NGOs, government agencies, mass media and think tanks involved in supporting migrant workers to communicate the issue of a growing human trafficking crisis in Thailand and mobilised the resources needed to rescue them. Since the rescued workers came from four different countries, LPN coordinated and shared relevant information with NGO counterparts in each country. Collaboration with the rescued fishermen and with migrant networks in Thailand was also significant and essential to the overall success of the operation.

The RTG, which embarked on the rescue operations in cooperation with the LPN, established bilateral collaboration with the Indonesian government and multilateral collaboration with the IOM. The governments of Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar benefited from their multilateral partner institutions—including IOM in particular—for the provision of transportation assistance and other services. In addition to bilateral or multilateral cooperation, because the TIP response involves a variety of agencies, there was also a need for cooperation among government agencies in each of the VoT's countries of origin (Figure 6.1).[28]

Interorganisational coordination in various counter-trafficking activities was established and strengthened to help address the trafficked fishermen's many needs. During the search and rescue phase, NGOs and former trafficked fishermen helped locate trafficked fishermen on the ground and provided direct assistance, the Indonesian government assessed fishing vessels anchored in Indonesian waters, and the RTG investigated Thai-flagged vessels.[29]

During the identification phase, in addition to LPN and other NGOs, the network of CLM migrant workers in Thailand helped identify the place of

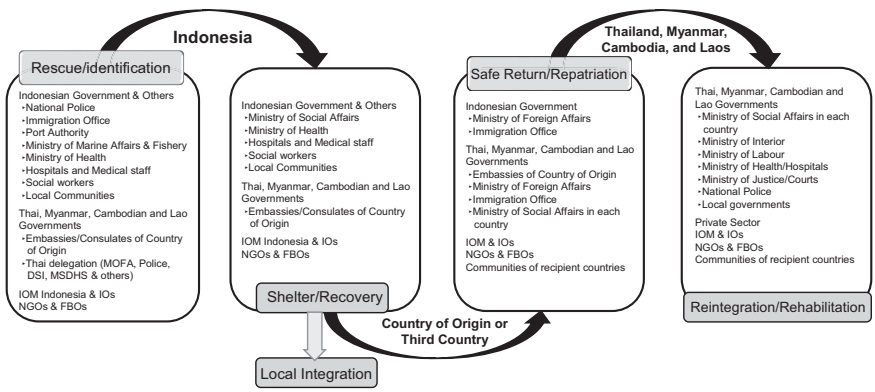

Figure 6.1 Actors involved at different stages of the protection of trafficked fishermen (2014–2016).

Source: Compiled by the authors based on IOM Indonesia (2017).

origin and supported family tracing for the trafficked migrant fishermen.[30] This network continued cooperating with LPN in providing support after trafficked migrant workers returned home.

The repatriation and rehabilitation phase of the counter-trafficking cycle likely required the most challenging and complex coordination to facilitate durable solutions for trafficked persons. Governments were primarily responsible for repatriation operations, which involved flight arrangements and immigration control, but partnerships with IOM and bilateral governmental partners supported the operations. During the rehabilitation phase, coordination was needed among governmental and non-governmental actors in the countries of return and beyond. A good example of cooperation among offices of the same institution is the follow-up by IOM Cambodia and IOM Myanmar after repatriation by IOM Indonesia during the reintegration phase (Bearup 2016).

However, coordination between NGOs, government agencies and international organisations was ad-hoc in each phase of the rescue operations. The absence of a systemic coordination mechanism in these international and large-scale rescue operations of trafficked migrant workers represented a significant challenge. LPN noted that "even arranging a meeting time was a challenge".[31] At the time, a Thai official involved in rescue operations in Indonesia said, "In the beginning, there were some unsuccessful cases. We could not work well with different agencies because we were not used to it. Through the operation, effective and efficient collaboration within government has been facilitated".[32] As there was no common coordination mechanism in ASEAN at the time, IOM attempted to implement comprehensive support for coordination involving states and non-state actors,[33] while UN-ACT organised donor coordination meetings (UN-ACT 2015).

Similarly, there was no robust and predictable coordination mechanism between national governments responsible for identifying and issuing nationality documents through intergovernmental cooperation and civil society organisations that locate trafficked fishermen on the ground and provide direct assistance. LPN argued that one of the challenges was the "ineffective exchange of data between the governments and NGOs, both in the places of origin and current residence of the trafficked fishers".[34] There were challenges in identifying the needs of the trafficked fishermen due to the lack of proper documentation, the long period of trafficking, language diversity and uncertainty about their nationality. Safe shelter, food and nutrition, medical and psychosocial support, and legal assistance also needed to be provided promptly based on the trafficked fishermen's needs, requiring the intervention of multiple actors. Effective information sharing among actors was essential to identify the needs of trafficked fishermen and secure and mobilise the necessary resources. However, this aspect could not always be performed effectively and according to pre-identified standards and protocols.

6.5 Discussion

This case study highlights that counter-trafficking action for migrant workers in fisheries shares similarities and overlaps with humanitarian action involving life-saving and immediate protection for people in other emergencies and other crisis scenarios. It also demonstrates that rehabilitation from a tragic experience, injury, disease and physical or mental trauma requires support for immediate treatment at the point of rescue and over longer periods. Throughout the rescue operations, various assistance was provided to meet the medium- to long-term needs of rescued fishermen, including access to economic programmes and financial assistance to lead self-sufficient lives, cultural and social integration, and family tracing and reunification to protect their dignity—all of which are essential part of durable solutions for trafficked persons. This case shows that drawing a clear line between short-term humanitarian actions and long-term development might be challenging, especially from the perspective of counter-trafficking action.

Given the unique characteristics of migrant workers in the context of TIP, the case study highlights the increasing importance of capacity building of relevant actors through partnerships. After the rescue operations, the RTG began implementing the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) as a nationwide coordinated response mechanism for VoTs. JICA's efforts to strengthen capacity and promote intra-regional collaboration through technical cooperation in multiple countries could contribute to advancing this issue. Also, various U.N. agencies' ongoing efforts, monitoring, and coordination to address human trafficking are vital. Funding for NGOs and CBOs to expedite and localise these efforts, identify instances of TIP, and raise awareness and give visibility to relevant issues, is also essential. There is a need to strengthen coordination and partnerships between government agencies, counter-trafficking actors, and the private sector in each country and internationally.

Notably, this case study also reveals that migrant workers—including trafficked migrant workers themselves—are essential actors in the fight against the trafficking of persons. As noted earlier, the cooperation of migrant workers and formerly trafficked fishermen was vital in initiating, informing and directing LPN's rescue operations. What became apparent during the authors' observations in Samut Sakhon, Thailand, is that migrant workers from Myanmar develop their own networks, allowing them to assist each other and autonomously solve issues they face. Rousseau (2018) highlights how increasing agency for trafficked Thai fishermen after their return in reintegration and prosecution activities required empowering them as capable individuals rather than seeing them as passive victims. Further research is needed to explore the proactive role of migrant workers and VoTs in combating TIP and how civil society organisations can facilitate this role.

The variety of cross-border movements recorded in the Thai context (and, more broadly, globally) makes counter-trafficking activities particularly complex. Migrant workers moving from their home country to Thailand were

then forced to work in a third country (Indonesia, in this case), only to be returned to their home country upon rescue after many years of enslavement. Migrant workers, including those whose initial mobility decision may have been voluntary, are caught up in forced labour and may repeatedly be subject to forced migration, including internationally. In the context of human trafficking of labour migrants, voluntary and forced forms of migration are overlapping and inextricably linked.

Thus, the case study challenges the rigid distinctions between voluntary and forced migration, showing how people's degree of agency and freedom of choice can change during their migration experience due to external factors, including exploitation and abuse. These categories are fluid and change well after an initial migration decision, depending on the individual circumstances of the migrants, the nature of their work and the conditions of their employment. It is important to highlight the fluidity of migration status in the context of Thailand's political, social, and economic interactions with neighbouring countries, featuring large numbers of people moving for different reasons and in different manners. The forced migrant workers exposed to severe trafficking risks would inherently need life-saving humanitarian action.

6.6 Conclusion

In light of the complex nature of trafficking in migrant workers, this chapter has examined the needs of trafficked migrant workers, the challenges inherent in their protection, and the nature of partnership among actors involved in counter-trafficking responses.

However, it is essential to note the limitations of this study. First, it only examined the protection and partnership aspects of the counter-trafficking framework. To look comprehensively at these aspects, including prevention and prosecution—which are all essential in addressing TIP—a more extensive study would be desirable. Secondly, this chapter did not cover the role played by private sector actors in collecting and analysing data and in supporting other responses. Since the role of the private sector has been increasingly recognised in combating TIP in recent years, partnerships with the private sector and other actors should be further investigated. Finally, the interviewees in this study were primarily based in the Thai context—little data collection was conducted in the Indonesian context and in the migrants' countries of origin and return.

Still, the efforts of counter-trafficking actors illustrate the significant achievements, needs, and challenges involved in protecting trafficked migrant workers. TIP in the fishing industry, an issue that had previously remained "out of sight" (David et al. 2019), was revealed, and many trafficked migrant workers were rapidly rescued. This was achieved through the cooperation of governments, international organisations, and NGOs, including affecting migrant workers working at sea. As this chapter has argued, this rescue

operation qualifies as humanitarian action in the sense that it saved thousands of lives and provided immediate protection assistance to affected persons. On the other hand, the physical, psychological, social and cultural impacts suffered by the trafficked migrant workers require greater medium- to long-term support, highlighting how humanitarian action needs to happen in continuity with other forms of development assistance. In addition, in the case analysed, coordination mechanisms had to be set on an ad-hoc basis, a limitation that may hinder the ability to deploy these arrangements quickly and effectively during an emergency. These arrangements need to become more predictable and planned, and the scope for coordination needs to be boosted at the regional level, enhancing partnerships between governments and civil society organisations.

Combating TIP is crucial to the promotion of safe, orderly, and regular migration. This is because TIP poses risks to migrant workers, documented or undocumented, with or without regular status, by shrinking their agency and freedom of choice (UNGA 2018). Given the complex nature of migration and trafficking, trafficked migrant workers with different statuses, identities, experiences and needs could fall through the cracks of protection if counter-trafficking actors were to work in silos and base their assistance on nationality, status and migration categories. Instead, counter-trafficking must be carried out from a humanitarian standpoint, comprehensively and without discrimination.

Notes

1 The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, Article 3(a) states that "Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs."
2 The Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) Article 2(1) defines "forced or compulsory labour" as "all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily."
3 In the context of vulnerable migrant workers, IOM defines the referral mechanism as "a process of cooperation between multiple stakeholders to provide protection and assistance services to vulnerable migrants" (Guajardo 2019, 7). For the concept of National Referral Mechanism, see also Liu (2017).
4 Interview, the Royal Thai Government no. 1, Bangkok, September 2, 2022.
5 Interview, LPN representative no. 4, Pathumtani, Thailand, August 31, 2022.
6 Interview, LPN representative no. 4, Pathumtani, Thailand, August 31, 2022.
7 Interview, the Royal Thai Government no. 1, Bangkok, September 2, 2022.
8 Interview, the Royal Thai Government no. 1, Bangkok, September 2, 2022.

9 Interview, LPN representative no. 4, Pathumtani, Thailand, August 31, 2022.
10 Interview, LPN representative no. 1, Bangkok, August 30, 2022.
11 In the documentary film "Ghost Fleet," which chronicles the rescue efforts of LPN, a former trafficked migrant fisherman is shown aiding the search for trafficked migrant workers around the Indonesian islands.
12 Interview, LPN representative no. 4, Pathumtani, Thailand, August 31, 2022.
13 CI is a system whereby migrant workers in Thailand register their identity and receive the certificate of identity for their residence and employment.
14 Interview, the Royal Thai Government no. 1, Bangkok, September 2, 2022.
15 The profiling of CLM migrant victims was undertaken by national governments in collaboration with NGOs; therefore, IOM did not carry out any profiling (Online Interview, IOM, Bangkok, September 2, 2022).
16 Interview, LPN representative no. 4, Pathumtani, Thailand, August 31, 2022.
17 Interview, the Royal Thai Government no. 1, Bangkok, September 2, 2022.
18 Interview, LPN representative no.2, Bangkok, August 30, 2022.
19 Some trafficked migrant workers were repatriated with assistance provided by LPN.
20 Interview, the Royal Thai Government no. 1, Bangkok, September 2, 2022.
21 LPN representatives, the Royal Thai Government official, and an IOM officer reported similar experiences of trafficked fishermen choosing to stay in Indonesia.
22 Interview, LPN representative no. 3, Pathumtani, Thailand, August 31, 2022.
23 Interview, the Royal Thai Government no. 1, Bangkok, September 2, 2022.
24 Interview, LPN representative no. 2, Bangkok, August 30, 2022.
25 Interview, the Royal Thai Government no. 1, Bangkok, September 2, 2022.
26 Few post-return needs and conditions were tracked, except for those involved in LPN activities and the Myanmar Migrant Network after their repatriation. Myanmar Migrant Network is a network for migrant workers from Myanmar in Thailand. LPN supported the Burmese migrant workers in Thailand in establishing the network.
27 Online interview, IOM, Bangkok, September 2, 2022.
28 Interview, the Royal Thai Government no. 1, Bangkok, September 2, 2022.
29 Interview, LPN representative no. 3, Pathumtani, Thailand, August 31, 2022.
30 Interview, LPN representative no. 3, Pathumtani, Thailand, August 31, 2022.
31 Interview, LPN representative no. 2, Bangkok, August 30, 2022.
32 Interview, the Royal Thai Government no. 1, Bangkok, September 2, 2022.
33 Online interview, IOM, Bangkok, September 2, 2022.
34 Interview, LPN representative no. 1, Bangkok, August 30, 2022.

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7 Reflections on Operational Challenges in Forced Migration

Towards Inclusive Humanitarian Action for People in Displacement

Lisette R. Robles and Lorenzo Guadagno

7.1 Introduction

The plight of tens of millions of people displaced every year in crises of all kinds and in all regions underscores the complex and pressing issue of forced migration for humanitarian operations and development work, as well as the broader international policy landscape. These diverse, complex and evolving contexts require the development of comprehensive categorisations and adaptable responses to protect and assist population groups with different capacities and needs. In addition to those who are traditionally identified as "populations of concern" (refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons and stateless persons, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) definition),[1] effective action must account for the presence and movements of other migrants at risk, the challenges faced by those who are trapped in place and unable to flee, the needs of those who are seeking a durable solution—whether by returning home, integrating locally or moving to a different location—and the impacts suffered by host communities and other groups affected by other people's movement. Traditional categories associating vulnerability (and protection needs) with specific patterns of movement are being increasingly challenged. The operational landscape now features multiple overlapping and cascading factors that constrain people's ability to make movement decisions in a free, empowered manner. What emerges clearly from research and practice, however, is that all these instances of constrained mobility translate into increased vulnerability, dependence and assistance needs, which all require dedicated responses by local, national and international actors, straddling preparedness, response and long-term development work.

Labels and categorisations of forced migration and people on the move continue to be used, determined by particular triggers of movement—such as conflict, violence, natural hazards and disasters, environmental degradation or large-scale development projects—or patterns of movement (e.g. internal or cross-border). Labels have been useful for developing context-specific policies, legal mandates and obligations, and forms of assistance. However, they also open up a series of analytical and operational issues by oversimplifying complex realities and leading to exclusionary responses that address

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the needs of some while (re)producing the risks for others. Categories such as "displaced person", "migrant", or "refugee" that are associated with certain legal statuses and entitlements to receive assistance do not fully reflect the forced nature of movement decisions in complex, multi-hazard contexts. They also frequently oversimplify the lived experiences of people who may move between different categories throughout their lifetime (Hynes 2021, 8).

For instance, in recent years, natural hazards and disasters have frequently affected camps hosting refugees and people displaced by conflict and migrants in transit. These incidents result in secondary movements, thereby creating the need for assistance to disaster-displaced refugees and migrants.[2] Acute needs and evolving vulnerability have also been experienced by many labour migrants who started their journeys in a regular manner, only to face exploitation and impoverishment, become stranded, and were then trafficked and bound into forced labour (as shown for Southeast Asian migrants in Chapter 6). In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, specific patterns of destitution and discrimination were experienced by internal and international migrant workers (both with regular and irregular migration status) forced to return home after becoming unemployed and being excluded by welfare assistance schemes, sometimes having to resort to smugglers and irregular channels to *get out* of their destinations and back home. Even former refugees from Venezuela and Afghanistan were forced to move back from the areas they initially fled, ending up at even higher risk through their return despite not formally qualifying as "refugees" anymore.[3]

In addition, these forced migration labels and categories result in the "relative invisibility of host populations, urban refugees, and self-settled displaced populations" (Stepputat and Sorensen 2014, 90), as well as trapped populations and other affected communities. In countries and locations with limited resources, services and opportunities, allocating specific assistance to host displaced populations often becomes a source of tension.

Negotiating the challenges of oversimplification and exclusion is both a conceptual and operational issue that needs to be solved by examining the various representations, experiences and circumstances of diverse people in different forced migration scenarios. People's experiences are shaped by their identities and individual and communal characteristics (e.g. age, gender, race and ethnicity, nationality, and religion, in addition to their migration status), and they continue to change throughout their migration trajectories.

Every context of forced migration includes individuals and groups facing specific patterns of marginalisation that require tailored support and assistance to effectively meet essential life-saving needs and protect or recover their dignity and human security. Similar risks and overlapping insecurities are often experienced by women, children, older people, people with disabilities, and exploited migrants in diverse forced migration contexts. Displaced children and women, for instance, are particularly exposed to violence and abuse, resulting in the increased incidence of sexual and gender-based violence. Older people and persons with disabilities often experience more

significant health insecurities, compounding the challenges linked with their limited mobility.

Forced migration is a global issue that shapes the work of humanitarian, recovery and development actors, requiring significant engagement and investments to save lives, reduce suffering and protect the rights of all affected persons (Bradley 2017, 98). Meeting the short- and long-term interconnected challenges faced by all individuals in these contexts is essential for ensuring that responses are appropriate and effective. The sustainable success of such efforts can be assessed by the extent to which people's needs are met and their agency exercised, as well as how these elements change over time—especially for the most marginalised individuals and groups. In this sense, human security is a very useful framework for interpreting the effectiveness of responses to forced migration contexts, and, more specifically, analysing and systematising the findings of the case study chapters. A human security approach allows us to assess the design and implementation of protection strategies and empowerment initiatives for different vulnerable groups in displacement as a way to understand the effectiveness of relevant humanitarian action.

To accomplish this, this chapter begins by recapping the importance of understanding humanitarian action for different at-risk populations in displacement and outlining the conceptual intersection of humanitarian action for displaced groups and human security. The following section presents key findings from case study chapters, identifying progress made in humanitarian actions for different at-risk populations. Specific evidence and recommendations are highlighted to enhance work on data collection and analysis, adapt the provision of basic services, support coordination and collaboration with different humanitarian and non-humanitarian actors, better engage beneficiaries, and advocate for their needs. The final section of the chapter highlights the importance of embracing a human security approach to design and implement humanitarian action that ensures that the most vulnerable individuals are protected and empowered to deal with their displacement. It also stresses the need to continue searching for improvements to humanitarian action in the evolving contexts of forced migration.

7.2 Diverse At-Risk Groups in Displacement

Forced migration encompasses very different situations: short-distance, internal movements, and long-distance, cross-border ones; short-term, protracted, or even permanent displacement; and movements towards planned or unplanned locations, where people will receive different kinds and levels of assistance from different actors. These distinct manifestations motivate (and validate) the use of different labels and categories for people who are forced to move. These categorisations, in turn, contribute to determining the status and entitlements of different people on the move, the assistance they receive for addressing their needs, and the way their rights are protected

under the law. Inherent individual characteristics interact with contextual features to determine the conditions and extent of their "vulnerability in displacement". In most displacement scenarios, the populations of concern, whether composed of refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs) or forced migrants, comprise people from diverse demographic groups, including individuals facing heightened risks and insecurity. A comprehensive understanding of the particular needs and conditions of vulnerability of these different at-risk populations allows humanitarian actors to design effective protection measures, provide appropriate assistance to each individual, and ensure that resources are allocated efficiently. Moreover, this knowledge can allow humanitarian actors to better leverage the agency and capacities of diverse people, transforming the lived experiences and mitigating the impacts of displacement for all those affected.

Forced migration may result from very diverse threats to people's well-being, dignity or survival, emerging in conditions ranging from violent conflict to severe economic hardship (Bartram, Poros and Monforte 2014, 69). However, at the individual level, vulnerability will be determined largely by factors other than the event or process triggering the forced movement, a fact that is increasingly recognised and operationalised by humanitarian actors. The 2011 Sphere Handbook, describing the minimum standards for the provision of emergency humanitarian aid, explicitly acknowledges that not all individuals within a crisis-affected population have equal control of resources and power (Sphere Association 2011, 11). Moreover, displacement generates and amplifies vulnerability, producing and reproducing risk over time.

Women, children, older people, persons with disabilities, migrants in irregular status or victims of trafficking may be denied vital assistance or the opportunity to be heard due to physical, cultural, administrative and social barriers. Experience has shown that treating these people as a long list of vulnerable groups can lead to fragmented and ineffective interventions that ignore intersecting vulnerabilities and dynamic risks they face over time, and even during a single crisis (Sphere Association 2011, 11). Any commitment to assisting vulnerable individuals and marginalised groups in a more informed, systematic manner is a cross-cutting concern for the whole humanitarian and development system.

The contributors for this book saw fit to focus on diverse representations of displaced people, including women, children, older people, people with disabilities, and migrant workers, to examine the progress of humanitarian action for diverse at-risk people in displacement. Chapter 2 focused on children on the move from Northern Africa to Southern Europe and analysed the importance of migration data in humanitarian programming. It specifically highlighted the difficulty of accessing data and evidence on child migrants, which would instead be crucial for informing humanitarian programming approaches for segments of the population increasing in needs and numbers. Shifting the focus to women and humanitarian action, Chapter 3

recognised the ample evidence available on the gendered challenges across the displacement cycle, pointing to the need for specialised empowerment efforts and policies to support women in displacement. However, women's representation in data collection for humanitarian programming has yet to be fully explored and systematised. Thus, the chapter analysed the data practices from selected case study countries where the International Organization for Migration (IOM) data collection tool (the Displacement Tracking Matrix) is active.

Many of the displaced persons who are the focus of the different chapters of this book face similar challenges. However, the level and extent of their vulnerability in crises vary at the individual level, necessitating that specific responses be appropriately designed and delivered. Lupieri (2022) reflected on the issue of deservingness among at-risk and vulnerable populations, where women and children are often prioritised in medical humanitarianism compared to other groups of vulnerable people. This concern is highlighted not to create competition among vulnerable groups but rather to underscore the point that particular challenges exist to achieving a more inclusive humanitarian action for people with disability and older people. In Chapter 4, a comprehensive review of the progress on disability inclusion in humanitarian programming was performed for internally displaced persons (IDPs) with disabilities in disaster-affected Vanuatu and conflict-affected Nigeria. Similarly, Chapter 5 conducted a thorough review of the representation of displaced older people in humanitarian programming, as it appears in academic literature and the works of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) engaging with older people in the Philippines.

Evidence from recent years clearly shows that people's movement—regardless of its initial trigger or circumstances—can lead to increased conditions of vulnerability and risk. This is the case for the millions of people who have initially moved rather voluntarily or in situations that were not immediately life-threatening in all regions and found themselves increasingly destitute and exposed to trafficking. Chapter 6 framed the specific needs of trafficked migrants as a humanitarian concern, elaborating on the protection mechanisms and partnership structures established at the national and regional level in implementing the rescue operations of trafficked fisherfolk in Thailand.

While the chapters approach the issue of vulnerability using very broad strokes—each focusing on a specific group—it needs to be highlighted that different members of each demographic face distinct barriers and risks. For example, within the particular subgroups of displaced children, those five years and below would have different needs than those in their teens. Similarly, older people are a broad category that includes different age cohorts: young–old, old–old, and oldest–old, which has significant implications for service delivery during crises. Moreover, vulnerability cannot be solely attributed to a singular aspect of one's identity but is shaped by the intersection of multiple forms of needs, priorities and risks confronted by people in displacement.

7.2.1 Intersectionality and Forced Migrants

Hugo Slim (2018) analysed *intersectionality* and its relationship to *impartiality* in the context of humanitarian aid and assistance. According to Slim, in order to achieve good humanitarian action, it is essential to reconcile the former's appreciation of the complexity of human identity and power relations with the latter's core principle of humanitarian work. This entails treating all individuals equally and providing assistance based on need alone. As highlighted in the piece, the tailoring of humanitarian action to people's needs involves carefully appreciating the many intersecting factors that determine their lives (Slim 2018). In the context of inclusive humanitarian action, intersectionality challenges the notion of pre-determined categories of vulnerability (Barbelet and Wake 2020). People's multiple social identities, resulting from the combination of factors such as age, education, gender, and migration status, shape their conditions of vulnerability and capacities during crises.

Although the case studies in the chapters focused on specific at-risk groups during emergencies, they also revealed overlaps and intersections, which allowed the authors to further elaborate patterns of vulnerability and describe lived experiences of displacement in more detail. For instance, gender is a crucial factor determining how people experience life's situations, both generally and, more particularly, during crises. However, gender has intricate ties with several other aspects of people's social identities. Migration status and gender, in particular, shape crisis impacts in very distinctive ways. Male migrant workers, often subjected to more dangerous and demanding physical work, are particularly exposed to labour-related exploitation and trafficking in particular industries and sectors (e.g. fisheries). Female migrant workers, instead, are overrepresented in domestic work, which makes them particularly isolated and hard to reach in crises (e.g. in the 2006 Lebanon crisis). Also, for a person with disabilities, gender affects the support they are likely to receive during crises. In Vanuatu, women with disabilities were more marginalised, with 74% reporting barriers in accessing evacuation centres during Tropical Cyclone Pam compared to 60% of men with disabilities.

Similarly, age is a critical social identity affecting the lived experiences of displaced persons and is profoundly affected by displacement. Children, adults, and older people, all have unique needs and vulnerabilities; however, protracted displacement drives a shift in the demographic composition of the displaced caseload: children become adults, adults older people, and older people become very old. While disability is not limited to a particular age group, old age and disability concerns in displacement need to be addressed together, reiterating the frailty and functional limitations of displaced persons as they reach their advanced age, all while not overlooking their agency and capacities.

Each person affected by a crisis deserves targeted and appropriate humanitarian assistance. Effective protection and assistance measures can

only be delivered by appreciating the differences in how certain individuals or communities in displacement face additional barriers and discrimination due to their intersecting social identities. Hence, there is a need to acknowledge and tackle the structural disparities and power imbalances among various groups to ensure genuinely unbiased and efficient humanitarian aid (Slim 2018).

7.3 Humanitarian Operational Challenges: Reflecting on the Approaches for and by Those Displaced

As mentioned in the Introduction to this book, meeting the particular needs of people on the move entails confronting very specific operational challenges. To effectively identify developments in humanitarian action for these distinct populations in crises, it is necessary to gain knowledge of the current state of the entire humanitarian system. In September 2022, the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP), a global network for advancing humanitarian learning, published its State of the Humanitarian System (SOHS) 2022.[4] This particular edition assessed the size, shape, and performance of the humanitarian system against key criteria for the period January 2018 to December 2021. Rather than producing new initiatives and commitments to change, the report reflected and monitored the implementation of previously set objectives and reforms. The report concluded that despite the abundance of self-critique in the humanitarian sector, the system has proven to be flexible and successful in facing major new challenges as it supports people through crises (ALNAP 2022, 306). In other words, the humanitarian system is growing in the face of increasing need and is performing sufficiently well, but could be performing better (International Council of Voluntary Agencies 2022).

The report draws attention to displacement as a specific issue of concern for the system, reflecting on the need for humanitarian support to reach the right crisis-affected people (ALNAP 2022, 101). In a context of dwindling resources, the increasing number of people needing humanitarian assistance poses a dilemma between reaching the most people and adequately assisting those most in need. The ability of the humanitarian system to ensure protection, safety and dignity for the most marginalised individuals is still insufficient. While efforts to ensure equitable reach to the most marginalised community members brought some attention to LGBTQI people, these efforts did not result in significant progress in systematically addressing the needs of women, older people and people with disabilities (145).

Rounding up the case studies in this book, five operational areas were identified as key to inclusive humanitarian action in displacement settings. Each area presents challenges and opportunities that are specific to contexts of forced movement and requires distinct approaches to be implemented to address them.

7.3.1 Data in Humanitarian Programming

Most reports and studies on forced migration, including this book, begin by laying down the numbers of forced migrants and illustrating the extent of different crises with the number of people displaced and on the move. It is through access to accurate and reliable data on global displacement patterns that effective response strategies are developed. The latest Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) global report not only highlights the all-time high of 71.1 million people living in internal displacement at the end of 2022 but also underscores the urgency of addressing data gaps that hinder our full understanding of how displaced persons are impacted by the pressing disruptions in the food system (IDMC 2023). Information is the foundation of humanitarian action, and being invisible in data means being invisible in the analysis that underpins budget provision, and aid delivery and prioritisation (Barbelet and Wake 2020, 25). In order to achieve a more inclusive humanitarian action, it is necessary to identify the most vulnerable segments of the population and accurately represent them and their needs in the data on displaced persons. However, underreporting of the number of affected persons, lack of precise data disaggregation criteria, overlaps between categories and double counting are some of the challenges in accurately identifying the numbers and characteristics of forced migrants.

Data needs to be of good quality to be useful in humanitarian programmes, and needs to be interpreted carefully. As identified in Chapter 2, despite the presence of datasets on child migrants, available information is often of poor quality: outdated, scattered across sources, and not comparable across countries and regions. Increasing the quality of available data can imply complementing quantitative and qualitative approaches. For example, identifying the number of people with disabilities must be complemented by qualitative information to comprehensively understand the diversity of needs and experiences of different individuals with different disabilities and to inform concrete action (see Chapter 4). Crucial to improving the availability and quality of humanitarian data is greater participation among the target population in data collection. The ways in which context-specific social and cultural barriers involving the prevalence of male-dominated socio-cultural hierarchies hinder the engagement and visibility of women in data collection exercises are explored in Chapter 3. Conversely, the benefits of the participation of the affected population in data collection and analysis, not just during a crisis but even in emergency planning, are also investigated and made explicit (see also Chapter 5).

All chapters mentioned the need for the availability of disaggregated data, where having more sex- and age- disaggregated data is imperative to delivering humanitarian responses that are more able to address concerns linked with age, gender, or disability. Identifying the different at-risk groups helps deliver more tailored responses and ultimately enables more equitable and effective humanitarian action. An example of the benefit of improved data

collection and analysis for humanitarian programming is provided by the extensive utilisation of the Washington Group of Questions to standardise and systematise data on disability in crises (see Chapter 4). A similar tool can be utilised to assess the needs of older people in crises.

7.3.2 Adaptation of Service Provisions

Humanitarian action encompasses a variety of activities collectively defined through the joint objective to save lives and preserve the dignity of crisis-affected persons. Humanitarian operations span from the provision of emergency responses after a disaster to the reunification of families after separation due to violent conflict and the provision of documents to facilitate the return of victims of trafficking. Assisting those that are most in need in a crisis requires both adapting the provision of basic services (e.g., protection from violence, provision of adequate food, access to clean water and sanitation) and complementing traditional forms of assistance with the delivery of dedicated services that specific individuals might need, such as maternal and child health care, education, or replacement of assistive devices (among others).

In 2012, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)'s World Disaster Report focused on forced migration and displacement, acknowledging that as the humanitarian system worked to improve its responses, the needs and numbers of forced migrants had also continued to grow as a consequence of increased incidence of crises (IFRC 2012). The three significant emergencies around that time, namely the Haiti earthquake, the Pakistan floods, and drought and conflict in the Horn of Africa, proved how each displacement crisis strained the humanitarian system's capacity to respond in a timely and coordinated manner to current and future crises. More than a decade later, the system's speed and effectiveness of responses have improved but are being increasingly tested in a variety of forced migration scenarios. As introduced at the beginning of this section, the 2022 SOHS Report reflected on the performance of refugee response operations and found evidence that the humanitarian system tends to be more effective at meeting the immediate material life-saving needs of refugees but less able to meet their longer-term needs (ALNAP 2022, 131). One example of this trend is the Rohingya refugee crises, which featured effective responses to the rapid influx of displaced persons and outstanding constraints to action for meaningful, durable solutions.

All case study chapters tackled this need for targeted services and assistance for specific groups of people in displacement focusing primarily on responses to immediate, urgent needs. As discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, respectively, people with disability and older people are among those disproportionately impacted by conflict, disasters, and other humanitarian emergencies. Both chapters highlighted the need for more inclusive humanitarian assistance through "accessible" programmes that aim to overcome the limitations and

reduce the barriers to accessing food, shelter, and other life-saving services that these individuals might face in crises. Evidence on rescue operations for trafficked migrant fisherfolk in Thailand illustrated the differentiated forms of assistance humanitarian actors needed to put in place at every stage of counter-trafficking operations in order to address the specific circumstances of trafficked labour migrants (see Chapter 6).

Providing adapted services across displacement scenarios requires collecting and using data in an appropriate manner for programme development, delivery of assistance, and monitoring and evaluation. Likewise, building the capacity of humanitarian personnel and capitalising on the presence and work of competent service providers is also necessary to ensure that age-, gender-, and diversity-sensitive services are delivered.

7.3.3 Coordination and Collaboration among Humanitarian Actors

Enhanced coordination in crisis response among international humanitarian actors, NGOs, and national and local institutions is critical to the effective delivery of diverse services and assistance in all humanitarian contexts (IFRC 2012, 32). This is evident in the design of the "Cluster Approach", an integrated system that organises humanitarian organisations, both UN and non-UN, in each of the main sectors of humanitarian action (water, health, shelter, logistics, etc.) with clear roles, responsibilities and procedures for coordination.[5] People's displacement poses unique challenges to the management of humanitarian operations through the demand for specific services and the need for trans-local (and sometimes international) responses: this makes coordination among different sets of actors particularly critical in forced migration contexts.

The perspectives of humanitarian actors providing support to specific groups of at-risk populations in displacement mirror the coordination issues of the larger humanitarian system. Evidence from the case studies in the book points to the need to pursue the harmonisation of definitions and standards, an improved circulation of information across actors and locations, the establishment of multi-sited or regional coordination structures, and the involvement of specific groups and specialised actors in humanitarian coordination mechanisms as key areas of improvement for humanitarian coordination.

The importance of humanitarian data across the different phases of displacement has already been established in this chapter, as it provides the foundation for understanding the specific needs and conditions of vulnerability of the displaced population, guiding resource allocation, and carrying out monitoring and evaluation exercises. Harmonising definitions and standards on migration and displacement data and establishing cross-country coordination and data-sharing mechanisms can support the development of evidence-based migration policies and the creation of better humanitarian coordination both at the national and regional levels (Schöfberger, Aggad, and Rango 2020). Chapter 2 described the extent to which these objectives

are achieved along the Mediterranean migration routes towards Europe, showing how larger humanitarian organisations have extended data sharing and exchanges and diversified uses of data, while smaller organisations are limited to data usage for programming purposes.

The establishment of multi-sited or regional/international coordination systems is specific to situations in which people move from place to place or across international borders. Responses to displacement and forced migration, including work to support returns and reintegration or relocation to different areas, all require governments and humanitarian actors from different locations to come together and coordinate the provision of different forms of assistance, often in response to challenges that cannot be tackled by specific institutions in isolation. Moreover, despite the expansion and development of the international humanitarian system, the number of people in need of assistance is increasing, overwhelming the system with demands. Chapter 6 provides a detailed overview of the evolving configuration of local and regional coordination systems in response to the needs of trafficked international migrant workers in Southeast Asia. Governments in the region, NGOs and international organisations have collaborated to rescue victims of trafficking (VoTs) and provide them with appropriate recovery services.

The case study in Chapter 6 also shows how coordination with private sector actors has the potential to contribute more to humanitarian action beyond only providing goods and services (e.g. transport, communications, and construction of shelters and infrastructure). Their engagement as *partners* enables innovative solutions for humanitarian programmes, by leveraging their managerial skills and organisational capacity for humanitarian response (McKechnie 2015, 243).

In general, coordination with specialised partners is vital to the efficiency of resource mobilisation, as well as the allocation and use for humanitarian programming in forced migration contexts. Actors working with specific at-risk individuals and groups have to be included in the work of the broader humanitarian system. This requires expanding coordination mechanisms and networks, often including actors that are not primarily or traditionally humanitarian in nature, with operational implications on capacities, responsibilities and training of personnel. Examples of relevant approaches are provided in Chapter 4, describing how the Australian Humanitarian Partnership in Vanuatu brought together the country's National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), Australian NGOs and local organisations to harmonise preparedness activities and raise awareness about disability inclusion as a cross-cutting theme.

Populations at risk play a central role in their own protection. Communities are at the forefront of responding to crises, especially in remote or hard-to-reach locations (IFRC 2012, 219). Moreover, community members have perspectives and information on the needs and risks faced by specific groups that may complement information held by institutional actors. Involving them in humanitarian service provision can help design and deliver

assistance that reaches the most vulnerable individuals more effectively. Members of specific groups within the affected population and self-representative organisations are essential partners to humanitarian actors. For older people and persons with disabilities, specialised organisations like older people organisations (OPOs), organisations of people with disabilities (OPDs), and good humanitarian coordination with other stakeholders can raise general awareness of the humanitarian sector, for instance through the establishment of age and disability working groups as part of the official coordination system. Chapter 4 described the approach adopted in Vanuatu, where OPDs were involved in all cluster meetings. Chapter 6, instead, showed how rescue operations of trafficked workers were improved through the active participation of trafficking in persons (TIP) survivors. Their knowledge of the crisis context and the needs of affected persons, as well as their outreach ability in relevant locations, helped protection actors ensure the safe recovery of VoTs and the appropriate provision of humanitarian assistance.

7.3.4 Engagement of Beneficiaries

The engagement of beneficiaries is an increasingly essential component of effective humanitarian action and, in particular, for addressing the specific needs of vulnerable, marginalised individuals. Brown et al. (2014) detail the engagement of crisis-affected people in humanitarian action as encompassing the provision of information, the direct involvement of crisis-affected people in decision-making, the establishment of communications, consultation, feedback and accountability mechanisms for and with beneficiaries, and the adoption of participatory and community-based approaches. In the context of this book, "engagement" is referred to all efforts aimed at ensuring the active participation of displaced persons as active agents in the decision-making processes related to preparing for, responding to and coping with crises, as well as eventually resolving their displacement.

Grünewald and de Geoffroy (2008, 9) demonstrate that participatory approaches result in a deeper understanding of people's diverse, individually nuanced needs. Humanitarian responses designed around the participation of affected persons tend to be more flexible and adaptable to people's changing needs, capacities and constraints. However, there are multiple challenges, both conceptual and operational, to fully realising the engagement of affected persons in humanitarian programming. Brown et al. (2014, 19–24) enumerate operational constraints related to contexts (i.e. cost, access, information, replicability), staff (i.e. skills, attitudes and behaviours, availability of personnel), and structure and procedures (i.e. projectisation, institutional changes, measurement and reporting, and a "supply-led" paradigm).

Despite these operational and conceptual barriers, there is a generalised tendency within the humanitarian system to adopt approaches that increase the engagement of different at-risk groups on matters that affect their current or future conditions. All five case studies articulated the importance

of meaningful and active participation of individuals, flagging the specific opportunities provided by the engagement respectively of child migrants, displaced women, displaced persons with disabilities, displaced older people, and trafficked workers in humanitarian programming. In particular, central to the discussion of Chapter 4 is the need for more disability-inclusive humanitarian programming, aiming to delineate pathways for more meaningful participation for displaced people with disability.

The participation of at-risk individuals and groups should not be limited to the response and recovery stages. More participatory preparedness efforts can build resilience among the most vulnerable and mitigate risks associated with future displacement. In particular, enabling the participation of older people also demonstrates valuing their wealth of knowledge and expertise gained from past experiences with crises and migration. It also helps to preserve their social roles within their families and communities, which could otherwise be lost in displacement. Engaging older persons in community planning for disaster risk reduction and preparedness can be vital to these efforts. Chapter 5 described how post-Typhoon Haiyan disaster preparedness training for older people brought considerable changes in the attitudes towards evacuation by older people.

Participation also involves inclusion in data collection. Child migrants' participation in humanitarian research and data collection can enable a better understanding of their agency, motivations, and resilience, which can inform both short-term aid and long-term development assistance (see Chapter 2). Mazurana and Proctor (2015, 58) stressed that both women and girls are often perceived as passive victims with limited agency during emergencies; however, there is a need to recognise that they should remain active agents throughout all preparedness, response and recovery efforts. As elaborated in Chapter 3, women's participation as data collectors (enumerators) and key informants in humanitarian settings can help improve access to services and the effectiveness of humanitarian operations for all.

Lee and Özerdem (2015, 380) clearly show that the participation of a wider section of the affected population enables humanitarian practitioners to gain a more comprehensive and accurate overview of the beneficiaries and their needs, increasing the ability of humanitarian actors to respond effectively to crises. Engagement with the diverse segments of the displaced population, especially the frequently marginalised and those whose needs are neglected—such as the ones analysed in this book—is a pivotal step to improving humanitarian practices.

7.3.5 Advocating for Those Displaced

Giving visibility to the concerns of at-risk groups creates awareness that can support more effective immediate responses as well as the reformulation of policies and approaches to protect and promote the rights of all people, both in times of crisis and in periods of (relative) stability. Advocacy is therefore

an important element of humanitarian action, with implications for both short-term assistance and longer-term well-being objectives. Although each humanitarian organisation has its own ways of defining and describing its advocacy work, they all share the common goal of protecting and upholding the rights of the affected, especially the most vulnerable individuals within a community.

UNHCR (2015), for instance, incorporates crisis advocacy into its protection strategies through coordinated activities to safeguard people of particular concern to the organisation. In its advocacy role, it promotes changes that will bring laws, policies, and practices in line with international standards. This work is realised through research, surveys and studies, visibility and communications work, and monitoring and assessments of outcomes.

National NGOs and self-representing organisations can be key advocacy actors both in crisis and non-crisis settings. They have the comparative advantage of being able to communicate effectively with the affected population and can advocate for societal change if given access to opportunities to influence the humanitarian system (Ryfman 2007; Visoka 2015; Jumbert 2020). Local NGOs supporting specific marginalised groups are often particularly well placed to play this multifaceted role, advocating for the rights of displaced persons while supporting responses and working to create sustainable solutions to people's displacement, whether triggered by disasters or conflict.

Local NGOs' roles are fluid and likely to evolve in the context of crisis, including the provision of humanitarian relief and services, the direct engagement of community members in response work, and the outreach to, and coordination with, other humanitarian actors. While they routinely work on the ground to provide assistance, raise awareness about crucial issues, and advocate for policy changes, they are often constrained by resource limitations. This underscores the importance of donor relations as an essential component of advocacy for humanitarian action targeting specific people in crises. The case studies reiterated the importance of enhancing donor relations to ensure that groups often overlooked or lacking support receive the necessary assistance. While there is a need to align with donors' agendas and motivations, it is equally important for local priorities to be recognised and for relevant action to be promoted across the humanitarian system, including by advocating for change with donors themselves. For example, creating suitable and effective protection plans begins with conducting accurate assessments. Thus, advocating with donors for the systematic inclusion of requirements for data disaggregated by age, sex, disability, etc., in grant agreements can be a fruitful way to kickstart changes in humanitarian programming (see Chapters 2 and 3). Ensuring that data of those often deemed "invisible" is available can influence further advocacy, ultimately improving short and long-term prospects for the most vulnerable.

In his research, Thomas Park (2008, 217) examined Asian NGOs and their donor relations practices, highlighting the volatility of funding due to changing priorities from the donors. Lack of sustainable and predictable funding

often means limited support to advocacy NGOs, regardless of their focus or locations. As a result, local NGOs were compelled to compete with limited resources while facing increasing demands for measurable short-term results. To sustain donors' motivation for supporting specific advocacy efforts for different at-risk groups, regular updates on the progress and outcomes of ongoing programmes that showcase the impact and effectiveness of relevant efforts are crucial. This however puts further burdens on local organisations with limited administrative capacity.

Effective advocacy leads to action that protects people and delivers support, but it can also be used to address the root causes of people's insecurity. Thus, those in the position to make institutional changes must be made aware of the plights, concerns and realities of displaced persons. Finding advocates to amplify the voices of the most vulnerable in humanitarian crises and provide them with relevant spaces and visibility for effective advocacy remains challenging. Moreover, advocacy for different at-risk groups may impact the attention given by the different stakeholders to different segments of the affected population. People with disability and older people are among those who continue to seek more advocates to ensure their rights are protected and upheld both during normal times and crises (see Chapters 4 and 5). Lupieri (2018, 26) explains that while specialisation [of humanitarian and development agencies] can bring about positive developments for some of the most vulnerable populations, for older people, it actually means having fewer advocates for their cause.

Despite the increased system-wide attention to the sections of society most commonly understood by the humanitarian system to be socially marginalised—women, people with disabilities and older people, as well as emerging awareness of LGBTQI people[6]—there is still a lot of work to do to ensure their concerns and needs are heard, they receive adequate assistance during crises, and they are supported in their search for durable solutions.

7.4 Humanitarian Action in Forced Migration Contexts: A Human Security Lens

Forced migration research has been heavily influenced by security scholars, and its conceptualisation aligns with the constructivist conception of security.[7] The Copenhagen School's formulation of security resonates with some of the potential negative consequences of migration, such as the competition among groups for resources, services, and opportunities, and resulting tensions and instability. The securitisation approach situates (forced) population movements as the perceived source of threat and fear for people in places receiving displaced people. Anne Hammerstad (2014, 270), for instance, reflects on the case of Mediterranean boat migrants to illustrate how "the threatening discourse [on national security] to describe migrants, takes away their humanity and depicts migration as a natural disaster rather than a normal (and perennial) human activity—mobility". Such a perspective, widespread

in countries of the Global North, presents migration as a security threat to the identity, cohesion, and way of life of host communities, building on (but also reproducing) a narrow view of security, focused solely on safeguarding the rights and well-being of people within a specific territory.

Contrary to this exclusionary thinking—which is both divisive and harmful to migrants and displaced persons—scholars argue that the concept of security can be understood more holistically. It can be leveraged to forge strong coalitions of actors that work to diffuse threats to people's rights and well-being in proactive, inclusive, and collaborative ways (Hammerstad 2014, 272). This people-centred approach to security constitutes the commonly accepted understanding of *human security* as "the right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair".[8] This concept, now widely adopted within the United Nations, is built on the understanding that "all individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential".[9] With the individual or community at the centre, protection strategies are set up by states, international agencies, NGOs, and the private sector to shield people from all well-being threats. At the same time, empowerment strategies enable individuals to develop their resilience to shocks and stresses (Commission on Human Security 2003, 10). Since the 1990s, this comprehensive view of securitisation has allowed relevant actors to re-interpret forced migration, pushing governments to deal proactively with the root causes of population movements and find permanent solutions to displacement and related risks (Hammerstad 2014, 273). Rather than looking at the people on the move as a threat, this interpretation of security highlights how all people, including displaced persons, migrants and refugees, face a broad range of distinct but interconnected and compounding threats requiring attention from states and other actors.

The concept of human security links together all components of the humanitarian and development nexus and is therefore intrinsically tied to response work in crises. Human security is built on five fundamental principles: it is (i) people-centred, (ii) multisectoral, (iii) comprehensive, (iv) context-specific, and (v) prevention-oriented (OCHA 2009, 12). These principles guide and complement the work of humanitarian actors aspiring to ensure people's rights, safety, and well-being during crises (as well as in non-crisis times). First, human security as a people-centred strategy concentrates on the people's local needs and vulnerabilities, seeking better ways to align and coordinate actions taken by the international community and other stakeholders. Moreover, human security's comprehensive and prevention-oriented features strengthen the continuum of humanitarian and development actions, especially for people experiencing protracted crises. These principles can be translated into specific operational approaches: for many years, the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) has been funding programmes linking humanitarian and development assistance through informed strategies that

are comprehensive and context-specific and designed to protect and empower people in the face of compounded and complex crises.[10]

On the other hand, the core objective of humanitarian action is ensuring and safeguarding people's human security. Humanitarian work aims to preserve people's dignity and wholeness, going beyond the provision of services that meet material needs and protect physical safety (Muguruza 2015, 35). In the humanitarian sector, the conceptualisation of human security, understood in terms of rights rather than needs, has brought an increasing emphasis on protection activities and a widespread shift among humanitarian actors away from a needs-based approach to a rights-based approach to assistance (Massari 2020, 92). This carries with it the implication that people affected by conflict, disasters and other forms of insecurity have the right to assistance and protection. This rights-based approach to protection informs both humanitarian actions and development programmes, ensuring that the rights of those excluded, marginalised, and those whose rights are infringed, including those in displacement, are safeguarded and promoted.

The concept of human security revolves around the involvement of communities and institutions across every level to mitigate and reduce the impact of threats and fulfil all aspects of people's freedom. It can be leveraged to guide foreign policy and international development assistance, as well as orient practical operational work. The strength of this broader framework is its ability to bring together operational approaches and efforts towards protection and empowerment in a complementary manner. It recognises that responsibilities to protect and empower people are inherent to the mandates of governmental and non-governmental actors in all societies and are mutually reinforcing and cannot be treated in isolation. The objective to protect people from threats needs to be realised through the empowerment and active participation of individuals and communities. One matches the other to fill gaps and ensure people enjoy freedom and fulfilment. Empowerment does not strip the state of its protective role—rather, it reinforces its obligation to protect people from threats beyond their control.

Providing a full definition and scope of "humanitarian action" is difficult due to the variety and diversity of activities the domain entails (Peterson 2015; Sezgin and Dijkzeul 2016). All humanitarian action, however, should align with human security objectives by combining protection and empowerment measures into a context-specific approach to meet immediate needs and contribute to addressing more complex, longer-term local challenges. In this book's attempt to reflect on the progress of humanitarian action for specific at-risk and marginalised individuals in displacement, five key areas of work have been identified, which can contribute to the operationalisation of the human security approach and the realisation of its objectives. These are (1) the collection and analysis of humanitarian data, (2) the provision of appropriate, adapted aid and services, (3) the coordination and collaboration of actors, (4) the engagement of beneficiaries, and (5) the advocacy for marginalised affected persons. The case studies try to identify protection

and assistance efforts that protect the rights and strengthen the agency and resilience of specific individuals. As Slim and Bonwick (2006) emphasise, in order to reduce people's vulnerability, people in need of protection should not only be seen as the objects of state power but also as subjects of their own protective capabilities (53). The crisis response measures highlighted in this book's chapters—with their intended and unintended, short and long-term results—resonate with the features of a human security framework, ensuring that those forced to move are free from fear, free from want, and can live in dignity.

7.5 Final Remarks

This concluding chapter combines the notable themes from the five case studies covered in this book. Guided by the research project's goal of identifying *how humanitarians have navigated their roles in supporting displaced people in the evolving landscape of forced migration*, each case study delivered substantive interpretations and analyses of humanitarian action for a specific group of at-risk individuals, covering a specific forced migration context. This final chapter closes this book with an examination of the importance of viewing humanitarian efforts for migrants, refugees and displaced persons from a human security perspective. It also offers a way to reconcile the apparent contradiction of comparing the shared concerns of vulnerable groups while emphasising their specific capacities, knowledge and resilience.

The question of how well the humanitarian system is reaching marginalised groups remains a major concern. Collectively, the case studies presented in this book helped to identify five areas of work in humanitarian action that can be improved to better protect and assist all forced migrants and displaced persons. These identified areas include: data collection and use in humanitarian programming, adaptation of the provision of essential services, coordination among actors, engagement of beneficiaries, and advocacy for people in displacement. The chapters analysed outstanding operational issues and existing practices for more inclusive approaches to humanitarian action.

It is necessary to reiterate that the book does not offer a comprehensive solution to the various operational challenges of carrying out humanitarian actions for specific at-risk groups in forced migration contexts. Instead, it provides a perspective on the specific vulnerability of *some* individuals in *some* contexts and discusses *some* recent responses that humanitarian actors have implemented to protect rights, address needs, and empower individuals and communities.

The snapshots provided in each chapter allow us to look at a continuum of forced migration situations, associated humanitarian needs and responses, and confirm a few essential points. First, cross-cutting issues exist that are confronted by different at-risk groups in a similar manner, and recommendations for actions and solutions laid out in this book may be useful to address the concerns of other vulnerable populations in other forced

migration scenarios. Second, many of the challenges identified by the case studies lie at the intersection of different identities and representations and will require holistic approaches to people's vulnerability and marginalisation to be effectively resolved. Third, addressing many of these challenges requires humanitarian actors to push the boundaries of what constitutes "life-saving assistance" (e.g. by integrating advocacy efforts in their work or addressing the drivers of marginalisation through their assistance). At the same time, this also means that more effective humanitarian action can have a profound, long-lasting influence on people's well-being, well beyond the duration of a crisis and related response operations. Lastly, by looking at forced migration through the human security lens, we are compelled to re-centre our attention on diverse groups of people showing specific needs and facing multiple risks in displacement. Recognising the urgency of protecting people in different displacement contexts through effective and tailored humanitarian solutions also means acknowledging the capacities and agency of people in displacement. To effectively address the needs of those in forced displacement, it is necessary to develop inclusive humanitarian approaches that consider people's diverse backgrounds, experiences and conditions and provide opportunities for them to take ownership of the crisis response, with the goal of finding appropriate and sustainable solutions.

Notes

1 Combined description of UNHCR population of concern from "Populations of Concern to UNHCR" (see: https://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/ga2019/pdf/Chapter_PoC.pdf), and "Refugee Data Finder – Data Insights." https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/insights/explainers/forcibly-displaced-pocs.html.
2 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351755729_Moving_from_one_risk_to_another_-_Dynamics_of_hazard_exposure_and_disaster_vulnerability_for_displaced_persons_migrants_and_other_people_on_the_move?_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7ImZpcnN0UGFnZSI6InByb2ZpbGUiLCJwYWdlIjoicHJvZmlsZSJ9fQ.
3 https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/blogs/it-beneficial-have-somewhere-go-3-reflections-mobility-and-disaster-vulnerability-covid-19-pandemic.
4 The State of the Humanitarian System (SOHS) is an independent study that compiles the latest statistics on the size, shape and scope of the humanitarian system and assesses overall performance and progress. Published every three years, it provides a unique sector-level mapping and assessment of international humanitarian assistance. https://sohs.alnap.org/2022-the-state-of-the-humanitarian-system-sohs-—-full-report.
5 Cluster Approach. UNHCR Emergency Handbook https://emergency.unhcr.org/coordination-and-communication/cluster-system/cluster-approach-iasc#:~:text=The%20Cluster%20Approach%20is%20used,humanitarian%20responses%20at%20country%20level.
6 See ALNAP (2022, 115).
7 Leading constructivist scholars Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde (1998) argue that security studies extend beyond the focus on the state and politico-military competition, thereby including the economic, societal and environmental sectors.
8 United Nations General Assembly (2012, 3a).
9 United Nations General Assembly (2012, 3a).

10 See UN (2019, January 16), "Policy Brief: Bridging The Gap between Humanitarian Assistance And Sustainable Development." https://www.un.org/humansecurity/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Bridging-the-gap-between-humanitarian-assistance-and-sustainable-development-1.pdf.

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Index

Note: **Bold** page numbers refer to tables; *italic* page numbers refer to figures and page numbers followed by "n" denote endnotes.