FEATURE

Puntland, Somalia and Somaliland

**AFFEC TED AREAS**

Puntland, central and southern Somalia, and Somaliland

**CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT**

Disaster (Drought)

**FIGURES**

More than 135,000 new displacements between November 2016 and February 2017; about 3,800 cross-border displacements between 1 January and 21 February

**CONTEXT**

More than 135,000 people were displaced by drought in Somalia between November 2016 and February 2017. About 3,800 people were pushed by drought over the Ethiopian border into Melkadida refugee camp between 1 January and 21 February. About 75 per cent of children arriving at the camp had acute malnutrition. Puntland and Somaliland in the north, and central and southern Somalia were the areas that were worst affected (UNHCR, 21 February 2017). At least 47,000 people were displaced by drought between 1 and 23 February mainly from rural to urban or peri-urban areas (UNHCR, 23 February 2017).

Somalia’s 1.1 million IDPs live in precarious and insecure conditions in over-crowded settlements, with little or no basic services. Most rely on aid for shelter, food, health, water, sanitation and protection. “In a fragile context such as Somalia, drought has devastating consequences for vulnerable communities who already suffer under protracted conflict and a lack of basic services. Recovery from the 2011 to 2012 famine which left 260,000 people dead, more than half of them children, has been fragile” (ECHO, February 2017).

The drought comes as UNHCR continues a repatriation programme that has brought home 50,000 Somali refugees from Kenya’s Dadaab complex since December 2014. “UNHCR is informing people in the camps about the drought, but so far this does not appear to have had a major effect on returns” (UNHCR, 21 February 2017).
The drought also affected parts of Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda. This is the third consecutive year of drought in the Horn of Africa. Multiple years of diminished food production has exhausted people’s capacity to cope with another shock. "The greater region suffers from chronic and intensifying conflicts, continued access constraints in some areas, rising refugee numbers and communicable disease outbreaks; and the drought is expected to worsen in the coming months, with low rainfall forecast for March to May - which is the main rainy season" (UNHCR, February 2017).

**EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC**

**French Polynesia**

- **Affected Areas**: Tahiti and Mo’orea islands, Takaroa atoll
- **Cause of Displacement**: Disaster (Floods)
- **Figures**: About 1,100 new displacements between 22 and 23 January; more than 100 new displacements between 18 and 20 February

**Context**

About 300 households (1,100 people) were evacuated after heavy rain and flooding that started on 22 January, particularly affecting Tahiti and Mo’orea islands. Some people stayed in tents provided by the local authorities (Floodlist, 23 January 2017). A state of natural disaster was declared (Figaro, 23 January 2017).

In a second incident, about 105 people were evacuated and 27 houses were destroyed on Tahiti island and Takaroa atoll in mid-February because of floods after heavy rain and strong winds (ECHO, 20 February 2017). Nine houses on Mo’orea atoll were flooded, forcing about 35 people to evacuate (TNTV, 21 February 2017).

**Indonesia**

- **Affected Areas**: Many areas, including Java island, and Banten and North Sulawesi provinces
- **Cause of Displacement**: Disaster (Floods and landslides)
- **Figures**: About 48,000 new displacements between 9 and 17 February

**Context**

As many as 33,000 people were displaced in North Sulawesi and Banten provinces by floods and landslides between 9 and 17 February (Antara News, 17 February 2017).

At least 15,000 people were displaced on Java island between 15 and 16 February by torrential rains that caused temporary flooding (OCHA, 20 February 2017).

**Philippines**

- **Affected Areas**: Surigao del Norte province
- **Cause of Displacement**: Disaster (Earthquake)
- **Figures**: About 5,200 new displacements on or after 10 February

**Context**

About 5,200 people were displaced when a shallow 6.7 magnitude earthquake struck off the coast of north-eastern Mindanao at 10pm local time on 10 February. The earthquake destroyed at least 150 houses and damaged another 900. Displaced people stayed in open areas near their homes or with host families. A state of calamity was declared in Srigao city on 11 February (IFRC, 12 February 2017).

**Europe and Central Asia**

**Ukraine**

- **Affected Areas**: Donetsk province
- **Cause of Displacement**: Conflict
- **Figures**: About 540 new displacements and 22 returns between 29 January and 13 February

**Context**

About 300 people (including 44 older people and 139 children) were evacuated from the city of Avdiivka in the government-controlled area, west of Donetsk, between 29 January and 7 February. This was as a result of clashes between government and separatist forces, which intensified on 29 January. As of 12 February, 22 of the displaced had returned. About 240 people (including 64 children) were relocated to collective centres in Donetsk city and Khartsyzk, in the non-government controlled area, east of the contact line between 29 January and 13 February. The sharp spike in hostilities subsided somewhat after 3 February but the security situation remained “extremely tense”. Indirect shelling and increasing use of heavy artillery continued to threaten the lives of people living in the conflict area, “with disastrous impact” (OCHA, 13 February).
LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN

Colombia

- **Affected Areas**: Cauca, Valle del Cauca, Norte de Santander
- **Cause of Displacement**: Conflict
- **Figures**: More than 600 new displacements between 8 and 16 February; more than 900 people trapped starting 8 February; more than 50 people trapped in early February

**Context**

As many as 100 families (about 400 people) were displaced from Tibú and Teorama in Norte de Santander department between 10 and 16 February because of the presence of armed groups that remained after the government signed a peace agreement in November 2016 with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (known by its Spanish acronym, FARC). Of the displaced families, some crossed into Venezuela, while others returned home or remained internally displaced (OCHA, 16 February 2017).

An entire indigenous community of 85 people fled their homes in Timbiquí, in Cauca department on 8 February because of the presence of unidentified armed people. More than 900 people from three other communities in the same municipality were trapped starting on 8 February with limited access to basic services (OCHA, 19 February 2017).

More than 150 people, the whole population of Santa Rosa de Guayacán in Buenaventura (Valle del Cauca department), were displaced on 11 February because of the presence of people who had attacked a community leader. The community moved towards the urban area of Buenaventura. More than 50 people in El Guadal in the same municipality were also trapped starting in early February. Both communities are indigenous (OCHA, 11 February 2017; OCHA, 18 February 2017).

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Iraq

- **Affected Areas**: Mosul, other governorates
- **Cause of Displacement**: Conflict
- **Figures**: 57,000 returns to Mosul between 17 October and 16 February; 100,000 returns across Iraq between 1 and 31 January

**Context**

More than 57,000 people displaced from Mosul to camps to the east of the city returned home between 17 October and 16 February. Security began improving in late January when eastern Mosul was captured by the Iraqi army (OCHA, 20 February 2017; IOM, 16 February 2017). However, remaining insecurity and suicide attacks in eastern Mosul resulted in some families who had gone home returning to IDP camps in search of safety (UN, 21 February 2017).

As many as 220,000 people were displaced by the Mosul offensive, which began on 17 October, and in which the Iraqi army took control of eastern Mosul from Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (OCHA, 20 February 2017, IOM, 16 February 2017). About 161,000 people remained displaced from Mosul as of 21 February (IOM automated dashboard, 20 February 2017).

On 19 February, Iraqi forces began an offensive to retake western Mosul (Institute for the Study of War, 21 February 2017).

“Families in Mosul face a brutal choice: attempt to flee, and risk being killed by ISIS fighters. Stay, and face bombs, crossfire and dire food shortages” (Save the Children, 21 February 2017).

As many as 250,000 people could be displaced by the offensive to retake western Mosul (UN, 21 February 2017).

As many as 100,000 IDPs returned home across Iraq in January. As many as 1.5 million people returned between June 2014 and February 2017. Returnees face the risk of unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices, and hardship caused by widespread infrastructural damage (OCHA, February 2017).

Syria

- **Affected Areas**: Aleppo and Daraa governorates
- **Cause of Displacement**: Conflict
- **Figures**: About 36,000 new displacements in Aleppo governorate between 1 January and 14 February; about 9,000 new displacements in Daraa in the second week of February

**Context**

About 36,000 people were displaced by fighting around Bab sub district in Aleppo governorate between 1 January and 14 February, with 26,000 people displaced between 1 and 14 February. Up to 10,000 people remain displaced within Bab city, facing increasingly difficult conditions (UNHCR, 16 February 2017; CCCM Cluster, 14 February 2017).

About 9,000 people were displaced in Daraa governorate by an increase in fighting between government and non-government forces in the second week of February (UNHCR, 16 February 2017). The fighting in Daraa and the surrounding countryside was described as the most intense bombardment by the government since 2015. Syrian regime forces control the city’s northern and western neighbourhoods, while Islamist and Free Syrian Army forces control southern and eastern suburbs (Syria Direct, 14 February 2017). This is the largest displacement in Daraa since 2015, according to IDMC calculations.
NORTH AMERICA

United States

- **AFFECTED AREAS**: California
- **CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT**: Disaster (Flood and risk of flood)
- **FIGURES**: About 188,000 new displacements on 12 February; about 14,000 new displacements and returns between 21 and 22 February

**CONTEXT**

About 188,000 people were ordered to evacuate on 12 February as the authorities feared that a spillway at Oroville dam could give way, unleashing a wall of water on communities downstream (NSNBC International, 14 February 2017). The incident at the country’s tallest dam came after a record-setting drought, then extremely heavy rain. Displaced people stayed in shelters, churches, Sikh temples, schools, hotels, motels, an air force base and with strangers who used social media to offer a place to stay. On 13 February the situation had stabilised (Washington Post, 13 February 2017).

About 14,000 people were evacuated from San Jose on 21 February by flooding after heavy rain filled Anderson reservoir to capacity. Most were allowed to return home within 24 hours, though as many as 300 more remained displaced, many staying in high schools (The Mercury News, 22 February 2017).

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

- **AFFECTED AREAS**: Herat, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Nimroz provinces
- **CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT**: Conflict
- **FIGURES**: At least 15,000 new displacements between 1 January and 18 February; between 1,200 and 2,000 additional new displacements between 13 and 18 February; about 3,700 returns from Iran and Pakistan between 12 and 18 February

**CONTEXT**

More than 15,000 people were newly displaced by conflict in 18 out of 34 provinces between 1 January and 18 February. Between 1,200 and 2,000 people were newly displaced by shelling and airstrikes from Pakistan into Lalpur district in Nangarhar province between 13 and 18 February (OCHA, 18 February 2017). Tensions rose after Pakistan said militants implicated in an attack at a Sufi shrine in Sindh province that killed 90 had taken shelter in Afghanistan. (Reuters, 20 February 2017).

The attacks, into Nangarhar and Kunar provinces, were condemned by the Norwegian Refugee Council. “Nangarhar province is already overwhelmed by the impact of displacement in Afghanistan, with thousands of families internally displaced from conflict, as well as tens of thousands of Afghan refugee families who felt forced to return from Pakistan in 2016. This further displacement from cross-border offensives aggravates suffering and compounds the critical humanitarian needs among communities in these areas” (Norwegian Refugee Council, 20 February 2017).

About 3,700 undocumented Afghans returned from Iran and Pakistan between 12 and 18 February. The total number of such returnees from Iran between 1 January and 18 February is now 42,000. The number of returnees from Pakistan during the same period is 9,300 (IOM, 18 February 2017).

Many returnees will join the 1.5 million Afghans already driven from their homes and living in some of the country’s worst conditions. “Almost every returning Afghan … said they were unable to return to their homes due to a lack of land, property or security … significant numbers have no homes or land and are living in tents in urban informal settlements or far-flung towns and villages, or temporarily renting rooms, apartments or houses … hundreds of returnee families were living under open skies and had either no food at all, or only enough for a few days, and that many were sending their children to work to help families survive” (Human Rights Watch, 13 February 2017).

SUB SAHARAN AFRICA

Nigeria

- **AFFECTED AREAS**: Borno state
- **CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT**: Conflict
- **FIGURES**: More than 15,000 new displacements between 27 January and 10 February; 2,000 secondary displacements between 27 January and 10 February

**CONTEXT**

Up to 15,000 people were displaced in Borno state by military activity between 27 January and 10 February. A further 300 people were displaced to Chibok town because of attacks reportedly carried out by Boko Haram. Military activity in Mallam Maja, Fufiye and Boboshe wards in the Dikwa area also caused the temporary relocation of an estimated 2,000 people to Dikwa town (OCHA, 9 February 2017).
South Sudan

**AFFECTED AREAS**
Greater Upper Nile region

**CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT**
Conflict

**FIGURES**
33,000 new displacements between 2 January and 17 February; 32,000 new displacements between 25 January and 17 February

**CONTEXT**

About 33,000 people fled in Nasir, in Upper Nile state, when fighting broke out 2 January in Ketbek between government and opposition forces. Humanitarian organizations are concerned about IDPs’ safety in areas affected by the ongoing offensive on the western bank of the river Nile. Most are women, children and older people. People from locations attacked on 2 January fled with nothing, while people in places that were subsequently attacked were able to take minimal food and other possessions including cattle and goats. Many IDPs settled in Malual cattle camps and under the trees in Burebeiy. The host community provided some household items and other support. Some displaced people were fishing and eating wild leaves; others depended on their livestock for milk, meat and selling to buy food (OCHA, 17 February 2017).

About 18,000 people arrived in Kodok in Western Nile state and about 14,000 in Aburoc in Fashoda county in Upper Nile state, between 25 January and 17 February, following continued advances by armed forces on the western bank of the river Nile in Greater Upper Nile region. IDPs in Kodok are sheltering in schools, churches and other public facilities. In Aburoc, IDPs are sheltering with the host community and in public spaces. An unconfirmed number of IDPs are also staying with host communities in Lul and Orinyi, located along the Nile between Wau Shilluk and Kodok in Upper Nile state (OCHA, 17 February 2017).

**DISCLAIMER**

The terminology, names and designations used in this update and the material in links do not imply any opinion on the part of IDMC. Displacement figures in this update are indicative only and have been rounded to the nearest 100 (if the total is less than 10,000) or 1,000. For validated figures, read our [Global Report on Internal Displacement](#).