

14 March 2013

## RUSSIA

# IDPs increasingly neglected despite continuing needs

More than 14 years after they first fled their homes, at least 29,000 people are still internally displaced due to armed conflict and violence in the North Caucasus, and an unknown number of people are still displaced elsewhere in Russia.

Displacement induced by the threat and impact of natural hazards, especially floods and wild fires, continues to be significant in Russia. Though information on such displacement and the current situation of these IDPs is scarce.



Bamut, Chechnya. The two Chechen conflicts have all but destroyed the village, leaving 73 households instead of 1,914. The village water tank is in a mine-affected area but thanks to the ICRC, residents can now access water next to the local school. (Photo: ICRC/Marko KOKIC, October 2012)

Government figures of the number of internally displaced are not in line with international standards and international organisations stopped compiling statistics on IDPs displaced by armed conflict and violence in 2011. The lack of accurate figures limits the government's ability to effectively uphold IDPs' rights and address their specific needs.

Despite massive reconstruction and the declaration that the conflicts in North Ossetia and Chechnya are resolved, violence and human rights abuses are ongoing and impunity of insurgents and law enforcement authorities continues in the region. This obstructs sustainable return and integration.

The protracted conflict and insecurity, as well as dwindling assistance, lack of permanent housing and economic stagnation are obstacles to their self-reliance. Internal displacement is losing attention but not pertinence.

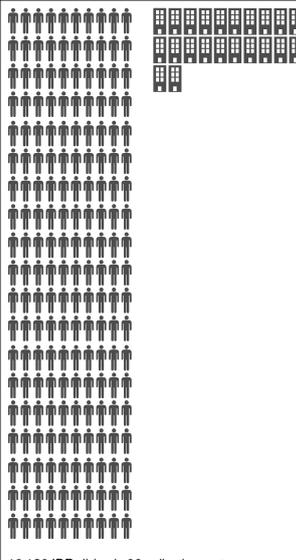
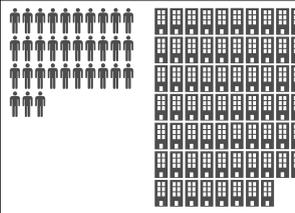
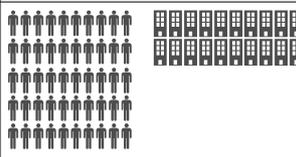
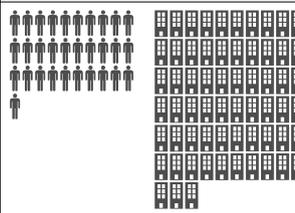
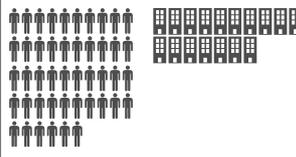
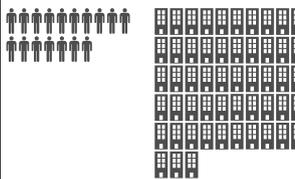
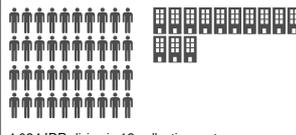
# IDP collective centres in the North Caucasus: A diminishing option

An insight to collective housing for IDPs from Chechnya from 2007 to 2012

Legend:

 100 IDPs

 IDP collective centre

	North Caucasus # of IDPs	Chechnya # of IDPs # of collective centres	Ingushetia # of IDPs # of collective centres	Dagestan # of IDPs # of collective centres
2007	At least 82,000	 19,189 IDPs living in 22 collective centres	 3,317 IDPs living in 68 collective centres	 396 IDPs living in 9 collective centres
2008	At least 82,000	 4,838 IDPs living in 20 collective centres	 3,130 IDPs living in 63 collective centres	 338 IDPs living in 8 collective centres
2009	At least 82,000	 4,600 IDPs living in 17 collective centres	 1,728 IDPs living in 52 collective centres	 Over 300 IDPs living in 8 collective centres
2010	At least 82,000	 4,034 IDPs living in 13 collective centres	 947 IDPs living in 34 collective centres	 188 IDPs living in 8 collective centres
2011	At least 36,000	 3,076 IDPs living in 12 collective centres	 864 IDPs living in 31 collective centres	 177 IDPs living in 8 collective centres
2012	At least 29,000	 3,017 IDPs living in 11 collective centres	 711 IDPs living in 31 collective centres	No information available

## Why the decrease in number of IDPs living in collective centres?

 Receipt of compensation for destroyed housing

 Closure of collective centre and eviction by state officials

 ~~IDPs~~ Handover of collective centre to owner and eviction by state officials

 Move to housing elsewhere

 Termination of federal funding (Ingushetia only)

 IDP? Loss of forced migration status

\* Collective centres are named differently in Russia. For example, in Chechnya they are 'hostels' while in Ingushetia they are 'temporary settlements'. Collective centres also house IDPs outside of the North Caucasus, but the number with IDPs who fled Chechnya and North Ossetia was unavailable. Living conditions vary in collective centres, though they are generally substandard.

## Background to displacement

Internal displacement in Russia is largely a result of armed conflict and violence in Chechnya and North Ossetia. Large-scale fighting has ended, Moscow has declared both conflicts resolved and embarked on massive reconstruction efforts in Chechnya. Violence and human rights abuses nevertheless continue in the North Caucasus as an undefeated and expanded insurgency continues to clash with law enforcement authorities. The causes and consequences of the conflicts have yet to be fully resolved.

Fighting in 1992 between ethnic Ingush and Ossetian militants over Prigorodny district in North Ossetia was the first armed conflict in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Most of the Ingush living in North Ossetia, estimated to number between 35,000 and 64,000, were forcibly displaced from their homes during the five-day conflict in which over 3,000 Ingush houses were destroyed or burned. Most fled to Ingushetia or Chechnya. Prigorodny district has remained part of North Ossetia since the conflict ([HRW](#), 31 May 1996; [ICG](#), 19 October 2012).

In Chechnya, over 800,000 people were affected by two wars, some were displaced more than once (UNDP, 30 September 2005). Federal troops first went into Chechnya in 1994 to quash the independence movement and withdrew after a peace agreement was signed in 1996. They returned in 1999 as part of a 'counter-terrorist' operation after militants called for the creation of an Islamic state in the North Caucasus and allegedly bombed blocks of flats in several Russian cities.

Natural hazard-induced disasters displace people every year in Russia. The most common type of hazard event is floods, followed by wildfires ([UNISDR](#), n.d.). According to the International Federation of the Red Cross, from 1992 to 2011, disasters killed 66,339 people and affected 4,149,261 people ([IFRC](#), 16 October 2012). From

2010 to 2012, disasters displaced more than 43,000 people mainly in western Russia. In 2012, Russia experienced a record number of 469 extreme weather events compared to the previous 14 years, most of which were triggered by riverine floods following spring snowmelt and heavy rains ([Hydrometeorological Centre of Russia](#), n.d.).

Floods triggered particularly significant displacement in 2012. Severe flash floods on 6 July in the southern region of Krymsk, Krasnodar displaced at least 8,500 people and affected over 35,000 people ([RIA Novosti](#), 9 July 2012). A month later flash floods hit Tuapse, Krasnodar and caused additional displacement as around 1,840 homes were inundated and 1,500 people were evacuated ([IFRC](#), 23 July 2012; [AFP](#), 22 August 2012). At the end of 2012, four local government officials were charged with fraud and negligence for failing to alert residents and evacuate them to safety in the July 2012 flood ([Interfax](#), 27 November 2012).

## Lack of accurate figures of IDPs

The government counts "forced migrants," not internally displaced persons (IDPs) as defined by the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*. The definition used in the 1995 Law of the Russian Federation *On Forced Migrants* is both more and less restrictive than the definition of an IDP in the *Guiding Principles*. It is more restrictive in that a person displaced by a natural disaster or within a province of the Russian Federation would not qualify for forced migrant status, but would be considered an IDP according to the *Guiding Principles*. At the same time, a person who fled to the Russian Federation from a former Soviet republic might qualify for forced migrant status, but would not be considered an IDP according to the *Guiding Principles*.

Government figures of forced migrants do not include all IDPs forced to flee conflict and violence. The Federal Migration Service of Russia gave

150,000 people forced migrant status in 1991-1996, but human rights organisations estimate that at least a half million people fled Chechnya during the first war (ICG, 19 October 2012). The status was only accorded to a minority of those displaced by the second conflict in Chechnya. Those displaced within Chechnya and North Ossetia did not qualify for the status according to the criteria set out in the law *On Forced Migrants*. Many who were granted forced migrant status have lost it, having failed to apply for its extension after the end of its five-year validity or failed to regain it because they received housing assistance or compensation for their destroyed property.

Deregistering IDPs from Chechnya from government assistance lists in 2005 and 2008 deprived them of helpful support, but offered a chance to facilitate their social integration. It was an opportunity for the government to privilege their access to programmes for vulnerable groups and ensure they were linked to wider social welfare entitlements. However, IDPs have to date not been given privileged access to such programmes unless they have also managed to maintain their forced migrant status. Furthermore, few IDPs with the

status have benefited since these programmes are slow to materialize and inadequately funded. It is thus likely that some people no longer counted as forced migrants still have unresolved issues relating to their displacement.

There are no authoritative figures of the number of people currently displaced, though a compilation of figures shows there are still at least 29,000 IDPs from Chechnya and North Ossetia displaced by armed conflict and violence. The figures used in this compilation can be found in Table 1. In addition, IDMC has compiled further data on new displacement by sudden-onset disasters since 2008, however the number and location of IDPs as yet without durable solutions is unknown. Information on the impact of such disasters, especially wildfires, on people's lives, including destruction of homes and displacement, is scarce.

Local and international non-governmental organisations no longer compile comprehensive figures on IDPs, though they counted IDPs displaced by armed conflict and violence, including those who remained in their original province. Coupled with the limitations on government figures, the result

Table 1 – Figures on IDPs in Russia

Conflict IDPs	Number	Source
Origin: Chechnya	3,017 in Chechnya in hostels	UNHCR/Nizam, 1 January 2013
	15,000 in Chechnya in private accommodation (estimated)	DRC, November 2012
	4,885 in Ingushetia	<a href="#">Government of Russia</a> , 6 June 2012, para 455
	2,564 in Dagestan	UNHCR/Vesta, 2011
	2,209 elsewhere in Russia	<a href="#">Government of Russia</a> , 6 June 2012, para 455
<b>Total</b>	27,675	
Origin: North Ossetia	1,633 in temporary settlements in Ingushetia	Ministry of Nationalities of Ingushetia, October 2011
<b>Total</b>	1,633	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>At least 29,308 displaced by armed conflict and violence</b>	
<b>Flood and wildfire IDPs</b>	36,264 newly displaced in 2012	IDMC, February 2013
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>At least 36,264 displaced by natural disaster-induced displacement</b>	

is that there are no current authoritative figures of IDPs displaced by armed conflict and violence from Chechnya and North Ossetia that are in line with the definition of an IDP in the *Guiding Principles*. The lack of accurate figures limits the government's ability to effectively uphold IDPs' rights.

## Massive reconstruction

Since 2006 there has been dramatic and rapid reconstruction in Chechnya following the complete or partial destruction of over 121,000 houses and flats, medical clinics and educational institutions (Tishkov, 1997, p. 74). Destroyed infrastructure, roads, institutions and buildings have largely been rebuilt. New architecture has emerged, including Europe's largest mosque, a huge sports stadium and a complex of skyscrapers. Financing for this reconstruction has often been non-transparent, workers have not always been paid and allegations of corruption have been numerous. Moscow has also developed a strategy for socio-economic development to 2025 for a newly created North Caucasus Federal District. This regional economic development plan is not public, but it will total \$80.9 billion with 90 per cent of funds coming from state firms and private corporations ([RIA Novosti](#), 17 December 2012). These ambitious reconstruction initiatives have not improved the lives of average citizens in Chechnya, including IDPs. Ongoing corruption makes citizens skeptical of such investment projects ([FEWER](#), 13 March 2012).

## Ongoing violence

Despite the announcement of the end of the conflicts, the insurgency remains active. Over time, the aim of the insurgents has changed from secession from the Russian state to the creation of an Islamic caliphate in the North Caucasus. Multiple jihad-inspired rebel groups emerged and infiltrated other republics in the North Caucasus. Violence has decreased in Chechnya but increased in other

areas, particularly Dagestan which has regular attacks and explosions ([Jamestown Foundation](#), 11 January 2013; [Jamestown Foundation](#), 4 October 2012). An increase of incidents in Kabardino Balkaria in the western part of the region suggest insurgents intend to carry out threats to disrupt the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi ([ICG](#), 19 October 2012; [CSIS](#), 23 January 2013). Insurgent violence targets areas beyond the Caucasus, including Moscow ([Caucasian Knot](#), 31 March 2011), and, new in 2012, the Volga region ([Interfax](#), 19 July 2012). Insurgent attacks kill civilians and law enforcement officials alike.

Violence and human rights abuses continue in the North Caucasus. This includes indiscriminate attacks, illegal detentions, enforced disappearances, torture and extra-judicial executions by militants and law enforcement agents ([Memorial](#), 11 February 2012; [Caucasian Knot](#), 29 November 2012; [CoE](#), 24 January 2013). Human rights activists estimate that 3,000-5,000 people remain missing since the second Chechen war. They ascribe primary responsibility to Russian federal forces but also blame Chechen military units ([BBC](#), 16 July 2011). Separatism, interethnic conflict, jihadist movements, vendettas, criminality and excessive responses by security forces all drive the violence ([US DoS](#), 2012). The EU has raised the issues of abductions and enforced disappearances in its human rights consultations with the Russian Federation ([EU](#), 29 November 2011). Continuing violence and human rights abuses are still reportedly pushing Chechens and others to flee the North Caucasus to Europe ([Jamestown Foundation](#), 7 March 2013). Ethnic Russians also continue to leave the North Caucasus ([Jamestown Foundation](#), 30 October 2012).

Consolidation of military and police forces in the region remains key part of Moscow's strategy to control the North Caucasus. Since 2008-2009 nearly a quarter of the entire Russian military budget has been spent in the North Caucasus and neighbouring areas ([ICG](#), 19 October 2012; AI, 21

June 2012). However, Moscow has also been diversifying its approach to regional insecurity. Former president Medvedev and other senior officials cited unemployment, corruption and poor economic development as causes of the violence, which the strategy for socio-economic development for the North Caucasus Federal District is meant to address (RIA Novosti, 13 September 2011). Officially sponsored reintegration mechanisms – known as Commissions on Adaptation of Former Militants – have been established ([Memorial](#), 14 March 2012), but attempts to initiate public reconciliation through dialogue have brought no tangible results ([FEWER](#), 15 October 2012). There has been no apparent reduction in the number of young recruits to militant groups (Memorial, 14 January 2013; [FEWER](#), 15 October 2012).

## Continuing climate of impunity

There has been virtually no punishment of perpetrators of human rights abuses committed in the North Caucasus during and after the conflicts and counter-terrorist operations. Federal authorities acknowledged that ineffective investigations of alleged torture, ill treatment, unlawful detentions and abductions was a serious problem in Chechnya ([HRW](#), 19 October 2012; [CoE](#), 24 January 2013). As a result of their lack of diligence, those accused of human rights violations have been enabled to escape justice and civilians lose faith in law enforcement. Human rights defenders and lawyers in Chechnya and elsewhere continue to remain vulnerable to official intimidation in their calls for investigations into human rights abuses in the North Caucasus, and victims increasingly refuse to report their experiences due to fear of retribution ([AI](#), 20 February 2013; Memorial, 28 September 2012). In addition to continued impunity, corrupt institutions, poor governance and uneven economic development help drive dissatisfied youths to join militant groups ([ICG](#), 19 October 2012; TOL, 19 June 2012). These factors also remain obstacles to sustainable return and integration of IDPs in the region.

The European Court of Human Rights has found Russia responsible for human rights violations during the armed conflict and counterinsurgency campaign in Chechnya in over 215 judgments. Russia has compensated the appellant victims but no one has been held accountable for the crimes ([CoE](#), 26 September 2012). On 18 December 2012 the Court criticised Russia for systemic non-investigation of disappearances in Chechnya. This landmark decision marked the Court's first affirmation of Russia's consistent failure to effectively investigate disappearances in Chechnya and indicated that this required an urgent remedy. It is acknowledged that the Russian authorities have a clear obligation to combat threats to security posed by armed groups, but it is incumbent on them to do so within the rule of law and with full respect for human rights.

## Obstacles to return and integration

There are still several obstacles to return and integration in Chechnya, despite some 300,000 people having returned by 1999 ([ICG](#), 19 October 2012). In addition to the lack of housing and stable work, some still fear for their safety due to human rights abuses suffered or witnessed during the conflicts and the continued lack of impunity for such abuses. Those who wish to relocate to areas of Chechnya outside their place of origin face an additional burden to integrate since assistance from the Chechen authorities is only offered at IDPs' original place of residence. With a depressed economy and inability to return to rural livelihoods many Chechen IDPs who were from rural areas have relocated to Grozny, the Chechen capital, where opportunities are greater. They now struggle to integrate as municipal authorities prioritise assistance to IDPs who were registered residents in Grozny prior to the conflict. Providing assistance to IDPs according to their original place of residence runs counter to a 1995 Constitutional Court ruling that conditioning housing assistance on registration as a permanent resident was unconstitutional.

The Chechen authorities should assist IDPs according to their specific needs, not according to their residence registration prior to the conflict.

Over 25,000 IDPs have returned to North Ossetia since 1994, though return has been blocked for others. This is due to the secondary occupation of their homes by Ossetian refugees who arrived from Georgia in the early 1990s and government limitations on Ingush IDPs' choice of residence. A 1996 regulation creating a "zone of sanitary protection of sources of drinking water" has blocked return to several settlements where 80 per cent of the original population had been Ingush. The Ossetian authorities have also prevented return of Ingush to previously mixed Ingush-Ossetian areas since they could not guarantee their safety upon return due to a poor "moral-psychological climate" and lingering painful memories of the conflict (ICG, 19 October 2012; [Caucasian Knot](#), 24 September 2012). Most residents of villages closed to return have been given land and state support for new houses in purpose-built villages, Novy and Mayskoye. However, the authorities should do more to address ongoing tensions to create the possibilities for return.

## Need for permanent housing

### *Chechnya*

The government has offered housing assistance to some IDPs. Some have received restored blocks of flats, cottages or plots of land. Residents whose housing and property were fully destroyed were entitled to compensation of 350,000 roubles (c. \$11,500) if they settled in Chechnya and 125,000 roubles (c. \$4,000) if they settled elsewhere. The government paid 26.43 billion roubles (c. \$87 million) to 75,510 families who opted to settle in Chechnya, and 4.07 billion roubles (c. \$13.4 million) to more than 38,000 families who opted to settle outside Chechnya. IDPs with forced migrant status may also apply to the housing certificate programme, which provides recipients

with a certificate they can use to purchase housing of their choice for a pre-calculated amount. Some have also been able to privatise their living space in temporary accommodation such as the Vyborgskaya hostel in Grozny.

Housing assistance mechanisms have not solved the housing problems of many IDPs. It is reported that IDPs have had to pay bribes to secure compensation for destroyed housing, amounting to 30 to 50 per cent of the value of their entitlements. At the end of 2011 the government started to pay out compensation again. Those whose housing was destroyed partially are ineligible for any compensation. There is also no process to restore lost tenancy rights. Some IDPs were given inadequate housing, being offered flats with multiple competing ownership claims. Other IDPs have been unable to recover their property occupied by others. The housing certificate programme is inadequately funded. Thus only a small number of certificates are issued per year and as many IDPs have lost forced migrant status, they are ineligible to apply. In Chechnya in 2012 only three families managed to get a certificate and they have not been able to redeem it. Affordable social housing is notably absent. Thousands of IDPs have been deprived of any state housing assistance and continue to mostly live in substandard dwellings.

IDPs living in temporary accommodation in hostels in Chechnya have continued to be at risk of eviction. Evictions from hostels intensified in 2011 but slowed in 2012. Officials provided no alternative accommodation or financial support (AI, 29 March 2011) and in some cases gave only 48 hours notice during winter (AI, 4 February 2011). They explained that the buildings were state-owned and residents did not have contracts to stay at the hostels and were registered at their original address. In many cases, their housing had been destroyed or they never owned housing prior to being displaced. Local administrations from their villages have reportedly been told to find them accommodation, but had no housing to

provide. As a result, many families had nowhere to go, but were wary of publicly protesting their forced evictions lest this would further worsen their situation. Some were elderly without any resources or family support networks (Memorial, 15 August 2012).

### *Ingushetia*

Around 2000 IDPs wish to settle in Ingushetia: 600 from North Ossetia and 1,400 from Chechnya. Around 1,500 with forced migrant status are eligible to receive housing support under a 2010-2016 socio-economic development programme funded by a federal subsidy of 4.2 billion roubles (c. \$140 million). Local authorities had not implemented this plan as of early 2013, apparently due to lack of funding received from Moscow and lack of organisational capacity (ICG, 19 October 2012). As a result, many of these families still live in inadequate temporary settlements or in private accommodation in Ingushetia (ICG, 19 October 2012).

IDPs in temporary settlements remain at risk of eviction. At the end of February 2011, the President of Ingushetia ordered that all 29 temporary settlements should be closed before the summer of 2011 and all IDPs should be resettled and provided with housing stipends before 15 April 2011 (AI, 11 March 2011). This caused significant concern amongst the displaced, who complained that government housing stipends were insufficient. The government did not implement its pledge to close the temporary settlements, instead convening a September 2011 conference to discuss the issue. This resulted in a protocol according to which the Ministry of Finance of Ingushetia must supply residents of the temporary settlements with funds to enable them to rent temporary accommodation (FEWER, 15 October 2012). The government sent them further eviction notices in February 2012. Eleven IDP families still living in temporary settlements embarked on a three-day hunger strike in September 2012 to demand improved housing and force the government to act on its promises by provid-

ing sufficient stipends to enable them to secure sustainable housing solutions (Memorial, March 20, 2012; FEWER, 15 October 2012). The Minister of Nationalities in Ingushetia acknowledged their demands but as of early 2013 they were still living in the temporary settlements.

## **Flood disaster IDPs**

Further efforts are required to address the housing needs of people displaced by the 2012 Krymsk, Krasnodar flood and the 2012 flood in Derbent, Dagestan. Over 2080 dwellings, cars, livestock and other property were lost in Krymsk ([Operational Headquarters for Emergency Response in Krymsk](#), 21 November 2012). The authorities offered affected people compensation from 10,000 to 150,000 roubles (c. \$328 to 4933), gave 2400 people new housing, issued over 1000 families housing certificates with which they could buy a home for a specified amount, renovated over 6000 dwellings and gave credit for housing reconstruction ([Operational Headquarters for Emergency Response in Krymsk](#), 6 February 2013; [Operational Headquarters for Emergency Response in Krymsk](#), 9 January 2013). They also renovated schools, health care clinics, cultural and sport centres.

However, some of the affected report they have not received anything and compensation recipients report that the amount insufficient to secure basic housing as renovation prices skyrocketed immediately following the flood ([RFE/RL](#), 19 October 2012; [RFE/RL](#), 31 January 2013). In Derbent, 600 dwellings were flooded and victims received 20,000 roubles to cover their losses, though recipients complained this did not cover loss of livestock, vineyards and other property ([Caucasian Knot](#), 29 October 2012; [Caucasian Knot](#), 25 October 2012). Towards the end of 2012, reconstruction was slow and the federal government announced 2 billion roubles (c. \$65 million) for reconstruction of infrastructure and housing

certificates for victims in Derbent ([Gazeta.ru](#), 13 December 2012).

## Lack of job opportunities

Unemployment remains a serious challenge in the North Caucasus, including among IDPs. More than 60 per cent of able-bodied IDPs were unemployed in Ingushetia and Chechnya in 2010-2011 (DRC, November 2011; DRC, September 2010). In comparison, official levels of unemployment in Ingushetia and Chechnya were 48 and 34 per cent in 2012 respectively. IDPs report that it is difficult to secure a stable job because they missed years of schooling, they are disabled or they need to care for children and relatives. In common with the rest of the population, they also face a shortage of job opportunities, their qualifications have become outdated and employers demand kick-backs in return for a job. The result is that most IDPs depend on state pensions, social allowances and help from relatives as their main sources of income (IDMC, November 2012; IDMC, September 2011). The socio-economic development programme for the North Caucasus Federal District will reportedly create thousands of jobs ([RIA Novosti](#), 17 December 2012). Opening of the border with Georgia could also potentially provide a boost to development in the region.

## Government assistance still needed

The government has helped IDPs in many respects over the years. It has raised national awareness of internal displacement, collected related data, trained government officials on IDP protection, adopted a law upholding the rights of IDPs, appointed a national focal point for IDPs, devoted significant resources to solving the problem and cooperated with international and regional organisations. In addition, IDPs outside of the North Caucasus do not now report as many problems with residence registration as in the

past due to simplified electronic procedures at the Federal Migration Service. In Chechnya, the welfare agency Akhmad Kadyrov Foundation has also helped a substantial number of families, including a small number of IDPs, benefit from housing and financial assistance. State-funded legal aid clinics in Chechnya are a positive development that have helped IDPs with legal and documentation problems and should be replicated elsewhere in the North Caucasus.

The government needs to do more to help IDPs achieve durable solutions. The housing programme in Ingushetia for 1500 internally displaced families should be fully funded without further delay. IDPs in Chechnya should be assisted based on their specific needs regardless of their original place of residence. The achievement of durable solutions also entails improved data and information collection on the displacement-related needs of IDPs, targeted programmes to address these needs, better communication and consultation with IDPs as well as strengthened efforts towards achieving peace in the region. IDPs should be assisted according to their specific needs.

New legislation adopted in 2012 may negatively affect assistance to IDPs by curtailing the activities of NGOs. One new law compels NGOs receiving funding from abroad to register as "foreign agents" if they engage in what is deemed to be 'political' activity. Failure to register can lead to heavy fines and imprisonment. Once registered, they are subject to onerous regulatory restrictions. Also, in 2012 libel was recriminalized and the definition of treason revised to "providing financial, technical, advisory or other assistance to a foreign state or international organization . . . directed against Russia's security, including its constitutional order, sovereignty, and territorial integrity." Given this broad definition, NGOs working on human rights issues may choose to forego international advocacy, resulting in less reliable information on the state of human rights in the North Caucasus ([HRW](#), 31 January 2013).

## Continuing reduction of international assistance

UN agencies exited the North Caucasus in 2011. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation has also left though several international NGOs and the ICRC continue to assist IDPs and others in Ingushetia, Chechnya and North Ossetia. Russia ended the mandate of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) in September 2012, accusing USAID of seeking to influence Russian politics and elections. The Foreign Ministry expressed particular concern about the agency's activities in the volatile North Caucasus, while USAID said it has provided "more than \$2.6 billion toward Russia's social and economic development" since 1992 ([RFE/RL](#), 18 September 2012).

The departure of UN agencies and other international organisations from the North Caucasus has made it more difficult for the remaining organisations to convince donors of the outstanding needs in the region. Humanitarian funding has decreased in recent years. Donors in 2012 included Azerbaijan, Norway, Sweden and the US Bureau of Refugees, Population and Migration (DRC, November 2012; [OCHA](#), 20 February 2013).

In 2012, the Council of Europe adopted a report on the situation of IDPs and returnees in the North Caucasus. Its recommendations included aligning legislation with the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, conducting a survey to identify IDPs and the issues they face, creating jobs for IDPs and building additional social housing. The Council acknowledged corruption in the region and recommended that the government increase oversight and transparency of budgetary spending in the North Caucasus. The Council of Europe's monitoring committee also expressed "serious concern" about the legislation concerning the activities of NGOs (CoE, 14 September 2012).

## About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) was established by the Norwegian Refugee Council in 1998, upon the request of the United Nations, to set up a global database on internal displacement. A decade later, IDMC remains the leading source of information and analysis on internal displacement caused by conflict and violence worldwide.

IDMC aims to support better international and national responses to situations of internal displacement and respect for the rights of internally displaced people (IDPs), who are often among the world's most vulnerable people. It also aims to promote durable solutions for IDPs, through return, local integration or settlement elsewhere in the country.

IDMC's main activities include:

- Monitoring and reporting on internal displacement caused by conflict, generalised violence and violations of human rights;
- Researching, analysing and advocating for the rights of IDPs;
- Training and strengthening capacities on the protection of IDPs;
- Contributing to the development of standards and guidance on protecting and assisting IDPs.

For more information, visit the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre website and the database at [www.internal-displacement.org](http://www.internal-displacement.org)

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