

How Urban are IDPs and What Does that Mean for Their Economic Integration?

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As of December 2017, there were over 68.5 million forcibly displaced people in the world, including about 40 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) displaced by conflict.¹ Millions more were displaced internally by other drivers, including disasters, economic instability, and development projects such as infrastructure construction.²

IDPs face severe economic challenges as a result of their displacement, with harmful impacts on consumption, health, education, security, housing, labor conditions, and social outcomes.³ They face these challenges for long periods of time: IDPs often spend many years or even decades displaced.⁴ And for displaced women and girls—who face unique challenges ranging from legal restrictions on owning property to larger wage reductions following displacement—the economic challenges can be even greater.⁵ Furthermore, IDPs tend to be disproportionately located in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs): over 99 percent of the world’s IDPs displaced by conflict are in LMICs. Within these countries, populations in more marginalized areas are often more severely affected by displacement.⁶ Thus, those who are displaced tend to face greater economic difficulties to begin with and displacement only compounds these difficulties.

In response to these challenges and in consideration of the Sustainable Development Goals’ commitment to leave no one behind, there is a growing recognition of the need to support forcibly displaced people in LMICs in overcoming these economic difficulties.⁷ In particular, there is an emerging acceptance that, in contrast to camp-based models of support, IDPs and refugees should be allowed to seek self-reliance through local economic integration (i.e., through improved outcomes in the labor market in terms of employment and incomes). Likewise, there has been an increasing number of programs designed to improve their access to labor markets and economic outcomes in places of destination.⁸ However, most of the focus to date has been on refugees rather than IDPs. Moving forward, more should be done to support IDPs as well. There are many more IDPs in the world, and although

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as citizens they face fewer legal barriers to work, they nevertheless face serious economic challenges. Furthermore, with sound policies and support systems in place, greater economic integration can bring benefits not only to IDPs, but also to host communities, which can benefit from IDPs' economic contributions.

Understanding the extent to which IDPs are currently concentrated in urban areas is an important step towards determining how best to implement programs and policies that enable IDPs to achieve self-reliance. To this end, we analyse data on the existing known locations of conflict-displaced IDPs in all LMICs and visualize their locations in an interactive map. The data, which can be accessed online, cover 17 countries and over 9 million conflict-displaced IDPs.ⁱ The sample is not representative, so it does not allow us to estimate the total number of urban IDPs in the world, but it does allow us to create a lower bound for the number of urban IDPs and highlight the extent to which IDPs live in urban areas. To our knowledge, this is the most comprehensive attempt to date to determine urban rates among IDPs. This work builds on our previous paper, *Are Refugees Located Near Urban Job Opportunities?*, where we analysed and mapped the locations of refugees in 31 LMICs.ⁱⁱ

We find that millions of IDPs are located in urban areas and hundreds of thousands are located in major urban areas.ⁱⁱ Specifically, as table 1 shows, we find that about 4.4 million conflict-displaced IDPs are in urban areas, and nearly 1.5 million of them are in major urban areas with populations over 300,000. We also find that these urban populations are dispersed across various countries. Ten countries have at least 50,000 IDPs in urban areas and 10 countries have at least 10,000 in major cities. The data also suggest that about half of IDPs are female and nearly half are of working age.

Furthermore, some countries have very large urban populations: three—Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Iraq—each have over 500,000 IDPs in urban areas and at least 100,000 in major urban areas. It is also common for at least half of the IDP population in a given country to be urban. On the other hand, the vast majority of IDP populations for some countries, such as Niger and Chad, are in rural areas. Thus, there is a great deal of variation in urban-rural composition across countries that may in part reflect a country's overall rate of urbanization. In some cases, however, IDP populations are disproportionately rural compared to national populations, suggesting a potential opportunity to incentivize urbanization in these contexts.

The analysis also highlights the paucity of data on the locations of IDPs within countries. As table 1 shows, there are only about 9.3 million IDPs with location data that allow for urban analysis (i.e., that allow us to determine whether they are in urban or rural locations)—and there were roughly 40 million conflict-displaced IDPs in the world as of December 2017.¹⁰ Furthermore, these 9.3 million IDPs are from only 17 countries, out of a total of 50 with at least 1,000 IDPs.

i The dataset can be accessed here: https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/idp_locations_data.zip. We focus specifically on conflict-displaced IDPs—which includes displacement from political, communal, and criminal violence—mainly because displacement from conflict tends to be especially protracted, such that the need for improving economic integration for conflict-displaced IDPs at their place of destination may be greatest. Crawford, Cosgrave, Haysom, and Walicki, *Protracted displacement: uncertain paths to self-reliance in exile*.

ii Data sources for analysis include DTM, UNHCR, JRC and the EU, and UNDESA. A detailed discussion of the data is included in the Data and Methodology section and Appendix A.

Table 1. Total numbers of IDPs in urban areas based on location data available for 9.3 million IDPs in 17 countries

	IDPs with data for urban analysis	IDPs in any urban areas ⁱⁱⁱ	IDPs in urban clusters ^{iv}	IDPs in urban centers ^v	IDPs in major urban areas ^{vi}	IDPs in largest urban areas ^{vii}
Total number	9,273,931	4,387,834	4,190,937	2,593,674	1,438,992	262,724
Working-age^{viii}	3,969,046	1,956,890	1,870,183	1,157,763	654,147	118,786
Working-age females	2,045,714	1,008,614	963,924	596,731	337,159	61,224

Our findings have several key policy implications for stakeholders working to help IDPs achieve self-reliance.

First, the large number of IDPs in urban areas indicates that it may be important to shift current approaches to better reflect this reality and enable them to achieve self-reliance. Specifically, donors and NGOs could consider increasing programs that help IDPs thrive in labor markets and/or help host municipalities and communities adjust to growing populations. In light of the large proportion of female IDPs in urban areas, these programs should focus in part on supporting women’s economic integration. Donors and NGOs can also engage governments about the benefits of lowering legal and policy barriers to labor market access (such as documentation requirements or IDP-specific procedures for obtaining legal residency), and the private sector can be mobilized to engage IDPs through hiring, supply chains, and impact investing.¹¹

Second, because there are also many rural IDPs, it may be necessary for governments and stakeholders working on improving livelihoods and self-reliance to increase their focus on creating sustainable growth opportunities in rural areas. This could involve, for example, new investments that leverage growing populations in and around camps and settlements. In addition, if there is a skills mismatch between rural IDPs and job opportunities, subsidizing or incentivizing some IDPs’ voluntary relocation to urban areas could be considered. To support this transition, donors could assist governments in implementing urban planning policies. There are often political and policy constraints to relocation, but, where feasible and done effectively, relocation can benefit both hosts and IDPs, as IDPs can bring skills that complement hosts in the labor force and boost economic productivity.

Third, it is clear that more data is necessary to make strategic decisions regarding these possible

iii Includes urban clusters, urban centers, major urban areas, largest areas, and locations given an “urban” classification by data collectors. See the Data and Methodology sections for more detail on urban classifications

iv Areas with a density of at least 300 inhabitants per km² and a minimum population of 5,000 inhabitants.

v Areas with a density of at least 1,500 inhabitants per km² or a density of built-up greater than 50 percent, and a minimum of 50,000 inhabitants.

vi Cities with at least 300,000 people.

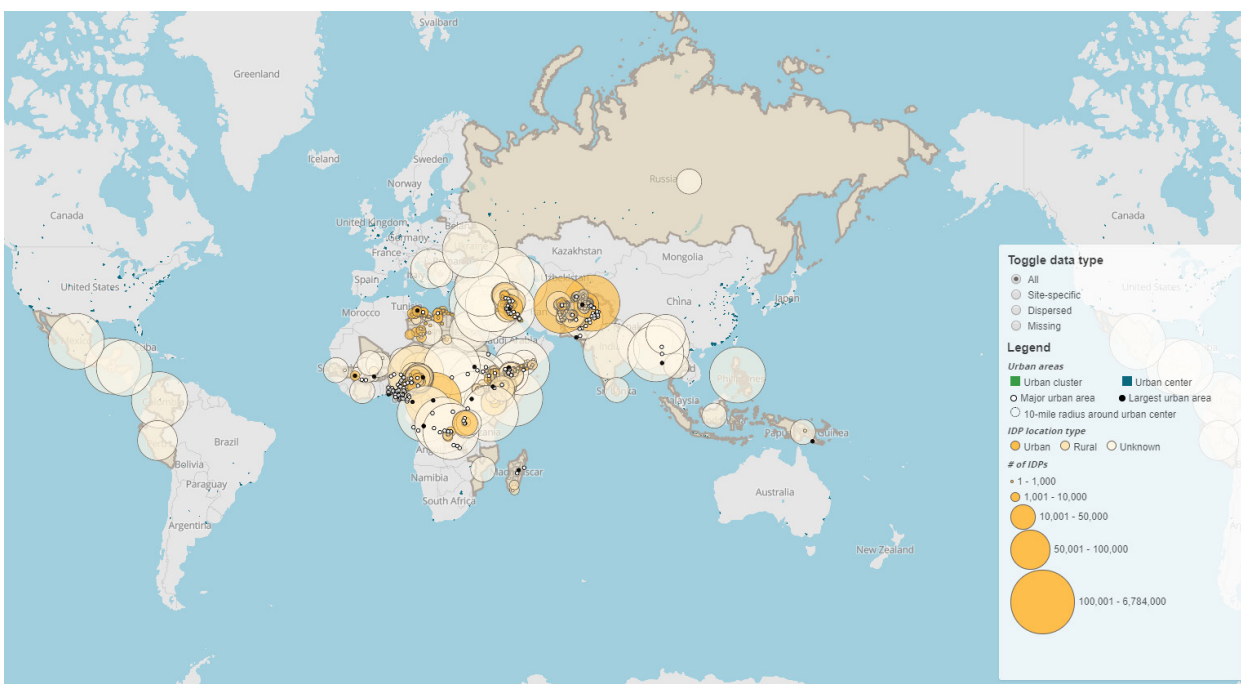
vii Includes the single largest city for each country.

viiiAs explained in Appendix C, age- and gender-disaggregated data are not available for all IDPs. Where necessary, national averages were applied.

policy approaches. Whereas in some countries there is enough data to understand the general urban-rural makeup of their IDP populations along with their general locations, in others, their locations are largely unknown. In the latter situations, it is difficult to make strategic decisions about how to allocate aid, design and focus programming, or create policies that most effectively support IDPs in achieving self-reliance. Furthermore, there is little data on the skills profiles of urban and rural IDPs. If available, this information could be used to understand the extent to which skills mismatches exist. For example, it could be used to understand if rural IDPs would be better able to economically integrate in urban areas, or if urban IDPs needed greater support. These findings, for example, could then inform potential voluntary relocation schemes or vocational trainings. However, due to security, privacy, and cost concerns, it must be noted that it would not be feasible, or even desirable, to collect such data in all situations. Data collection should be driven by the needs in a given situation, pursued as a collaborative process among relevant stakeholders to ensure that it will be used effectively, and undertaken only after carefully considering the privacy and security concerns of IDPs.

The interactive map, below, allows one to explore the findings of our location analysis. It depicts the known locations of IDPs relative to various types of urban areas, demographic information and reasons for displacement for each IDP location, and the estimated amount of missing data in each country. The following sections of the paper give important context to this information and explain the methodology.

Locations of IDPs relative to urban areas and amount of missing IDP data across countries



To access the interactive map, follow this link: www.cgdev.org/idps

Map instructions: To toggle between site-specific data, dispersed data, and missing data, click on the buttons in the box on the right. Click on IDP location bubbles to access information about each location. Hover the mouse over major and largest urban areas to access information about them. Drag the screen to move the map. Scroll or click the buttons in the top-left to zoom. Click the buttons

in the bottom-left to access full screen. On some screens, it may be necessary to scroll the box on the right to see all information.

Map notes: The “Missing” data depict the gap between the estimated number of conflict-displaced IDPs in each country and the number of IDPs with within-country location data for that country. Missing data are only depicted for countries with at least 1,000 IDPs according to IDMC. “Dispersed” data depict IDPs that are dispersed somewhere within the administrative area in which a given bubble is located. “Site-specific” data correspond to specific towns, cities, or areas within cities. Major and largest urban areas are only visualized in countries with within-country IDP location data. Urban centers and clusters are not perfectly represented because the borders had to be simplified for the interactive map; compare them to figure 9 in Appendix E, in which they are perfectly represented. The boundaries and names used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion or acceptance by the authors. For any questions, comments, or feedback related to the interactive map, please contact jgraham@cgdev.org.

INTRODUCTION

As of December 2017, there were over 68.5 million forcibly displaced people in the world, including roughly 40 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) displaced by conflict and millions more displaced by other drivers.¹² IDPs face severe economic challenges. Displacement can lead to a loss of assets, isolation from markets, labor market discrimination, difficulty accessing formal labor markets due to legal barriers such as documentation requirements, a loss of social networks and support systems, the erosion of skills during extended stays in camps, and reduced investment in education and human capital.¹³ These and other challenges are compounded by the fact that many IDP situations are often cyclical or protracted, lasting for many years or even decades.¹⁴ As a result, IDPs tend to experience lower incomes and reduced outcomes in terms of consumption, health, education, security, housing, labor conditions, and social wellbeing.¹⁵ And the challenges are compounded even further for internally displaced women and girls. Because various legal and cultural factors make it difficult for women who are separated from their communities and families to re-establish themselves, women often face larger reductions in wages and higher rates of post-traumatic stress disorder following displacement than men.¹⁶

Furthermore, IDPs tend to be disproportionately located in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs): over 99 percent of the world’s IDPs displaced by conflict are in LMICs and, although many high-income countries face risk of natural disaster displacement, LMICs still face the greatest risk of displacement from disasters.¹⁷ Displacement tends to occur more often in countries with worse socioeconomic indicators in terms of poverty, access to finance, health, social protection, and education.¹⁸ Within these countries, populations in more marginalized areas are often more severely affected by displacement.¹⁹ Thus, those who are displaced tend to face greater economic difficulties to begin with and displacement only compounds these difficulties.

Given the economic challenges faced by IDPs in LMICs and the wide-ranging consequences of these challenges, there is an emerging acceptance that, in contrast with camp-based models of support, IDPs and refugees should be allowed to seek self-reliance through local economic integration (i.e., through improved outcomes in the labor market in terms of employment and income).²⁰ Likewise, there are an increasing number of initiatives designed to improve their access to labor markets and economic outcomes in places of destination.²¹

Greater economic integration would benefit both IDPs and host communities. For IDPs, it could reverse some of the negative effects of displacement, implying higher incomes; an ability to be more

self-reliant; a reduced need to engage in exploitative labor market activities or other negative coping mechanisms; and an improved ability to invest in health, education, and productive assets. With more assets and savings, IDPs may be better able to sustainably return to places of origin if conditions for safe, voluntary, and dignified return materialize.²² For host communities, IDP economic integration could lead to higher tax revenues resulting from their increased incomes, more employment opportunities resulting from the establishment of new IDP businesses, greater productivity in the labor market resulting from possible complementarity between IDP and host skillsets, and higher revenues for businesses resulting from greater IDP spending in the economy.²³ But greater economic integration could also come with adjustment costs, implying the need for sound policies and donor support—discussed below—that help manage the transition.

Some of the greatest opportunities for expanding IDPs' economic integration are likely in urban areas (particularly larger urban areas) where, as we show in our previous paper, economic activity clusters.²⁴ There is strong evidence for the association between the size of urban areas and economic activity and productivity. For example, 681 of the world's cities with at least 500,000 people account for 24 percent of the global population and 60 percent of global economic output.²⁵ Furthermore, population size correlates positively with wages.²⁶ Urban areas represent especially important opportunities in LMICs, whose cities have some of the world's fastest-growing economies and where urban productivity relative to national productivity is especially high.²⁷ Research also shows that the gap in urban and rural productivity is not entirely a result of more skilled workers “selecting” into cities.²⁸ In Tanzania, internal migrants have been found to experience a 36 percent increase in consumption on average after moving to urban areas; in Ethiopia, income gains to urban migration have been observed at 200 percent.²⁹ A large body of research finds that there are large economic gains associated with moving to urban areas.³⁰ Thus, urban areas very likely have more opportunities for economic integration for IDPs and, as the population of the urban area increases, opportunities also increase.

Furthermore, multinational corporations (MNCs), which are increasingly responding to forced displacement, including by engaging refugees through their hiring and supply chains, tend to cluster around major urban areas.³¹ Companies like Zain (a telecommunications company) that have shown interest in supporting IDPs through humanitarian action, can also be encouraged to support IDPs through hiring and supply chains.³² And although the total number of direct hires MNCs can make and the number of businesses they can supply from is limited, their role as market leaders and trend-setters can enable them to encourage other businesses to also hire refugees and IDPs, thus multiplying their impact. This means that if IDPs are located in larger urban areas, they have a greater chance of connecting with economic opportunities presented by MNCs and their networks.

However, there is no guarantee that IDPs in urban areas will be able to successfully integrate into labor markets and obtain decent work. Given the many challenges mentioned above—including lost assets, policy barriers, and a lack of networks—it may be difficult for many forcibly displaced people to integrate even when they are located near job opportunities. Furthermore, urban areas, particularly larger ones, bring their own challenges. For example, rent, transportation, food, and other items can be more expensive and unaffordable for people who have already lost much of their wealth during displacement. Urban IDPs may also have less access to services than their counterparts in camps, greater security challenges, and less secure housing tenure.³³ As a result, while urban areas provide more opportunities, IDPs may need support in accessing them.

Of course, if IDPs are not located in urban or major urban areas, they may still have access to economic opportunities, including with MNCs. Also, some IDPs may have skills that can best be applied in a rural context. And in many cases, it may not be feasible, for a variety of reasons, for IDPs to access ur-

ban areas. Therefore, urban economic integration may not be the best path for all or even most IDPs. Nonetheless, given that they represent larger markets and have greater absorptive capacities, larger urban areas likely provide the best opportunities for economic integration.

These dynamics present several key policy considerations:

- First, to the extent that IDPs are located in urban areas, it may be advisable to alter current policies. This could involve reallocating or increasing aid (which is often more concentrated in camp-based settings and rural areas),³⁴ placing greater emphasis on supporting urban IDPs in achieving economic integration and self-reliance, and helping host municipalities and communities adjust to growing populations.
- Second, to the extent that a subset of rural/camp-based IDPs would be more likely, with the proper support, to achieve self-reliance in urban areas, policies could be implemented to subsidize or incentivize voluntary relocation. And if the implementation of these policies and programs do in fact incentivize urbanization among IDPs, policies must also be in place to support effective urban planning and service delivery. These measures should be taken alongside efforts to promote inclusive growth in rural areas for the benefit of IDPs and hosts.
- Third, to make informed decisions about and effectively implement these policies and programs, data on the locations, skills, and socioeconomic characteristics of IDPs is needed. However, this should be balanced with security, privacy, and cost concerns that may make it difficult or unwise to collect such data in certain situations.

Understanding the urban-rural composition of IDP populations is an important first step towards determining how best to implement programs and policies that support their livelihoods and self-reliance. However, to our knowledge, there has been no systematic attempt to date to determine the degree of urbanization among IDPs worldwide. To fill this gap, we analyse data on the existing known locations of conflict-displaced IDPs in all LMICs, and we visualize their locations in an interactive map. The data cover 17 countries and over 9 million of the world's roughly 40 million conflict-displaced IDPs. This work builds on our previous paper, *Are Refugees Located Near Urban Job Opportunities?*, where we analysed and mapped the locations of refugees in 31 LMICs.³⁵ In the following sections, we discuss the data and methodology, present the results of the analysis, and discuss policy implications and areas for future research.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY: MAPPING AND ANALYZING LOCATIONS OF IDPs

The goal of this paper is to map and analyse the existing known locations of working-age IDPs in LMICs in relation to major urban areas in order to provide policymakers with the information needed to help IDPs achieve self-reliance. To do so, we combine and employ several data sources. The final dataset that we used for our analysis, a synthesis of these sources, can be found online.^{ix}

One source of data we use for within-country IDP locations is DTM (the International Organization for Migration's Displacement Tracking Matrix).³⁶ For this source, the date of the location information available varies for each country, but we only use data that has been collected since December 2017.^x

ix The dataset can be accessed here: https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/idp_locations_data.zip

x The range of the data we use is from March 2018 to November 2018. We extracted data on December 10, 2018; thus, all data that DTM has added thereafter is not included.

We also use UNHCR data for within-country IDP locations—though to a much lesser extent because most within-country IDP locations are tracked by DTM.³⁷ The UNHCR data are from December 2017. Thus, our sample includes all of the IDPs with locations tracked by UNHCR or DTM since December 2017, but we do not combine these two sources for any single country; for each country, we use the source that tracks the greater number of IDPs. Information on the source used for each country and the date of data collection can be found in the dataset. For a description of the methodology used to collect these data and the data limitations, see Appendix A.

Because displacement from conflict tends to be especially protracted, the need to improve economic integration for conflict-displaced IDPs may be greatest. Accordingly, we endeavour to only use data for IDPs that have been displaced by conflict, including political, communal, and criminal violence. However, because it was not always possible to determine the reasons for displacement for all IDPs in a given location, some IDPs displaced for other reasons are included in the sample. Thus, we may slightly overestimate the number of IDPs in our sample that are displaced by conflict because we prefer to wrongly assume that more IDPs were displaced by conflict than to drop conflict-displaced IDPs from the sample (see Appendix B for details). Nonetheless, we are confident that the large majority of IDPs in the sample are conflict-displaced because, according to IDMC national estimates, there is a large number of conflict-displaced IDPs in the countries in our sample relative to the number for which we have location data.

To approximate the total number of IDPs in each country, we use data from DTM and the International Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). For each country, IDMC gives the total number of conflict-displaced IDPs as of December 2017.³⁸ (For a detailed discussion of how IDMC, DTM, and UNHCR data collection methodologies differ, see Appendix A.) Because DTM typically collects within-country data that cover IDPs throughout the whole country, for countries where we use DTM data to determine within-country locations, we use DTM data to determine total numbers. Because UNHCR does *not* collect within-country data that cover IDPs throughout the whole country, for countries where we use UNHCR data to determine within-country locations, we use IDMC data to determine total numbers. As Appendix A describes, these data help us understand roughly how many within-country location data are missing.

To employ the DTM and UNHCR data for within-country locations in the analysis, geocoordinates are needed. Most of the data already had geocoordinates corresponding to each IDP location, specific to a certain town, city, or district/area within a city. We refer to these data as “site-specific.” For the data that did not have geocoordinates corresponding to a specific site, we use an automated geocoding program to geocode each location according to the largest or second-largest administrative unit (aside from the country itself) corresponding to the location.^{xi} We refer to these data as “dispersed.” For reasons discussed in Appendix E, only some of the dispersed data can be used for analysis; the rest is only useful for visualizing general locations in the interactive map.

For each location of IDPs, we also analyse and present information on age and gender. We want to determine the number of working-age individuals (aged 18–59) in each location, since they are most

xi The geocoding program we used was the ezGeocode add-on in Google Sheets. The larger administrative units were used in order to ensure the accuracy of geocoding. For example, if administrative units in a given country were divided into regions, states, counties, and districts, with each unit smaller than the last, we would have created geocodes corresponding to either the regions or states, depending on how confident we were (based on trial mappings) that the geocodes could accurately match to states. This is because the automated program may not have been able to accurately locate counties and districts.

likely to integrate into labor markets.^{xii} We also wish to determine the proportion of female IDPs in order to create a more complete picture of the demographics of urban IDPs, as this could be relevant to policy and programmatic considerations. See Appendix C for a discussion of how working-age and gender proportions are determined.

We use several different data sources to determine urban areas and major urban areas. Primarily, we use the 2015 Global Human Settlement Layer (GHSL) Settlement grid data from the Joint Research Centre and the European Commission, which, using satellite images and population data, classifies locations around the world as “urban centers” (cities or large urban areas), “urban clusters” (towns and suburbs or small urban areas), or “rural.” The classifications are based both on population density and population size.³⁹ Where it is available, we also use the urban-rural classifications provided in the IDP datasets. The downside of this approach is that it does not allow us to distinguish the type of urban area. But, as described below, it is useful in some situations. To define large urban areas, we use the UN’s 2018 World Urbanization Prospects, which provides the population of urban areas around the world.

Using these data, we classify large urban areas in two ways: “major urban areas” are cities with populations of at least 300,000, and “largest urban areas” are the single largest city for each country.^{xiii} We use the 300,000 cut-off for major urban areas because the World Urbanization Prospects report considers cities with a population of less than 300,000 to be small and therefore less noteworthy as urban agglomerations. These data are necessary in addition to the GHSL data because the GHSL includes cities with relatively small populations (often much less than 300,000 people) in its definition of urban centers. They therefore allow us to see if IDPs are located in especially large urban areas. Table 3 further clarifies the distinctions among the urban classifications we use.

To determine national rates of urbanization, we use data from the World Bank Development Indicators on urban population as a percent of the total population.⁴⁰ Finally, we use data from GADM to visualize country borders and the within-country administrative borders that correspond to the administrative units in which dispersed data are located.⁴¹

Table 2 provides an overview of the data and Appendix D provides a summary for each country. The table shows that there are 17 countries included in our dataset. According to IDMC, 52 LMICs host conflict-displaced IDPs and 50 host a total of at least 1,000.⁴² This means that there are many countries without within-country data for IDP locations that are not included in our analysis. Altogether, IDPs with within-country location data suitable for analysis (i.e., suitable for at least determining urban or rural location) account for about 26 percent of conflict-displaced IDPs in the world (using the most recent estimates for the total number of IDPs, as discussed in Appendix A). Thus, there is a great deal of missing within-country location data and many countries do not have data—at least not publicly available through DTM or UNHCR.

For these reasons, our analysis does not provide an accurate estimate of the total number of urban

xii We use the 18–59 range for working-age because the data do not allow us to do otherwise, as they are aggregated into age groups.

xiii One country in the sample, Papua New Guinea, did not have any city with at least 300,000 people according to the World Urbanization Prospects report. We therefore included Port Moresby, the largest city in the country, as a major city even though it was slightly below the cut-off. According to a different source, the World Population Review, it has a population of 310,000 as of 2019. “Papua New Guinea Population 2019,” World Population Review, accessed March 25, 2019: <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/papua-new-guinea-population/>.

IDPs worldwide. Rather, it creates estimates of the number of IDPs *in our sample* that are in urban areas—these are essentially lower bounds for the number of IDPs in various types of urban areas. But while our sample is not globally comprehensive, it is large in absolute terms and our analysis comprises perhaps the most thorough attempt to date to determine urban rates among IDPs. Furthermore, for the countries in the sample, the within-country location data seem to be quite comprehensive, covering an average of approximately 80 percent of the IDPs in those countries. The table also shows that working-age IDPs are estimated to account for 43 percent of IDPs in the sample, and 52 percent are estimated to be female.

Table 2. Overview of the data

# of countries in the sample	IDPs with data for analysis	Percent of IDPs in the sample countries with data for analysis	Percent of conflict-displaced IDPs in the world with data for analysis	Estimated proportion of working-age IDPs	Estimated proportion of female IDPs
17	9,273,931	80	26	43	52

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate how the data are dispersed across countries. Figure 1 shows there is large variation in the number of individuals with data for analysis across countries. For most countries, the number with data for analysis is under 250,000, but one country has over 2 million. And as Appendix D shows, most countries have hundreds of thousands of IDPs with data for analysis, but four countries have under 10,000. So, there is some degree of concentration of data in a few countries, but the data are also relatively well-dispersed. Figure 2 shows that there is also a large dispersion of the percent of the estimated total number of IDPs for each country that have data for urban-rural analysis. Eight countries have about 100 percent, five have less than 50 percent, and the rest fall somewhere in between. We can infer from this that within-country data collection for some of these countries has been much more thorough than for others.

Using these data, we create six urban classifications and conduct the analysis according to these classifications. As table 3 describes, each classification has pros and cons. The advantage to having numerous classifications is that we are able to have some classifications that employ all available data and some that use the more accurate site-specific data. Furthermore, some classifications refer to larger, more substantial urban areas while others are more inclusive of smaller urban areas.

Generally speaking, the placement of each IDP location into one of these classifications was determined by either analysing the overlap of its geocoordinates and the various types of urban areas or heeding the urban classification it was assigned by data collectors. The details of how this analysis was conducted are discussed at length in Appendix E.

Figure 1. Distribution of number of IDPs with data for analysis in each country

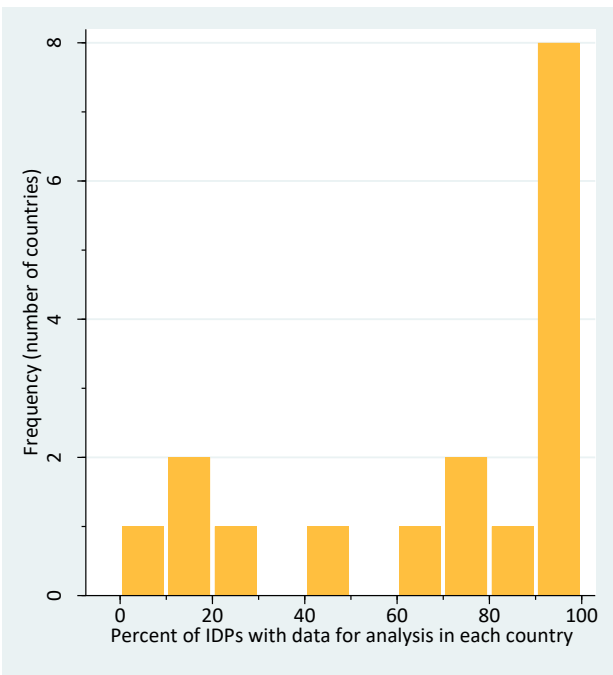


Figure 2. Distribution of percent of IDPs with data for analysis in each country

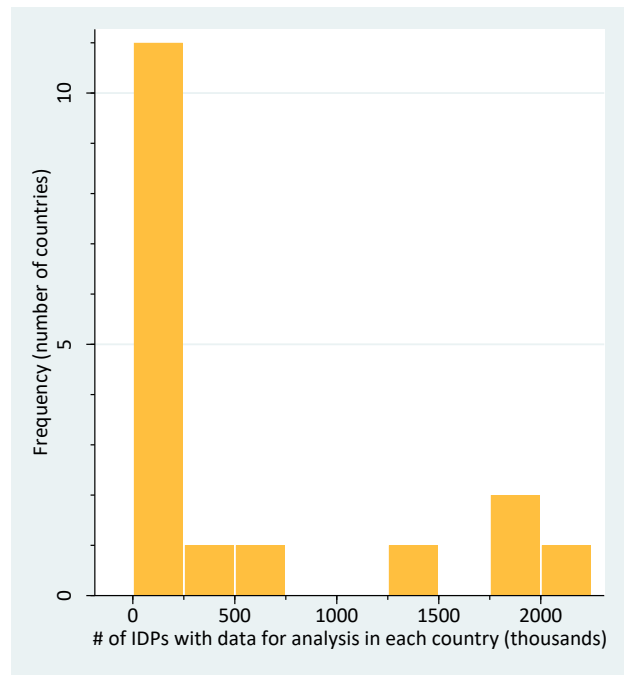


Table 3. Breakdown of urban classifications

Urban Classification	Description	Pros	Cons
Any urban area	A sum total of all urban classifications.	Provides a single number of urban IDPs.	Detail is lost by aggregating.
Dispersed urban	Dispersed locations given an urban classification by DTM or UNHCR data collectors (we cannot know the urban density of these locations). This classification is not presented in the results section; instead “any urban area,” which includes this classification and all others, is presented.	Allows us to employ dispersed data in analysis and provides a high estimate of urban IDPs within the sample.	The methodology for urban classification used by DTM/ UNHCR data collectors does not allow one to distinguish the type of urban area. It is thus possible that some IDPs within this classification are not actually urban according to our other classifications. It is also likely that the locations of some IDPs that are only counted in this group should also be counted in larger urban areas.

Urban clusters	Towns and suburbs or small urban areas, as determined by satellite and population data. Specifically, “contiguous grid cells with a density of at least 300 inhabitants per km ² and a minimum population of 5,000 inhabitants.” ⁴³ By definition, this includes urban centers. It also includes all major and largest urban areas.	Provides an objective determination of urban areas according to a standard definition and gives their exact geographic locations.	Uses a generous classification for what counts as urban.
Urban centers	Cities or large urban areas, as determined by satellite and population data. Specifically, “contiguous cells with a density of at least 1,500 inhabitants per km ² or a density of built-up greater than 50%, and a minimum of 50,000 inhabitants.” ⁴⁴ This includes all major and largest urban areas.	Provides an objective determination of larger urban areas according to a standard definition and gives their exact geographic locations.	Does not allow one to determine the exact size of large urban areas, so one cannot determine how large they actually are. In other words, it uses a generous classification for what counts as large urban areas.
Major urban areas	Cities with at least 300,000 people according to population data. In our sample, this includes all largest urban areas.	Allows one to distinguish especially large urban areas using a clear benchmark.	These urban areas are indicated via single geocoordinate points, such that a radius of 10 miles had to be set (somewhat subjectively) to determine if IDP locations overlap with them. Thus, some IDPs were likely not counted that should have been, and vice versa.
Largest urban areas	The largest city in a given country according to population data.	Allows one to determine the degree to which IDPs are clustering around the largest economic areas in a given country.	These urban areas are indicated via single geocoordinate points, such that a radius of 10 miles had to be set (somewhat subjectively) to determine if IDP locations overlap with them. Thus, some IDPs were likely not counted that should have been, and vice versa.

RESULTS

Table 4 presents the main results of the analysis. It shows that, of the over 9 million IDPs in our sample, almost half are in urban areas.^{xiv} Furthermore, about 2.5 million are in denser urban areas (i.e., urban centers), nearly 1.5 million are in major cities, and about 250,000 are in the largest city in their host country. We estimate that just under half are working-age, such that there are still almost 2

^{xiv} This is similar to the percent of refugees in urban areas, which is estimated at about 60 percent. The data for refugees is more comprehensive, but it is interesting to note the similarity. See Huang and Graham, *Are refugees located near urban job opportunities?*

million working-age IDPs in urban areas, many of which are in denser urban areas and major urban areas. Furthermore, we estimate that about 1 million working-age female IDPs are in urban areas. In other words, nearly half of all IDPs (many of whom are women and/or of working-age) are in urban areas and a large portion are in denser urban areas, where opportunities for economic integration and self-reliance are especially promising.

Table 4. Total numbers of IDPs in urban areas

	IDPs with data for urban analysis	IDPs in any urban areas	IDPs in urban clusters	IDPs in urban centers	IDPs in major urban areas	IDPs in largest cities
Total number	9,273,931	4,387,834	4,190,937	2,593,674	1,438,992	262,724
Working-age	3,969,046	1,956,890	1,870,183	1,157,763	654,147	118,786
Working-age females	2,045,714	1,008,614	963,924	596,731	337,159	61,224

Figure 3 shows how the urban IDPs in our sample are dispersed across countries. Appendix F also displays this information in table format. For simplicity, figure 3 only examines four out of five categories, leaving out urban clusters, which is included in the table in Appendix F.

The numbers show that a large portion of the IDPs located in urban clusters and centers and major urban areas are in Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Iraq. The rest of the urban IDPs seem to be concentrated in an additional six to eight countries. There is little evidence of a strong urban presence in the other countries. Overall, according to the data in our sample, five countries have at least 200,000 IDPs in urban areas, nine have at least 100,000, two have between 10,000 and 100,000 in urban areas, and the remaining six have less than 10,000. Furthermore, five have at least 50,000 in major urban areas and five more have 18,000 to 50,000. Therefore, there is clearly major variation in the urban composition of IDP populations across countries: some have very large urban populations while in others there is no evidence of urban concentration.

Figure 3. Total numbers of IDPs in urban areas, by country

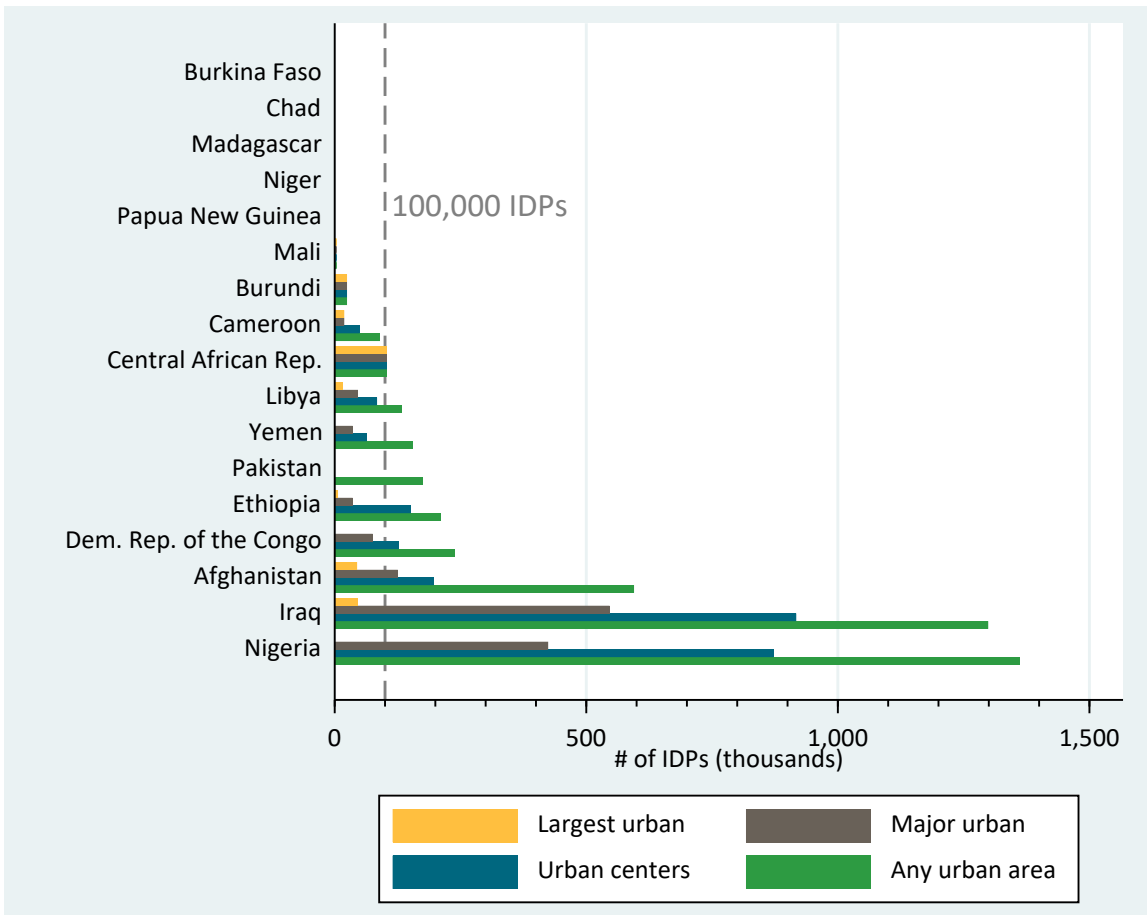


Figure 4 shows that a relatively large percentage of IDPs in the sample are in urban areas. For some countries, these percentages must be interpreted cautiously because they are not always representative of the broader IDP population in each country (figure 5 takes this fact into consideration). This information helps contextualize the findings from figure 3, showing that some countries do not have smaller urban IDP populations because they have large rural populations, but because they have relatively smaller IDP populations overall and/or less data for analysis. Such is the case for Mali especially, and also Cameroon, Burundi, and others. That said, in some countries, IDP populations seem to be largely rural.

Figures 3 and 4 show that IDPs tend to be spread across various types of urban areas. Relative few IDPs seem to concentrate in the largest cities, but many are in major cities. Thus, for the most part, IDPs do not seem to be concentrated only in relatively small urban areas, though some are. One clear exception is Pakistan, where there is no evidence that IDPs are in denser urban areas (however, this is because the data in this case do not allow us to determine the specific urban classification).

Figure 4. Percent of IDPs with data for urban analysis in urban areas, by country

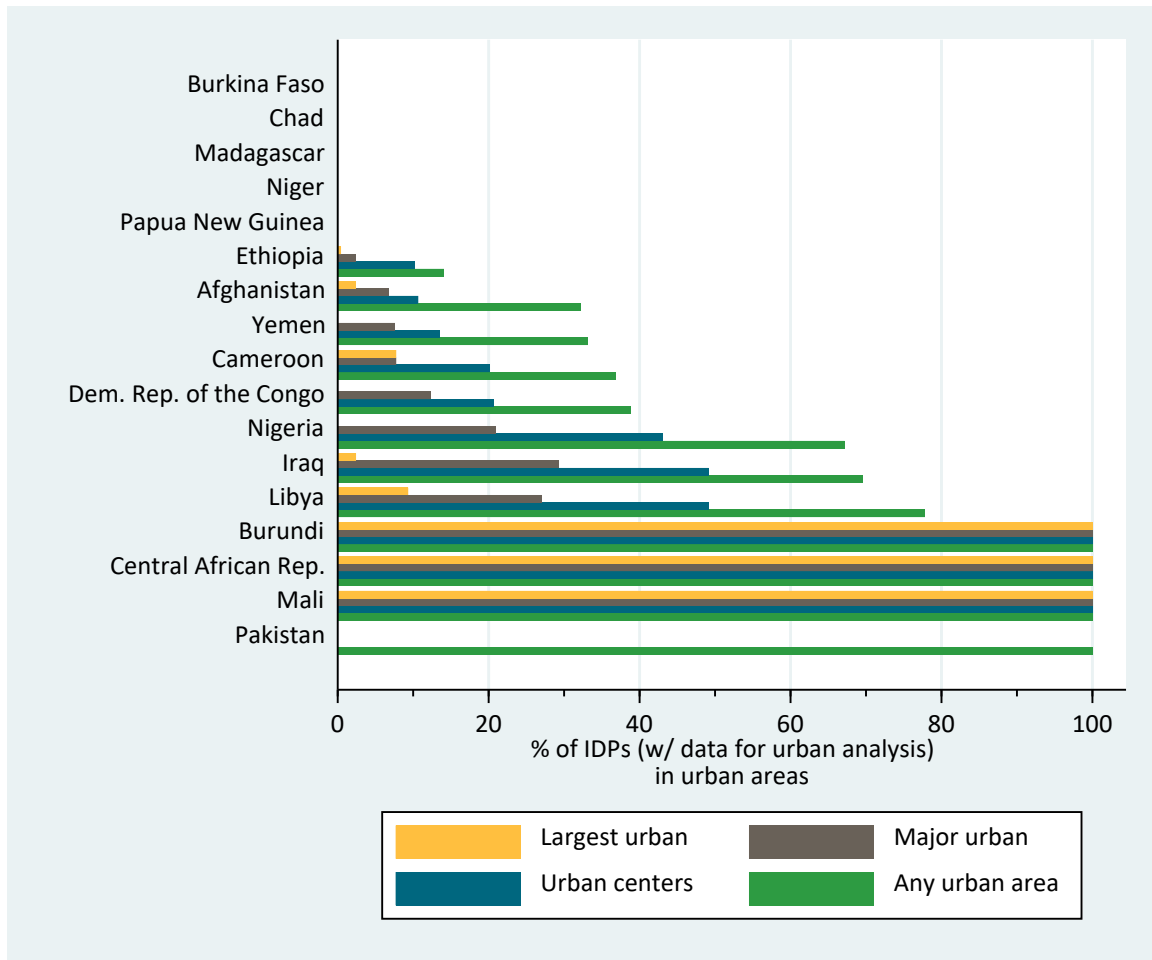
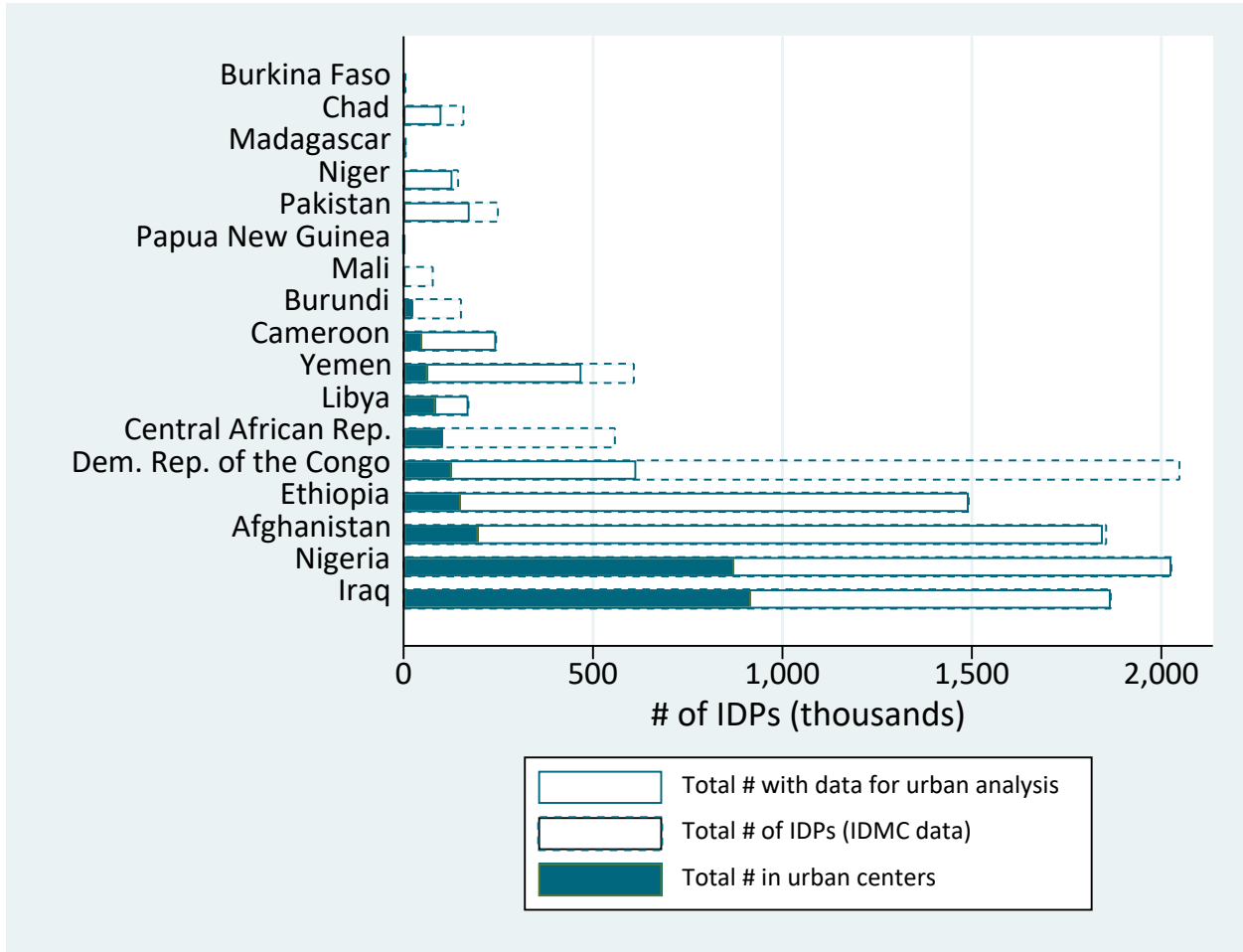


Figure 5 compares several data points: the total number of IDPs in each country (the dotted lines), the total number IDPs for which there are data for urban analysis (the hollow sold lines), and the number of IDPs in urban centers (the solid teal bars). The figure illustrates how close the numbers of IDPs in each country with data available are likely to be to the true number for each country.

For example, in the DRC, one can see that there are few urban IDPs. However, one can also see that there is little data compared to the total number of IDPs in the country, such that there may be far more urban IDPs than we have reported. On the other hand, for countries like Niger, Cameroon, Libya, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Iraq—for which the number of IDPs with data for analysis is close to the total number reported—we can be confident that the number of urban IDPs we report is closer to the true number. What we can learn from this figure (in combination with the others) is that, in some countries, most of the IDP population is mostly rural or at least in minor urban areas (i.e., clusters). This is the case in Niger, Pakistan, Chad, and Ethiopia, and in Cameroon to a lesser extent. On the other hand, we can be confident that in countries like Iraq and Nigeria, urban IDPs make up about half of the total IDP population. But in countries like the CAR, the DRC, and Burundi, more data are needed to make confident claims about the urban makeup of the population. In yet other countries, like Burkina Faso and Madagascar, there are simply not very large IDP populations in relative terms. Altogether, figure 5 supports two findings: the overall proportion of IDPs in some countries is highly urban and in others it is mostly rural (i.e., there is significant variation across countries); and

in some countries, more data are needed to make claims about the urban-rural composition.

Figure 5. Number of IDPs in urban centers compared to total number of IDPs with data for urban analysis and the total number of IDPs in the country



Finally, to provide a sense of the degree to which IDP urbanization follows national rates of urbanization, figures 6 and 7 compare the proportion of urban IDPs in each country to the national proportion of urban individuals. Both figures exclude countries for which the number of IDPs with data for analysis is less than 47 percent of the estimated total.^{xv} As depicted by figure 7, there is a statistically significant correlation ($p < .01$) between IDP and national urbanization. A takeaway from these figures is that in some countries, IDPs may be as urbanized as, or even more urbanized than, other groups in the country. In others, however, such as Chad and Niger, IDPs seem to be disproportionately rural. This has important policy implications, discussed below.

^{xv} 47 percent was a natural cut-off; the next highest percent was 30.

Figure 6. Percent of IDPs with data for urban analysis in urban areas compared to national percent of individuals in urban areas (excluding countries with less than 47 percent data availability)

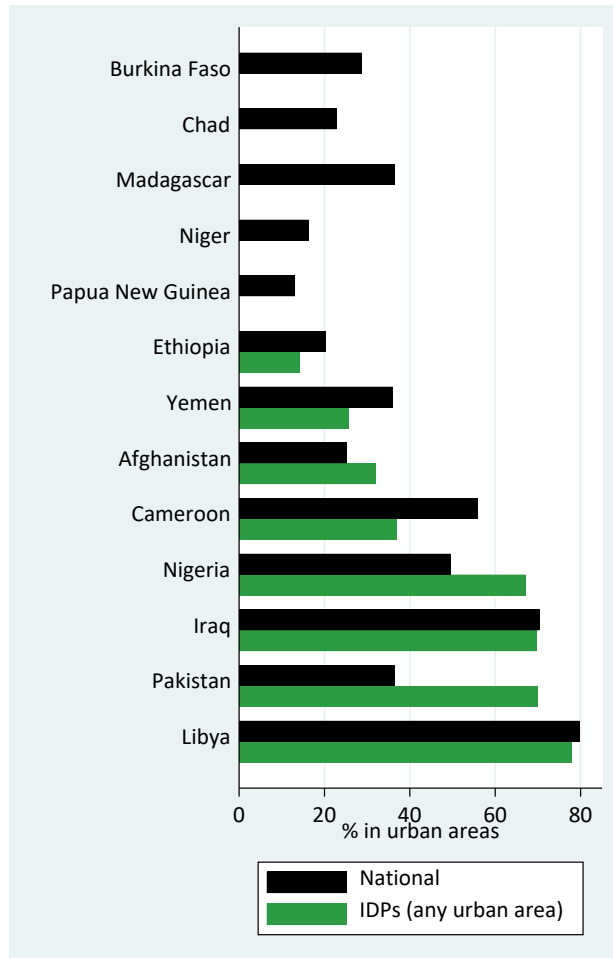
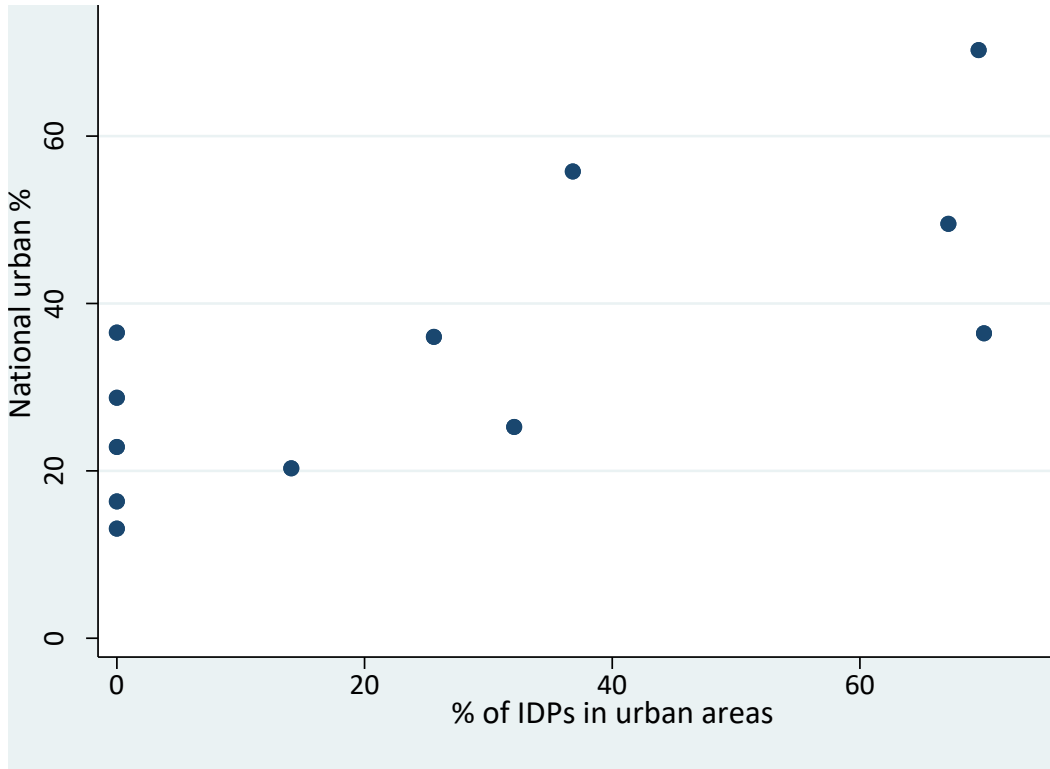


Figure 7. Percent of IDPs with data for urban analysis in urban areas compared to national percent of individuals in urban areas (excluding countries with less than 47 percent data availability)



POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Urban IDPs: capitalizing on opportunities for self-reliance

Millions of working-age IDPs are in urban areas, including very large urban areas, and some countries have highly urbanized IDP populations. While urban areas provide economic opportunities, they also present challenges. Compared to non-urban IDPs, urban IDPs often face a higher cost of living and less access to services and support.⁴⁵ And while non-forcibly displaced urban migrants may face similar difficulties, the task of economic integration tends to be more formidable for IDPs, who may face a range of additional challenges, including lost assets, discrimination, legal barriers, disrupted social networks and support systems, and mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress.⁴⁶ A study in Somalia, for example, found that IDPs in Mogadishu were more vulnerable than economic migrants and other host community counterparts.⁴⁷ It may be necessary to shift and target current approaches to supporting IDPs in a way that reflects the reality of urbanization and their specific vulnerabilities and enables them to capitalize on economic opportunities and achieve self-reliance in an urban setting. In other words, there is an opportunity for progress towards durable solutions for urban IDPs that can be catalyzed through greater support focused on economic integration.

This may entail an increase in support from donors, NGOs, and the private sector to urban IDPs. Depending on current efforts, it may also entail providing support that focuses on enabling self-reliance instead of simply survival. Currently, there is a bias among humanitarian organizations toward supporting non-urban IDPs and providing survival-focused support.⁴⁸ Given the high degree of urban-

ization among IDPs, the economic opportunities in urban areas, the protracted and cyclical nature of displacement, and IDPs' need for support in overcoming economic challenges, there is a need for a paradigm shift.

Support that helps IDPs thrive in urban areas can take many forms and emanate from a variety of actors. For example, humanitarian organizations can do more to reach non-camp urban IDPs with basic services, which can be a foundation for progress towards economic integration. In addition, NGOs can implement interventions to improve integration, such as vocational trainings or job matching programs, which have been shown to have significant positive effects on employment outcomes in some cases.⁴⁹ Given the traditional focus of humanitarian organizations on protection- and survival-based aid, these shifts may require mobilizing new resources and complementary expertise and deepening partnerships with development actors. Private sector actors can complement these investments in employability and skills by directly hiring IDPs and supplying from or investing in IDP-owned businesses.⁵⁰ Aside from investing in IDPs, donors can also invest in the broader development agenda. For example, if IDPs are contributing to rapid urbanization, municipalities and local governments may need support in implementing effective urban planning. This could involve increased investments in infrastructure and service provision.

Furthermore, governments can lower policy barriers, which can take numerous forms. In rare circumstances, IDPs may require permits to work in areas where they are not from (as in China).⁵¹ Legal permission to reside (and by extension work) in certain areas of countries may also require completing certain procedures—such as interviews with government security services in the Kurdistan region of Iraq.⁵² And in some cases, IDPs may be missing documentation (due to the circumstances of forced displacement) that any citizen requires for working in a given country. This has been found to be a problem in Serbia, for example.⁵³ If IDPs face such policy barriers to work, their labor market integration can be severely curbed. Donors can provide support to governments to help them lower policy barriers—for example, by offsetting any increased fiscal costs that may result in the short term, supporting government capacity to provide work permits, and supporting host community members facing increased job competition with upskilling and job placement.

These efforts to support IDP economic integration should also incorporate host communities. Often, urban IDPs reside alongside other vulnerable populations. Thus, development-focused approaches to self-reliance—including job trainings, investments in businesses, improved infrastructure, etc.—should also target members of the host community. Furthermore, these approaches should respond to gender dynamics. Our analysis shows that about half of all working-age IDPs are women. Thus, understanding how to specifically support women in integrating economically in urban areas will be key to achieving broad self-reliance among IDPs.

A robust research agenda would help support a transition to this self-reliance-focused approach to supporting IDPs. For example, more research is needed to determine the most effective ways to facilitate economic integration.⁵⁴ Specifically, research could be conducted to evaluate different approaches to business or vocational trainings, determine which government policies are most important for improving economic integration, and investigate how best to facilitate occupational upgrading among hosts who are displaced from jobs. Furthermore, research could be conducted to understand the best ways to reach IDP populations residing outside camps or established settlements. Finally, research that examines the impact of increasing support to urban IDPs would be useful for planning and allocating resources. For example, if more support to urban IDPs attracts rural IDPs to urban areas, cities will have to be prepared for a degree of population expansion. And if an inclusive, development-led approach to supporting IDPs leads to improved economic outcomes for both hosts and IDPs, host governments may be more motivated to work with development partners in responding to IDPs.

Rural IDPs: overcoming skills and opportunity mismatches

Because a large portion of IDPs—about half—are in rural areas, an urban-focused approach to self-reliance will not be relevant to all IDPs. Two main approaches can be applied to reaching rural IDPs: incentivizing voluntary relocation to urban areas and creating economic opportunities around camps and rural areas.

It is likely that many rural IDPs have not chosen their location “optimally.” As evidenced by the rural-urban productivity gap discussed above, individuals often do not live in the place where they will be most productive. By this logic, many rural IDPs would likely be able to earn higher incomes and make greater progress towards self-reliance if they were located in urban areas. Furthermore, the decision not to migrate may be based on financial barriers, uncertainties about how to integrate into urban areas, or other factors that interventions can help IDPs overcome. As evidence, a small monetary incentive to rural households in Bangladesh that served to cover the cost of transportation to urban areas made members of the household much more likely to migrate, and as a result earn significantly more.^{xvi} Suboptimal location may be especially pertinent to IDPs, who, fleeing from conflict, may be more likely to make location decisions in an attempt to meet immediate needs rather than achieve optimal economic outcomes.

Our research indicates that IDP populations in some countries are disproportionately rural. This could merely signal that rural individuals are more likely to be displaced in these contexts, but it may also signal that IDPs, for whatever reasons, are more constrained to rural areas than their non-displaced counterparts. In such contexts, there may be an especially substantial degree of skill misallocation and relocation schemes may therefore be especially appropriate.

Relocation schemes could take various forms. Most fundamentally, they could involve monetary subsidies to help IDPs relocate. In addition, they could include the provision of housing upon arrival or other services to help relocated IDPs integrate. Relocation schemes could bring relocated IDPs into the framework of support being offered to other urban IDPs. They could also target vulnerable hosts as well as IDPs, thus creating broad-based benefits. Finally, they could involve either permanent or temporary relocation.

Well-designed relocation schemes can lead to economic benefits for hosts as well as IDPs.⁵⁵ This is particularly true if individuals are incentivized to relocate to places where, according to labor needs and skillsets, they are able to make the greatest economic contribution and earn the highest incomes. For example, in the case of temporary relocation, placement could respond to seasonal labor needs and as a result boost growth in areas with seasonal labor shortages. Furthermore, the Immigration Policy Lab has already created an algorithm which can predict which placements will maximize economic benefits for hosts and IDP.⁵⁶ In contexts where enough data are available, this algorithm could be used to guide relocation strategies. Moreover, adjustment costs to relocation can also be mitigated by strategic design. For example, if one urban area was already experiencing rapid population growth whereas another had more capacity to host IDPs, IDPs could be encouraged to relocate to the latter location.

Crucially, following the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions, these kind of relocation schemes should be entirely voluntary.⁵⁷ They should also prioritize IDPs’ safety and wellbeing and should be collaborative, consultation-driven processes that account for the needs of IDPs themselves and coor-

^{xvi} It should be noted that there were barriers to scaling this program; impacts were not as positive when it was brought to scale. Thus, more evidence is needed on the best way to effectively conduct relocation schemes.

dinate with the appropriate government ministries. Given these and other considerations, relocation can be a complicated process. But when done correctly, it can lead to self-reliance for IDPs and positive outcomes for host communities.⁵⁸

However, for a variety of reasons, relocation may not be the best option in many or most cases. First, it may be politically untenable. Despite the possible benefits of relocation, municipalities may be unwilling to accommodate larger IDP populations or there may be a lack of political will or interest to improve the livelihoods of IDPs. Second, relocation may not be in some IDPs' best interest—particularly if they do not have the skills to excel in urban areas, they are already integrating well in rural areas, or relocation would move them further from social networks upon which they are dependent. Third, for whatever other reasons, IDPs themselves may simply be uninterested in relocating.

In these cases, the question becomes how to support rural IDPs in achieving self-reliance in their current location. In part, this could require more traditional rural development approaches. But it may also involve leveraging the economies that grow out of IDP camps. For example, an IFC report found that Kakuma, a refugee camp in Kenya, had a total household consumption of \$56 million per year. In other words, it represented a large market with potential for investment and growth.⁵⁹ IDP camps, which in some cases have tens of thousands of residents, may present similar market opportunities. Governments, private sector actors, donors, and NGOs could thus work together to leverage these opportunities to create sustainable growth in a way that benefits camp residents as well as surrounding host communities. Eventually, this could lead to durable solutions as IDPs leave camps and integrate into surrounding areas. To achieve this, and by targeting both hosts and IDPs, governments and donors can invest in developing infrastructure, development banks can encourage private sector investments by offsetting risk, and NGOs can help develop IDP and host businesses and employability.

It is likely that a combination of these different approaches should be employed. Some IDPs, potentially even a relatively small subset, may be most suited/interested in relocation, while the rest may be better supported in rural areas. Ultimately, the best approach will depend on context and can be determined in consultation with governments, humanitarian and development partners, and IDP communities.

A variety of research activities could also enhance these approaches to supporting rural IDPs. For example, studies examining the efficacy of, and best practice in, relocating IDPs would be useful in informing future attempts. Furthermore, since the concept of implementing development approaches around existing camp economies is relatively new, research into the best approaches to doing so and to bringing in private capital would also be helpful. Finally, as this paper shows, there is a great deal of variation in IDP locations. Research that analyses the causes of this variation and determinants of location decisions could illuminate the best ways to respond to IDP location decisions. For example, if IDPs choose rural locations mostly because they come from rural locations, that may imply that relocation schemes may not be prudent, as most IDPs would have rural skillsets. On the other hand, if IDPs choose locations randomly or based on proximity to their origin, strategic relocation may be more appropriate.

Missing data: challenges, implications, and the road ahead

We have shown that IDP populations differ in their urban-rural composition and that the best policy responses in a given context depend on the composition in that context. However, our analysis has also emphasized that there is a great deal of missing data regarding IDP locations and urbanization—

data that can be used to determine urban location account for only about 26 percent of conflict-displaced IDPs worldwide. Thus, it will be difficult in some countries to make strategic decisions about how best to support IDPs toward self-reliance. For example, if the general location of IDPs is unknown, it will be difficult to target programming, allocate resources, and decide on a more urban- or rural-focused approach (or a mix). And without data on not only the locations of IDPs but also their skillsets, it may be difficult to design optimal relocation schemes that match IDPs with economic opportunities, or to design and target vocational trainings. Furthermore, better data on IDPs could be used to monitor progress towards durable solutions—and to continue to highlight shortcomings as a means to raise more support.

To some extent, the data missing from our analysis does not reflect a total absence of data. For privacy and other reasons, some data is not publicly released but can be accessed by governments and/or humanitarian actors. And although the sources we have used cover most of the publicly available data, some data may be accessible through other sources. Generally speaking, however, there is in fact a lack of data.⁶⁰ There are a number of reasons why this might be. These include a lack of political will to invest resources in data collection, low statistical capacity among some countries, the fact that many IDPs do not want to be identified (as a means of protecting themselves/for political reasons, particularly when displacement-related assistance is not being offered), the fact that some non-IDPs want to be identified as IDPs (particularly when displacement-related assistance *is* being offered), difficulty accessing areas with IDPs due to security or political concerns, the fluid movement of IDP populations, a lack of a clear definition/universal acceptance for who counts as an IDP, and others. Furthermore, the task of data collection is especially difficult for urban IDPs because they typically make up a small proportion of the urban areas they inhabit and are widely dispersed among other populations, municipal authorities may refuse to acknowledge the scale of the problem of displacement in their cities as a means to downplay crises, and census data often does not include the sort of informal settlements where IDPs tend to live.⁶¹

But this is not to say that it is impossible to gather quality data on IDPs in urban areas and elsewhere; a range of data collection techniques are available to do so. Organizations like JIPS, DTM, and others, as well as many national statistics offices, are experts in supporting and/or implementing data collection and IDP profiling processes. For example, in place of fully representative (and expensive) surveys, key informant interviews can be used to estimate population sizes. Likewise, skills and experience profiling exercises can rely on civil society organizations or other informants to glean information about IDP populations and their general location. Afterwards, mappings of IDP communities and informal settlements can be carried out to obtain more accurate counts and information. Innovative technological approaches that rely on aerial imaging, social media analysis, call records, and analysis of online reports can also be used to develop estimates. Furthermore, humanitarian organizations can work with national and local governments to build capacity to conduct profiling exercises. Regardless of the technique, however, protecting IDPs and respecting their safety concerns linked to being anonymous should always be a top priority.⁶²

Given the availability of these techniques, efforts should be made to increase data collection—but only where it is needed as a means to inform programmatic and policy responses. While collecting detailed within-country data as a means to inform responses could play a crucial role in advancing progress toward durable solutions, collecting it simply to have a clearer picture of global internal displacement may not be worth the cost and potential risks to IDPs. To ensure that data collection responds to the needs in a given context, it should be a collaborative process that brings in the relevant actors that

will use the data to make decisions. It should also be connected to national statistical offices as much as possible in order to link IDP-focused efforts to national planning efforts.⁶³

This task will require much greater investments and, as a result, will also require greater political will from national governments, civil society, and international institutions. In part, political will can be generated by arguing the importance—for the good of host communities as well as IDPs—of addressing internal displacement. For example, we know that if the right policies are not in place to address displacement, negative effects can be exacerbated and positive effects forgone.⁶⁴ More research about the broad societal economic impacts of displacement—particularly urban displacement—would also be key for bringing attention to the issue.⁶⁵ Furthermore, if greater international support is given to governments for actively supporting IDPs, other governments can be encouraged to do the same. Progress can also be made by creating frameworks for action and accountability at the international level. For example, frameworks like the SDGs have achieved broad international buy-in for certain international goals. However, targets for reducing internal displacement and creating durable solutions for IDPs have not been elevated to the same level.⁶⁶ In cases where IDPs have been displaced by the current government’s action or inaction, it will be even more challenging to create domestic political will to increase attention to IDPs. In these cases, data collection may have to proceed via more innovative means, as discussed above. In other cases, governments may be more open to acknowledging and supporting IDPs—particularly if it is accompanied by increased support from international actors.

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY BEHIND DTM AND IDMC DATA

The data sources for within-country locations are DTM and UNHCR. DTM data are collected through a variety of methodologies that vary across context. These include baseline area assessments, which involve key informant interviews cross-checked with any available secondary data to determine general areas of IDP locations (this produces “dispersed” data, as discussed in the Data and Methodology section); baseline location assessments, which again involve key informant interviews cross-checked with any available secondary data, but conducted at smaller administrative units to develop a more nuanced picture and more accurate numbers and locations; and site assessments, which include key informant interviews, direct observation, and/or full counts within towns and cities. Considering these approaches, the data are clearly not always perfectly accurate, as the geolocations of IDP groups are often based on information from key informants rather than direct observation. Nonetheless, this is the best information available to determine locations and is sufficient to provide general estimates of the number of IDPs in rural versus urban areas.⁶⁷

By starting with national baseline assessments and moving to more granular assessments, this approach allows for a broad national assessment of IDPs that also has detailed information. It can therefore be used to produce reasonable estimates for the number of IDPs in an entire country.^{xvii} This is not to say that the urban-rural composition presented for each country is representative, however, because not all of the data collected are useful for urban-rural analysis. Furthermore, global DTM data are not necessarily representative of global IDP populations. DTM collects data in response to humanitarian operational needs, either in support of specific government or other humanitarian partners or to contribute to humanitarian operations more broadly. Thus, as the organization responds to operational requirements rather than a mandate to collect comprehensive data, the data are not necessarily representative.⁶⁸

UNHCR's data collection process for IDPs is based on direct contact, given that “the populations reported in its statistics are limited to conflict-generated IDPs or persons in an IDP-like situation to whom the agency extends protection or assistance.” UNHCR does not provide geolocations for the IDPs it works with, but it sometimes indicates if they are urban. This information is likely based on the location of UNHCR operations (i.e., whether it is working with IDPs in rural or urban areas). Because UNHCR only counts the IDPs with which it interacts, the data are not representative of the whole country.⁶⁹ The four countries in our sample for which we use UNHCR data are Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger, and Pakistan; we use DTM data for the rest.

IDMC provides information on aggregate totals by country. IDMC data are collected through a complex aggregation of various data sources, which can include DTM, UNHCR, government partners, other UN agencies or international organizations, civil society organizations, news outlets, and more. One important difference between IDMC and DTM data is that DTM considers IDPs who have physically returned to origin as “returnees” and not “IDPs” anymore. IDMC instead keeps them in its IDP stock figure unless it has been verified that they have achieved a durable solution. UNHCR, in contrast, counts both IDPs and people in IDP-like situations, “who face protection risks similar to those of IDPs but who, for practical or other reasons, could not be reported as such.”⁷⁰

Unlike DTM, UNHCR does not attempt to collect comprehensive data on IDPs in a given country. Thus,

xviiIn countries where DTM conducts data collection in certain areas of the country rather than the entire country (as is sometimes the case), the total number of IDPs given may be an underestimate. However, because these efforts likely focus on areas of countries hosting the largest number of IDPs, they likely do not produce severe underestimates. For an example, see: DTM Nigeria, [Displacement Tracking Matrix](#) (Geneva, Switzerland: DTM, 2019).

for countries where we use within-country data from UNHCR, we use IDMC total figures as a benchmark to understand roughly how much data that can be used to understand urban-rural compositions is missing. We do the same for countries where we have no within-country data. In countries where we use DTM within-country data, we use DTM total figures as a benchmark. Using all of these data, we calculate the amount of missing within-country location data by subtracting the amount that have locations tracked within-country from the total estimated number of IDPs. The amount of missing location data for each country is displayed in the interactive map and the dataset. Similarly, we calculate the amount of missing within-country location data *suitable for urban analysis* by subtracting the amount that have within-country location data suitable for urban analysis from the total estimated number of IDPs. Finally, to estimate the amount of data for urban analysis missing globally, we subtract the total amount of data for urban analysis in our sample from the total estimated number of IDPs across all countries, which is the sum of all the country totals using the mix of IDMC and DTM figures described above. This information is reflected in table 2.

APPENDIX B: COUNTING CONFLICT-DISPLACED IDPs

For most IDP locations, the reasons for displacement were explicitly given. Sometimes there were multiple reasons for a given location and sometimes only the “main” reason for displacement was provided.^{xviii} If conflict was included as a reason, we counted all of the IDPs at the location as conflict-displaced even if there were other reasons for displacement, because it was impossible to disaggregate them. Furthermore, we counted locations with unknown reasons for displacement—a minority of locations—as conflict-displaced. The countries with locations with unknown reasons for displacement are Burkina Faso, Chad, the DRC, Libya, Niger, and Pakistan. Because IDMC stock figures indicate that there are large numbers of conflict-displaced IDPs in these countries (at least compared to the number tracked within each country), we decided to keep the unknown-reason locations in the sample.⁷¹ Thus, we overestimate the number of IDPs in our sample that are displaced by conflict because we prefer to wrongly assume that a relatively small number of IDPs were displaced by conflict than to drop a large number of conflict-displaced IDPs from the sample.

All of the possible reasons for displacement for each location are displayed in the interactive map and Table 5 provides a summary of this information. As one can see, although it is possible that a large number of IDPs displaced for non-conflict reasons are in the sample, we can be confident that over half of the locations in the sample exclusively host conflict-displaced IDPs. Furthermore, since IDMC stock figures indicate that these countries are characterized largely by conflict-induced displacement, we can be even more confident that our sample is mostly composed of conflict-displaced IDPs.

Table 5. Reasons for displacement among IDPs in the sample

Reason for displacement	Number of locations	Number of IDPs
Conflict	10,461	5,513,178
Conflict and economic	389	169,429
Conflict and natural disaster	1,549	1,176,567
Conflict and unknown	3,456	1,884,172
Conflict, economic, and unknown	58	5,265
Unknown	363	525,320

^{xviii}In Cameroon, the reasons for displacement were not disaggregated by location. Rather, the number of individuals displaced for various reasons was given as an aggregate for the whole country, and all IDPs were displaced by disasters or conflict. Thus, all locations in Cameroon are counted as “conflict and natural disasters.” However, according to the aggregate figures, the vast majority of IDPs in the country were displaced by conflict.

APPENDIX C: DESCRIPTION OF DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

In some instances, the UNHCR and DTM data provide demographic information for individual locations. Where possible, we use these data. Where the data are not available for an IDP location, we apply the national proportion of working-age people (those aged 15-64) or the national proportion of females to estimate the number of working-age individuals and women/girls, respectively, in each location. To do so, we use data from UNDESA for 2015.⁷² Table 6 summarizes this information. It shows that the demographic information was collected by UNHCR or DTM for almost half of the IDPs in the sample. For the rest, the national average was applied. For most countries, the demographic data were either collected/estimated by UNHCR or DTM for all (or very nearly all) IDP locations, or it was not collected at all. The countries for which the demographic data were collected are Chad, the DRC, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Sudan. It was not collected in the others, so national proportions were applied.

The application of national averages is not ideal; it may be that IDPs in general and urban IDPs in particular are more likely to be a certain age or gender. However, this approach is sufficient for creating a rough lower bound of the number of female and working-age IDPs in urban areas. Furthermore, at least for gender, research shows that proportions for IDPs are typically similar to those for the nation as a whole (though the proportion of women is slightly higher for IDPs).⁷³

Table 6. Sources for demographic data used in the sample

	# of IDPS with demographic data tracked by DTM or UNHCR	# with weighted national average applied
Age data	3,923,952	5,349,979
Gender data	3,923,770	5,350,161

APPENDIX D: SUMMARY OF DATA BY COUNTRY

Country	Total IDPs	IDPs with data for analysis	Percent of total with data for analysis	Estimated percent of working-age IDPs	Estimated percent of female IDPs
Afghanistan	1,854,416	1,845,715	100	44	52
Burkina Faso	4,900	2,350	48	36	55
Burundi	151,520	24,497	16	45	49
Cameroon	244,347	244,347	100	46	50
Central African Rep.	557,723	103,785	19	44	49
Chad	158,000	99,983	63	34	55
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	2,048,021	614,171	30	43	50
Ethiopia	1,491,648	1,491,648	100	34	52
Iraq	1,866,594	1,866,594	100	48	51
Libya	171,323	171,323	100	60	50
Madagascar	5,699	5,699	100	47	50
Mali	77,046	3,023	4	41	50
Niger	144,000	129,015	90	32	56
Nigeria	2,026,602	2,026,602	100	40	54
Pakistan	249,000	174,354	70	42	46
Papua New Guinea	1,337	1,337	100	51	51
Yemen	607,758	469,488	77	53	51
Total	11,659,934	9,273,931	80	43	52

APPENDIX E: METHODOLOGICAL DETAILS

To determine the urban classification of the site-specific points, an overlap analysis was conducted. Those located in urban clusters according to GHSL are considered urban clusters, those located in urban centers according to GHSL are considered to be in urban centers, those that are in urban centers and which are also located within 10 miles of major cities (using the city geocoordinates given by the UN city data) are considered to be in major cities, and those that are in urban centers and which are also located within 10 miles of largest cities are considered to be in largest cities.

It is important to note that overlap between IDPs and urban areas are likely not perfectly captured by our data. That is, some of the IDP geocoordinates may be imprecise; they may be very close to the suggested location but not exact, or they may give a single location for thousands of IDPs that may be dispersed in the close surrounding area. Thus, some IDPs may be counted as urban when they should not be and vice versa. It is therefore not clear whether the imprecision creates upward or downward bias. It is more likely that our estimates are conservative, as IDPs that are clustered just outside cities are not counted as urban—even though they could reasonably be considered urban in many cases. Nonetheless, the estimates should be accurate enough to create rough lower bounds for the number of urban IDPs.

It should also be noted that the 10-mile radius around major and largest cities does not refer to city limits; rather the 10-mile distance is from the exact location given by each city's geocoordinates (we refer to this as the city center). Thus, the 10-mile range is sometimes contained within the city. This radius was set in order to determine overlap between IDP locations and major cities, since city coordinates are only given as single points. The choice of 10 miles was made through observations of the typical radius within which most of the GHSL urban centers around major urban areas fall. Because this varies across cities, there are instances in which the 10-mile radius is too large. But because IDP locations are only counted as being in major cities if they are also urban centers, the over-counting due to large radii is minimal; it only occurs if the radius is large enough to expand to another city altogether. More commonly, the radii under-count, failing to capture some (but still not many) IDPs that are technically within the city but outside the 10 miles. This method therefore gives conservative estimates of the number of IDPs in major and largest cities.

Figures 8 and 9 help visualize how the site-specific data are used. Figure 8 starts by providing a high-level look at the various urban categories and site-specific IDP locations in Nigeria and surrounding areas. It gives a general idea of how urban clusters, urban centers, major cities, and site-specific IDPs are mapped. The data can also be examined more thoroughly in the interactive map.

Figure 8. High-level visualization of data for Nigeria and surrounding areas

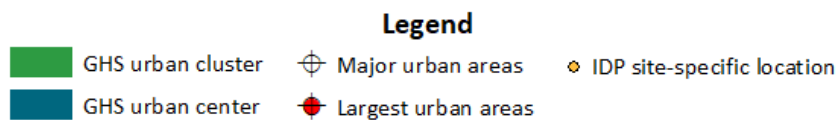
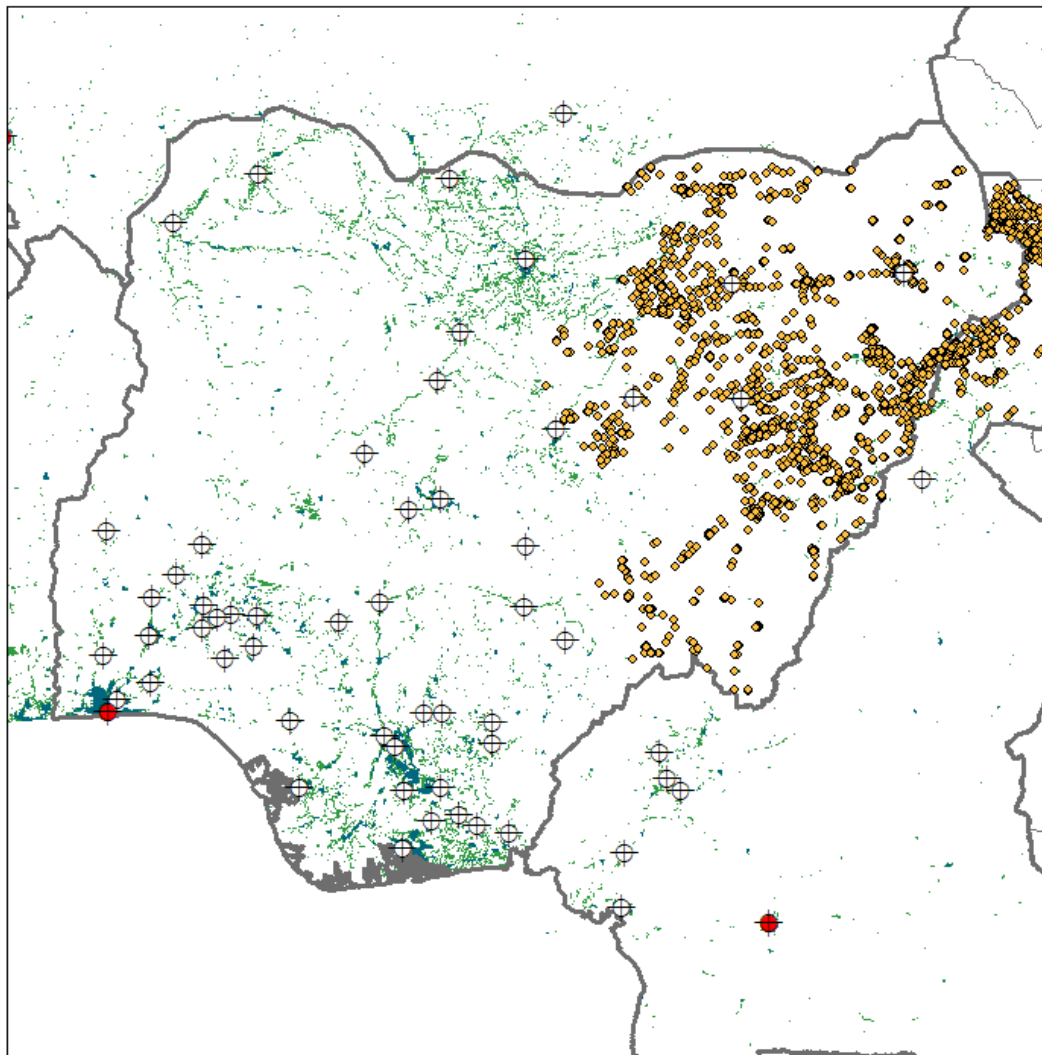
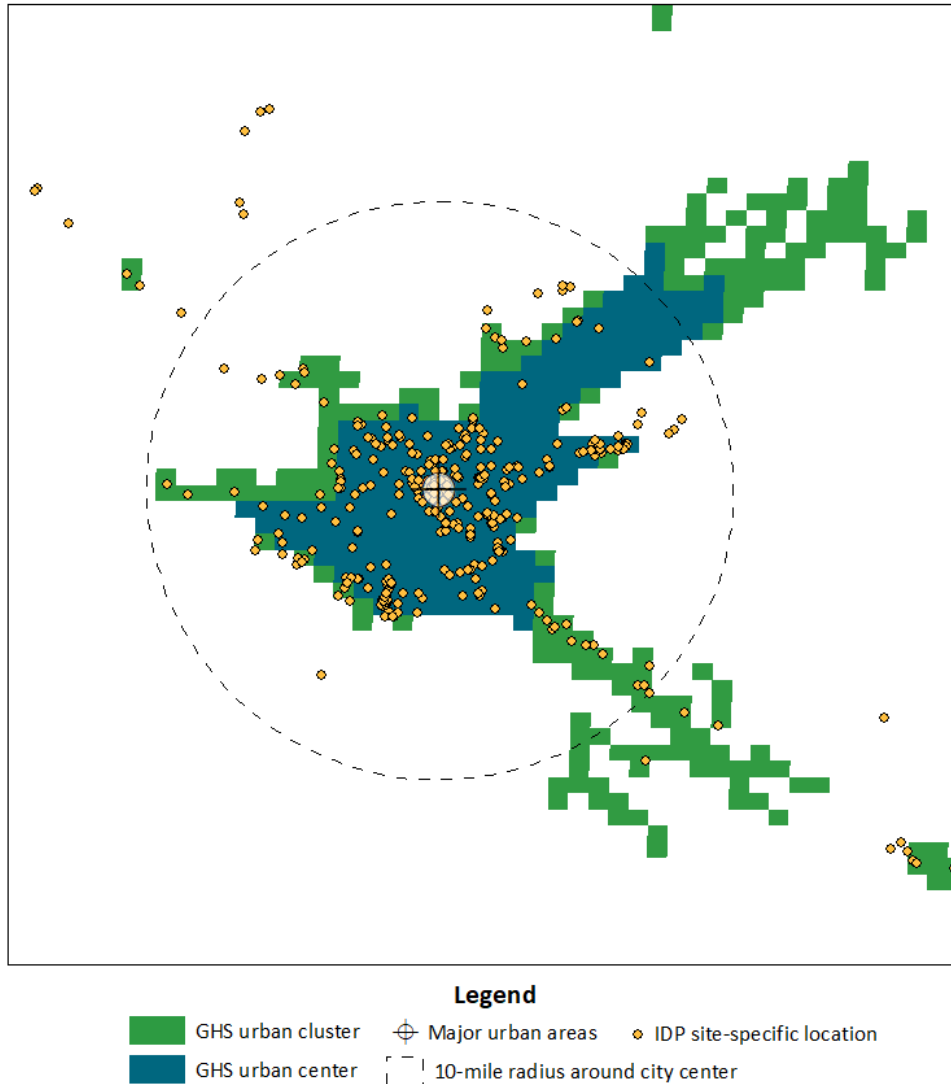


Figure 9 helps visualize how IDP locations are classified by urban type by zooming in on one Nigerian city, Maiduguri, which has a population of about 750,000 and a strong IDP presence. To begin with, each of the yellow points represent site-specific IDP locations, and each point can represent any number of IDPs in that specific location. The white target symbol represents the city center of Maiduguri, the major city, and the larger grey circle represents the 10-mile radius around the city center. As one can see by comparing the GHS area around the city center and the circle, the circle does not line up exactly with the actual city, but it is a decent approximation. The yellow IDP locations that are located within the green areas are considered to be in urban clusters for purposes of the analysis. Those located in teal areas are considered to be in the more populated, denser urban centers. Furthermore, the points that are within the circle *and* in the teal areas are considered to be in a major city.

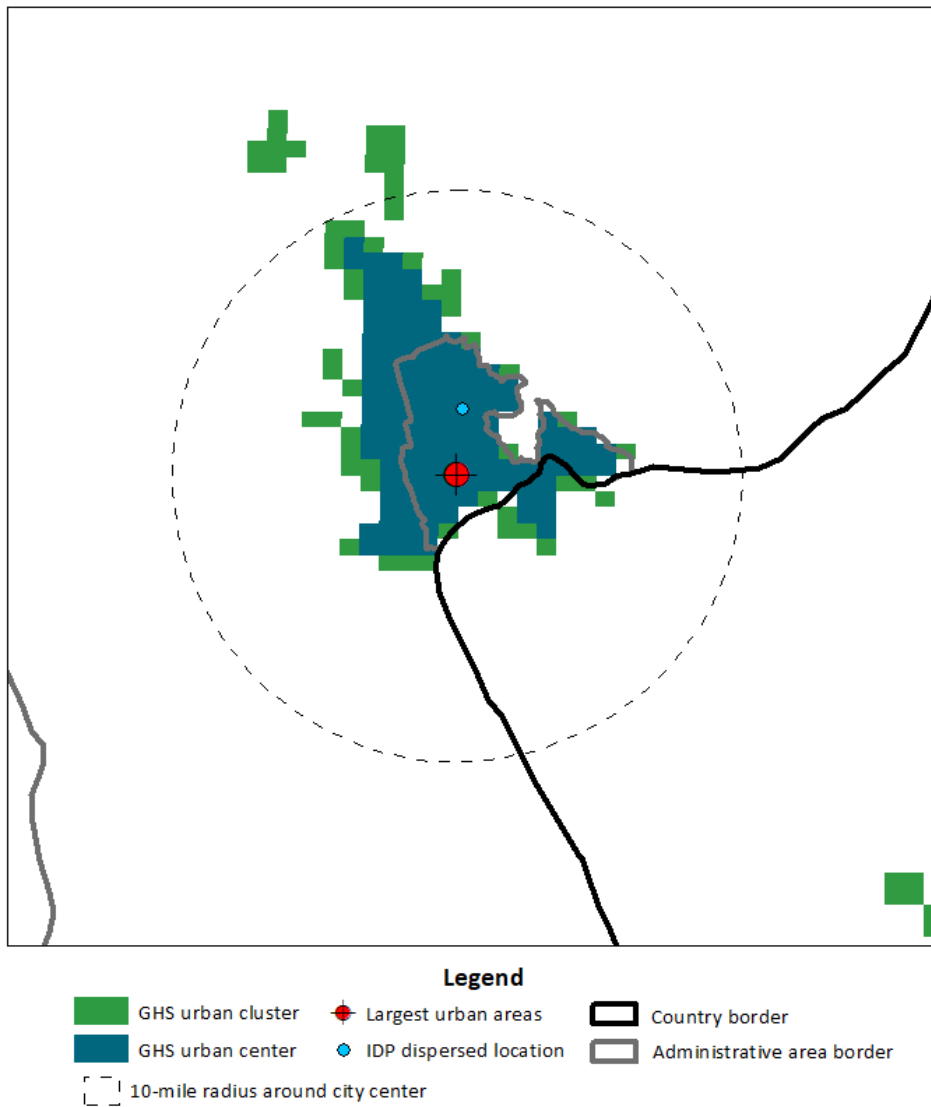
Figure 9. Visualization of urban classifications in Maiduguri, Nigeria



We also conduct the overlap analysis using dispersed data. For these data, we consider dispersed points that are within an administrative unit whose area is composed of at least 25 percent urban centers to be in an urban center. (The 25 percent cut off was used because administrative units with such high rates of urbanization tend to be relatively small areas that correspond to large cities.) If the units contain major or largest cities, we also consider the dispersed points to be in major and largest cities, respectively.^{xix} Figure 10 helps illustrate this approach. It displays the city of Bangui in the Central African Republic, on the border with the DRC. As one can see, Bangui is more than 25 percent composed of urban centers; in fact, it is virtually entirely urban centers. Moreover, it is a largest city. Thus, although the data are dispersed within Bangui, because we know Bangui is heavily urban and the largest city, we consider the dispersed data to be in a largest city.

^{xix} In addition, some of the data from Libya—those which include GPS coordinates—are dispersed but counted as site-specific because they are dispersed to very small administrative units. Thus, some of these data may be unfairly counted as urban, which is not ideal, but it is preferable to discarding these relatively specific data from analysis.

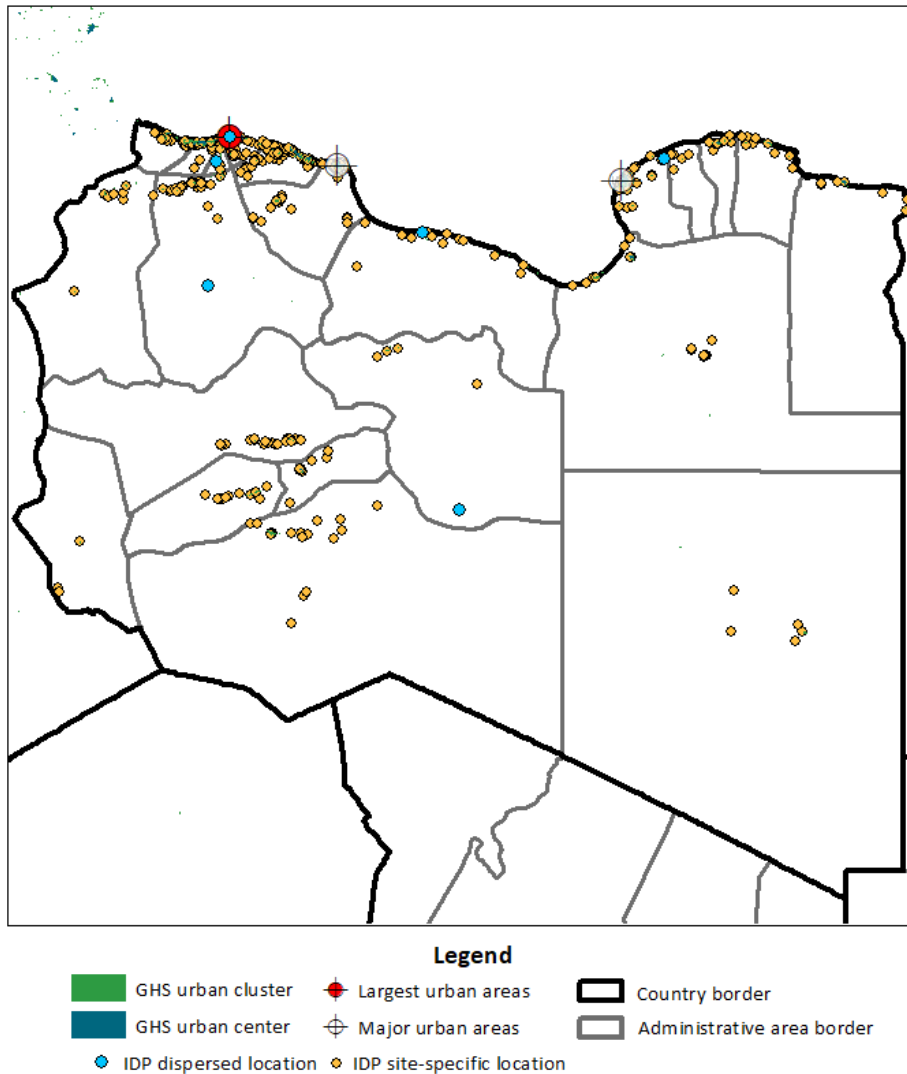
Figure 10. Visualization of dispersed data counted as largest city, in Bangui, Central African Republic



For the dispersed data that are not within an administrative area that is composed of at least 25 percent urban centers, there are some instances in which UNHCR or DTM indicate explicitly whether a given group of IDPs is urban or rural. If they are indicated as urban, we also consider them to be urban. Specifically, we classify these dispersed urban data as “dispersed urban.” Figure 11 helps illustrate this approach. It shows all of the data—site-specific and dispersed—that are available for IDPs in Libya. As one can see, most of the data points are site-specific, and these are classified in the ways discussed above. For the dispersed data, some are located in the map on top of urban centers or major cities. However, these points are not counted as such because we in reality only know that they are located within the administrative area in which they appear. In some cases, this can mean they are dispersed somewhere in a rather large province, so the data are not very informative. In other cases, when they are dispersed in small provinces, the data are more indicative of actual locations. Among

the dispersed data in the figure, four of the seven points were marked as urban by the data collectors. We therefore consider those four to be in “any urban area,” regardless of their apparent location on the map.

Figure 11. Visualization of dispersed data in Libya



For the rest of the dispersed data (i.e., those which are not explicitly labelled as urban or rural and are not in an area that is at least 25 percent urban centers), we are unable to classify whether they are urban. Thus, much of the dispersed data are limited in what they can tell us about urban rates. Nonetheless, they still serve to visualize the general locations of IDPs in the interactive map.

When presenting the urban data, we also include a category for “any urban area,” which is the sum total of all urban classifications. Thus, to simplify presentation, we do not present dispersed urban data as a separate category—they are simply the difference between “any urban area” and “urban cluster.”

In the interactive map, each location is labelled as the largest urban classification to which it can be ascribed. For example, an IDP grouping located in a largest urban area is labelled as “largest urban area” even though it could also be labelled as “urban cluster” (since all largest urban areas, by defini-

tion, are also major urban areas, urban centers, and urban clusters).

Table 7 shows that there is a total of 14,623,322 IDPs with locations tracked within-countries (this includes IDPs that were tracked in terms of their general location, such as within a given province, even if it was not in a way that allowed for analysis of urban-rural location). All of these locations are visualized in the interactive map, and they are spread across 20 countries. The amount of missing data (i.e., the gap between the number of conflict-displaced IDPs and the number of IDPs with within-country location information) are also visualized in the interactive map. Of these 14.6 million IDPs with locations tracked, 9,273,931, across 17 countries, have data that are useful for analysing locations relative to urban areas. This is our sample for analysis. Within this sample, 8,727,615 IDPs have site-specific data and 131,305 are dispersed in administrative areas that are at least 25 percent urban. These are the most useful data points, allowing us to categorize them as urban clusters, urban centers, major urban areas, or largest urban areas. An additional 415,011 IDPs are dispersed but with urban-rural classification, allowing us to classify them as urban using the “any urban area” classification.

Altogether, this means that nearly a third of the within-country location data, including all the data for three countries, cannot be used in analysis. Furthermore, of the roughly 36 million conflict-displaced IDPs in the world (according to methods described in Appendix A), only about 26 percent are tracked in a way that allows for analysis. This underscores the fact laid out in the data section: the numbers of urban IDPs we present are not estimates of the number of urban IDPs in the world—rather lower bounds.

Table 7. Breakdown of types of within-country IDP location data for the 17 countries in the sample

		Amount of IDP data	Useful for location analysis?
Site-specific		8,727,615	Yes
Dispersed...	... in admin. areas that are at least 25% urban	131,305	Yes
	... in admin. areas < 25% urban, with urban-rural classification	415,011	Yes (but only for vague classification)
	... in admin. areas < 25% urban, without urban-rural classification	5,349,391	No
Total tracked within-country (all of which can be seen in the interactive map)		14,623,322	.
Of the total tracked, amount useful for location analysis (our sample)		9,273,931	.

APPENDIX F: NUMBER OF IDPs BY COUNTRY AND TYPE OF URBAN AREA

Country	IDPs with data for urban analysis	IDPs in any urban areas	IDPs in urban clusters	IDPs in urban centers	IDPs in major urban areas	IDPs in largest cities
Afghanistan	1,845,715	594,954	594,954	197,089	125,418	44,560
Burkina Faso	2,350	0	0	0	0	0
Burundi	24,497	24,497	24,497	24,497	24,497	24,497
Cameroon	244,347	89,962	89,962	49,194	18,948	18,948
Central African Rep.	103,785	103,785	103,785	103,785	103,785	103,785
Chad	99,983	0	0	0	0	0
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	614,171	238,633	238,633	127,092	75,484	0
Ethiopia	1,491,648	210,087	210,087	151,381	35,500	6,573
Iraq	1,866,594	1,298,898	1,298,898	917,352	546,240	45,330
Libya	171,323	133,306	110,763	84,217	46,252	16,008
Madagascar	5,699	0	0	0	0	0
Mali	3,023	3,023	3,023	3,023	3,023	3,023
Niger	129,015	0	0	0	0	0
Nigeria	2,026,602	1,360,755	1,360,755	872,480	424,307	0
Pakistan	174,354	174,354	0	0	0	0
Papua New Guinea	1,337	0	0	0	0	0
Yemen	469,488	155,580	155,580	63,564	35,538	0
Total	9,273,931	4,387,834	4,190,937	2,593,674	1,438,992	262,724

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