



Helpdesk Research Report

Effects of respect for international humanitarian law on displacement

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Question

Is there evidence that the degree of respect for international humanitarian law (IHL) during an armed conflict affects levels of displacement? Focus on armed conflicts in the past 10 years (2006-2016). Cases can relate to internal or international displacement, and to any type and number of armed belligerents. The connections considered can involve direct or indirect factors or effects, such as the role of disrupted livelihoods. If possible, also signpost evidence on whether the degree of respect for IHL impacts how long civilians are affected by a crisis.

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1. Overview

International practitioner and policy literature typically views violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) as forcing civilians to leave the area of fighting, for example as a result of direct and deliberate attacks on civilians' bodies, housing, and livelihoods, on civilian infrastructures, or on aid delivery. It typically argues that better respect for IHL by warring parties is likely to enable civilians to stay in the areas concerned. At the same time, most legal scholars agree that IHL does not forbid all forced displacement of civilians, and that current IHL and international refugee law leave open significant gaps in

legal protections.¹ Most importantly, high-quality literature on population movements has long demonstrated that, even under violent conditions, displacement (like return) is differentiated by individuals, households, and contexts. Given such complexity, is there actually evidence that the degree of respect for IHL during an armed conflict affects levels of displacement?

This rapid review considers academic, practitioner, and policy literature published in the past five years about internal or cross-border displacement that is linked with domestic or international armed conflicts that have taken place in the decade since 2006.² The rapid literature search identified a limited though rigorous evidence base, by using proxies for 'respect for IHL' such as violence against civilians by armed groups. The main findings from multi-country studies are as follows.

- Considered at macro level, **warfare is typically followed by displacement.**
- However, **mobility is just one among many strategies that civilian groups, households and individuals adopt** to survive and cope with war and its consequences. In most wars, a large proportion of the population, if not the majority, do not move away (Raleigh 2011: S85). Even in civil wars, most civilians do not leave conflict zones (Raleigh 2011: S87). Civilians may stay through choice; others are trapped against their will into a lack of mobility. In both cases, civilians who remain elaborate self-protection strategies other than displacement to cope.
- Even focusing on civilians who move, the **causality from warfare to displacement is not automatic**, universal, or linear, nor is it mono-causal.
- Three categories of **intermediate variables mediate the effects of warfare** on displacement, at macro, meso and micro levels: violence, economy, and politics. They shape the level of displacement, its type (e.g. forced immobility, forced expulsion, anticipatory migration), its geography (in the place of origin, in transit, and at destination), the groups affected, and its timeframe (e.g. when people leave, for how long).
 - **Violence against civilians is the main driver of displacement.**
 - The nature, intensity, location, external influences, and targets of violence shape mobility. In particular, when armed actors' logic is to collectively target specific groups of civilians, this leads members of the targeted group to adapt their decisions and modalities of mobility, by attempting to leave, hide, or comply.
 - But these factors cannot alone explain the specifics of civilians' mobility. Conflict dynamics determine the relative weight of violence and economic conditions in civilians' decisions about mobility, and their willingness to trade income for improved security. This is specific to context.

¹ For an overview of relevant international law, its interpretations, and ongoing debates, see: Cantor (2012); Cantor & Durieux (2014); Juss (2013); Leaning (2011); Ruauudel (2013).

² For the purpose of this report, displacement refers to any civilian individual or household moving out of an area as a response to the direct or indirect effects of armed conflict. It includes internal displacement (i.e. internally displaced persons [IDPs]) and moving across a border (i.e. refugees and people who migrate as a result of war). In agreement with DFID, the research approach to displacement was kept open-ended: it considered forced movement of civilians that humanitarian practitioners would label as refugees or IDPs, but also migration. This report focuses on contexts that would typically be deemed to constitute armed conflicts under IHL. The report does not cover contexts of high levels of domestic violence, although such violence has demonstrably led to domestic and international displacement in a number of cases.

- **Socio-economic factors** also shape mobility.
 - o Some of these factors interact with armed actors' degree of respect for IHL, especially regarding the protection of civilians' livelihoods, public infrastructures, and aid delivery. Other factors are more centred on civilian households' and individuals' "identity, class, assets, feasibility, assistance and social networks", as they interact with war (Raleigh 2011: S85).
 - o The specific position of households in the face of IHL violations shapes their situation and decisions: risks of violence are not equal for all households, and households' capacities for protection and for mobility are unequal too. One reason is that armed groups target groups of civilians with particular characteristics. Another is that some households can protect themselves from violence better than others. Characteristics such as wealth, education, or political affiliations can reduce risks of violence, on location or by moving away. This is why, for example, some households stay in regions with intense violence, and why some become trapped.
- There is **no strong empirical evidence to date that armed conflicts increase trafficking in persons**, though they do exacerbate the root causes of such trafficking (Goździak & Walter 2014).

Section 2 discusses the state of knowledge and knowledge gaps on the report question. Section 3 gives a narrative synthesis of evidence, focusing on a selection of multi-country studies. Section 4 lists rigorous single-country studies. Lastly, section 5 signposts references about the effects of respect for IHL on how long a crisis lasts for affected civilians.

2. State of knowledge and knowledge gaps

Approach for researching the report question

Nearly none of the rigorous references identified for this report use legal categories to investigate the effects of armed actors' warfare on civilians' displacement. Among relevant studies, academic literature uses social science language, and international practitioner and policy circles use their own practice-oriented language. So the approach adopted in this report was to **work in an open-ended way from proxies** that stand for respect for IHL (or violations of it) and for displaced persons in relevant studies.

On IHL, proxies were direct and indirect. Direct proxies included, for example, armed groups targeting civilians or destroying livelihoods. Indirect proxies were about the manifestations or immediate effects of likely respect or violations of IHL, such as the successful provision of humanitarian aid in an area (which indicates that that armed groups let humanitarian agencies work there). This is admittedly imperfect and carries risks of confounding causes and effects, though efforts were made to systematically check that the direction of causalities synthesised was the one investigated. In addition, authors rarely described situations formally as respect for, or violation of, IHL, and it would have been impossible for the author of this rapid review to decide whether each of these situations formally saw respect or violation of IHL. Given that all the conflicts discussed in the references used in the body of the report have seen major, frequent violations of IHL combined with selective respect for certain aspects of IHL such as allowing aid delivery, the report author has worked from a balance of probability for inclusion and exclusion of cases and for categorisation of events as respect vs. violation of IHL. For the purpose of this review, such proxies were the best approximation to investigate the question.

On displacement, the non-legalistic approach meant that any movement of the population in a war-affected country was considered for inclusion when authors showed a link to warfare, whether the displacement was a direct result of armed fighting (e.g. flight for immediate survival) or anticipatory with more room for choices (e.g. anticipatory emigration before fighting reaches an area). Findings in many references that note the fluid and mixed nature of population movements during armed conflicts support this approach. Specialists have issued strong warnings against basing studies on legal, practitioner, or policy categories – such as IDPs vs. refugees, war refugees vs. economic migrants from countries at war, internal vs. international war.³ They show that such approaches lead to making incorrect assumptions about the persons affected, to missing important data and large population groups, to misinterpreting information and twisting causalities (a widely cited article on this is: Bakewell 2008).

State of knowledge and knowledge gaps

Key features

There is a **limited body of relevant and rigorous studies** that specifically examines the effects of warfare on displacement that has occurred in the past ten years, especially for academic publications and for multi-country studies.⁴ While there is a significant, high-quality knowledge base on displacement during wartime, only a limited number of these studies specifically investigate the report question.

One of the strengths of the knowledge base is its **rigour**. Available knowledge is based on a range of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method research. Some methods and approaches are more present than others, but overall there is good diversity in the approaches used. Household surveys are one example of a less-used method. This is due to the risks involved for researchers and respondents caught up in forced displacement in places of war (Ibáñez 2014: 371). Most of the rigorous studies were found in academic literature. While there is a mass of publications on displacement from practitioner and policy sources, many of them were found to be descriptive, with no investigation of causalities, and very few of the analytical ones met minimal standards of rigour (such as spelling out the methodology and data behind their claims). This left a small number of publications from policy-oriented institutions and practice-oriented research organisations and to a lesser extent from NGOs. This rapid review identified nearly no rigorous analytical references from governmental aid agencies or international organisations on the report question. While a few authors are central and widely cited, knowledge comes from a variety of sources, with a mix of multi-country and single-country studies.⁵

The knowledge base offers good though uneven coverage. **Geographically**, knowledge comes from a diversity of world regions with low- and middle-income countries. However, several countries stand out (particularly in academic research), especially Colombia, Nepal, Somalia, and Syria. For example, Ibáñez' review of recent literature found that all the household surveys available on the report topic were

³ For example, a number of armed conflicts, such as Colombia, the DRC, and Somalia, defy neat characterisation (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 18, 28-30). All this “has considerable implications in understanding [...] forced displacement” and providing international protection (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 2).

⁴ In contrast, there is a large body of knowledge and data on the links between warfare and displacement relating to conflicts prior to 2006 (see syntheses e.g. in: Adhikari 2013; Ibáñez 2014; Melander & Öberg 2007).

⁵ This being said, the majority of references are single-case studies. Due to the time constraints of helpdesk work, and the large number of single-case studies published by practitioner and policy sources, this report prioritised the following selection of references: any relevant academic references, be they single- or multi-case studies; and practitioner or policy references that provide substantial analysis (as opposed to brief statements) and, preferably, are based on a multi-case study.

concentrated on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, and Nepal (2014: 371). Conversely, some armed conflicts affecting large numbers or proportions of displaced populations are under-researched or not researched.

Thematically, the literature offers good coverage of various types of armed conflicts and warfare, of a range of direct and intermediate variables involved in the relationship between warfare and displacement, and of various types of displacement within countries and across borders. There are some gaps though, such as a dearth of research on trapped populations who cannot flee (Black & Collyer 2014). However, findings rarely include a systematic consideration of structures of inequality – such as socio-economic class, caste, gender, age, ethnicity, nationality (including non-citizens – see Koser 2014), and disabilities –, or of their interplay. Most references do consider a few of these inequalities, but as a whole the literature displays a significant lack of disaggregation and analysis in this regard. For example, household-level literature typically approaches households as unitary decision-makers. This ignores that households may collectively decide to adopt separate mobility strategies for different members of the household (Ibáñez 2014: 383). It also erases inequalities and power differentials among household members.

In terms of the **consistency of findings**, there are some areas of wide agreement, most notably to confirm that violence against civilians is the primary driver of displacement. But there also remain many cases when evidence from different countries points in opposite directions, because relationships between variables seem specific to context. Further, while a few causalities can be considered established, authors frequently note that findings are either correlations (rather than causalities), or that the causalities need clarification. Studying contexts of ongoing war is notoriously difficult, and data, methods and interpretation of results are frequently debated (e.g. Blattman & Miguel 2010; Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 7-8; Ibáñez 2014: 371-372). For example, “the causal links – especially direction of causation – between conflict, poverty, population displacement, disease and famine are difficult to untangle” (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 30). As a result, while many findings can be taken as conclusive thanks to their methodological rigour, many causalities have to remain indicative.

Summary of in-depth critical discussions of available knowledge and its gaps

Ibáñez (2014) and Raleigh (2011) offer critical assessments of the state of knowledge on the effects of war on displacement (also see a similar version of Ibáñez 2014 in Ibáñez & Moya 2016). They identify gaps in knowledge due to methodological issues as well as to lack of connections between themes. This assessment of recent literature also shows where and how bringing in complementary themes, methods, and levels of analysis would increase understanding. The overarching weakness of available literature is that studies often fail to establish a causality from violence or other wartime factors to forced displacement. There are problems of correlation vs. causality, of direction of causality, and of uncertainties about explanatory mechanisms for the correlations found (Ibáñez 2014).

Cross-country literature on forced displacement presents methodological and empirical problems. First, a number of authors have made the erroneous assumption that armed groups and war-affected populations are homogeneous (Ibáñez 2014: 360). In reality, “armed groups are strategic actors that attack the population according to their war objectives and the constraints they face”, and civilians still make choices in the midst of war and violence (Kalyvas, and Moore & Shellman, both summarised in Ibáñez 2014: 360). Second, the limited availability of data curtails the ability to control for other correlates of forced displacement (also see Blattman & Miguel 2010). Third, the studies Ibáñez examined fail to establish a causality between violence and forced displacement: unobservable variables may cause variations across war, violence and forced displacement (also see Blattman & Miguel 2010). Using cross-

country data and not controlling for fixed effects in countries mean that study authors do not control for an array of factors that may determine both warfare and displacement simultaneously, such as the dynamics of conflict or socio-economic factors (Kalyvas cited in Ibáñez 2014: 360-361; also see Blattman & Miguel 2010).

National-level studies present several drawbacks to study the relationship between conflict and migration: available data are poor and incomplete; individuals' agency is ignored and "subsumed under the structural characteristics of polities or conflicts" (Raleigh 2011: S84); local determinants are not addressed; the patterns of movement of refugees or IDPs are not explained; and previous studies have approached migration through the questionable dichotomies of force vs. choice, politics vs. economics, and war vs. peace – even as the boundaries between both are blurred in time, space and society (Raleigh 2011: S84).

The **literature about in-country variations** of displacement can help overcome some of the above problems with cross-country literature. Sub-national estimations control for the historical and institutional contexts in particular to each country. Their use of panel estimations also controls for unobservable variables that are in variants in time. Both of these approaches reduce the bias caused by unobservable and omitted variables respectively (Ibáñez 2014: 363). However, the patterns, characteristics, and determinants of wartime mobility are under-researched at local levels of analysis (Raleigh 2011: S85). Studies about in-country variations also have shortcomings. Among other reasons, they too fail to account for the heterogeneity of victimisation and of the risk of violence among the population. Their empirical approach to the data cannot disentangle the various channels causing forced displacement, such as armed groups' strategic approach to warfare and civilians' cost-benefit analysis. The studies also cannot explain the heterogeneity of individuals' decisions to stay or move. Further, they fail to establish a causality from violence to forced displacement (Ibáñez 2014: 363).

Even in **studies that consider the effects of armed groups' strategies** in civil wars on forced displacement, authors often confound the causes of war with the patterns of violence against civilians during war (Kalyvas cited in Ibáñez 2014: 366). They also largely ignore the interactions between civilians and armed groups (Ibáñez 2014: 366). Further, the literature on armed actors' strategies typically ignores the role of economic factors in shaping armed actors' warfare and civilians' decisions on displacement (Ibáñez 2014: 369).

The **household-focused studies** currently available present a number of strengths, first among them their ability to disaggregate findings about household and individual displacement in a detailed manner. However, they also have a number of limitations, often due to the methodological challenges involved. Among other issues, household surveys do not isolate and disentangle the effects of different causal factors (economic, social, and violence-related) on displacement. For example, wealthy households may be targeted for violence because of their wealth, which may prompt them to leave an area; but their wealth may also enable them to move out more easily. To date, household surveys have not disentangled these effects empirically, leaving it impossible to know what the exact causalities at play are in the face of contradictory findings from different contexts. More broadly, the studies establish correlations, not causalities. In addition, their external validity and generalisability are low, due to their limited geographic basis and to their contradictory, context-specific findings (Ibáñez 2014: 374-376, 379).

3. Multi-country studies⁶

Importance of combining multiple levels of analysis and diverse factors

A multi-level, multi-factor explanation of mobility by groups, households, and individuals

Displacement typically follows warfare – this is acknowledged in rigorous literature as a fair macro-level claim. However, the causality from war to displacement is neither automatic or general, nor linear or mono-causal. Not all armed actors displace civilians, and those that do have a range of motives and effects. For example, armed non-state actors may deliberately or unintentionally cause displacement, but they may also actively take protective action towards displaced people (Ruauadel 2013). Even when armed actors use intense violence at one point in time in one area, not everyone flees, and not everyone leaves at the same time to the same place (see e.g. Black & Collyer 2014; Ibáñez 2014: 350; Raleigh 2011; South et al. 2012; Zetter, Purdekova & Ibáñez Londoño 2013). All high-quality references found for this report argue that the causalities involved are complex.

Recent empirical evidence demonstrates that **mobility is just one among many strategies that groups, households and individuals adopt** to survive and cope with war and its consequences. Where earlier scholarship framed forcibly displaced people as passive victims, it is now well established that civilians facing war are active agents who make decisions in complex conditions. To understand displacement during wars, analyses need to consider both people who stay and people who move, to identify whether, why and how people stay or move, as well as the who, how many, when, and where of forced or chosen immobility and forced or chosen mobility.⁷ For example, data from household surveys in Colombia and Nepal shows that people self-selected for mobility, that conflict dynamics determined this self-selection, and that the redistribution of population as a consequence of conflict had a non-random pattern (Ibáñez 2014: 376).

Violence, though a determinant factor, is combined with and mediated by socio-economic factors that influence decisions on mobility. The understanding of wartime mobility therefore needs to be more complex than thinking that relocation is always forced: people weigh the costs and benefits of moving in the face of violence (Ibáñez 2014) and civilians exercise agency – even highly constrained –, including when they stay (Baines & Paddon 2012). Factors such as the macro-level deliberate violent targeting of civilians cannot alone explain the specifics of civilians’ mobility in the face of armed conflict and violence. In many cases, households also make choices on whether, when, and where to move to escape war or violence. The choice made by large numbers of civilians to stay in regions with protracted conflict and high victimisation of civilians is one manifestation of this and evidence at cross-country, household and micro levels confirms this (Baines & Paddon 2012; Ibáñez 2014; Raleigh 2011).⁸ Movement and its options depend on the nature, intensity, location, external influences, and targets of violence, and that people’s decisions on where and when to move depend “largely on identity, class, assets, feasibility, assistance and social networks” (Raleigh 2011: S85).

⁶ This section centres on references about more than one country. On a few occasions, it does mention evidence from single-country studies, but primarily when those studies are cited in multi-country references.

⁷ Baines & Paddon 2012; Black & Collyer 2014; Ibáñez 2014; Jose & Medie 2015; Raleigh 2011; South et al. 2012; Zetter, Purdekova & Ibáñez Londoño 2013.

On uncertainty for displaced civilians, see: Horst & Grabska (2015).

⁸ In this discussion, Ibáñez (2014) does not mention the case of civilians being trapped, although this affects the notion of choice.

Several authors find that the **traditional determinants of migration – and immobility – play a continued, though transformed, role** in households' decisions, as war-specific determinants add new variables and transform the traditional ones (e.g. Black & Collyer 2014; Ibáñez 2014: 361, 369-371; Raleigh 2011). Ibáñez (2014: 361, 370-371) presents a synthesis model with the main types of push and pull factors shaping decisions of mobility: violence (perceptions of security); traditional determinants of migration (economic conditions, costs of information and migration); household characteristics that influence preferences; and a random terms. Each factor is important at both origin and destination location (see e.g. Balcells & Steele 2016; Lozano-Gracia et al. 2010; Steele 2009).

The models of forced displacement that Ibáñez (2014: 361-362) synthesises confirm that violence is a major determinant of displacement, but that other variables shape when, where and why mobility happens in the face of violence. Warfare alters the benefits and costs of migration in the eyes of the people affected. People are willing to trade off income to improve their conditions of security (Ibáñez 2014: 361-362, 371). More broadly, people “make trade-offs between short-term survival, medium and longer term livelihood prospects, political status, family unity and other issues, trying to maximise their welfare within the opportunities presented by immigration and refugee regimes” (Lindley cited in Raleigh 2011: 585).

The **wartime combination of economy, politics, and violence has two major implications** for displacement. First, conflict dynamics determine the weight of violence and economic conditions in decisions about mobility, and the willingness to trade income for improved security. This is context-specific. Second, the specific position of households shape their situation and decisions: risks of violence have patterns and are not equal for all households, and households' capacities protection and for mobility are unequal too (Black & Collyer 2014; Ibáñez 2014: 371; South et al. 2012). One reason is that armed groups target groups of civilians with particular characteristics – as detailed later in this report – and seek to control regions with salient strategic features. Another reason is that some households can protect themselves from violence better than others. In particular, wealth, education, political affiliations, and other household characteristics can help people reduce their risks of attack by armed actors, on location or by moving away (Adhikari 2013; Balcells & Steele 2016; Black & Collyer 2014; Ibáñez 2014: 371; Raleigh 2011; Ruaudel 2013). This second factor explains why some households decide to stay in regions with intense violence (Ibáñez 2014: 371), and why some become trapped despite wanting to move (Black & Collyer 2014).

Importance of combining levels of analysis

Several authors emphasise that the only way to account for the plural, complex effects of warfare on displacement is to take into account several levels of analysis. Cumulatively, the levels of analysis identified as meaningful in the literature reviewed for this report are: macro levels (e.g. armed groups' use of violence, state of economy and livelihoods); meso levels, such as social groups defined by their location, politics, or other relevant socio-economic condition (such as disability); households; and individuals. In particular, the study of conflict dynamics and displacement has long focused on macro-level factors, and several authors emphasise the importance of complementing these with micro-level perspectives (e.g. Baines & Paddon 2012; Blattman & Miguel 2010; Ibáñez 2014; Raeymaekers 2011; Raleigh 2011; Zetter, Purdekova & Ibáñez Londoño 2013).

For example, based on her review of recent literature about internal armed conflict, Ibáñez (2014: 251) concludes that the causes of forced displacement need to be understood at three analytical levels:

1. “the onset of war in countries with particular conditions leading displacement”;
2. armed groups’ strategies during civil conflict “which triggers purposive violence against civilians and subsequent movements of population”;
3. the behaviour and decisions of individuals in regions of armed conflict.

Many authors also emphasise the necessity of considering, and articulating together, various research methods and various categories of factors in order to understand the effects of warfare on displacement – see the summary of critical reviews of literature in section 2 for greater details.

Deliberate violence against civilians

Violence against civilians that does not lead to displacement

In most wars, a large proportion of the population, if not the majority, do not move away (Raleigh 2011: S85). Even in civil wars, most civilians do not leave conflict zones (Raleigh 2011: S87). Yet to date, there is still scarce evidence on the people who stay, be it due to lower risks of victimisation, higher opportunity costs of moving, or lethal risk of moving. Not much is known about their reasons for staying and about their strategies to navigate the conflict, reduce their risk of victimisation, and continue their daily lives (Black & Collyer 2014; Ibáñez 2014: 383).

Civilians who stay, by choice or by constraint, in the face of violence

Even in contexts where armed actors use high levels violence against civilians, **many civilians stay** in the affected region. Civilians’ assessments of a situation are typically very nuanced and well-informed (Baines & Paddon 2012; South et al. 2012). For example, Steele (2009) found that households’ responses to the risk of violence in specific contested localities in Colombia depended on the type of violence. If an armed actor targeted civilians collectively, those civilians with a profile akin to that of supporters of a rival armed group faced a higher likelihood of being targeted. Consequently, households assessed their probability of being targeted collectively, and decided whether to stay or leave based on that. On that basis, specific groups of civilians decided to stay (Steele 2009).

In some contexts, civilians become trapped in the middle of an internal armed conflict, without being able to flee, be it to nearby areas or further away. They are then typically at high risk of violence, neglect, and exploitation by the state and non-state actors (Black & Collyer 2014; Farrell & Schmitt 2012). It is typically the most disadvantaged in society who become trapped (Black & Collyer 2014).

Writing on “trapped populations”, Black and Collyer (2014) emphasise the distinction between the desire to move and the need to move, and between aspiration and ability in wartime mobility. Forced immobility can affect civilians at their location origin, as some are never able to begin their move. Others become immobilised on the move, leading to an incomplete journey. Various factors can explain enforced immobility, including (Black & Collyer 2014, unless otherwise cited):

- The risks posed by wartime violence that can arise due to direct attacks. For example, in civil wars, intense violence limits out-migration from these hotspots (Raleigh 2011: S87).

- Other forms of violence that can also restrict mobility. For example, in contexts such as Colombia, civilians have commonly been taken hostage, either to deter state forces from conducting operations ('political' hostages) or to fund the insurgency through ransoms ('economic' hostages) (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 18).
- A lack of various types of material and immaterial capital needed for mobility. This includes economic, social, cultural, human, geographical, and political capital, as conceptualised for non-war contexts by Kothari (cited in Black & Collyer 2014: 290-291; also see Raleigh 2011). In particular, "[l]imited finances and immobile assets prevent movement", writes Raleigh (2011: S87) on civil wars.
- The combined disruptions that war, environmental change, or natural disasters, cause to resources and practices that enable individuals' mobility (also see Raleigh 2011). This has affected mobility in Somalia, for example (Lindley 2010 & 2014).
- The restrictive migration policies of states (also see Horst & Grabska 2015).
- Unintended negative consequences of certain humanitarian actions, such as safe havens.

Civilians' self-protection other than mobility in the face of violence

Civilians in armed conflicts have developed a number of **tailored coping strategies** to avoid having to resort to displacement, or to survive a forced lack of mobility. The strategies – individual and collective – have ranged from non-engagement to non-violent engagement to violent engagement (Ibáñez 2014; Jose & Medie 2015; Ruaudel 2013; South et al. 2012). The relationships between civilians and armed actors are dynamic, reciprocal (though unequal), and strongly shaped by gender and kinship (Ruaudel 2013). The role of armed actors can range from an exploitative and abusive orientation to a positioning as a source of governance, Ruaudel (2013) notes about armed non-state actors.

- In Colombia, some civilians could stay because they could associate with an armed group that provided them protection, while others could stay because they exchanged information with the newly dominant armed group and defected from the rival group. In both cases, staying entailed signalling a strong willingness to collaborate with the dominant armed group and having to comply with it (Steele 2009).
- In Nepal, people used social connections for protection from violence: community organisations and social networks provided a sense of security as well as valuable information to prevent victimisation and avoid having to move out (Adhikari 2013; Williams 2013).
- In Somalia, many residents of Mogadishu had made the choice to stay in the city until 2007-2008, despite 16-17 years of urban warfare. This is because they had created mechanisms for survival and coping that enabled them to negotiate daily dangers. Some did well despite war, such as small and large businessmen, while others did well out of the war itself, namely warlords. When these mechanisms broke down, some two thirds of the city population left (Lindley 2010).
- In northern Uganda, civilians adopted self-protection strategies that included attempts to appear neutral, avoidance, and accommodation of armed actors. Access to local knowledge and networks shaped each of these strategies (Baines & Paddon 2012).

Civilians' definition and practice of protection are elaborate and often differ from international aid agencies' perspectives, as shown in community-based studies about self-protection in Myanmar (Burma), Sudan, South Sudan and Zimbabwe. People vulnerable to the negative effects of war on security and livelihoods take the lead in protecting themselves and their communities. In most cases, people closely associate their livelihoods and protection. In addition, they often considered psychological and spiritual

needs and threats to be as important as physical survival. “Customary law and local values and traditions mattered at least as much as formal rights” (South et al. 2012: iii).

Violence against civilians that leads to displacement

Violence against civilians as the major driver of displacement

There is a consensus in the literature that **violence against civilians is the main driver of forced displacement in wartime**, be it because civilians flee immediate or upcoming violence, or because armed actors force them to move. Data from recent household surveys up to 2014 confirm that violence is the major factor even after controlling for economic and social conditions, and for household characteristics (Ibáñez 2014: 373). This household survey data also shows that people decide to move not only after being victims of a direct attack, but also preventively to avoid perceived threats and violence in neighbouring communities and reduce the likelihood of suffering aggression (Ibáñez 2014: 373).

At the same time, many authors also note that the levels, geography, timing, and profile of displacement vary, due to variables related either to the violence itself or to other factors that combine with the factor of violence in shaping displacement (or lack thereof). As a result, violence against civilians belongs to the category of factors having mixed effects on displacement. Further, there remain a number of knowledge gaps: “identifying the causal effect of violence on the decision to migrate is an unresolved and challenging issue” (Ibáñez 2014: 383).

In a UNHCR-commissioned study, Farrell and Schmitt (2012) confirm that **many civilians flee to escape the direct effects of armed violence**, i.e. bodily harm (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 12). They survey scholarship about the effects of internal armed conflicts that took place between 1990 and 2010 on civilian populations, by looking at multi-country literature and conducting a comparative analysis of six case studies (Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo [DRC], Mexico, Somalia, and Sri Lanka). The study shows that internal wars during the period have typically involved violence directed against civilians, including gender-based violence (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 1, 29-30). Further, internal armed conflicts have directly caused or chronically exacerbated population displacement, as well as food insecurity and disease, all of which have killed large numbers of civilians (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 1). These direct and indirect lethal effects of domestic warfare on civilians are a major cause of displacement (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 12).

How different logics of violence against civilians shape the specifics of wartime displacement

The literature provides further details and nuances on the levels, geography, and profile of displacement due to the logics, intensity, and geography of violence. Several types of violence against civilians and of interactions between civilians and armed groups have led to different effects on displacement – both overall at macro levels and in patterns specific to groups, households, and individuals.

One type of violence against civilians that has central relevance is **violence by armed groups that is specifically aimed at forcibly claiming territory** and, if needed as part of this, displacing populations (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 8; Ibáñez 2014: 366). The dynamics of armed groups determine their war strategies during internal conflicts, including their strategic use of forced displacement (Ibáñez 2014: 365-368). Indeed, at a macro level, armed groups’ deliberate choice to target and sometimes expel civilians for the purpose of establishing territorial control and civilians’ co-operation is a major factor of displacement (Ibáñez 2014: 363, 365-368). In doing so, armed groups may be aiming to pursue their war objectives, to terrorise and control the population on their territory, to uproot and punish a population, to alienate a population from a rival, to separate rebel groups from their support base, to increase their economic resources, or to secure space for illicit activities (Ibáñez 2014: 363, 366; Ruadel 2013).

While civilians may be attacked indiscriminately in some cases, much of the literature examines **targeted attacks against specific types of civilians**. Such collective targeting consist of attacks against a certain type of civilian who is perceived to support a rival, perhaps living in a particular neighbourhood, or being of a certain ethnicity, wealth level, social position, or political affiliation (Kalyvas cited in Ibáñez 2014: 367-368; also see Adhikari 2013; Steele 2009). Collective targeting is more likely in regions where two or more armed groups are in competition than in regions where an armed group either dominates the territory or has no control over it. Incumbent armed groups use collective targeting to punish potential defections among the resident population, and incoming armed groups use it to show residents that support for the incumbent armed group is costly (Kalyvas cited in Ibáñez 2014: 367-368; Steele 2009). This is exactly what a statistical analysis on Colombia at sub-national level found, for example (Balcells & Steele 2016).

Another form of violence leading to forced mobility is the **abduction** of children to forcibly enrol them as child soldiers, for example in wars in Colombia, Somalia, and Sri Lanka (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 19, 29).

Another type of violence that has led to displacement is **generalised violence**, i.e. violence other than warfare that is large-scale and indiscriminate. The application of this concept to specific contexts remains debated, but some authors point to its usefulness in analysing displacement. For instance, generalised violence sometimes accompanies internal armed conflict, as a precursor (e.g. in Libya in 2011) or as a component in the overall pattern of violence (e.g. in Iraq from 2004-2009). A general lack of security can also discourage many from returning. For example, in rural Southern and Eastern Afghanistan, civilians have faced “daily threats of violence from corrupt security services, insurgents, organised crime, and other armed groups”, which has discouraged a number of Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan from returning to these provinces (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 16). In other cases, generalised violence is not part of war, but carries the risk of armed conflict and does lead to displacement. For example, in 2008, election-related violence in Kenya led to the displacement of 350,000 persons (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 9-10). There is significant literature analysing displacement due to generalised violence in Latin America (see section 4).

These dynamics can also end up feeding into **causality loops**. The result of internal armed conflicts, such as population displacement, food insecurity, and disease can “provide fertile ground for generalised violence” (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 9). Similarly, the presence of displaced populations, especially cross-border refugee flows, can exacerbate the risk and intensity of armed conflict in neighbouring states, if host states perceive the refugees to heighten political, economic, or social insecurity (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 13). One study on Colombia found that community characteristics (e.g. urban vs. rural) and the macro-level characteristics of the war, such as whether the conflict revolves around arbitrary set elements (e.g. physical appearance) or not, shaped people’s decisions about whether and where to move. In turn, displaced persons’ choices of mobility in the face of violence can have further effects on displacement, including unintended negative consequences. For example, some displaced persons choose to cluster and hide with others with similar characteristics in a larger group. This may reduce individuals’ likelihood of suffering violence, but it may also increase danger for the whole community if an armed actor then comes to see the community as affiliated with a rival. This may lead to a cycle of collective targeting and displacement (Steele 2009).

How the intensity and geography of violence matter

The relation from violence against civilians to displacement is not linear; the intensity and geography of violence, as well as its logic, matter. The household survey data examined by Ibáñez (2014: 373) show that low **levels of violence** reduce the number of people moving out. Only a certain threshold triggers forced displacement (Ibáñez 2014: 373; also see Raleigh 2011). Data from Nepal shows that individuals facing higher levels of violence tend to move to more distant locations: in the case studied, more violence

was linked with international emigration, and a decrease in violence led to out-migration closer to people's home town (Bohra-Mishra & Massey 2011).

Economic factors "arguably" play a lesser role when warfare is intense and the risk of suffering violence is high (Ibáñez 2014: 378). When the level of violence and risks is low, the decision to move is less hasty and may give higher weight to traditional determinants of migration (Ibáñez 2014: 378).

The **geography of armed violence against civilians** also plays a defining role. People move to regions where armed conflict is less intense or the risk of victimisation is lower, even if their income drops. Improvements in security lead to arrivals of displaced persons, whereas the intensification of armed conflict leads people into forced flight (Ibáñez 2014: 362; also see Lozano-Gracia et al. 2010 on Colombia). In Colombia, civilians who decided to flee from a high risk of being attacked also assessed their risk of collective targeting when selecting a destination location. Civilians unwilling or unable to signal realignment to a new dominant armed group in their place of origin adopted distinct strategies. Some moved to the territorial strongholds of the group they supported. Others hid collectively among civilians also facing aggression, as this decreased the individual probability of their victimisation if their group reached a certain threshold. Lastly, others moved individually to a place that brought them anonymity (Steele 2009).

The conditions of armed conflict and security also shape people's choice of destination after displacement: people seek places that are safer than their place of origin, and arrive in regions with better security. Where there is violence in certain regions within a country, this deters displaced people from relocating there, reducing movement to these places (Ibáñez 2014: 362; also see Lozano-Gracia et al. 2010 on Colombia). Decisions about destinations are linked to the specific logics of violence. For example, in civil wars, areas of active fighting can still attract displaced persons if they think that the violence is likely to target other communities, or that the impact will be spread over larger communities (Raleigh 2011: S87).

A quantitative study on Colombia also shows that violence against civilians, measured through massacres, matters not only at origin and destination, but also in areas surrounding these locations. When there is violence in locations close to individuals who are in a place that itself is not directly experiencing violence, this signals a potential intensification of warfare and its spillover to nearby areas. As a result, such contexts prompt large population flight from places not directly suffering violence, and they discourage other displaced persons from seeking refuge in those places (Lozano-Gracia et al. 2010 on Colombia).

The relation between war violence and displacement is far from linear (Ibáñez 2014: 362-369). The impact of violence on displacement may vary with the intensity of the violence in the places of origin and destination (Ibáñez 2014: 363). For example, in Colombia, the additional variable of distance between places of origin and destination influences people's journey to safety. People in municipalities with extremely high levels of violence seem to move as far as possible from their hometown. This shows that people are willing to incur the higher costs associated with such moves to put greater distance between themselves and the violence they endured (Lozano-Gracia et al. 2010).

Characteristics of households and individuals that shape civilians' responses to violence

The risk of violence for civilians varies with characteristics at individual and household level. All these factors combine, alongside economic factors, to explain in-country and cross-border variations in displacement (Ibáñez 2014: 366; Raleigh 2011). One reason for the unequal risk of violence is that **armed actors attack groups in the population based on specific characteristics** (Ibáñez 2014: 363, 366). Civilians leave or stay largely depending on the characteristics that armed groups target and on armed groups' strategies (Ruauadel 2013; Steele 2009).

This combines with another variable: **differentiated civilian responses to the violent context**. Some individuals have better capacities to cope with the risk of violence, for example because they have better social connections or higher wealth (Baines & Paddon 2012; Ibáñez 2014; Koser 2014; South et al. 2012). However, the effects of such factors on displacement are neither automatic nor linear. For example, richer households may be targeted because of their wealth, or better able to fund out-migration, both of which may result in their leaving. On the other hand, their status may enable them to negotiate good relations with armed groups, which could enable them to stay. Studies on similar variables – such as wealth, income, or social capital – find that causalities seem to depend on the context and the types of household resources considered. For example, whereas landowners and people in waged employment were less likely to move out in Nepal, landowners with strong social networks were more likely to do so in Colombia. (Ibáñez 2014: 363, 366, 373-376; also see e.g. Adhikari 2013; Bohra-Mishra & Massey 2011; Koser 2014; South et al. 2012).

Individual and household characteristics of those who have decided to escape violence shape their displacement. In many Karen families and communities fleeing war in south-east Burma, people split up during migration, choosing different strategies depending on their resources and networks and local opportunities and constraints” (South et al. 2012: 7; also see South 2012). In general, those with mobile assets flee further (Raleigh 2011: S87). People leaving their home country for higher-income states “tend to be highly skilled and relatively wealthy” (Raleigh 2011: S90; also see Kirkegaard & Nat-George 2016 on people who flee war through studies at Western universities).

Factors other than violence, including livelihoods and public services

Several authors emphasise that the violence of armed conflict is not the only factor shaping displacement. Statistical analysis and a critical review of recent literature shows that factors additional to civil war are also associated with refugees’ and IDPs’ movement, including **respect for civil and political rights, and general socio-economic conditions** (Ibáñez 2014: 352-361; also see Raleigh 2011). In addition to physical threat, civilians’ considerations include: “conflict-induced asset depletion of fixed and immobile assets (e.g. land); collapsed markets and trade disruptions; physical isolation; changed livelihood considerations; the disruption to health and education services; and lack of security from economic exploitation” (Raleigh 2011: S88).

Degradation of livelihoods and economy

Economic factors are not the main determinants of forced migration, but they do play a role: the forced migration of IDPs is lower in regions with stronger economies, as measured by GDP per capita (Ibáñez 2014: 359). Households and individuals not only weigh their risk of violence, but also the economic benefits and costs of various alternatives, as modified by war, in their decision on whether to stay or leave (Ibáñez 2014: 369; Raleigh 2011).

At macro level, a number of civilians flee to escape the indirect effects of armed violence on their livelihoods and on their access to food, as war increases poverty and the risk of famine (Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 12; Ibáñez & Moya 2016; Lindley 2010). For example, in the Sri Lankan civil war, the massive IHL violations were destructive for people, infrastructure, livelihoods, and social relations, with disruptive results for the economy. In turn, this “contributed to an exodus of qualified professionals” from the North and East of the country (UNDP cited in Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 28).

At household level, economic factors, while not the main determinant of forced migration, play a role. Households with higher incomes are less likely to migrate (Ibáñez 2014: 359). Estimations for Nepal suggest that people in waged employment are less likely to move out in the face of violence (Adhikari

2013). This is possibly because the risk of foregone income deters mobility (Ibáñez 2014: 376). The ability of households to generate income is limited when warfare destroys economic opportunities, leading people to lose their productive assets. In turn, this may trigger displacement. Findings from a study on Nepal shows that the destruction of industry, and the loss of crops, animals, land, and home, all had a significant positive correlation with displacement (Adhikari 2013).

Social factors can mediate the effects of the degradation of livelihoods and economy. In some cases, support from social networks and community organisations may mitigate the economic and social consequences of war, and help avoid the confiscation and destruction of assets. This can help prevent forced displacement. This happened in Nepal for example. Throughout the civil war, all community organisations moderated the effect of violence on migration, although only some organisations directly reduced the probability of leaving (Williams 2013). Belonging to community organisations reduced the probability that an individual's private property would be seized (Adhikari 2013).

In other cases, such networks and organisations can actually increase displacement. For example, they can provide information and support in destination locations, reducing the cost of out-migration. There is evidence from Nepal that having ties at a destination location – be it local, internal, or international – was positively correlated with displacement (Bohra-Mishra & Massey 2011). All these factors can play out simultaneously. The weight and effects of each factor on displacement depends on context, with the main determinants being the conflict dynamics, the density of organisations, and institutions (Ibáñez 2014: 377).

Degradation of state presence, of infrastructure, and of public services

Evidence on the effects of state presence and public services on displacement is scarce (Ibáñez 2014: 377). “[S]tate presence, strong institutions and the provision of public goods may deter displacement” through improving people's perceptions of safety and by providing access to services such as education and health (Ibáñez 2014: 377). Conversely, Farrell & Schmitt (2012: 12) state that a number of civilians flee to escape the indirect effects of armed violence on their health, as war increases the risk of disease for many civilians. In some countries, it is government that directly attacks civilians and causes them to flee (Ibáñez 2014: 377).

Armed actors can deteriorate the existence or accessibility of transportation and transportation infrastructure, which can shape displacement. In recent civil wars, fighting has been concentrated in urban areas and roadways, and has often had mobile frontlines and urban hotspots (Raleigh 2011: S87). For example, Lindley (2010) found that, in 2007-2008, the availability of transport, the shifting geography of armed violence and information about the situation at different borders shaped the routes out of Mogadishu.

Conditions of aid created by armed actors and aid actors

The provision and modalities of humanitarian or development aid during armed conflicts can also shape displacement. Rigorous literature on aid has long established that **armed actors typically engage with aid in ways that serve their own purposes**, and that this can have effects on population movements. An armed actor may, for example, facilitate aid towards certain areas (upholding IHL) and prevent it from reaching other areas (violating IHL). Both attitudes aim to make civilians move towards and stay in the areas where aid is provided, while pressuring civilians to leave the areas without aid. There is evidence that this has happened in armed conflicts since 2006, as flagged for example on the case of Syria (Meininghaus 2016).

Aid itself, as an intermediate variable between war and displacement, has no linear effects on civilians' mobility. Some aid encourages people to stay in an area (Raleigh 2011: S90), as is the case in Syria (Meininghaus 2016). On the other hand, some aid seems ineffective at helping civilians stay on location. For example, community-based studies on self-protection in Myanmar (Burma), Sudan, South Sudan and Zimbabwe found that local understandings of 'protection' and local self-protection often differed from, or extended beyond, those of international aid agencies. Even though these local approaches were essential to people's everyday survival, aid agencies rarely acknowledged or effectively supported them. At the same time, local self-protection rarely provided the degree of safety, security and dignity that people needed, and some local activities for protection exposed people to further risk. Thus, local agency was no substitute for effective protection by national or international actors (South et al. 2012: iii; also see Jose & Medie 2015).

Degradation of environment⁹

Indirect, interconnected drivers of population movement during armed conflicts also include a fragility of livelihoods, and ecological and political instabilities. While the effects of war and poverty are the primary drivers shaping migrations in poor and high-risk environments, environmental changes shape how civilians can respond to political and economic threats. The persistence of violence plays a determining role in people's propensity to move, but also in the sustainability of their livelihoods, and in levels of poverty. In turn, poverty lessens the ability of communities that experience increasing environmental variation and disruption to respond to threats such as war, ecological disaster, disease, or economic hardship. Those most vulnerable to forced displacement live in areas with chronic vulnerabilities. These areas are characterised by: the deterioration, loss or destruction of primary livelihoods and productive assets; deterioration of natural resources and the environment; increasing impoverishment; geographical isolation; and a dependence on relief (Raleigh 2011).

Conditions for which there is no evidence of causal effect

On certain aspects of warfare and displacement, current literature simply offers no evidence of effect, leaving it unclear if there is actually no effect, or if research is simply lacking (see section 2 for more on the state of knowledge and knowledge gaps). A number of authors consequently issue warnings not to jump to conclusions or fall back on unverified assumptions shared in some media or policy circles.

For example, there are frequent assumptions that armed conflicts are prime environments for **trafficking in persons**, but "the evidence for this is thin" (Goździak & Walter 2014: 58). Scholarly literature on such trafficking during armed conflicts is robust in analysis of policy and law, but very limited in empirical data. Reports by human rights and humanitarian organisations on situations of armed conflict and its aftermath tends to discuss trafficking risks related to with the organisations perceive as vulnerabilities, mainly relating to children. However, they typically do not provide reliable data on the prevalence of trafficking in these contexts. There also seems to be a considerable difference between statements by media and advocates in the global North, and reports from the global South, which have been more accurate in a number of cases (Goździak & Walter 2014: 58).

For example, there is some evidence that demand for sex workers increases with the presence of military and peacekeeping personnel, but some reports risk conflating such an increase with an increase in trafficking for sexual exploitation. In another example, organisations working on the Syrian context often

⁹ This report mentions this because armed actors can commit violations of IHL that deteriorate the environment.

label situations as ‘trafficking’ when the situations would in fact warrant a more nuanced discussion about gender inequalities and the exploitation of vulnerable women (Goździak & Walter 2014: 58-59).

International anti-trafficking initiatives also frequently focus on trafficking for sexual exploitation and neglect trafficking for other forms of labour exploitation. The initiatives also tend to focus on girls and women, without enough attention to boys and men (Goździak & Walter 2014: 59).

Goździak and Walter (2014: 59) note that armed conflicts do exacerbate the root causes of trafficking in persons, “including poverty, underdevelopment and a lack of viable livelihoods”, but highlight that, to date, there is a lack of empirical data that would corroborate the hypothesis that trafficking will increase significantly during armed conflicts (or natural disasters). Further, the dearth of evaluations of outcome and impact about anti-trafficking strategies means that international and local actors continue to design prevention “in an empirical vacuum” (Goździak & Walter 2014: 59).

4. Studies on single countries or sub-regions

Due to time constraints, this helpdesk report could not include narrative syntheses of knowledge about single countries or regions. However, given the richness of findings from such references, the report signposts them here. The section begins with war contexts studied in multiple references, and then turns to war contexts on which only one reference was identified. In each of these subsets, countries where war is ongoing as of 2016 are mentioned first. The section ends with the special case of high levels of non-warfare violence in Latin America, as findings on displacement in these settings appear relevant.

Cases with multiple references

Syria

Achilli, L. (2016). Back to Syria? Conflicting patterns of mobility among Syrian refugees in Jordan. *Orient* 57(1) : 7–13.

<http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/38826/Achilli%2c%20L.%202016%2c%20Back%20to%20Syria.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>

Doocy, S., Lyles, E., Delbiso, T. D., & Robinson, C. W. (2015). Internal displacement and the Syrian crisis: an analysis of trends from 2011–2014. *Conflict and Health* 9: 33. <http://doi.org/10.1186/s13031-015-0060-7>

Ferris, E., Kirişçi, K., & Shaikh, S. (2013). *Syrian crisis: massive displacement, dire needs and a shortage of solutions*. Research report. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.

<https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Syrian-CrisisMassive-Displacement-Dire-Needs-and-Shortage-of-Solutions-September-18-2013.pdf>

Meininghaus, E. (2016). Humanitarianism in intra-state conflict: aid inequality and local governance in government- and opposition-controlled areas in the Syrian war. *Third World Quarterly* 37(8): 1454–1482. <http://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2016.1159509>

Somalia

Hammond, L. (2014). History, overview, trends and issues in major Somali refugee displacements in the near region (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Yemen). *Bildhaan: An International Journal of Somali Studies* 13(1): 7.

<http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1147&context=bildhaan>

Lindley, A. (2010). Leaving Mogadishu: Towards a sociology of conflict-related mobility. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 23(1): 2–22. <http://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fep043>

Lindley, A., & Hammond, L. (2014). Histories and contemporary challenges of crisis and mobility in Somalia. In: *Crisis and Migration: Critical Perspectives* (ed. A. Lindley). Abingdon: Routledge.

Lindley, A. (2014). Environmental processes, political conflict and migration: A Somali case study. In: *Humanitarian crises and migration. Causes, consequences and responses* (eds. Martin, S. F., Weerasinghe, S., & Taylor, A.). Abingdon: Routledge.

Colombia

Balcells, L., & Steele, A. (2016). Warfare, political identities, and displacement in Spain and Colombia. *Political Geography* 51: 15–29. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2015.11.007>

Lozano-Gracia, N., Piras, G., Ibáñez, A. M., & Hewings, G. J. D. (2010). The journey to safety: Conflict-driven migration flows in Colombia. *International Regional Science Review* 33(2): 157–180. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0160017609336998>

Steele, A. (2007). *Massive civilian displacement in civil war: Assessing variation in Colombia*. HiCN Working Paper 29. Brighton: Households in Conflict Network, Institute of Development Studies. <http://www.hicn.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/wp29.pdf>

Zea, M. C., Reisen, C. A., Bianchi, F. T., Gonzales, F. A., Betancourt, F., Aguilar, M., & Poppen, P. J. (2013). Armed conflict, homo-negativity and forced internal displacement: Implications for HIV among Colombian gay, bisexual and transgender individuals. *Culture, Health and Sexuality* 15(7): 788–803. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2013.779028>

Burma

Courtland, R. (2014). Intractability and change in crisis migration: North Koreans in China and Burmese in Thailand. In: *Humanitarian crises and migration. Causes, consequences and responses* (eds. Martin, S. F., Weerasinghe, S., & Taylor, A.). Abingdon: Routledge.

South, A. (2012). The politics of protection in Burma. Beyond the humanitarian mainstream. *Critical Asian Studies* 44(2): 175–204. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14672715.2012.672824>

Nepal

Adhikari, P. (2013). Conflict-induced displacement, understanding the causes of flight. *American Journal of Political Science* 57(1): 82–89. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2012.00598.x>

Bohra-Mishra, P., & Massey, D. S. (2011). Individual decisions to migrate during civil conflict. *Demography* 48(2): 401–424. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-011-0016-5>

Khan, A. A., & Hyndman, J. (2015). Navigating civil war through youth migration, education, and family separation. *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees* 31(2): 75 – 84. <http://refuge.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/refuge/article/view/40311>

Williams, N. E. (2013). How community organizations moderate the effect of armed conflict on migration in Nepal. *Population Studies* 67(3): 353–369. <http://doi.org/10.1080/00324728.2012.754927>

Cases with one reference

Iraq

Higel, L. (2016). Iraq's displacement crisis: Security and protection. London: Ceasefire Centre for Civilian Rights, Minority Rights Group International. http://minorityrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/CEASEFIRE-report_ENGLISH_march-2016_210x297mm_WEB.pdf

Eritrea

Kibreab, G. (2013). The national service/Warsai-Yikealo development campaign and forced migration in post-independence Eritrea. *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 7(4): 630–649. <http://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2013.843965>

Ukraine

Ivashchenko-Stadnik, K. (2015). *The impact of the current military conflict on migration and mobility in Ukraine*. EUI Working Paper RSCAS 2015/15. Fiesole: Migration Policy Centre. Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute. http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/34804/RSCAS_2015_15.pdf?sequence=1

Sudan

Alix-Garcia, J., Bartlett, A., & Saah, D. (2013). The landscape of conflict: IDPs, aid and land-use change in Darfur. *Journal of Economic Geography* 13(4): 589–617. <http://doi.org/10.1093/jeg/lbs044>

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Raeymaekers, T. (2011). *Forced displacement and youth employment in the aftermath of the Congo War: From making a living to making a life*. MICROCON Research Working Paper No. 38. Brighton: MICROCON, Institute of Development Studies. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/6455160.pdf>

Uganda

Baines, E., & Paddon, E. (2012). "This is how we survived": Civilian agency and humanitarian protection. *Security dialogue* 43(3): 231–247. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0967010612444150>

Stites, E. (2006). Movement as a livelihood and protective strategy in Northern Uganda. *Humanitarian Exchange* 36: 11–14. <http://odihpn.org/wp-content/uploads/2007/01/humanitarianexchange036.pdf>

Latin America - High levels of violence other than warfare

Literature searches conducted for this report also brought out numerous references about displacement in contexts of massive armed violence other than traditionally defined warfare, committed by state and non-state actors, in Latin America – especially in Central America (particularly Mexico). These settings have seen armed confrontations involving state and non-state groups around illicit activities (especially trafficking in drugs, migrants, and weapons), and high levels of criminal violence against individuals. Such contexts were historically not considered to constitute armed conflict in the understanding of major international humanitarian organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, or Doctors without Borders.

However, in recent years, some of these agencies have begun applying humanitarian framings and practices to these contexts.¹⁰ Further, publications about these contexts present rich, fine-grained findings on the effects of high levels of violence on displacement, with many findings similar to war contexts as well as some interesting differences. In addition, some references note that violent organisations involved in illicit activities have often been a central feature of internal armed conflicts, which has affected civilian populations (e.g. Farrell & Schmitt 2012: 6).

In light of these observations, there are a number of references worth further consultation:

- Albuja, S. (2014). *Criminal violence, displacement and migration in Mexico and Central America*. In: *Humanitarian crises and migration. Causes, consequences and responses* (eds. Martin, S. F., Weerasinghe, S., & Taylor, A.). Abingdon: Routledge.
- Atuesta, L. H., & Paredes, D. (2016). Do Mexicans flee from violence? The effects of drug-related violence on migration decisions in Mexico. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 42(3): 480–502. <http://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2015.1079122>
- Contreras, V. R. (2014). The role of drug-related violence and extortion in promoting Mexican migration: Unexpected consequences of a drug war. *Latin American Research Review* 49(3): 199–217. <http://doi.org/10.1353/lar.2014.0038>
- Correa-Cabrera, G. (2013). Security, migration, and the economy in the Texas-Tamaulipas border region: The “Real” effects of Mexico’s drug war. *Politics and Policy* 41(1): 65–82. <http://doi.org/10.1111/polp.12005>
- Gonzalez Lozano, H., & Orozco Aleman, S. (2013). *Does violence affect migration flow?* The 18th LACEA Annual Meeting 2013, Mexico City (November). http://lacer.lacea.org/bitstream/handle/123456789/12543/lacea_2013_violence_migration_flow.pdf?sequence=1
- CIDEHUM. (2012). *Forced displacement and protection needs produced by new forms of violence and criminality in Central America* (Study). San Jose: International Centre for the Human Rights of Migrants. <http://www.acnur.org/t3/fileadmin/Documentos/BDL/2012/8956.pdf?view=1>
- McIlwaine, C. (2014). Everyday urban violence and transnational displacement of Colombian urban migrants to London, UK. *Environment and urbanization* 26(2): 417–426. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0956247814544416>

¹⁰ See for example: Siegfried, K. (2016). *Gang Violence in Central America is a Humanitarian Crisis*. IRIN, 1 September. <https://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2016/09/01/gang-violence-central-america-humanitarian-crisis>

- Rubio Diaz-Leal, L., & Albuja, S. (2014). *Criminal violence and displacement in Mexico: Evidence, perceptions and politics*. In: *Crisis and Migration: Critical Perspectives* (ed. A. Lindley). Abingdon: Routledge.

5. Effects of respect for IHL on how long a crisis affects civilians

There is rigorous knowledge, based on diverse sources and methods, on whether the degree of respect for IHL affects how long a crisis affects civilians. Such knowledge is available from large but separate bodies of literature, such as literature on the duration of armed conflicts, on peace-making and peacebuilding, on post-war reconstruction and recovery, on refugees' and IDPs' return or resettlement, and on specific countries or regions.

Due to the time constraints of this report these vast bodies of literature could not be searched in-depth. However, searches on the core report question about displacement did bring out a number of references that discuss the duration of effects for civilians. The following list signposts these publications (in alphabetical order of first authors' name). They should be approached as exploratory, partial resources skewed towards displacement-related issues, and further searches in the above-mentioned bodies of literature would be needed to find out what current evidence shows.

- Arias, M. A., Ibáñez, A. M., & Querubin, P. (2014). The desire to return during civil war: Evidence for internally displaced populations in Colombia. *Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy* 20(1): 209–233. <http://doi.org/10.1515/peps-2013-0054>
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- Households in Conflict Network: <http://www.hicn.org/wordpress/>
- Institute for the Study of International Migration, Georgetown University – Publications: <https://isim.georgetown.edu/work/publications>
- Migration Policy Centre (European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies): <http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/>
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Practitioner and policy sources:

- Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) – Publications: <http://www.acleddata.com/about-acled/>
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