

# Out of Site

*Building better responses to displacement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by helping host families*

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## Acronyms

CCCM	camp co-ordination, camp management
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CMP	Comité de mouvement de population
CNDP	Congres National pour le Défense de Peuple
CPIA	Comité Provincial Inter-Agence
DfID	UK Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Aid department
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN
FDLR	Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda
FTS	Financial Tracking Service
HAG	Humanitarian Advocacy Group
HAP	Humanitarian Action Plan
HC	Humanitarian Co-ordinator
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	internally displaced person
IRC	International Rescue Committee
INGO	international non-government organisation
MONUC	UN Mission in DRC (peacekeeping)
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NFI	non-food item
NGO	non-government organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PARECO	Coalition of Congolese Patriotic Resistance
PEAR	Programme of Expanded Assistance to Returns
PF	Pooled Fund

RRM	Rapid Response Mechanism
SRSG	Special Representative to the Secretary-General
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme

## Glossary

**Agency, organisation:** These terms are used inter-changeably in the report to refer to any non-profit, non-state entity, UN or non-UN, providing humanitarian assistance.

**Formal camp:** A camp registered by UNHCR within the framework of the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) mechanism. These camps are administered by national authorities, co-ordinated by UNHCR, and managed by an NGO. A formal camp receives more regular humanitarian assistance than a spontaneous site, including food, non-food items, and basic services.

**Host community:** A community where IDPs live in host families or in nearby buildings or open spaces.

**Host family:** A family with IDPs living in their home.

**Hosted IDPs:** IDPs living with a host family, as opposed to a formal camp or a spontaneous site.

**Hosting:** Taking IDPs into one's family home.

**IDP:** Internally displaced person. A person who has fled his or her home to seek refuge within his or her own country.

**Spontaneous site:** An area where IDPs have spontaneously settled, such as in or around a church, school, or administrative building, or in an open space. Spontaneous sites receive intermittent humanitarian assistance. They are sometimes called 'spontaneous camps', but the term 'spontaneous site' is used here to avoid confusion.

## Executive summary

Despite new peace agreements, continued conflict among and between armed militias and government forces in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the last year has seen thousands of new internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the east of the country, many of whom have poured into camps seeking shelter and safety. This is a new development in DRC. Unlike Darfur and Uganda, IDPs in DRC have usually stayed with host families, returning intermittently to their homes, rather than fleeing to refugee-like camps. Around 70 per cent of DRC's IDPs are still living with host families, but the unprecedented upsurge in the number of those heading towards camps raises difficult questions. Have humanitarian organisations done enough to help IDPs in host families, and the host families themselves? If they have not, have they in fact encouraged the drive to the camps? Most importantly, how can IDPs with host families (as well as those in camps) be adequately assisted?

Until now, these questions have been difficult to answer because of uncertainty on whether the rising number of people in camps has been caused purely by the sharp increase in IDPs as a whole, or whether changes in the response by international agencies also played a role. This report concludes that the main drivers of the increasing population in camps has been the increasing 'saturation' of communities with IDPs, and the longer periods for which people are displaced. Those are not, however, the total explanation. Humanitarian agencies have increasingly directed energy and resources towards camps, while assistance to IDPs in host families and host families themselves at the household level has mostly not been provided. Once established, camps create a multiplying effect as people follow one another in search of food and basic needs such as water and health services.

This study, based on recent interviews and field research in eastern DRC, provides new evidence to support a far higher priority to be given for assistance to hosted IDPs and their host families. This is not simply because these are vulnerable groups whose needs have been traditionally under-addressed. It is also because displaced people usually prefer living with host families rather than in camps, because they are seen as more 'physically, emotionally and spiritually' secure.<sup>1</sup> Providing assistance mainly through camps undermines traditional coping mechanisms that can provide safer and more effective aid, and effectively limits the choices available to displaced people. The basic principle is that people should be able to go where they feel safest and assistance should be provided in ways that support livelihoods and help to keep families together.

Assistance to camps in DRC has been accompanied by certain theft and diversion practices. These include the setting up of 'phantom' (fake) camps, and attempts to steal or divert aid, as for example when non-IDPs register in camps or IDP families divide their members between host household and camp. In general, these practices should be seen as a sign that assistance strategies need to be adjusted. They tend to reflect more fundamental problems with the way in which relief aid is structured, including insufficient links with longer-term responses or livelihoods approaches that build on people's abilities to cope and survive during crisis.

Decisions about whether to provide aid in a site, transfer people, or dedicate an existing site as a formal camp need to be improved. The complex decisions that field staff must make are not adequately supported by institutional knowledge and guidance. The criteria for these decisions should be better defined and should consider:

- The hosting capacity of the local community
- The potential for a camp or site to create imbalances in the quality and quantity of aid between different populations in need, and
- The protection risks and the possibilities for exacerbating communal conflicts.

There is also a need to make decisions in ways that support the role of local authorities but ensure independence from undue pressure to create formal camps. These decisions should not be seen as 'either/or'. In many situations where a camp is necessary, increased assistance will *also* need to be given to surrounding communities, including host families.

If international humanitarian agencies are going to continue to rely on host families as a back-up, 'out of sight' way to assist IDPs, they must provide these families with far better support. A year after the surge in the number of IDPs in camps, the time is right for innovation. New or expanded approaches to help host families could not only address an acute situation in DRC, but also serve as a model to expand the range of tools to help displaced people in other countries.

At the programme level, this study suggests that livelihoods interventions, such as cash transfers, cash for work, vouchers, increasing market access and emergency micro-credit could play an important role in helping host families and IDPs to survive. Such responses need to build on people's strengths and capacities, differentiate between the effects of hosting and those of general insecurity, use local expertise, and involve careful strategies for communication with communities.

At the policy level, Oxfam offers the following recommendations to donors, the UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator in DRC, OCHA, UN humanitarian agencies, international NGOs, and others:

1. Develop and agree on a strategy to assist host communities as a vital part of the DRC 2009 Humanitarian Action Plan, and to be built into contingency planning. The strategy should include a strong component of assistance to host families and IDPs in host families at the household level. It should distinguish between two kinds of communities: those in areas where there is an immediate risk that hosting will become 'no longer a viable option' and all other communities. For the first priority group, actions should be designed to meet both immediate and medium-term needs. To succeed, the strategy will need expertise, implementation capacity, and funding. This in turn requires UNHCR and other organisations to develop expertise on supporting host families, international NGOs and others to launch programmes to help host families, and donors to provide funding for this approach.
2. Improve monitoring of population flows. Improved response will be impossible without improved information on IDP and host populations. This should include regular monitoring of potential 'saturation' in host communities and surveys of the decision-making processes of IDPs. Displaced people should be consulted regarding the kinds of shelter and assistance arrangements they prefer. The humanitarian community, in particular OCHA and/or UNHCR, should invest in improving ways to track basic statistics on the length and frequency of displacement. This information should be compiled and distributed regularly, feeding into existing 'early warning' systems to help the humanitarian community to decide when it is crucial to increase support to host families.

3. Clarify criteria for and the process of camp creation. UNHCR and other relevant organisations should clarify the criteria used to provide aid in sites, to establish or formalise camps, or to move IDPs between camps. These criteria should build on existing insights and should take into account the need to preserve the choice of hosting; to ensure protection and minimise conflict; to manage the role of local authorities; and to ensure that the need to adhere to standards does not prevent action. Creating formal camps should be considered as only one tool among many and generally used as a last resort. Furthermore, when camps are necessary, assistance to host families is also likely to be necessary alongside them. In the longer term, UNHCR needs to develop expertise to weigh the merits of camps alongside other viable response options.
4. Intensify efforts to reduce people's expenditure on social services. Humanitarian actors must redouble their efforts to ensure that individuals and communities affected by displacement do not face the added burden of finding money to pay for primary-school fees and basic medical costs. This requires closer links with relevant development actors – for example, accelerating in areas of high need, such as host communities, efforts currently underway in the government's poverty-reduction plan to reduce or eliminate fees for basic services.<sup>2</sup>

# 1 Introduction

## Context: the rationale for this study

Since August 2007, the conflict in eastern areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has intensified, causing increased displacement in the province of North Kivu in particular. Historically, most displaced people in DRC have stayed with host families or settled in towns rather than in camps. But the most recent displacement seems to have overwhelmed the coping mechanisms and means of many of these families, thus acting as one factor in the establishment of new camps. Given that the majority of internally displaced persons (IDPs) (around 70 per cent) continue to stay outside camps, and that many aid programmes are designed to assist IDPs wherever they are found, there is surprisingly little knowledge in the humanitarian community of how these people and their host families cope, what are their livelihood strategies, and how they are or could be assisted.

Debate has emerged among the humanitarian community in DRC between those who lean towards the creation of sites or camps and those who do not favour it. Both groups recognise that camps are not ideal, but that sometimes there is no other option. The first group is concerned that previous ways of responding to IDPs in DRC have over-relied on host families and used them as an excuse not to provide needed assistance. The second group worries that service delivery in camps could create 'pull factors', undermining the positive coping mechanism of hosting. This debate has been intensified by questions about the extent to which UNHCR's recently expanded role in IDP response, and in particular its leadership of camp co-ordination and camp management (CCCM) activities, may have contributed to the increased use of camps as a strategy for response. There is a broad acknowledgement among almost all humanitarian actors that responses to families and communities hosting IDPs need to be improved, but few concrete ideas about how this is best accomplished.

A better understanding of these problems will not only help to improve humanitarian responses in DRC but may also inform approaches to internal displacement globally. This report seeks to achieve the following:

1. To discuss and contribute to policy debates on IDP assistance, including the merits of camp versus non-camp responses, within DRC and in global context;
2. To shed light on the mechanics of hosting and the impact of hosting on livelihoods and food security in DRC; and
3. To suggest possible policy and programmatic responses for 'displacement in communities' in DRC.

## Methodology

The study was conducted through a review of the relevant documentation in DRC, supplemented by a review of the global literature. Interviews were conducted with more than 45 staff of humanitarian organisations in Kinshasa, Goma, and Beni (North Kivu) and Bunia (Ituri, Province Orientale). Field research was conducted in South Lubero territory of North Kivu, with CEPROSSAN, a Congolese NGO with whom Oxfam GB works in this region. This case study involved six focus groups and 70 individual interviews, involving a total of 154 IDPs and host families in the towns of Kanyabayonga, Kayna, and Kaseghe.<sup>3</sup> In choosing the location for field research, the researcher coordinated with and briefly accompanied a team commissioned by



CARE and UNICEF, working on a study of similar issues in the Petit Nord of North Kivu (Goma, Masisi, and Rutshuru) as well as nearby Kalehe in South Kivu (an exercise hereafter referred to as 'the CARE-commissioned study').<sup>4</sup> The two studies provide the basis for the majority of the analysis in Section 6 of this report, and together they cover most locations in North Kivu with significant IDP populations.

## Caveats

First, the paper focuses on North Kivu, because this province has seen the sharpest increase in both the number of IDPs and the percentage settled in camps; there may be dynamics of displacement in other areas which this paper fails to capture adequately. Second, the conclusions in Section 6 are based on qualitative research in which people report that hosting IDPs has affected their food security and their ability to make a living. But it should be noted that no studies have been done which explicitly compare the vulnerabilities of host families with those of non-host families. Nor have any studies looked at the same group of families before and after hosting. Third, the study does not include an analysis of relevant funding flows, which could have helped to estimate the costs associated with camp versus non-camp responses, for example. Finally, while the study includes a survey of the global literature, all interviews were conducted in DRC in order to focus on the DRC case.

## 2 Displacement and responses in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

This section summarises the extent and nature of displacement in DRC, placing it in the context of other IDP crises. It highlights some of the challenges encountered during data collection and population profiling, describes the main mechanisms for responding to new displacement in DRC, and explains why access and targeting remain serious challenges.

### Displacement in DRC in a global context

In DRC, more people have been forced to flee their homes due to war and violence than almost anywhere else in the world. In 2007, the country was home to an estimated 1.4 million IDPs, slightly more than Uganda (1.3 million) but fewer than Iraq (2.5 million), Colombia (up to 4 million), and Sudan (5.8 million).<sup>5</sup>

Responding to the needs of displaced people within DRC is particularly challenging because of the following factors.

1. People tend to stay with families rather than in camps or settlements.
2. Displacement is often short-term or of a 'pendulum' nature, with people returning to their areas of origin either during the day or intermittently for planting or school seasons. Sometimes people hide in nearby forests for one or more nights.
3. Access to sites where IDPs gather is difficult, due to poor roads and insecurity.
4. Host and surrounding populations suffer extremely high levels of vulnerability and poverty, due to conflict and under-development.

None of the above factors is unique to DRC. Host families are the main mode of response to the current needs of IDPs in East Timor and Côte d'Ivoire, for example,<sup>6</sup> and short-term displacement is common in Pakistan and the Philippines. Access to populations is an even more serious challenge in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, and Sudan. However, the first two characteristics listed above set DRC apart from the two other largest IDP crises in Africa – Uganda and Darfur (Sudan) – where most IDPs are long-term and living in camps provided with external assistance.

### Numbers and patterns of displacement

Since June 2007, the overall number of IDPs has increased in DRC. This increase has been sharpest in North Kivu, followed by South Kivu, while the number of IDPs has declined in Ituri and Katanga provinces. See the Appendices for maps and a graph showing break-downs by province over time. The exact proportion of IDPs in camps is not known,<sup>7</sup> but it is widely thought to have increased from around five per cent of IDPs in mid-2007 to 20–40 per cent in mid-2008. Table 1 presents a snapshot of the displaced population in March 2008.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 1: Displaced populations in eastern DRC, March 2008** <sup>9</sup>

	< 3 months	3-12 months	> 12 months	Total	% non-verified
<b>North Kivu</b>	91,110	415,369	340,220	846,699	45%
Beni	0	0	108,850	108,850	99%
Nyiragongo	0	77,459	0	77,459	0%
Lubero	43,485	7,680	167,808	218,973	85%
Masisi	1,185	103,635	0	104,820	0%
Rutshuru	46,440	226,595	35,910	308,945	19%
Walikale	0	0	27,652	27,652	100%
<b>South Kivu</b>	52,420	77,945	218,410	348,775	51%
<b>Ituri</b>	27,510	14,385	21,510	63,405	9%
<b>Province Orientale *</b>	0	46,972	0	46,972	71%
<b>Total</b>	171,040	554,671	580,140	1,305,851	46%

\* excluding Ituri

### *Methodological challenges to counting IDPs, and why they matter*

Profiling and tracking displaced populations is extremely difficult in DRC for several reasons.

1. Populations are highly mobile, as described above. One is trying to take a picture of something that is always moving.
2. Incentives are lacking. Many of those involved in counting (local authorities, the IDPs themselves, NGOs, and UN agencies) may have an interest in presenting higher figures. Actors who may have an interest in lower figures – national or provincial authorities, the UN Mission in DRC (MONUC) and donor states – are not usually directly involved in counting.<sup>10</sup>
3. People returning home are under-counted. There are limited incentives and systems in place to report when IDPs have left host communities to return home. Monitoring of returns mainly consists of tracking new arrivals in return locations, rather than tracking departures from places of displacement.

In DRC, displaced populations are tracked by Population Movement Commissions (CMPs).<sup>11</sup> The CMPs, which include local and international actors and are chaired by OCHA, collect and share information from various sources. Their counts are widely cited externally, but many inside DRC doubt their reliability. As Table 1 shows, almost half of all IDPs are ‘non-verified’. This means that their presence has either never been verified, or was last verified more than one year ago.<sup>12</sup>

The recent separation of figures into ‘verified’ and ‘non-verified’ is a welcome measure, because it allows flaws in data-collection systems to be acknowledged. Generally, the UN is under pressure to present a united, consistent set of figures. This is useful for press releases, but usually does not reflect the real status of information on the ground. Recently, OCHA has led the humanitarian community in developing new guidelines for the CMPs, to help to develop a clearer and more standardised method for their work. This is a positive initiative which will need broad support if it is to function well.

In a country where humanitarians have been responding to IDP crises for more than ten years, it is surprising that there are not clearer systems in place to monitor displacement.<sup>13</sup> Reasonably accurate data on the numbers and location of IDPs are crucial to enable donors to mobilise funds and organisations to deliver assistance based on an objective understanding of needs. They are

also crucial in order to mobilise responses to host-community populations *before* they are completely overwhelmed.

Given the large number of 'non-verified' IDPs, some donors and agencies have suggested that these people have since found adequate coping mechanisms and are no longer in need of assistance, or perhaps they were never displaced in the first place. For these reasons, their numbers could be removed from the count. But what the presence of non-verified figures really indicates is that government and humanitarian actors do not have an adequate picture of the needs of conflict-affected people in eastern DRC.<sup>14</sup>

## Current ways of responding to displacement

The first response to help people forced from their homes is almost always made by local communities. Newly displaced people will usually find shelter, food, and water with the first community where they spend the night, and often for many nights afterwards. This can entail being taken in by a host family or finding shelter in a school, church, or other public building. Even with this basic assistance, however, some people will have no choice but to sleep outside in the open air, either in the forest or on the outskirts of communities, later building small huts as temporary shelters.

The second-line response is from international agencies. As in most humanitarian contexts, a plethora of organisations, each with its own mandate, leadership, and funding sources, works alongside local authorities, local NGOs, and community-based organisations. The UN's Humanitarian Coordinator with OCHA is charged with ensuring a coordinated response, working through such fora as the UN cluster system, provincial-level Inter-Agency Standing Committees (CPIAs) and the Kinshasa-level Humanitarian Advocacy Group (HAG). Most humanitarian organisations in DRC respond to displacement in some way, but the degree of their focus on IDPs versus other populations varies from agency to agency.

One major way of responding is the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM). The RRM is implemented by two NGOs, Solidarités and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), which have relief stocks and staff pre-positioned in key locations, with oversight from UNICEF and OCHA. In addition to victims of natural disasters and epidemics, the RRM targets IDPs and other people affected by displacement who have been 'accessible for fewer than three months'. It provides emergency shelter/non-food items (blankets, buckets, and plastic sheeting for example), education, and water and sanitation, but does not cover health, food, or protection.<sup>15</sup> It is widely recognised as a successful initiative, but follow-up to RRM interventions is inconsistent, and there is concern that the humanitarian community has over-relied on the mechanism. Vital follow-up to RRM interventions is often slow to arrive, and NGOs with emergency-response capacity have often not felt pressure to respond to the needs of new IDPs, knowing that the RRM is in operation.

Communities hosting IDPs sometimes receive assistance from the RRM and other partners in the form of common services. This can include free or subsidised health care, reconstruction of schools, and rebuilding of water points and latrines. This assistance is not systematic, however. At the household level, distributions of non-food items (NFIs) to IDPs are the main form of response. These distributions are widespread, but they rarely target host families directly. Other household-level interventions, such as direct cash transfers, vouchers, household latrines, and shelter assistance, have either not been tried or have been tried on only a very limited scale. The reasons for this are explored below.

## Challenges of access and targeting

While eastern DRC does not suffer the same level of access challenges that humanitarian organisations face in Somalia or Iraq, there are some significant challenges linked to both security and infrastructure.

1. Security conditions are shifting or unknown in remote locations.
2. Roads are poorly maintained, impeding the delivery of goods in specific locations.
3. In some areas roads do not exist, so communities are accessible only by air travel (which is costly and often not possible) or motorbikes or canoes (which take time, entail further risk, and limit programming options).

As a result, emerging needs are simply not known in some cases and are not fully met in others. Too often this is not fully acknowledged by humanitarian organisations in DRC. In part this is because there is such a large gap between the overall needs of the population and the humanitarian response capacity: access and targeting are linked. Faced with limited resources and difficult security conditions – sometimes accompanied by a lack of institutional commitment to meeting newly emerging needs – many organisations choose to maximise impact by expanding out of existing bases, rather than establishing new ones. Such considerations can lead to an over-emphasis on response in areas close to major towns. Noting such trends with concern, Walter Kälin, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human Rights of IDPs recently called for a reinforcement of the humanitarian presence and access to vulnerable populations living away from population centres in DRC.<sup>16</sup>

It is far easier to meet the needs of a stable, long-term IDP population in a camp outside Goma than the needs of small groups of IDPs living in a village far off the main road, or even in the forest, who are displaced for three weeks, then return, only to be displaced again. The latter groups are hard to reach, and meeting their needs requires an agency to rely on counts of the number of IDPs provided by local authorities, which can be time-consuming and difficult to verify. As just one example, a door-to-door verification in Kalehe, South Kivu confirmed only 20 per cent of those identified as displaced by local authorities.<sup>17</sup> Aid is also more likely to be diverted to those with power, or stolen by armed groups, and attacks and theft after distributions in villages are common.<sup>18</sup> Box 1 demonstrates how people receiving assistance may perceive aid distribution as a result of these challenges.

### Box 1: Targeting-related challenges in South Lubero, North Kivu

*The research team heard many stories of people who arrived and registered as IDPs but were denied assistance (food or non-food items) when it arrived, because it was earmarked for people from the previous wave of IDPs, many of whom had since gone home. The undistributed surplus was then taken back. This prompted many IDPs to speculate that those distributing the assistance were selling the surplus for profit, since it was hard to understand why the distributors would not give it to the people in obvious need who were present. The situation was especially frustrating for IDPs who had forfeited other activities, such as farming, to be present for the distribution, only to be told that they were not on the right list. These experiences demonstrate the fluidity of displacement and the difficulties faced by agencies trying to target recipient populations.<sup>19</sup>*

The logistical and targeting challenges posed by a constantly moving population can frustrate those responsible for delivering aid. One recent situation report noted, ‘The incessant movement of displaced people and returnees does not facilitate the work of the partners in the field.’<sup>20</sup> Such an observation misses the point. The mission of humanitarians is not to implement a set of pre-defined activities, but to save lives and meet the urgent needs of vulnerable people, wherever they are found.

## 3 The role of camps versus other forms of response

### The debate in DRC

In 2006–2007, increasing tensions and fighting between the FARDC and the CNDP militia led to more prolonged displacement in the Petit Nord of North Kivu. As numbers of displaced grew and people stayed displaced for longer, fewer host families were available and IDPs were less willing to burden hosts with long periods of displacement. The proportion of IDPs in host families decreased. In mid-2007, more spontaneous sites began to appear, and donors and agencies agitated for an increased response. UNHCR, in consultation with other agencies in Goma, set up a camp co-ordination, camp management (CCCM) ‘working group’, and increasing numbers of NGOs began to work in the area, many of them in the camps. It was called a ‘working group’ rather than a ‘cluster’ to reinforce the requirement that all decisions to establish camps would be made by the provincial-level Inter-Agency Standing Committee (CPIA), rather than solely by those organisations working on camp management and camp co-ordination. It also fitted with the decision to adopt a CCCM ‘light’ strategy: establishing sites only as a last resort, providing assistance in ways that take into account the living standards of surrounding communities, and advocating for improved responses to host families.<sup>21</sup>

Behind these apparently sensible decisions lies a complicated and often unaided debate. Almost all actors acknowledge that there is a need for better assistance to host families, and that more concrete ideas are needed concerning when and how to provide it. Advocates on both sides of the debate tend to view camps as an option of last resort: camps are not ideal, but sometimes there is no other choice. But views differ on where and when there is indeed ‘no other choice’. UNHCR, coming from a background in refugee response where camps are its dominant *modus operandi*, is more likely to gravitate towards this approach. When people gather in sites, UNHCR believes that it has an imperative to respond. Some within UNHCR believe that humanitarian agencies have abdicated their responsibilities by relying on over-burdened host families. Many humanitarian actors in DRC see camps as a way of at least upholding basic standards of response: aid can be better targeted, more effectively monitored, and distributed more quickly in a controlled setting.

Other long-standing actors in DRC, such as UNICEF, OCHA, and some NGOs, tend to emphasise the traditional role of host families and the need to support coping mechanisms. They focus on the potential of camps to draw in IDPs and make it difficult for them to leave. The latter concern stems from fears of creating ‘dependency’, or of inhibiting return by the provision of higher standards of basic services. In DRC, humanitarians’ general scepticism about camps may also stem from previous negative experiences, notably the unhealthy, poorly controlled, and highly politicised refugee camps along the Rwandan border in 1995.

### Global debates

The DRC debate is mirrored at the global level, where practitioners and academics have long argued about the merits of refugee camps. Refugees differ notably from IDPs: they have official status under international law, but they tend to be more restricted in their movement and have a narrower range of options for earning a living than IDPs, often due to restrictive host-government policies. Critics of refugee camps have argued that they compound and reinforce these restrictions, preventing integration between refugee and host populations.<sup>22</sup> They point out that camps are an easier and more convenient solution for aid providers, not necessarily what is best for refugees.<sup>23</sup> More pointed critics charge that UNHCR and others involved in refugee assistance have a ‘vested interest in perpetuating the “relief model” of refugee assistance, which



entail(s) the establishment of large, highly visible and internationally funded camps'.<sup>24</sup> Still others have charged that camps are inherently unhealthy places and that they leave people at increased risk of violence.

Questions of whether and how to assist host families in DRC also reflect debates on whether IDPs should be recognised as a special category for humanitarian purposes.

Some have argued that being displaced does not make one automatically vulnerable. Focusing response on IDPs could result in their being inappropriately privileged over other groups. There is a fear that 'singling out one group could lead to discrimination against the other, fostering inequality and conflict'.<sup>25</sup> Agencies may become preoccupied with finding IDPs, to the detriment of understanding the needs of other vulnerable people. For these reasons, some have objected to the *treatment* of IDPs as a separate category, while others have even opposed their separate *identification* among all vulnerable groups.<sup>26</sup>

Some prominent aid actors lean towards this view, including the European Commission Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid (ECHO)<sup>27</sup> and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). ICRC explains that it cannot *a priori* delegate or forego some or all of its activities in favour of IDPs'.<sup>28</sup> Instead, it aims to maintain flexibility and complement the efforts of other organisations. This may lead ICRC to focus on non-IDPs, such as rural populations in Darfur, where the majority of the response was focused on IDP camps near provincial capitals.<sup>29</sup>

### **Box 2: The links between access, a focus on towns and camps, and conflict dynamics in Darfur**

*In Darfur, as described in a recent briefing paper, 'the majority of humanitarian travel is now via UN air services, as many roads are too dangerous to use due to the threat of hijackings. As well as being extremely expensive, this means that many rural areas – where the need is often greatest of all – are largely inaccessible, as flight services are infrequent and limited to main towns and camps. Aid agencies are keen to work more with rural communities and nomadic groups, but at the moment the insecurity is preventing this. As well as restricting response to urgent humanitarian needs, this also risks exacerbating the conflict, as many rural communities feel increasingly marginalised, neglected and isolated.'<sup>30</sup> Some rural Arab villages accuse NGOs of working only with African tribes and not with Arab/nomadic communities. Oxfam GB has taken steps to increase its work in these areas, which seems to have helped to ease resentment, but such work is becoming increasingly difficult, due to the access problems described above.*

In most contexts, there is agreement that while displacement is a useful indicator of potential vulnerability, it should not be the only means of targeting. There persist practical differences in the approaches of various agencies, however, with some using displacement as a main targeting criterion and others preferring a wider set of criteria. In DRC, because most IDPs have tended to live with host families, the response has naturally been more closely focused on communities than in other contexts. Nonetheless, as this paper argues, the needs of host families and host communities have tended to be overlooked.

## **The changing landscape of IDP response: the 'cluster approach' and UNHCR**

Debates about the role of camps in DRC are directly linked to UNHCR and its expanded role in IDP response under the 'cluster approach'. Unlike refugee settings, where UNHCR has a clear mandate grounded in international law, there is no international agency explicitly mandated to carry out IDP response. This lack of clarity and accountability has led in the past to severe gaps in provision, for example in the water and protection sectors in Darfur in 2004.

In 2005, as part of reforms to the UN humanitarian system, the 'cluster approach' was conceived as a way to vest overall sectoral responsibility in lead agencies, to prompt increases in field capacities, and to build preparedness capacity at the headquarters level.<sup>31</sup> UNHCR assumed responsibility for the protection, camp co-ordination, and camp management (CCCM) and emergency-shelter sectors in conflict situations.<sup>32</sup> At the field level, one of the most significant changes brought about by the cluster approach has been the increased presence and leadership of UNHCR in many IDP situations.<sup>33</sup> In DRC, with the activation of the cluster approach at the beginning of 2006, UNHCR began co-chairing the protection cluster (with MONUC) and the return and reintegration cluster (with UNDP), and in mid-2007 assumed leadership of a CCCM 'working group'.<sup>34</sup>

Many humanitarian actors in DRC welcomed the arrival of UNHCR, given the magnitude of the crisis and UNHCR's expertise in protection and displacement issues. But there are recognised limits to what UNHCR is able to contribute. At a global level, UNHCR has struggled to define the scope of its new commitments *vis-à-vis* IDPs, in terms of budget and staffing.<sup>35</sup> Its 2007 global budget included \$9.8 million for its global cluster responsibilities (IDP programmes), out of a total of \$54.4 million.<sup>36</sup> Donor-state requirements that UNHCR respond to different categories of people with different pots of money, regardless of levels of need, have contributed to under-developed responses. UNHCR's expertise and approach are derived mainly from refugee settings. In DRC, this background is reflected in the agency's focus on camps and its limited knowledge of response modalities for IDPs in host families.<sup>37</sup> UNHCR recognises such limitations and has recently asked the wider humanitarian community in DRC to work together to address and clarify key IDP policy issues.<sup>38</sup>

More generally, the humanitarian system's historically unpredictable and weak response to IDP crises is reflected in the fact that there is a global cluster for camps (CCCM) but no such cluster for host families, host communities, or even emergency livelihoods – all areas arguably more salient in IDP crises than refugee crises. At the global level, the CCCM cluster has debated the need for a more flexible policy approach to supporting IDPs,<sup>39</sup> but it is not clear that this forum has the expertise or mandate to initiate the diverse kinds of approaches that are needed. Rather, the most logical step is for UNHCR, as it takes on a larger role in IDP crises, to challenge its approaches to displacement and expand its skills and understanding of a wider range of responses other than camps.<sup>40</sup> Other organisations, including but not limited to those implementing programmes with UNHCR, need to do the same.

It is worth noting that even advocates for IDPs at the global level sometimes focus excessively on the plight of those in camps. Camps make for good photo opportunities and offer easy media access to vulnerable populations. One prominent annual survey of IDPs contains the word 'camp' 101 times, but the words 'host community' only 13 times and 'host family' only four times.<sup>41</sup> Practitioners have their own reasons for focusing on camps, but for advocates to focus exclusively on one kind of displaced population simply because they are the most visible represents a failure of the imagination. Analysts and advocates could lead the call for more appropriate responses to IDPs in host families.

## 4 Survival in displacement: understanding people's choices

This section considers various arguments and concerns that have been raised since the recent increase in camps: mainly that UNHCR and a camp-centred approach have encouraged camps; that assistance provided in camps can attract displaced people and make it less likely that they will return home; and that certain kinds of diversion practice are becoming more common as the



number of camps has increased. The analysis below suggests that these concerns require re-examination. It encourages a closer look at how IDPs make decisions on where to seek shelter and meet their basic needs. Understanding these choices is critical to the ability to provide assistance in ways which allow people to go where they feel safe, which support livelihoods, and which help to keep families together.

## Which came first, the camps or the people?

In DRC, some humanitarians have wondered whether the increasing number of IDPs in camps since mid-2007 is the result of decisions to establish camps, and in particular the approach used by UNHCR. Was the increased attention to and provision of aid in camps drawing IDPs away from the host families with whom they had traditionally stayed? Or did other factors independently cause people to settle spontaneously in sites or flee to open spaces, leaving humanitarians no other option but to set up camps?

The recent CARE-commissioned study and others<sup>42</sup> found that most people in camps (around 80 per cent) had come directly to the camp, *not* from a host family. This indicates that camps were not generally drawing in people who were leaving host families. Rather, new IDPs chose to go directly to the camps. When asked why, residents in sites gave as the top reason for their choice of refuge the fact that they had 'no friends/family'.<sup>43</sup> In part this is because there were fewer host families available. In the Petit Nord, except for Goma, a remarkably high proportion (60 to 80 per cent) of families in the hosting communities was estimated to be already hosting IDPs.<sup>44</sup>

At the same time, however, the nature of the insecurity caused people to suspect that they would need to be hosted for longer periods of time.<sup>45</sup> People have indicated that changes in the duration of displacement affected their decision to seek refuge in a camp or host family.<sup>46</sup> There was a desire to avoid burdening a potential host family for too long.<sup>47</sup>

As described above, humanitarian assistance is less available to IDPs in host families than to IDPs in camps. And it is usually not available at all to host families themselves at the household level. By contrast, formal camps offer a more regular source of external assistance. The expectation of aid was cited three times more often as a reason for their choice by residents in formal camps than by residents in spontaneous sites.<sup>48</sup> The formal CCCM camps are relatively well maintained, and residents generally have access to clean water, are given items such as plastic sheeting, cooking gear, and blankets, and receive some kind of food aid. One UNHCR official described the difference between spontaneous sites and CCCM camps as 'huge'.

UNHCR and others involved in camp response point out that the people establishing themselves in a spontaneous site or camp usually have no other options. They are the most vulnerable, and it is therefore logical to focus assistance on them. But it is difficult to say for certain that people truly had 'no other option'. Despite the seeming 'saturation' of host communities, it is possible that some people had relatives or acquaintances with whom they could have stayed, had assistance been given in ways more conducive to supporting that relationship. This possibility is suggested by the fact that people often stay with very distant relatives (see Section 6) and by the fact that people suspected that they would be displaced for a long time and wanted to avoid over-burdening host families.

Regardless of whether additional host families could have been found, once assistance began to be given in camps, two dynamics quickly complicated the picture:

1. Camps are highly visible; by definition, they constitute a *place*. The details of assistance-giving quickly become well known.
2. Differences can quickly result between the living standards of people in camps and those living around them (or between CCCM and non-CCCM sites).

These dynamics may have two results:

1. People follow other people to camps, thus creating a multiplying effect. Many IDPs do not make a specific decision on where to seek refuge, but simply follow others.<sup>49</sup>
2. Community residents and leaders promote the flow of new or existing IDPs towards the camps, or promote the creation of new camps.

Most likely the scale of displacement beginning in mid-2007 in the Petit Nord was such that some new IDPs indeed had no other place to go, and camp-based assistance was necessary. It is impossible to say what percentage of these could have been accommodated in host families if a better and more strategic assistance policy had been in place. But camps, once established, create imbalances if they are not accompanied by targeted assistance to host families. These imbalances in turn influence other IDPs' decisions about where to go.

## Deciding to come and go: 'pull factors', 'stay factors', and 'dependence'

This section examines a common argument against creating camps in DRC, mainly that they will act as 'pull factors'. The term is not used in a formal sense, but the concept is often evoked in discussions and used in decision-making. A basic definition could be that *as a result of a camp being established and assistance being provided there, displaced people will move into the camp*.

But the term implies other possible outcomes, seen as negative.

1. This situation is 'unnatural', in the sense that people would not have chosen to come to this place if it were not established by outside humanitarian actors.
2. Reliance on assistance in the camp could create 'dependence' and undermine or break the coping mechanisms that would have been used had the camp not been created.
3. The camp could 'attract' other people (displaced or non-displaced) who will try to access assistance in the camp while living elsewhere.

These implications reflect a fear that humanitarian agencies have played a role in determining people's movement and basic livelihood strategies. This possibility makes humanitarians uncomfortable. It implies that they have a certain kind of power over people's lives – a power which seems to exceed their mandate and capacities. Yet at the same time, countering the effects of this power involves an exercise of that same power. Humanitarian agencies do in fact wield influence over people's choices: this fact entails an obligation to understand the dynamics as well as possible.

But pull factors should be a concern only to the extent that people are left with no other practical choice except a camp, simply because that is where assistance is provided. IDPs who can and want to stay with a host family (or other hosting-like situation, such as sleeping in small groups in a communal building) should be supported in doing so as far as possible. It is possible to exaggerate or downplay the risks of pull factors without justification. Better information on IDPs' decision-making processes during times of rapidly increasing displacement could help to design more appropriate aid solutions.

At the other end of the spectrum, some humanitarians worry that camps will extend displacement, turning a temporary set of circumstances into a long-term situation. If only very limited assistance had been provided, they say, displaced people would have returned home quickly. A staff member of one agency insisted that the phenomenon of IDPs fleeing towards Goma had happened many times before without the creation of camps: 'We give them ten kilos of food, and they go home.' Providing greater assistance, they say, reduces incentives to leave, as

people become accustomed to regular food aid and relatively higher living standards in terms of education, health care, and even clean water.

Many of these concerns are underpinned by the concept of 'dependency'. The term is used to mean many things, but it generally refers to relief aid's potential negative effect of undermining people's initiative and self-reliance, especially when it is provided over a long period of time.<sup>50</sup> Some observers have usefully analysed the concept of dependency, arguing that people often depend less on aid than is frequently assumed; that when people's lives and livelihoods are under acute threat, and local capacities are overwhelmed, being able to depend on assistance is a good thing; and that the focus should be on providing reliable and transparent assistance on which people can rely as part of their own efforts to survive and recover.<sup>51</sup>

Given limited resources, some donors and agencies may be in favour of focusing assistance on returnees, in order to promote returns and durable solutions. They worry that ensuring excessively high standards in areas of displacement will create an imbalance, and that ensuring these same standards in areas of return would entail huge expenditure, or more likely be simply impossible. But, leaving aside the question of standards, it is not clear that there really exist many people who choose to stay displaced as a result of having become 'dependent' on aid. Examples cited of this phenomenon are IDPs near Beni (north of North Kivu) and in parts of Ituri, where relatively small numbers of people remain in camps and continue to ask for assistance, despite improved security conditions in return areas. Looking in depth at these cases was outside the scope of this paper, but some evidence suggests that they often require closer examination.<sup>52</sup>

Fundamentally, forced displacement is not a problem of economics, but of violence. Continuing insecurity will prevent durable return, regardless of how much assistance is provided.<sup>53</sup> When asked, the vast majority of IDPs (96 per cent in one survey) express an interest in returning home rather than settling in their area of displacement.<sup>54</sup> Linking assistance to good exit strategies and facilitation of returns, for example by providing neutral information on security or support in return areas, is critical, and is usually more important than aid itself in terms of creating conditions that make it easier for people to return home. Deciding not to provide emergency aid to newly displaced people is not the way to address traditional weaknesses in support for returnees. Assistance in or outside camps should be provided in ways that maximise people's ability to recover and move forward but also recognise that recovery can take place only if basic needs are met.

## Aid diversion in and around camps

The increasing presence of formal camps in North Kivu has been accompanied by new kinds of attempt to divert aid or otherwise 'cheat the system'. These include the following:

1. IDPs staying with host families establish part-time residence in camps or split their family between host and camp in order to have access to assistance, or simply register on the appropriate day.
2. Local non-displaced people register in the camps as a way to receive assistance.
3. IDPs sell their '*jetons*' (vouchers or tokens for food assistance) to use the money for other purposes.
4. A group of IDPs or community members set up 'phantom' camps as a way to attract assistance. These consist of basic shelter structures made of sticks and grass, but no people.

Many of these practices are ambiguous. It is difficult to tell if they involve people with urgent needs and no other way to access assistance, or people whose basic needs are met and who are simply looking for a quick profit. In reality, the distinctions are not easy to draw. Some cases may

involve serious corruption by local elites or profiteering by commercial actors, but others may involve people living precariously from one day to the next. When people see trucks regularly delivering aid to camps in their neighbourhood, they feel strongly that they should receive something too. Diversion is thus seen as justified, especially for hosted IDPs and host families.<sup>55</sup> The ability to successfully divert aid (in non-violent ways) is thought to help to reduce tensions between IDPs and the wider community in some areas.

Taken together, however, these practices should indicate to humanitarians that something is seriously wrong. The practice of IDP families separating needlessly shows that assistance is not reaching IDPs in host families, for example. And setting up fake camps is an obvious cry for help. In general, theft and diversion should be seen as a sign that assistance strategies need to be adjusted.

For those delivering relief assistance, these experiences can be extremely frustrating. Diversion limits the impact that assistance has on its target beneficiaries and shows that the relief effort is not proceeding as intended. In an effort to gain a hold on the situation, humanitarian organisations have recently resorted to some drastic measures. These included staff of UNHCR and its partners going round, hut by hut, at four o'clock in the morning to put plastic registration bracelets on residents of camps near Goma. And WFP has recently suggested that it may introduce retina-scan technology to identify beneficiaries in DRC.<sup>56</sup>

In the past, however, WFP has recognised that food aid is incorporated into livelihood strategies. A 2004 WFP evaluation notes in DRC that 'IDPs living... with host families or relatives particularly valued food rations. The rations allowed them to make contributions to the host table, and thus feel better integrated... This suggests that a good portion of WFP assistance is effectively used to support barter and exchange.'<sup>57</sup> More than simply looking at how people fit into aid systems, however, it is also possible to reshape systems to fit people. This could mean targeting host families directly rather than indirectly, for example.

With rising global food prices affecting the availability of food aid in DRC, it seems unlikely that WFP would opt for a strategy that would greatly expand its target population. Recent limitations have forced WFP to choose between providing regular distributions to camps and providing aid to other IDP populations or communities with high malnutrition rates. The need to make such difficult choices has partly motivated recent efforts to minimise diversion. Agencies' concerns about diversion in camps may also come from past experiences, such as in 1995 when aid to camps of Rwandan refugees was deliberately and systematically diverted by the former '*genocidaire*' regime.<sup>58</sup>

When aid is diverted, it is tempting to blame the recipients themselves, who can be seen as lazy or unco-operative. It can quickly be assumed that attempts to 'cheat the system' mean that too much assistance is being provided. But such attempts can equally be seen as evidence of need, and of insufficient assistance. As a recent paper notes, a more useful way to look at efforts to manipulate relief aid is 'to recognise that people are likely to exploit what aid is on offer as fully as they can as part of their livelihood strategies'.<sup>59</sup>

Aid agencies' frustrations about diversion and their worries about dependence arguably have roots in the lack of livelihood options available to people in conflict-affected DRC. In the end, relief aid is only a small part of the picture, and it cannot address all of these long-standing needs. Bridging the divide between relief and development approaches is as much a responsibility of the humanitarian community as that of anyone else. Partly this involves a shift in how we think about people receiving assistance, in the direction of focusing on their capacities and coping mechanisms. First, there is a need to consider options for livelihoods-based responses to displacement (see Section 7). Second, there is a need to reconsider how we decide when to set up camps, seeing them as only one possible response tool. This is discussed below.

## 5 Guidance on decisions to establish camps

Any decision to create formal camps affects the options available to people in need, creating certain dynamics in the immediate and medium terms. Humanitarian organisations have an obligation to understand these dynamics as well as possible when they make such decisions.

Better criteria are needed for deciding not just how but *whether* to create a camp. In a major 331-page document offering comprehensive guidance on setting up, managing, and closing camps, nowhere is the question addressed of whether a camp should be established at all.<sup>60</sup> This is because in many settings the rationale is obvious. Fleeing violence or disaster, people arrive somewhere safer, with immediate needs which in practice can be addressed only through assistance in an enclosed, separated site.

In DRC, there exist loose written criteria. The CCCM strategy for North Kivu specifies that, subject to CPIA approval, a planned camp can be established when:

1. There is an affected population that cannot be absorbed by existing planned sites or host families;
2. The will of displaced persons to establish themselves in a camp is determined;
3. There is an agreement with authorities that includes the designation of appropriate land which responds to the need for easy access to affected populations;
4. Consultation takes place with the police (PNC), MONUC, or the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) on the security imperatives affecting a planned camp; and
5. The clusters' technical validation of the proposed land is given.<sup>61</sup>

The current criteria are more procedural than substantive. They do not address the full range of potential risks, costs, and benefits attached to the decision. They are also intended only for new camps; it is less clear when existing spontaneous sites can be transformed into 'CCCM' sites. Expanded criteria are particularly needed for contingency planning. If faced with another large wave of new IDPs, should camps be created immediately? Are other rapid-response tools available, and how should agencies weigh the risks and benefits of each option?

For those making difficult choices now, the complexities are real. Complex decisions require serious guidance, and not merely in the form of better criteria or additional manuals, but more importantly through the development of real organisational expertise. UNHCR could usefully increase its ability to assess the trade-offs between a wider set of possible responses to displacement. At the same time, other actors also need to build their capacity, since they are also often involved in such decisions.

The following elements should be considered when deciding to create new camps, transfer people, or designate an existing site as a formal camp. They draw on issues already being considered at the field level. The decision should not be seen as 'either/or': deciding that a camp is necessary does not mean that other forms of assistance are not needed. On the contrary: establishing camps often means that increased attention needs to be given to surrounding communities.

### *The impact of providing assistance in camps versus providing it elsewhere*

There is a need to think about how the decision will affect the choices of other or future IDPs in terms of their likelihood to come to the camp in order to receive assistance (see Section 4). This requires considering whether assistance to host families or other forms of community hosting

have been or could be tried. It also requires better data on the IDPs in surrounding areas, including their decision-making processes.

### *Standards of assistance*

Should the question of whether a certain level of standards can practically be upheld be a factor in deciding whether to establish a formal camp? In practice, this matter is considered. For example, in May 2008 the CCCM working group hesitated to designate as a formal camp a place where around 1500 households had gathered, because they could not guarantee regular food assistance or basic protection. At the same time, urgent needs for water, sanitation, and shelter at the site were going unmet.<sup>62</sup> The inability to meet certain standards cannot justify inaction. Faced with limited resources and great need, agencies must make difficult decisions. What is important is to communicate as clearly and transparently as possible to populations what they can expect and when.

The CCCM working group was established in part to ensure that basic standards were upheld in sites. It was not acceptable to let people subsist in ill-managed or poorly co-ordinated sites, with gaps in provision between sectors and camps. But whereas globally, the CCCM cluster and UNHCR in refugee camps attempt to follow the Sphere standards,<sup>63</sup> in responding to the needs of IDPs in DRC they have not done so.

At the institutional level, organisations claim (in funding proposals, for example) to aspire to Sphere, but it is widely argued in the field that even if strict adherence were feasible, it would not always be desirable. Doing so would create too great a difference between those receiving assistance and the surrounding communities. To modify its approach for DRC, the CCCM 'light' strategy stipulates that services provided in sites 'must take into account the living standards of host communities'.<sup>64</sup> Sphere is not strictly adhered to, and different levels of camp management are provided in different areas, depending on access and resources.<sup>65</sup>

Such 'middle ground' approaches make sense. It will often be necessary to adapt standards – inside and outside camps – so that the response can serve the surrounding community or help to promote transition to more sustainable initiatives.<sup>66</sup> This does not mean that it is acceptable to operate in a standard-less vacuum, or on a 'best effort' basis, however. Clarification is needed at each step to ensure that all actors – including people receiving assistance – are aware of the standards to be applied. As one example of this kind of clarification, an NGO implementing the RRM has usefully proposed standards for RRM interventions where previously none existed.<sup>67</sup>

### *Concerns about protection and conflict/security dynamics*

When deciding to move existing IDPs or establish a camp in a new place, there is a need to exercise caution, since security threats can be difficult for outsiders to appreciate fully. Displaced people often choose to gather in the places where they feel they are most likely to be secure, and there may be negative perceptions of sites associated with past events. Some IDPs were reluctant to move from Kibumba to Katale because it was there that Rwandan refugees were attacked in 1996, for example;<sup>68</sup> others resisted movement to camps in Bulengo, near Goma, for similar reasons.<sup>69</sup> When considering transfers, there is an obvious need to consult IDPs themselves regarding possible security risks. The attacks on a makeshift camp in Kinyandoni in June 2008, which killed at least three camp residents, demonstrate the risks involved.<sup>70</sup>

There is general agreement on the protection benefits of living with host families compared with residence in camps and spontaneous sites taken together, but there is disagreement over whether a formal camp is generally safer than a spontaneous site. The latter can offer a sense of safety by being 'hosted' by a community, when IDPs stay in churches or schools, for example. On the other hand, spontaneous sites are generally more exposed and receive less assistance, which can increase the risk of sexual exploitation or prostitution. There is some evidence that formal camps



benefit from the presence of international actors, especially by reducing harassment by the Congolese armed forces, but this should not be automatically assumed. An added factor is that international actors are generally the first to evacuate when security conditions deteriorate.

Finally, there is the need to consider as carefully as possible how the establishment of a camp may affect the dynamics of conflict. Tensions could result from providing assistance to IDPs in camps but not to IDPs in host communities, for example, especially if they are of different ethnic groups.

### *The role of local authorities*

Local authorities have an obligation under national commitments and the Guiding Principles on IDPs<sup>71</sup> to lead or support efforts to assist displaced people; the obligation can include helping to find suitable sites if necessary. Humanitarian organisations making decisions about creating camps should involve local authorities. At the same time, before endorsing their recommendations, there is a need to be aware of possible conflicts of interest and other agendas. In one town, authorities were encouraging IDPs to settle at a site a few kilometres outside of town. The recommendation was influenced by the local head of the police, who was a former member of an armed group and who believed that many IDPs were 'informers' for a rival armed group. These police would be charged with ensuring the safety of the camps. Not only would the police patrols entail specific protection risks, but putting IDPs in a separate site could also increase their risk of being harassed or persecuted, since they would be less well integrated into the population.

Local authorities may be influenced by the fact that camps bring additional humanitarian aid to the area, by way of jobs and basic services, such as a medical clinic and rehabilitation of schools. In that sense, they are seeking to fulfil the social contract by arguing for camps. Authorities may also play a role in encouraging 'phantom' camps (see the section on 'diversion' above). In all of these cases, authorities have received the message that 'camp equals assistance'. Many point to the Goma camps as offering a powerful example in this sense. These dynamics need to be taken into account.

## 6 The hosting experience

This section sheds light on what are still surprisingly unexplored questions: what is the relationship between host families and IDPs in DRC? Does hosting make a family more vulnerable, and if so in what ways? How does conflict affect host communities? Insights and findings from several recent studies are summarised.

### The nature of the hosting relationship

Where camps are present, displaced people express a strong preference for living with host families rather than in camps.<sup>72</sup> Indeed, the top reason cited by IDPs in deciding to stay in a host family is 'negative perception of camps'.<sup>73</sup> Camps are generally perceived as crowded, insecure, and unhealthy, and many interviewees associated them with the violence and cholera that plagued the camps along the border with Rwanda following the genocide.<sup>74</sup> By contrast, a host family is seen as a source of security – physical, emotional, and even 'spiritual'.<sup>75</sup>

People's choice of a particular location or family is influenced by several factors. One of the most important is the presence of a friend or a family member, however distantly related. Studies in North Kivu are consistent in finding that around 80 per cent of hosts and IDPs either knew one another previously or had a family connection. In some areas of the Petit Nord, being near one's own ethnic group was found to offer a sense of emotional or physical security.<sup>76</sup> Other, secondary reasons for the choice of location included the accessibility of one's home fields, allowing one to go back and forth, or access to other land that could be farmed without too much difficulty. For a few people a favourable climate was also a factor.<sup>77</sup>

In North Kivu, the length of displacement varies in different areas. Intensified fighting in the Petit Nord has forced people to stay away from home for longer, with a median length of displacement of six months.<sup>78</sup> By contrast, in South Lubero as of May 2008, the median length of time for which people were displaced was one month, and they had been displaced on average three times previously.<sup>79</sup>

Hosting involves sharing the most basic elements of a home: a roof over one's head and food. Studies have found that while hosting involves sharing most food, it rarely involves paying for IDPs' medical costs or school fees. Although many IDPs in host families do not receive humanitarian assistance, when food aid is received by hosted IDPs, it is almost always shared with the host family. This is not the case for non-food items, such as kitchen utensils, blankets, and buckets, which are more difficult to share and are often already owned by the host family.

Displaced people are expected to contribute to the household in whatever ways they can. This usually involves working in the fields with their hosts, collecting wood for small amounts of money to contribute to the household, fetching water, or doing other domestic chores. Sharing humanitarian assistance is also seen as a contribution. In most cases, however, IDPs acknowledge that they had virtually nothing to contribute, which is a source of frustration for them.

In the families encountered by the CARE and Oxfam GB studies, hosts seemed to be motivated by a sense of compassion. They expressed a sense of solidarity with the IDPs and said that they could find themselves in a similar situation one day. For some observers, however, IDPs' unpaid household labour (or lowly paid labour outside the household) indicates a potential for exploitation.<sup>80</sup> Cases of women being coerced into sexual relations with their hosts have been reported. For these reasons, it is worth considering that these relationships may not be purely altruistic; rather, there are likely forms of reciprocity that outsiders may have trouble seeing. These could include benefits from the additional labour, or the simple assumption that a host



family will receive help should they be displaced in the future. In areas where there are not enough willing families to cope with the number of people seeking hosts, exploitation could be more likely. Before setting up programmes, organisations should seek to understand power dynamics within host-IDP relationships and within the community.

Hosting can be a positive experience for both IDPs and hosts. In the Petit Nord, 80 per cent of hosts said they would do it again,<sup>81</sup> and in South Lubero, current hosts had previously hosted between three and four times on average.<sup>82</sup> Despite that potential for good experiences, however, many obstacles can arise. As the CARE-commissioned study notes, 'The nature of hosting transmits vulnerability from displaced to host.'<sup>83</sup> When hosting is of short duration and fighting is intermittent, allowing time for people to return and recover, hosting can be a good way to cope with a difficult situation. But when it lasts for a long time or is experienced repeatedly, the coping mechanism needs to be supported to prevent it from breaking down.

## How hosting affects livelihoods in an already insecure environment

Because hosting involves sharing most food, it can exacerbate a food-security situation that is already precarious. Most people in North Kivu are subsistence farmers. The climate is favourable, with two planting seasons and some year-round crops. But people's ability to maintain a good food supply is impeded by limited access to markets (due to poor roads and insecurity); difficulty in accessing land (due to discrimination, legal issues, and an increasing population); and limited options for other economic activities due to lack of investment, education, and infrastructure.

When IDPs flee, they go to areas that are safer, but not safe. Host communities themselves are often deeply affected by conflict. For these reasons, livelihoods and protection problems need to be understood and addressed in tandem. The case study in Box 3 describes some of the ways in which security conditions can affect livelihoods. When planning interventions to help host communities, it is critical to understand the overall security environment and how it may have contributed to high levels of vulnerability, which hosting is likely to exacerbate.

### Box 3: Security and livelihoods in South Lubero, North Kivu <sup>84</sup>

*In South Lubero, the three towns visited are situated along a main road, with several armed groups situated only a few kilometres out of town in each direction. Over the past five to ten years, people have seen their main strategy to make a living (farming), their assets, their access to basic education and medical care, and their self-confidence all worn down by years of fighting.*

*The presence of armed groups has contributed to a reduction in the amount of safe, available land to farm. When people leave the towns to farm, they face a high risk of being attacked. It is very common for women in particular to be raped or otherwise sexually assaulted while farming or on the way to farm or collect wood. Armed groups, including the Congolese army, often demand money or portions of the harvests as they pass down the road, or they simply steal directly from the fields. The population also faces attacks and theft from the armed groups in the towns themselves, especially at night.*

*To limit exposure to armed groups when farming, residents have taken up several strategies. They now farm plots nearer to town, but this renders the soil infertile more quickly. They may also travel great distances for up to several months at a time in order to find fields that are both secure and fertile.<sup>85</sup> While this can result in a good harvest, it reportedly frustrates families and in particular parents of adolescents, who report that some of their children have begun sexual activity too early in the absence of supervision.*

*Assets are simultaneously a benefit and a threat to one's protection. Most of the IDPs' livestock (goats, pigs, lambs, and chickens) have either been stolen by armed groups or sold by their owners in order to pay for expenses such as food, emergency medical costs, and school fees. Faced with rampant theft, there is a complex relationship between owning livestock and personal security. On the one hand, people say that*

*'when you have a goat, you become a target'. On the other hand, people report that 'it's because of the goats that we live at all', and 'the only reason to have a goat is to save your life'. This is because when armed men come to your house and they find nothing, they might kill you; but if they find a goat, they may take it and spare your life.*

*Access to markets has been severely curtailed. Many smaller markets in remote areas no longer function because of the presence of armed groups. In addition to the threat of being attacked, raped, or killed, going to market usually involves paying numerous 'taxes' (to armed men demanding payment in the form of money or goods) along the way. The climate of deepening poverty affects residents simultaneously as consumers and sellers: people report having 'nothing to sell' and 'no money to buy things with'. On the other hand, some respondents said they would find a way to reach a market if they had something to sell. This could indicate that problems of low production and lack of cash might be more fundamental than the direct security threats that limit access to markets – or, equally likely, that people are willing to take risks to sell what they have. Dealers frequently come to farmers to buy directly: lacking the means to transport their goods, fearing that they might have to surrender them in the form of numerous 'taxes', not knowing current prices, and needing to eat soon, farmers sometimes sell their goods for much lower prices than they could otherwise get.*

IDPs and host families in North Kivu reported difficulty in accessing food as their most pressing problem. In South Lubero, 35 per cent of the hosts and IDPs interviewed reported eating fewer than two meals per day, while 42 per cent reported not having meat or fish in the previous week. In focus groups, host families explained that sharing food required them to finish stocks more quickly, for example consuming the remainder of the harvest in two weeks instead of four.<sup>86</sup>

Despite the increased burden assumed by hosts, and the fact that most food is shared, IDPs seem to be more likely to face problems in accessing food than their hosts do. In South Lubero, 44 per cent of the IDPs reported eating fewer than two meals per day, compared with 24 per cent of hosts. By coincidence, there was the same ratio between women and men as between IDPs and hosts: 44 per cent of women ate fewer than two meals per day, compared with 24 per cent of men. Women also ate meals of lower quality, with only 22 per cent eating meat or fish in the previous week, compared with 57 per cent of men.<sup>87</sup>

IDPs and host families cited the (linked) problems of inability to access sufficient food and lack of income as their main problems. In addition, those in the Petit Nord reported shelter as another key concern: this may be because they had been hosting for a much longer period. Respondents in both communities reported having received humanitarian aid in the form of basic services (rehabilitation of water points, building latrines, or school reconstruction, for example). At the same time, these efforts are clearly limited, since many in South Lubero expressed frustration at being unable to pay for school fees and health costs. Interestingly, in South Lubero this assistance was readily acknowledged as a kind of 'contribution' from the IDPs, whereas respondents in the Petit Nord tended to attach less value to these community-level interventions.<sup>88</sup>

For people in both communities, the biggest burden is felt at the household level. But the assistance that is currently being targeted at the household level is inadequate to meet these needs. Food and non-food items distributed to IDPs do not really match the problems that interviewees identified. Food is still largely available in markets for those with money to pay for it, and most host families already own the NFIs that are distributed. If host families were to receive NFIs, they might be likely to sell them or keep them in reserve as a kind of asset.<sup>89</sup> This indicates a need for strategies that more directly support people's ability to make a living.

## 7 A framework for response to displacement in communities

This section addresses possible risks and barriers associated with expanded assistance to host communities, in particular to host families (and IDPs in host families) *at the household level*, where it is especially needed. It then presents a framework for prioritising among different at-risk host communities. Finally, it suggests general principles for programming in host communities and presents a menu of options that focus on livelihoods programming in host communities.

### Questions and risks

#### *Why host families? Why the household level?*

Some have asked if there is really a need to assist IDPs in host families and host families themselves at the household level. Are community services not enough? Don't these also support people's livelihoods? Current efforts to provide services to host communities are essential, and could be usefully expanded. But the research clearly demonstrates that the biggest gap in terms of people's needs is at the household level, especially in terms of lack of income and food access. These burdens are what force people to choose the otherwise non-preferred option of camp life over living with a host family.

#### *Are livelihoods responses really 'humanitarian'?*

Some will question whether the kinds of assistance to host families described below are really emergency humanitarian activities. Are they not more appropriate for a development context? The programme responses suggested below are designed to help communities experiencing repeated or lengthened hosting over the long term. Some of them need to be implemented quickly (Priority 1, see below), in order to prevent unnecessary movement towards camps, while others allow for more slightly more lead-time (Priority 2).

More generally, the failure thus far to respond effectively to displacement in communities is linked to larger, structural issues with humanitarian assistance. For too long, providers of relief aid have ascribed a passive posture to recipients, not seeing people as active agents in their own lives, who find ways to survive in crises. Even when these insights are understood by organisations at a rhetorical level, they are not translated into changes in institutional knowledge and practice. Doing so requires a shift in how 'relief' and 'development' are conceptualised: there is a need to see the two as linked and overlapping in time and space—a 'contiguum' rather than a continuum.<sup>90</sup> As observers have noted, conceptual advances still remain to be translated into programmatic innovations, especially at a scale required for real impact.<sup>91</sup> This has particularly been the case in situations of protracted conflict, such as DRC.<sup>92</sup>

#### *Will targeting IDPs in host-families and households cost more money?*

This strategy is not about providing more aid, but about providing smarter aid. A cost breakdown has not been attempted, but it is predicted that some elements are likely to cost more, while others could cost dramatically less. Certain kinds of door-to-door targeting can be more time-intensive and labour-intensive than mass distributions, although many of these already require household-level registrations. Pilot programmes with learning components can sometimes be more expensive than time-trusted interventions. But alternatives to food aid (such as cash transfers) have the potential to be much less expensive. Furthermore, one of the goals of this approach is to reduce the overall number of IDPs in camps, as people begin to feel that they

can rely on basic assistance provided within families and to see a more proportional allotment of aid between families and camps. Given the high cost of camps, this could reduce overall expenditure. In any case, the major determinant of the cost of humanitarian operations will be whether the violent conflict continues or peace begins to take root.

### *Will targeting host families pose risks in terms of incentives or creating tensions?*

Some have wondered whether directly assisting host families could create incentives that could also lead to diversion, with people pretending to be hosts, for example. Others have asked whether the traditional coping mechanism of hosting could actually be undermined by the support of humanitarian organisations, bringing an element of self-interest into what had previously been an act of compassion. Another concern is that assisting host families could cause friction between host and non-host families.

All of these concerns are legitimate and require good risk-management strategies. But it should be remembered that almost all emergency assistance – from housing vouchers after Hurricane Katrina in the USA to communal kitchens in Mozambique – creates incentives for people to take maximum advantage of the aid that is on offer. The question is how well the systems meet urgent needs and fit with people's own ways to keep themselves safe and their livelihoods secure. It is critical that people are able to rely on and understand how aid will be given. This requires clear communication about aid packages and vulnerability criteria, which in turn can help to reduce potential tensions. The overall level of vulnerability in the host community should be taken into account, so that aid packages to host families are enough to make a difference, but not enough to spark conflict or prompt a groundswell of people trying to pass as hosts. If more people chose to become hosts as a result of knowing that assistance is available, this would be a positive outcome.

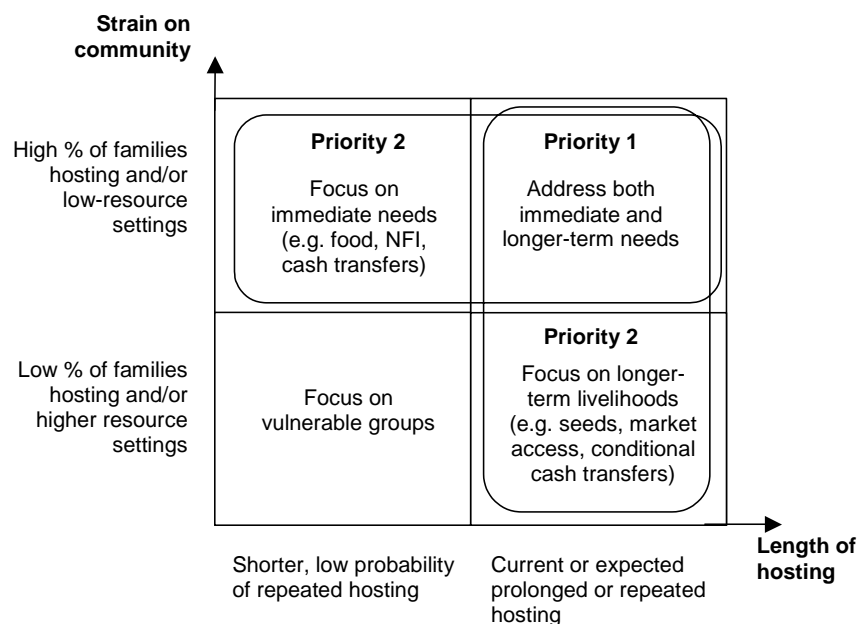
## **A framework for prioritising response to host communities**

Figure 1 illustrates a strategy to distinguish between two different kinds of host communities, according to the following criteria:

1. **Priority 1:** there is an immediate risk that hosting may no longer be a viable option.<sup>93</sup> This could be indicated either by an increase in the number of spontaneous sites, or by (a) potential 'saturation' of IDPs within the community (for example, more than 30 per cent of homes hosting IDPs)<sup>94</sup> and by (b) the fact that hosting is long-term (for example, more than three months), or repeated, or likely to be extended in the immediate future.<sup>95</sup>
2. **Priority 2:** the risk of IDPs moving to sites or camps is not immediate, but hosting has had a demonstrated effect on the overall vulnerability of host communities. This may include areas where a high proportion of families are hosting IDPs or where hosting is long-term, or repeated, or expected to be extended among a sizeable population.

For the first priority group, immediate action is required. At the same time, a longer-term perspective is required, since these problems are by definition not going away soon: a dual approach is necessary. Ensuring that host families in this group receive quick support may require adjusting the targeting criteria of WFP and the Rapid Response Mechanism, among other actions. For this group, response at the household level is critical. The second group should receive a lower priority when resources are limited. For groups where hosting is or is expected to be longer-term, responses should consist as much as possible of interventions to increase families' capacity to earn a living, rather than distributions of food and non-food items. This will help to ensure their own food security (and access to education and medical care, where fees are charged), as well as contributing to the food security of their IDP guests.

**Figure 1: A framework for prioritising response to host communities**



## Possible programme responses: general principles

The following are suggested general principles for improving programming responses to ‘displacement in communities’, to meet the needs of IDPs in host families, the host families themselves, and the broader host community.

### *Build on strengths and capacities*

Build on people’s strengths and capacities, recognising the fact that local economies still function during conflict, and understand hosting as an extraordinary coping mechanism and act of solidarity. Assessments should begin by asking what people are doing for themselves. This could mean including questions about livelihoods in assessments for programming in other sectors (health, education, etc.).

### *Support programming decisions with careful analysis*

Broaden the scope of standard needs assessments to allow deviation from traditional responses. Assessments should gather at least a basic understanding of the local power dynamics and the possibilities for external assistance to exploit them. This should especially include gender dynamics, which can be missed if not examined specifically, as well as risks of exploitation or abuse within host families. Programming decisions should always be guided by specific circumstances, including security and protection conditions.



### *Respond in an integrated way*

Humanitarian assistance tends to be provided along sectoral lines. A 'livelihoods' approach can help to promote joined-up interventions by emphasising the range of factors that allow people to attain food and income security; but this requires integrated approaches, both within and between organisations. Agencies should work to co-ordinate strategies and share programming ideas, working within existing co-ordination structures, such as the CPIAs or those of other operational bases (Beni, Butembo, etc.). This should take place with development agencies as well as relief and multi-mandated organisations.

### *Use local expertise*

Capitalise on the knowledge and expertise of local organisations and associations, from the needs assessment to design to implementation phases. These actors often have a better understanding of the dynamics of local economies and host families. This may help to make responses more sustainable. In the short term, international agencies could organise a workshop with local groups to improve their own understanding of the local economic dynamics and how to support host families.

### *Communicate reasons for and processes of interventions*

Clearly communicate to communities receiving assistance with services (water, health, education) that they are doing so in part because of their status as host communities for IDPs. When targeting at the household level, including host families, conduct community sensitisation exercises to make sure that targeting criteria, the standards to be applied, and as far as possible the timing and processes of interventions are well understood. These practices can promote a sense of solidarity and reduce tensions.

### *Differentiate between the effects of hosting and insecurity*

Some of the ideas presented below seek to help people to cope in an atmosphere of insecurity that can drive them into deeper poverty. Host families for whom theft and 'taxes' are major threats may require interventions that take security dynamics into account more rigorously, whereas those at lower risk may benefit from more elaborate livelihoods interventions (asset restocking, for example). Poor security conditions can of course affect hosts and non-hosts alike, so it is important to be clear about which groups are targeted, and why.

#### **Box 4: What is Oxfam doing for host communities in DRC?**

*Oxfam GB, the largest Oxfam affiliate in DRC, leads public-health interventions that routinely target both displaced people and host communities. In Beni territory of North Kivu, for example, Oxfam GB constructs water-gravity systems and rehabilitates water sources in several host communities in ways that are designed to meet the needs of the whole population, and also to provide sustainable infrastructure for the future. Near Goma, Oxfam GB not only provides clean water to IDPs in several camps but also works with a local partner organisation to rebuild water-storage systems just outside the camps so that the wider community benefits in the long term. This paper represents the first step for Oxfam GB, together with the humanitarian community, to consider expanded and more targeted responses to assist host families in DRC, including livelihoods interventions.*

### **Possible programme responses**

Below is a 'menu of options' of plausible programme responses for NGOs, the UN, and donors to consider in order to improve assistance to IDPs in host families, host families and host communities, within the scope of their mandates and areas of intervention. This list is focused on

'livelihoods' programming options, since these are the most needed and the least understood.<sup>96</sup> It is based on existing programming in DRC, on suggestions by interviewees, and on a literature review.

Most of these interventions have not been tried yet in eastern DRC, and certainly not on a large scale. To make them a reality, individual NGOs, UN agencies, and donors should undertake more concerted planning together (see policy recommendations below). Devising new and workable programming options for host families and the IDPs they shelter will require creative thinking and a willingness to experiment. Pilot programmes, accompanied by a learning research component, could be useful. Good needs assessments based on the specific circumstances in each location are essential. The current situation in DRC presents a remarkable opportunity to innovate with approaches that could eventually be taken up in other similar contexts.

### *Cash transfers or vouchers*

Unconditional cash-transfer schemes are often the easiest and most direct way to meet people's needs and achieve clear programmatic objectives.<sup>97</sup> This method keeps money in local markets and can cost less than distributing the actual items. The flexibility of cash also allows it to be used in areas where some households have problems accessing food and other households have different economic problems. Cash responses have yet to be tried in response to displacement in DRC, but they have shown promise elsewhere. Since 1999, the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development has provided cash transfers (for emergency assistance, temporary shelter and permanent shelter) – via national governments, the UN and NGOs – to around 57,000 host families sheltering refugees or IDPs in places such as Macedonia, Ingushetia (Russian Federation) and Indonesia.<sup>98</sup> In DRC, UNICEF, NRC, and CRS have recently experimented with seed fairs and vouchers as a substitute for distributing non-food items to returnees in North Kivu.<sup>99</sup> As the modalities, risks, and benefits become better understood, this approach could be tried in less secure areas. This would have the benefit of giving IDPs and host families direct means to pay for the goods or services – such as food, farming inputs, school fees or health costs – that they deem most important. Vouchers could also be used to enable displaced and host families to pay for education and basic health services (where fees are charged), including paying teachers. A number of practical resource guides are available online.<sup>100</sup>

### *Cash for work or food for work*

Lack of opportunities to earn cash income is a major problem for many people, including host communities. Some cash-for-work programmes have been carried out in the Kivus,<sup>101</sup> but these have been outnumbered by food-for-work programmes. A 2004 study concluded that food-for-work programmes were seldom an appropriate response to food insecurity in the Great Lakes.<sup>102</sup> Distributing food is much more inefficient and costly than distributing cash, and is inappropriate where food supply is plentiful (usually the case in eastern DRC). One exception could be where security conditions make food less risky than cash. Cash for work has the benefit of enabling people to choose how and where to spend their money, and channelling investment back into the community through infrastructure projects, for example. Constructing roads, replanting trees, and teaching are possible work options. However, it requires that households have surplus labour, and the risk of inflationary pressure must be low.<sup>103</sup> It also must be complemented by efforts that more directly reach vulnerable people who do not have the capacity to work, such as elderly or ill people.

### *'Bring the market to the people'*

To help farmers to take advantage of higher food prices and increase their access to markets, local associations could be supported with funds to allow them to go door-to-door to buy food from farmers at fair prices. This could help farmers to overcome problems of access to markets due to

poor roads, 'taxes', and widespread theft and attacks. Other ways to improve access to markets could include help with transport and communications between sellers, providing farmers with information on prices, and preventing excessive taxation.

### *Income-generation activities*

These activities could target vulnerable groups, including host families, and could include making or selling soap, carpets, or fuel-efficient stoves.<sup>104</sup> A market analysis is essential in order to avoid distortions and ensure that there is sufficient demand for products and services offered.<sup>105</sup>

### *Distribution of improved seeds*

Another intervention used with increasing frequency in development contexts is the distribution of high-yielding or disease-resistant seeds to poor farmers. This could be of particular use for farmers in communities with limited access to land as a result of increases in population or the presence of armed groups.

### *Emergency micro-credit or insurance pools*

Micro-credit is a rapidly expanding tool to help people to emerge from poverty by giving them small loans that are repaid regularly at low interest rates. Other areas of DRC are beginning to use micro-credit, and there is reason to challenge an unspoken assumption that it would not be possible in places with difficult security conditions. Local associations could be supported to make small loans to pay for things like agricultural inputs, school fees, and unexpected medical costs. The schemes would have to be sure of reaching the most vulnerable, or else must be accompanied by other approaches that did reach them. Residents of one town were reportedly able to create and sustain a medical-insurance pool by members replenishing it with small amounts when they had extra cash; examples such as this could be explored and studied for possible replication. Such investment pools at the very local level could provide a buffer when people face shocks, such as hosting IDPs. Risks of corruption or theft by armed groups could be managed through support from external organisations, careful supervision and monitoring at the outset, and the initial use of small amounts of cash.

### *Shelter needs*

As the CARE-commissioned study suggests, the following could help long-term hosts to cope better: providing materials to create temporary walls in homes; building expanded cooking areas or additional rooms; and providing household water catchments. Alternatively, cash or vouchers could be given to enable people to provide their own shelter improvements (see above).



## 8 Conclusions and recommendations

This section presents overall conclusions from the study, followed by policy recommendations for humanitarian actors in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to improve responses to displacement by better assistance to host families.

### Conclusions

If the international humanitarian community is going to continue relying on host families as a *de facto* response mechanism, it must provide them with the support they need. It is not possible to build on capacities and coping mechanisms when these are not well understood. This research and other studies represent a first step in broadening this understanding. Those responsible for charting the overall response must now look closely to see what can be done at the programme level to make sure that assistance is sufficient and appropriate to meet people's urgent needs.

The increasing number of spontaneous sites in North Kivu<sup>106</sup> indicates that host families are at the limits of their capacities. Despite people's preference for living with host families for reasons of security, emotional well-being, and community relations, too often people in need must choose between living with an over-burdened host family or taking residence in a camp, where at least they are likely to receive basic assistance. Although it is sometimes more difficult, providing greater assistance to IDPs in host families and host families themselves at the household level is necessary. Doing so would not only prevent some people from having to resort to a camp, but it would also help to reorient perceptions that 'camp equals assistance' and thus further reduce the need to choose a camp. The basic principles are that people should be able to go where they feel safe, and assistance should be given in ways that support livelihoods and help to keep families together.

It could be seen as surprising that these issues are being discussed only now. Humanitarian agencies have been helping displaced people in eastern DRC since the mid-1990s, and the vast majority of them have been living with host families.<sup>107</sup> But it took the recent increase in camps to prompt serious thinking about how to improve responses to these groups. Fortunately, commitment to addressing these issues in DRC has never been higher. Innovations tried in DRC could prompt similar efforts in other contexts where large numbers of IDPs live outside camps.

### Policy recommendations

The following recommendations are offered to those with responsibility for directing the overall humanitarian response in DRC. This includes donors, the Humanitarian Co-ordinator, OCHA, the main UN humanitarian agencies, and international NGOs.

#### *1 Draft, agree and implement a strategy to assist host communities*

The humanitarian community in DRC should urgently prioritise the completion of a joint strategy for the better assistance of host communities, in particular host families at the household level.<sup>108</sup> (See Section 7 for a suggested framework on how to prioritise among different communities.) This strategy should be developed with actors at the provincial level and with the clusters, and incorporated into the 2009 Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP). Contingency plans should also include specific details on how host families will be assisted should large new waves of displacement occur. The strategy should consider potential risks involved and approaches to mitigate them.

The strategy should address gaps in three areas: expertise, implementation capacity, and funding. All of these elements must be in place for the strategy to work.

1. **Expertise:** UNHCR could usefully develop additional expertise on support for host families, at the global and DRC levels, to complement its current role in camp co-ordination and camp management (CCCM). Humanitarian agencies operating in DRC should consider developing programmes to assist host families, ideally with a research component built in to promote shared learning.
2. **Implementation capacity:** Relevant UN agencies (especially UNHCR, UNICEF, and WFP) and international NGOs should prioritise assistance to host families in their intervention strategies. The HAP process would provide a useful forum for agreement to do this. International NGOs with expertise in emergency livelihood programming in particular should consider starting programmes to help host families.
3. **Funding:** Donors should help to shape and endorse this strategy if it is to be successful at the scale required. The Pooled Fund<sup>109</sup> and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) may also choose to prioritise responses to host families; doing so will be considerably easier if this is already prescribed by the HAP. Some forms of programming to host communities may require adapted donor-funding modalities: linking 'emergency' and 'development' windows, for example. There may be a need to support longer-term funding partnerships (more than 12 months) between international and local organisations. At the global level, donors should provide funding to UNHCR in ways that will allow it to assist different kinds of displaced population according to need, not according to category ('refugee' or 'IDP').

## *2 Improve monitoring of population flows*

The humanitarian community, and in particular OCHA and/or UNHCR, should invest in improving mechanisms (including existing ones, such as the Population Movement Commissions) to track basic statistics on the length and frequency of displacement. Steps need to be taken to improve co-ordination and unify existing data collection, to avoid double counting and prevent responses being weighted towards geographic areas where more data are being collected. Figures collected should systematically draw attention to data that are unverified or otherwise potentially unreliable. Verification missions should be conducted to areas with large numbers of 'non-verified' IDPs. Statistics can be gathered in simpler ways, for example selecting agency focal points in remote areas and using quick sampling techniques. Lessons could be learned from other IDP contexts, such as Darfur or Somalia, where data collection is more consistent, despite challenges to access. Agencies should adopt a standardised registration form which allows for disaggregation of basic data and information on host families.<sup>110</sup> Regular checks for 'saturation' of host communities should be conducted, with this information feeding into existing early warning systems and contingency planning so that organisations can respond in time. Most importantly, efforts to improve population profiling should involve asking displaced people what they want, in terms of shelter and assistance.

## *3 Clarify criteria for and the process of camp creation*

Humanitarian actors should discuss and clarify the substantive criteria for deciding when new camps should be established, IDPs transferred, or spontaneous sites transformed into formal, CCCM camps. The potential benefits of a formal camp must be weighed against possible unintended consequences and the feasibility of alternatives (such as emergency assistance to host families). Field staff have considerable insight into these risks and dynamics, and their knowledge should be tapped when developing written criteria: see Section 5 for a description of elements that should be included in the criteria. In the longer term, UNHCR and others should develop institutional capacity in making these decisions.

The following is a summary of elements to be considered when expanding criteria and developing institutional knowledge on this issue.

1. **Preserving the choice of hosting:** Has the host community reached a saturation point in terms of percentage of families hosting? Has emergency assistance to host families or other forms of community hosting been expanded? Is there a potential for imbalance between camp and surrounding community in terms of quality and quantity of aid? How will the presence of a camp affect the choices of other IDPs?
2. **Ensuring protection and minimising conflict:** What would be the protection risks for camp residents, compared with those of other possible approaches such as expanded assistance to host families? Could setting up a camp provoke community tensions or exacerbate conflict?
3. **Managing the role of local authorities:** Are local power dynamics at play in inappropriately pushing for a camp? What example will the camp set for local authorities seeking to fulfil their obligations?
4. **Ensuring that standards do not prevent action:** Is the inability to uphold high standards of assistance in a camp or a site inappropriately preventing a basic assistance from being provided?

#### *4 Intensify efforts to reduce people's expenditure on social services*

People living in host communities consistently report difficulty in paying primary-school fees and medical costs. Hosting can increase these difficulties by requiring families to spend extra income on food, thus reducing money available for these costs. Interventions should be pursued – at both the agency and the policy levels (encouraging government action, for example) – to ensure that basic medical and educational services are provided free of charge, both to IDPs and to the host community; or, where they are already nominally free, to ensure that fees are not being charged inappropriately. This could include providing people with vouchers for these services. Humanitarian and development organisations and donors need to improve linkages so that efforts currently underway in the development sphere to reduce fees for basic services – including via the government's own poverty-reduction strategy<sup>111</sup> – could be accelerated in areas of high need, such as host communities.

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> S.McDowell (2008) 'Internal Displacement in North Kivu: Hosting, Camps, and Coping Mechanisms', prepared for UNICEF DRC and CARE DRC, 27 April, p.7.

<sup>2</sup> The third pillar of the government's strategy to reduce poverty is 'improving access to social services and reducing vulnerability'. See Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2006) 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper', July.

<sup>3</sup> K.Haver (2008) 'Study on Food Security, Livelihoods and Relations Among Host Families and IDPs in South Lubero, Nord Kivu, DRC', Oxfam GB and CEPROSSAN, 28 May. A summary of findings is available at the Oxfam GB office in DRC by contacting [khaver@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:khaver@oxfam.org.uk) or Ellie Kemp at [ekemp@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:ekemp@oxfam.org.uk).

<sup>4</sup> S.McDowell, *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p.6.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* pp.69 and 32.

<sup>7</sup> Due to the existence of many 'non-verified' IDPs. See text following this reference.

<sup>8</sup> Note that while more recent figures are available, they do not show the breakdown of verified versus non-verified figures, which illustrates the problems of data collection in DRC.

<sup>9</sup> OCHA DRC (2008), 'Population movements in eastern DRC, January–March 2008', OCHA: Kinshasa, May, p.11.

<sup>10</sup> The difficulty of agreeing on even a basic assessment of the situation was noted by the Humanitarian Co-ordinator after a trip to Goma and Minova in April 2008, when views differed between MONUC and the humanitarian community, with the latter describing a deteriorating situation.

<sup>11</sup> The 'Commission des Mouvements de Population' currently operates within the provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri districts of Province Orientale. Unlike other IDP crises where it increasingly plays this role, such as Somalia, UNHCR in DRC is not involved in monitoring IDP flows, only in tracking numbers in camps.

<sup>12</sup> Because figures are cumulative since 2004, double counting is likely; for example, someone who was displaced three times in three years could be counted as three displaced persons instead of one. Conversely, some populations are likely to be missed altogether.

<sup>13</sup> In many ways, this gap reflects broader information-management challenges faced by the DRC humanitarian community. For example, the first stage in a plan to monitor the 2008 Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP) every three months was deemed a 'total failure' by OCHA, due to problems in collecting information from cluster leads and cluster participants.

<sup>14</sup> In questioning non-verified figures, some have asked whether there is a need for a better approach to determining 'when displacement ends'. Recently a 'Framework for Durable Solutions' was developed at the global level to help to clarify when people should no longer be considered IDPs. The ambitious criteria set forward by the framework, however, simply highlight how far from ideal are responses to displacement in DRC. See Brookings Institution–University of Bern (2007) 'When Displacement Ends: A Framework for Durable Solutions,' Project on Internal Displacement, June.

<sup>15</sup> This is due to the RRM's link with UNICEF, which focuses on these sectors.

<sup>16</sup> UN (2008) 'Note présenté par le Représentant du Secrétaire Général sur les Droits de l'homme des Personnes Déplacées dans leurs propre pays', W.Kälén, Conclusions préliminaire suite à la mission effectuée en République Démocratique du Congo, February, p.6.

<sup>17</sup> OCHA DRC (2008) 'Population movements in eastern DRC, January–March 2008', OCHA: Kinshasa, May, p.6.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* p.37.

<sup>19</sup> Excerpt from K.Haver, *op. cit.* p.7.

<sup>20</sup> 'Les mouvements incessants entre déplacements et retours ne facilitent pas la tâche des partenaires sur le terrain.' See OCHA DRC (2008) 'Situation Report: North Kivu, 12 to 16 May'.



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- <sup>21</sup> UNHCR in DRC (2008) 'Strategie CCCM au Nord Kivu', presentation to Humanitarian Advocacy Group, Kinshasa, April, p.10. One way to explain the labels of 'working group' and 'CCCM light' may be to argue that what is needed is not a CCCM group per se, but a wider mechanism or set of policies to determine appropriate responses to displacement in changing contexts.
- <sup>22</sup> A.Schmidt (2003) 'Camps Versus Settlements', *Forced Migration Online*, research guide, September.
- <sup>23</sup> For example, camps can be more secure for staff, compared with working in isolated rural areas.
- <sup>24</sup> J.Crisp (2006) 'Forced Displacement in Africa: Dimensions, Difficulties and Policy Directions,' Research Paper No.126, New Issues in Refugee Research, UNHCR, July, p.12.
- <sup>25</sup> J.Crisp, *op. cit.* p.18.
- <sup>26</sup> J.Borton, M.Buchanan-Smith, and R.Otto (2005) 'Support to Internally Displaced Persons: Learning from Evaluations', Sida, p.11. This meta-evaluation of IDP responses, conducted in 2005, noted these differing points of view with surprise. These differences (and the surprise with which they were noted by evaluators) may reflect a gulf between field and headquarters perspectives. Efforts to address IDP issues have taken the form of global advocacy reports or legal or quasi-legal frameworks and guidelines written from a human-rights perspective, for which a clear definition of an at-risk group is essential.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* p.10.
- <sup>28</sup> A.Aeschlimann (2005) 'Protection of IDPs: An ICRC View,' *Forced Migration Review*, supplement, October, p.25.
- <sup>29</sup> In this case, the ICRC was also concerned that the concentration of aid in camps had led to pull factors or was acting as a deterrent to return.
- <sup>30</sup> NGOs (2008) 'NGO Briefing Paper: Threats to Humanitarian Assistance in Darfur', 1 June, p.1.
- <sup>31</sup> A.Stoddard, A.Harmer, K.Haver, D.Salomons, and V.Wheeler (2007) *Cluster Approach Evaluation*, London: Humanitarian Policy Group, ODI, November, p.5 .
- <sup>32</sup> For protection, UNHCR is the global-cluster lead and field-level lead in conflict situations, while UNHCR, OHCHR, and UNICEF decide on leadership for the field level in disasters; for shelter, IFRC is the 'convener' in disaster situations, and for CCCM, IOM is the lead in disaster situations. See A.Stoddard et al. pp.vii and viii.
- <sup>33</sup> A.Stoddard et al.*op. cit.* p.36.
- <sup>34</sup> Before 2006, UNHCR's engagement with IDPs in DRC was not systematic and was largely restricted to the inclusion of returning IDPs in community-based interventions in areas of refugee return.
- <sup>35</sup> A.Stoddard et al.*op. cit.* p.24.
- <sup>36</sup> UNHCR (2007) 'UNHCR's Mid-Year Financial Report, 2007', September, Table 4.
- <sup>37</sup> Interviews with UNHCR staff in DRC, 2008.
- <sup>38</sup> In April 2008, UNHCR requested the Kinshasa inter-cluster group to address certain IDP-policy questions. A clear list of policy issues to be addressed was never agreed upon, but a PROCAP officer was deployed in July 2008, charged with helping to sharpen the overall strategy of assistance to IDPs, including assistance to host families.
- <sup>39</sup> A.Stoddard et al.*op. cit.* p.26.
- <sup>40</sup> The recently developed 'transitional settlement approach' usefully widens the concept of shelter (previously understood mainly in terms of distributing tents or plastic sheeting) to include support for all of the settlement options chosen by affected populations, including host families, rural self-settlement, urban self-settlement, collective centres, self-settled camps, planned camps, and, when not displaced, on-site shelter. See the Shelter Centre and in particular T.Corsellis and A.Vitale (2005) *Transitional Settlement: Displaced Populations*, Cambridge: University of Cambridge, Shelterproject, Oxfam GB. Although the global emergency-shelter cluster is co-led by UNHCR, the agency had limited expertise when the cluster started (see Stoddard et al. *op. cit.* p.38). In DRC, the shelter cluster is combined with non-food items (NFI) together in one cluster led by UNICEF, which adds to the problems of disconnected policy making.
- <sup>41</sup> E.Jennings (ed.) (2008) 'Internal Displacement: Global Overview of Trends and Developments in 2007', NRC and IDMC, April.



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<sup>42</sup> UNHCR in DRC (2008) 'IDP profile' and NRC (2008) 'Protection Monitoring: Rapport d'enquête ménages Quartier Buzito / Cité de Kiwanja', 8-15 April. The UNHCR study looked at two camps in Rutshuru and found that 30 per cent had been living with host families but that only five per cent of these people had been with the host family for more than one month. This indicates that length of time spent with the host family is not necessarily a factor in deciding to leave that family.

<sup>43</sup> S.McDowell, *op. cit.* p.13.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* p.6. These figures were as of March 2008. It is not clear how this estimate was arrived at. Given the problems with the double counting of IDPs, as described in Section 2, it is possible that this is an overestimate.

<sup>45</sup> There is some evidence that armed groups fighting to gain territory or make strategic political gains, as opposed to simply acquiring food or supplies, results in longer-term displacement. See S.McDowell, *op. cit.* p.46.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* pp.11-12.

<sup>47</sup> This may indicate that returning home regularly helps to make hosting relationships work.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* p.13 and p.26. Of formal camp residents, 28 per cent cited 'expectation of aid' as the top reason for their choice, as compared with nine per cent of spontaneous-camp residents. The top reason chosen for both groups was 'no family/friends', indicating that both of these groups were faced predominantly with a lack of available host families.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* p.12.

<sup>50</sup> P.Harvey and J.Lind (2005) 'Dependency and humanitarian relief: A critical analysis', *HPG Report 19*, London: Overseas Development Institute, July, p.3.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* p.1.

<sup>52</sup> In one case in Tchomia (Ituri), a small population remained in a camp despite improved security in their home village and the fact that many among them had already returned. The owner of the property was exerting pressure on them to leave. They requested that humanitarian agencies assist them to return by way of transport; but this was puzzling, since many others had returned without such assistance. Upon further investigation by agencies, it seemed that integration into their home areas was not assured, due to ethnic tensions.

<sup>53</sup> Paul Harvey, correspondence with the author.

<sup>54</sup> OCHA DRC (2008), *op. cit.* p.3.

<sup>55</sup> S.McDowell, *op. cit.* p.37.

<sup>56</sup> This technology would help to prevent double counting, but of course would not address the other practices described.

<sup>57</sup> WFP (2004) 'Information Note on WFP Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in the Democratic Republic of the Congo', Rome, 15 January, p.10. This document summarises the findings of an evaluation team, but it is not a full evaluation.

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, F.Terry, *Condemned to Repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action*, Cornell University Press, 2002, pp.155-216.

<sup>59</sup> P.Harvey et al. *op. cit.* pp.4-5.

<sup>60</sup> N.Birkeland, E.Vermeulen, and T.Vagli (eds.) (2004) *Camp Management Toolkit*, Camp Management Project. By contrast, a major guidance document on 'transitional settlement' looks at a wider variety of settlement options, such as host families, rural or urban self-settlement, and collective centres. See T.Corsellis and A.Vitale (2005) *Transitional Settlement: Displaced Populations*, Cambridge: University of Cambridge, Shelterproject, Oxfam GB.

<sup>61</sup> UNHCR in DRC (2007) 'Stratégie pour la Coordination et la Gestion des Camps et des Sites de Personnes Déplacées Internes dans le Nord Kivu', version 1, 24 September. Translated by the author from the French.

<sup>62</sup> Various agencies, 'Compte rendu de la reunion de coordination des activités humanitaire à Rutshuru', DRC, 27 May 2008, p.1.

<sup>63</sup> The Sphere Project (2004), *The Sphere Handbook*, Geneva.

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- <sup>64</sup> UNHCR in DRC (2008) 'Strategie CCCM au Nord Kivu', presentation to Humanitarian Advocacy Group, Kinshasa, April, p.10.
- <sup>65</sup> Some areas are even categorised as CCCM 'light light'.
- <sup>66</sup> It is also often necessary to adapt standards in the truly emergency phase of response, but such adaptations are already taken into consideration by Sphere, which allows lower standards in the first weeks or months. See the Sphere Project (2004) *The Sphere Handbook*, Geneva.
- <sup>67</sup> IRC (2008) 'Standards for IRC/RRM Interventions', DRC.
- <sup>68</sup> Alliance of Armed Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL). See OCHA (2008), *op. cit.* p.1.
- <sup>69</sup> S.McDowell, *op. cit.* p.13.
- <sup>70</sup> UNHCR (2008) 'UNHCR Condemns Attack on Displaced People in Eastern D.R. Congo', press release, Geneva, 5 June.
- <sup>71</sup> DRC recently ratified the Protocol on protection and assistance to displaced people, adopted in the framework of the Great Lakes conference. This protocol requires states to incorporate the Guiding Principles into their judicial system and to adopt a legislative framework to implement them. See UN (2008) *op. cit.* p.4.
- <sup>72</sup> This finding comes from the CARE-commissioned study and pertains to the Petit Nord of North Kivu. See S.McDowell, *op. cit.* In another area examined, South Lubero in North Kivu, no camps existed, so this question was not posed.
- <sup>73</sup> S.McDowell, *op. cit.* p.13.
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* p.22.
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* p.22.
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* p.14.
- <sup>77</sup> The South Lubero and Petit Nord studies are consistent in finding that land accessibility and climate are factors, but less important than others.
- <sup>78</sup> This ranged from an average of three months in Minova to seven months in Kiwanja (Rutshuru) (S.McDowell, *op. cit.* p.22). Another study in Kiwanja confirmed this, showing that most IDPs have been hosted for between three and twelve months. See NRC (2008) *op. cit.* p.2.
- <sup>79</sup> K.Haver, *op. cit.* p.7.
- <sup>80</sup> NRC staff as cited in S.McDowell, *op. cit.* p.21.
- <sup>81</sup> S.McDowell, *op. cit.* p.6
- <sup>82</sup> K.Haver, *op. cit.* p.8.
- <sup>83</sup> S.McDowell, *op. cit.* p.15.
- <sup>84</sup> The following is adapted from the study conducted by Oxfam GB with the NGO CEPROSSAN, looking at host families and IDPs in South Lubero, North Kivu. See K.Haver, *op. cit.* An Oxfam GB food-security assessment in the same area in August 2007 made similar conclusions. See N.Wirt (2007) 'Synthèse Generale sur les Besoins en Sécurité Alimentaire au Niveau des Sites de Projets Oxfam GB', August.
- <sup>85</sup> The need to travel long distances also possibly reflects a lack of available land.
- <sup>86</sup> K.Haver, *op. cit.* p.15, p.11.
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* pp.11-12.
- <sup>88</sup> S.McDowell, *op. cit.* p.36.
- <sup>89</sup> Interview with a member of staff of an NGO implementing the Rapid Response Mechanism and other UN staff. Also see S.McDowell, *op. cit.* p.38: 'commodities are not necessarily relevant to the long term displaced'.
- <sup>90</sup> See, for instance, D.Maxwell, P.Webb, J.Coates, J.Wirth (2008) 'Rethinking Food Security in Humanitarian Response', paper presented to the Food Security Forum, 16-18 April, Rome, p.56.
- <sup>91</sup> See, for example, S.Levine, and C.Chastre (2004) 'Missing the Point: An Analysis of Food Security Interventions in the Great Lakes', Network Paper number 47, Humanitarian Practice Network, Overseas Development Institute, July, p.21.

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<sup>92</sup> J.Macrae and A.Harmer (2004) 'Beyond the Continuum: Aid Policy in Protracted Crises', *HPG Report 18*, London: Overseas Development Institute.

<sup>93</sup> Whereas IDPs would prefer it, and it has occurred in the recent past.

<sup>94</sup> As the proportion of households hosting IDPs increases, it will be important to sustain interventions to support host families, while recognising that site-based response becomes more likely. If camps are established, continuing assistance to host families is essential.

<sup>95</sup> For instance, due to insecurity in areas of origin.

<sup>96</sup> See, for example, the CARE study and the draft strategy on host-family responses in North Kivu.

<sup>97</sup> In June 2008, WFP announced a new global strategic plan that emphasises (among other things) using targeted cash and voucher programmes when food is available locally but not accessible by the hungry. This is an important global development that should be explored for roll out in DRC. See IRIN (2008) 'Global: WFP goes for a makeover', Johannesburg, 18 June.

<sup>98</sup> See Swiss Development Agency for Development and Cooperation (2008), 'Information Platform on Cash Transfer Projects in Humanitarian Aid', [http://www.sdc-cashprojects.ch/en/Home/Experiences/SDC\\_Cash\\_Transfer\\_Projects](http://www.sdc-cashprojects.ch/en/Home/Experiences/SDC_Cash_Transfer_Projects)

<sup>99</sup> See S.Bailey and S.Walsh (2007) 'The use of cash in emergency and post-emergency non-food item programs – a case study from the Democratic Republic of the Congo', *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, 31 May.

<sup>100</sup> See Humanitarian Policy Group (2008) 'Cash and Vouchers in Emergencies: a Resource Guide', <http://www.odi.org.uk/HPG/cashresources.html>. See also P.Creti and S.Jaspars (2006) *Cash-Transfer Programming in Emergencies: A Practical Guide*, Oxford: Oxfam GB, February.

<sup>101</sup> For example, road-construction projects implemented by German Agro Action (GAA).

<sup>102</sup> S.Levine and C.Chastre *op. cit.* p.21.

<sup>103</sup> S.Levine and C.Chastre *op. cit.* pp.13-14.

<sup>104</sup> Co-ordination of Host Communities and Displaced, *op. cit.* pp.10-11.

<sup>105</sup> IRIN (2008) 'DRC: Rise in Spontaneous Sites Worrying – Official', Nairobi, 28 May.

<sup>106</sup> An evaluation of humanitarian response in DRC from 2000 to 2004 shows that these issues have been relevant for many years: 'separate programs for IDPs resulted in unfairness that strained relationships with host communities, and that this was exacerbated by targeting which favoured IDPs... in camps over those in host families'. See S.Reed, H.Weiss, and M.Mubagwa (2004) 'Evaluation of USAID's Humanitarian Response in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2000-2004', September, pp.xi, xiii.

<sup>107</sup> The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human Rights of IDPs made a similar recommendation following a visit in February 2008, calling for humanitarian organisations to increase their actions in host communities with IDPs. See UN (2008) *op. cit.* p.6. See also the draft strategy for North Kivu, Coordination of Host Communities and Displaced (2008) 'Assistance Strategy for Host Families and Communities', Draft, 9 June.

<sup>108</sup> For example, a recent report found that NGO skills training courses that typically focus on skills such as soap-making, hair braiding, baking, tailoring and pastry-making have trained far more people than there is demand for. See IRIN (2008) 'Liberia: too many cooks', Monrovia, 20 March.

<sup>109</sup> The Pooled Fund is controlled by the HC with the Pooled Fund Board and supported by the provincial-level committees and the national cluster leads. Both the CERF and the Pooled Fund base funding decisions on the HAP.

<sup>110</sup> As recommended in the draft strategy on host-family responses in North Kivu, Co-ordination of Host Communities and Displaced (2008) 'Assistance Strategy for Host Families and Communities', Draft, 9 June, p.5.

<sup>111</sup> Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2006) 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper', July.

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