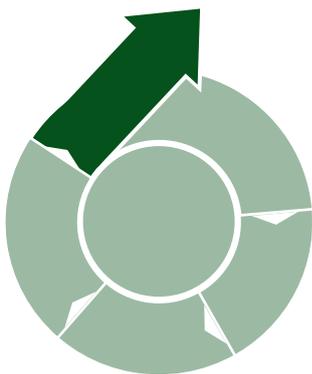


## Thematic Brief 15: Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in the recovery and transition phase of complex emergencies

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In responding to complex emergencies, where natural disasters and environmental degradation compound the problems brought about by political and social upheaval, challenges linked to reconstruction and recovery intertwine with the need to provide assistance and support to local institutions for restoring stability and security. In similar situations, it is useful to adopt a holistic approach to recovery and transition to a safer life. The DRR perspective provides useful tools and concepts to address the complexity of factors that hamper well-being and development.

As part of its community stabilization portfolio of activities, IOM implements risk reduction and resilience-building activities in post-conflict contexts. The Organization recognizes the potential of these activities in protecting vulnerable communities, preventing further displacement and building trust among local communities and authorities.

### Actions

- ▶ Reduce the risk of future displacement and adequately manage population movements in order to avoid inter-communal tensions linked with mobility and resettlement.
- ▶ Multiply and protect livelihood options in order to avoid conflict over scarce resources and opportunities. *Examples: Kenya and Sudan.*
- ▶ Make sure economic and social revitalization measures following conflicts take into account natural hazards and the effects of climate change, in order to allow for long-term individual recovery and collective regeneration.
- ▶ Prevent conflicts from hampering disaster management and emergency operations by adequately protecting and multiplying essential assets and arrangements and by adequately planning interventions.
- ▶ Whenever possible, build on risk reduction, relief and reconstruction activities, to build trust in institutions, overcome inter-communal tensions and pursue shared development goals.

**CASE STUDY 23: The use of village assessments to promote sustainable return in Sudan and South Sudan**

According to the tracking of spontaneous returns by IOM in 2009, an estimated 10 per cent of the returnees from Darfur and other regions in Sudan to South Sudan were liable to secondary displacement due to the lack of services (e.g. schools, health care and water provision) and job opportunities in their respective areas of origin.

In order to promote sustainable return, reduce the risk of displacement and improve the capacity of receiving communities to adapt to a sudden increase in population, IOM performs Village Assessments both in Sudan and South Sudan, as well as in areas with high returnee caseloads. These assessments provide a detailed understanding of the availability of, and access to, basic services and resources in target areas and can be used to design and prioritize interventions that improve the conditions in these villages for the benefit of the entire community, including the host population, returnees, IDPs and nomadic pastoralists that come through the area seasonally. Moreover, the assessments allow for identifying the risk of conflicts over limited resources, and can therefore support the peace-building process. In addition, they expose existing protection gaps resulting from social and political factors (e.g. age, gender, ethnic and cultural diversity), allowing local drivers of marginalization and discrimination to be identified and addressed.

**CASE STUDY 24: Kenya's Security in Mobility assessment**

Together with the Food and Agriculture Organization, the UN Development Programme, OCHA and the Institute for Security Studies, IOM conducted a joint assessment to identify the needs for safe and secure mobility of the pastoralist communities in four clusters of arid and semi-arid land shared by Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia and Somalia.

The assessment was completed in mid-2011 and its findings indicated the need to improve water supply and manage the pasture range, to sustain the pastoralists' livelihoods; support and strengthen the local governance systems, to maintain the peaceful movement of pastoralists; and prepare communities for environmental stresses, by strengthening the linkages with community-led groups and organizations and making better use of technology.

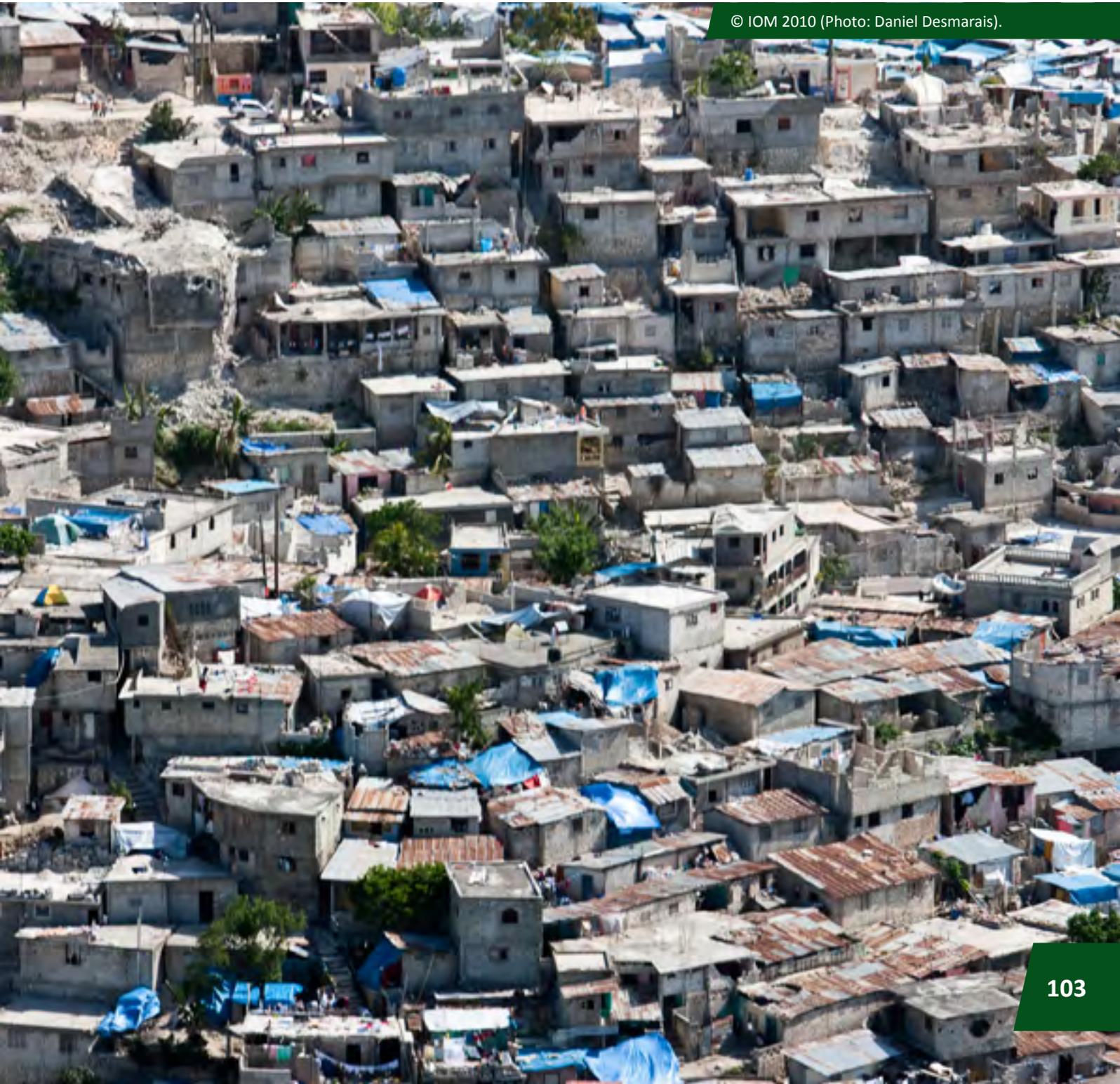
Building on these findings, IOM Kenya has prepared the "Mini-strategy on Resilience" for regional activities that will support mobile communities in Kenya and, more generally, in East Africa.

## ISSUE 5: Mobility, urbanization and risk

During the last century, population growth has increasingly been concentrated in cities. Today, urban areas are home to over 50 per cent of the world's population and will host about 90 per cent of the total demographic increase over the next decades. This trend is driven more by internal growth than by in-migration; yet, according to IFRC, 10.5 million refugees and 13 million IDPs, along with hundreds of million migrants, live in cities around the world.

Disasters, environmental degradation and conflict are drivers of rural-to-urban and urban-to-urban migrations. Cities tend to offer stronger assistance and protection systems and markets that continue to provide goods, even in times of hardship. They provide better access to education and health care and diversification of income opportunities. They allow for a way of life less dependent on locally available natural resources and can multiply people's capacity to cope with both natural and man-made hazards.

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Nonetheless, with vulnerable populations and unprotected capital increasingly concentrating in cities, urban development also drives disaster risk. In dense urban areas, hazards – even small, localized ones – threaten large populations and substantial economic assets and can have enormous impacts on the population’s settlement and mobility (e.g. displacement of the urban population in Port-au-Prince following the 2010 earthquake). Due to the heavy concentration of different land uses, natural events often trigger secondary hazards (e.g. fires, explosions, spills), resulting in a catastrophic chain of effects (e.g. evacuation and prolonged displacement of the population of Namie-machi following the Fukushima triple disaster in 2011).

Environmental degradation induced by poorly managed urbanization (also deriving from migration to urban areas) is a key driver of hazard occurrence. Buildings and infrastructure deeply affect air and water circulation and soil stability, reducing the local ecosystem’s capacity to control floods, fires, landslides and weather extremes. Insufficiently planned development that does not meet the population’s demand for essential services also produces risk, inducing poor and marginal groups, which often cannot rely on effective coping mechanisms for recovering from shocks, to live in unsafe conditions. Risk finds spatial expression in informal settlements of substandard buildings located on land prone to hydro-geological hazards and rarely served by essential services and welfare systems.

Recognizing the central role of urban governance in reducing disaster risk, the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) launched its “Making Cities Resilient” campaign in 2010, in order to raise the awareness of urban risk and disaster risk

reduction among actors at all administrative levels and to support the implementation of resilience-building initiatives in cities around the world.

While many of the risk factors faced by mobile populations are shared by certain local groups, being a migrant is often a condition that restricts access to resources, political representation and opportunities for formal housing and services, all of which are key determinants in the shaping of risk in urban areas. In Rio de Janeiro, over the last decades, most *favelas* have undergone institutionally supported urbanization processes that have steadily improved the living conditions of their more ancient settlers. Still, newcomers and poorer households tend to occupy marginal, non-urbanized areas prone to mudslides and rockfalls.

Migrants to urban areas pose significant issues to urban authorities, especially in developing countries, as they put pressure on local resources and on the capacity of institutions to plan and manage urban development. This is also true for humanitarian actors who face urban migration crises. The dispersion of migrants, the presence of strong administrative authorities and the heavy density of the population and its assets are unprecedented challenges for a traditionally camp-based crisis response system. Insufficient support to a population displaced to an urban area can lead to the creation of permanent, vulnerable settlements. Migrants, however, can also serve as a valuable resource to a city’s life. Their presence drives the demand for goods and services and has the potential of expanding the local labour market and economic activity by multiplying the available human capital. They can enrich a city’s cultural life and foster innovation and intellectual vitality.