

*These COVID-19 Analytical Snapshots are designed to capture the latest information and analysis in a fast-moving environment. Topics will be repeated from time to time as analysis develops. If you have an item to include, please email us at [research@iom.int](mailto:research@iom.int).*

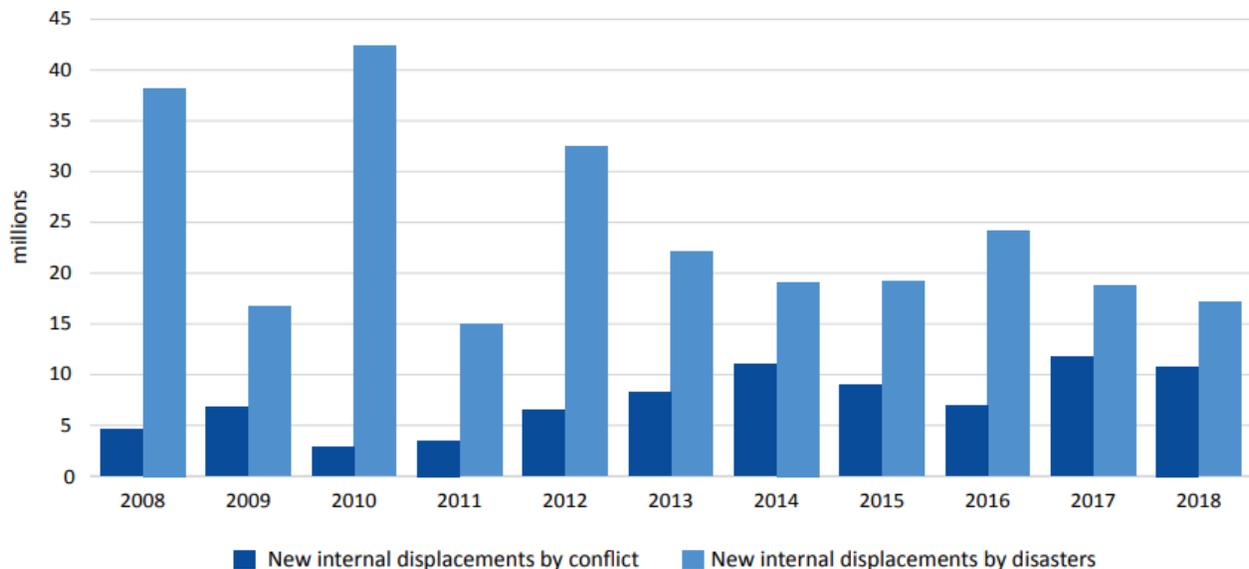
Since the start of COVID-19, there have been several new displacement events, including disasters and conflicts. Some conflicts are not new and continue to drive many people from their homes. The spread of COVID-19 has complicated the ability of governments and organizations to respond to other pressing humanitarian crises, and threatens the effectiveness of future responses to displacement events.

### Impact on disaster preparedness

As countries devote significant resources to responding to COVID-19, [concerns](#) that other disaster preparedness efforts are taking a backseat are mounting. Disaster events have consistently been the largest drivers of displacement (see figure below).

New internal displacements by conflict and disasters, 2008–2018 (millions)

Source: IDMC 2019 in the [World Migration Report](#)



Should disasters such as typhoons, earthquakes or wildfires strike during the COVID-19 pandemic, some countries may not be able to respond effectively. Hospitals already overwhelmed by COVID-19 [may not be able](#) to take care of those affected by disasters, while some measures after disaster events such as mass shelters may become untenable, as they could become [hotspots for the further spread of COVID-19](#). These concerns are especially [pronounced in countries such as the United States](#) that are going into disaster season. The recent [powerful earthquake](#) in Croatia after the COVID-19 lockdown had already taken effect also illustrates the complexities of responding to disasters while at the same time dealing with this pandemic.

## Impact on the delivery of humanitarian assistance

The spread of COVID-19 has forced governments across the world to impose strict international travel and internal movement restrictions in order to limit the transmission of the disease. These restrictions are having [significant impact](#) on the ability of aid organizations to respond to some of the world's most pressing humanitarian crises.

Large-scale displacement in countries such as Yemen and the Democratic Republic of Congo is of particular concern, with fears over not just over the strain on human resources, but also on much-needed supplies to sustain people affected by these conflicts. In regions such as East and Horn of Africa, where COVID-19 has disrupted [efforts to curb the spread of locusts](#) that have destroyed people's livelihoods, worsening food insecurity could lead to further displacement.

If/when new disasters or conflicts occur during the pandemic, governments and aid agencies would struggle with logistics and transport, as COVID-19 has already taken a toll on humanitarian [supply chains and transportation](#).

## Prolonging displacement events

Several countries around the world continue to be [ravaged by conflict](#), even as they scramble to control the spread of COVID-19. There are growing [concerns](#) that the focus on COVID-19 may result in the abandonment of efforts such as peace processes to resolve conflicts, further exacerbating or prolonging them and leading to further displacement. Efforts such as security assistance and peacekeeping could also be affected. Already, travel restrictions are [taking a toll](#) on international mediation efforts, as envoys have been prevented from traveling.

## Call for a global ceasefire

The United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, recently [called for an immediate global ceasefire](#) to allow humanitarian organizations to reach vulnerable populations affected by COVID-19.



## Impact on funding and relief coordination

A major concern is the impact of COVID-19 on [humanitarian funding](#). With many governments squarely focused on COVID-19, humanitarian agencies may struggle to get the funding needed to respond to large displacement events, as donor states dedicate their resources toward COVID-19. Meanwhile, should rapid-onset, large-scale emergencies occur during the COVID-19 pandemic, [efficient humanitarian coordination](#) and effective response will be more difficult, as personnel, systems, and processes of various organization are already stretched and under significant pressure.

This COVID-19 Analytical Snapshot has been produced by [IOM Research](#) ([research@iom.int](mailto:research@iom.int)).

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