



**Danish Refugee Council**

# **Danish Refugee Council Internal Displacement Profiling Toolbox**

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## List of abbreviations

AOR	Area of Responsibility
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
NFI	Non-Food Items
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
RC	Resident Coordinator
UNHABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
OCHA	(United Nations) Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

With an estimated Internally Displaced Person (IDP) population of over 25 million people across 50 countries world-wide, IDPs have been recognised as the world's most prevalent protection gap. This is often due to the continuous fluid and abrupt causes of their displacement and, as a consequence, the lack of factual knowledge on their plight. In addition, with IDPs on the increase and prolonged situations, it is often a challenge to capture an accurate understanding that enables humanitarian actors to comprehend the circumstances of their displacement. This aspect is vital in order to assist and identify the protection risks and look towards durable solutions to displacement. Information gathering, as a result, has become a critical activity for organisations working with IDPs.

The need for comprehensive global guidance on collection and analysis of IDP-related information was realised by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in 2004 when a decision was taken to develop an inter-agency framework for these activities. The task of developing such guidance was subsequently given to the Norwegian Refugee Council's *Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre* (IDMC) who, in cooperation with OCHA, initiated the work in 2004. A draft version of the guidance was field-tested by Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the IASC country team in Somalia in 2006-07, and by November 2007 a provisional release of the *Guidance on Profiling Internally Displaced Persons* (hereafter referred to as the *Guidance*) was ready<sup>1</sup>.

'IDP profiling' is the term used to describe various methods of data collection from and on IDP populations. The methods can range from aerial counts to a full census. Different profiling methods help to collect unique core and contextual data on different IDP groups and communities to help understand the situations that IDPs face in their locations of displacement and identify possible ways of addressing problems and working towards durable solutions.

The DRC has for a number of years been actively engaged in profiling of IDPs and other displacement affected communities that it works with - although not always under the title or framework of 'IDP profiling'. The methods used have included broad profiling, socio-economic surveys, registration, and core data collection. To discuss and document this experience, DRC in June 2007 held an internal workshop with participation of staff from country programme with profiling experience.

## 1.2. The DRC mandate

The DRC mandate for dealing with IDPs is stated in the mandate for international activities that covers the protection of a wide variety of groups:

*"...protection and promotion of durable solutions to refugee and displacement problems, on the basis of humanitarian principles and human rights, including: Providing refugees, internally displaced and other affected groups in situation of war and conflict with assistance according to their rights". (DRC Mandate for International Activities)*

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<sup>1</sup> *Guidance on Profiling Internally Displaced Persons*, Provisional Release, IDMC and OCHA, Geneva, November 2007.

### 1.3. DRC Profiling Toolbox

As DRC continuously aims to strengthen its protection approach and assistance mechanisms, it recognises the significant role that IDP profiling can play and to document the DRC experiences in this regard through developing a toolbox.

Based on the outcome of the DRC workshop in June 2007, this toolbox outlines DRC's different IDP profiling processes with a particular emphasis upon best practices and lessons learnt.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the DRC toolbox should be seen as a supplement to the IDMC *Guidance*. The toolbox serves to relate the DRC experience to the general advice of the *Guidance* and at the same time facilitate information sharing internally between country programmes as well as externally with donors and other stakeholders. The toolbox is designed with the understanding that profiling is always context specific; there is no single format that can be adopted across all contexts as both situation and purpose differ. It is a living document to be regularly updated incorporating lessons learnt and best practices from the field.

In this toolbox document, first an introduction is given to the *Guidance* and the basic concepts and definitions that will be adopted by DRC. This is followed by a presentation and discussion of specific DRC experiences from three of the country programmes chosen to represent three different methodological approaches:

- 1) *Somalia* – where a broad one-off socio-economic profiling was done in five selected IDP settlements 2006-07
- 2) *Sudan, West Darfur* – where an ongoing profiling is being carried out in a larger area of responsibility focusing on mapping/GPS readings and core data collection at village/community level
- 3) *Russia, North Caucasus* – where an ongoing emergency registration and confirmation process is being carried out, on behalf of the aid community, as basis for aid distribution. In addition, one-off surveys have been carried out.

The three cases are different in context and approach but have a number of common key themes.

## 2. What is profiling

The IDMC *Guidance* is a main reference for IDP profiling and provides a number of basic definitions and an introduction to tools and methods that will be a point of departure for future DRC work with IDP communities. This chapter will therefore provide a brief introduction to key concepts and methods as provided in the *Guidance*.

### 2.1. What is IDP profiling?

The *Guidance* provides a general discussion of the rationale for profiling. Key questions, quoted from the *Guidance*, are highlighted in the boxes below. For detailed discussions, reference is made to the *Guidance* itself.

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<sup>2</sup> All documents, questionnaires and formats presented at the June-2007 DRC workshop have been collected on a CD-ROM, which will serve to provide more details on issues discussed in this toolbox and be a reference point for inspiration regarding further programme and tools development in DRC and other interested agencies.

### What is IDP profiling?

IDP profiling is the collaborative process of identifying internally displaced groups or individuals through data collection, including counting, and analysis, in order to take action to advocate on their behalf, to protect and assist them and, eventually, to help bring about a solution to their displacement.

An IDP profile is an overview of an IDP population that shows, at a minimum:

1. Number of displaced persons, disaggregated by age and sex (even if only estimates)
2. Location/s

This is understood to be 'core data'. Wherever possible, additional information could include, but not be limited to:

3. Cause(s) of displacement
4. Patterns of displacement
5. Protection concerns
6. Humanitarian needs
7. Potential solutions for the group / individual, if available

Although an IDP profiling exercise is not the same as a needs assessment, the two are complementary: they can be conducted simultaneously to optimise resources, or one exercise can incorporate the methodologies necessary to obtain data for the other.

(*Guidance*, p. 3)

In a draft version of the *Guidance*, the definition of IDP profiling included '...a summary of biographical data on a person that indicates the extent to which that person matches standard characteristics...a process that assesses the demographic, family, or individual economic or social characteristics, particular individual attributes, skills, professional background, family conditions, etc....' (IDMC 2006, p. 8)

### Why profile IDP?

Profiling IDPs is an important means of improving the availability and quality of information on IDPs to obtain a figure through a collaborative process that can be used both for country operations and global statistics. Timely and reliable data can lead to a better understanding of an IDP situation in a particular country or area within a country. This should improve the quality of advocacy and programming on their behalf, in turn leading to better resourced and more targeted means to protect and assist them.

(*Guidance*, p. 3)

### When to profile IDP?

Whenever statistics on IDPs are unclear, unreliable or out of date, a profiling exercise would be advisable to establish a new figure through a collaborative process. Insufficient or outdated information can limit effective advocacy to protect or assist IDPs whose circumstances may have changed over time. When numbers are suspected to be inflated, or conversely, too low, verification may be necessary in order to adjust aid delivery accordingly.

(*Guidance*, p. 3)

### Who should do the profiling?

National authorities have the primary responsibility to provide protection and assistance to IDPs within their jurisdiction. As such, wherever appropriate, the *national authorities* should lead a profiling exercise, with international agencies playing a supporting role, if necessary.

Where the national government is unable or unwilling to assume this responsibility, it is the role of the *United Nations Resident and/or Humanitarian Coordinator (RC and/or HC)* to initiate a profiling exercise, in consultation with the Country Team...

The main point is that, at all times and in all locations, profiling should be a commonly-agreed process among the various involved actors...

In many contexts it may be necessary to engage professional demographers to carry out a profiling exercise given the complexities that require their special skills and techniques.  
(*Guidance*, p. 3)

## 2.2. IDP profiling methodologies

The *Guidance* also provides a discussion and overview of methodologies that may be feasible and practical in different IDP profiling circumstances. Some of the most practical and widely used are highlighted in the boxes below. For detailed presentation and discussion of the various methodologies, reference is made to the *Guidance* itself.

### A. Area survey using aerial or satellite images

- This is a methodology to obtain population estimates at the community level.
- It is suitable for areas where ground access is either too difficult or where the area of interest is too large for a quick ground based profiling.
- It can be used for gathering information on location and approximate size of populations, their direction of movement and modes of transport as well as their proximity to natural or man-made hazards.

(*Guidance*, p. 24)

### B. Flow monitoring

- Flow monitoring is suitable for data collection at the group/community level.
- They are appropriate for situations that are – or may become – unstable, resulting in sudden population movements to an area or from an area of which the population profile is known.
- They are useful for estimating the changes in population size of a known IDP population within a well defined geographic area.
- In flow monitoring, enumerators can, if the situation allows, supplement their counting by stopping for example every 10<sup>th</sup> individual or household, and asking questions to obtain 'additional information'. This will provide good information on what people are fleeing from, where from and to, whether they are all together or split families and why, what they are taking with them, etc. Questions need to be kept to a minimum in order to avoid people being held up and potential bottlenecks emerging. Much can be learned just by observing the flow – condition of the people fleeing, average number per household, ratio of men to women and children, range of children's approximate ages, any particular vulnerabilities, means of transport being used, etc.

(*Guidance*, p.26)

### C. Dwelling count

- This method is suitable for data collection at the household level.
- It is preferred for situations where the population is located in a geographically well defined area such as a camp or a settlement.
- A dwelling count is useful for obtaining a total count of houses/dwellings and an estimate for the number of individuals in the area and can be combined with establishing address systems or simple house numbering schemes. The key difference to the head count is that population figures are estimated based on the number of dwellings counted. As such the accuracy may be less in comparison to the headcount, but the dwelling count is less labour intensive.

(Guidance, p. 28)

### D. Head count

- This method is suitable for data collection at the individual level.
- It is preferred for situations where the population is located in a geographically well-defined area such as a camp or a settlement, or at a distribution point.

(Guidance p. 30)

### E. Head count/dwelling count using sampling method

Sampling methods can be used for dwelling counts and head counts to extrapolate the results to obtain a population overview. This is less labour intensive as the counts are only conducted in the sample and not for the entire population. However, the selection of samples and extrapolation may need proper knowledge to reduce the margin of error in the calculation...

- Suitable for estimation at the community level.
- Best for estimating the size of a population where people are not on the move. Additional information can be obtained during the actual visit of the area.
- Methodology charts out sample areas. A dwelling counts or headcount is conducted within the sample and the results extrapolated to obtain the overview of the population.

(Guidance, p. 32)

Under the heading in Box E comes *household survey* and *registration*, which deserve separate introduction since these methods are particularly relevant to DRC. The *Guidance* writes:

### Household survey

Consists of selecting a sample of part of the general population and generalising the results. Suitable for data collection at the household and at the individual level. The method is applicable when the population and ground condition are stable and it allows for a wider collection of additional information. Surveys can be used to identify IDPs within a larger population group. In this case, a cross-section of the population would be interviewed to be able to compare socio-economic or vulnerability differences between IDPs and local population. In IDP camps or settlements, another application of a household survey would be to ascertain and/or collect additional data.

(Guidance p. 22 – see also *Guidance* p. 35ff for operational details)

## Registration

The primary goal of registration is to establish the identities of IDPs through detailed data collection at the individual or household level. The level of detail and scope of use of 'registration' data will differ among humanitarian organisations due to the purpose of registration. For example, gathering data for human rights monitoring or protection activities typically requires more detailed information on the individual and situation. On the other hand, registration for the purpose of assistance delivery programmes requires data in lesser detail and for a more limited purpose. (*Guidance* p. 22 – see also *Guidance* p. 38ff for operational details)

## 3. The DRC profiling experience

The questions *why*, *who* and *how* to do IDP profiling are important to engage with before the start of an IDP profiling, as they have clear implications on what kind of profiling will be undertaken. This chapter looks at how the DRC programmes relate to these questions and it highlights some of the DRC experiences and lessons learnt in this regard.

### 3.1. Why does DRC profile?

The experience from the DRC programmes shows that good quality and context-specific information is essential for assistance to IDP communities to be satisfactorily targeted and effectively delivered. Profiling enables the programmes to understand and know their caseloads, which, in turn, is the basis for better planning, provision of assistance, and advocacy work. One or more of the points below provide a platform for initiating a profiling exercise.

#### Reasons for profiling

- 1) The need for general statistical data and demographic background
- 2) The need for specific information on the target community
- 3) The need to understand the history of the displacement and migration issues in a given place
- 4) The need for comprehensive information upon which to plan an intervention (advocacy and direct assistance)
- 5) The need for concise information regarding protection issues and risks
- 6) The need to understand the IDPs own intentions for the future
- 7) The need to update information already held
- 8) The need for special mapping of a given community
- 9) The need to understand the perception of the communities hosting IDPs

In the DRC programmes, profiling of IDP communities generally serves the purpose of gathering of context related information, which provides a better understanding of who, when, where and how, in order to develop appropriate and effective protection strategies and interventions.

Profiling has its place at all stages of a DRC operation. For a new operation, profiling is an effective way to gather baseline data and form an understanding of the characteristics of the new group of IDPs. Registration can help collect the correct personal information for effective distributions and advocacy. Profiling in later stages of a DRC operation allows DRC to evaluate its work and identify gaps in programming and it serves as a continuous monitoring mechanism on IDP protection concerns. The bottom line is that knowledge gained from profiling influences and enables the DRC and its partner agencies to improve programming and protect those most vulnerable.

The three DRC programmes, from which experience has been compiled, are all dealing with relief and livelihoods support, with the following stated objectives for profiling.

#### Objective of profiling – Somalia

- Profiling tool development
- Information gathering – global interest
- Information gathering – in preparation of local intervention

#### Objective of profiling – West Darfur

- Identification of inhabited and non-inhabited villages as well as Arab settlements
- Information gathering (identification of needs) for preparation of interventions (external/internal) and coordination between relevant actors
- Information gathering for UNHCR protection projects
- Keep track of movements among IDP population

#### Objective of profiling - North Caucasus

- Ensure accurate targeting of humanitarian assistance at household level
- Information gathering for UNHCR for protection projects
- Use of information for coordination between stakeholders in the region
- Ensure systematic IDP and beneficiary participation in relief and recovery programmes
- Ensure accountability to IDPs and local populations
- Ensure transparency in the beneficiary selection process

Furthermore, as an added benefit, through profiling DRC is able to engage in dialogue with a community, which helps gain acceptance and understanding of DRC within that community. This has obvious advantages for both the community and DRC. This is well illustrated by an example from the profiling conducted in Darfur.

#### Protection by presence - Sudan, West Darfur

In West Darfur, profiling is conducted in locations where often no other NGOs are present; therefore it also serves as a way of 'protection by presence'. The communities have accepted the DRC profiling visits to such an extent that they now voluntarily disclose protection information to DRC. This must be seen on the background of such information often being particularly sensitive. The information is therefore kept classified and not included in the official database, but it is shared with protection oriented partners on the ground.

### 3.2. What kind of data is obtained?

DRC's profiling activities have resulted in the following kind of data:

#### Kind of data obtained – Somalia

Household information (housing, number, age, gender), clan affiliation, displacement history, access to basic services (food, water, sanitation, education, health), livelihoods data, protection data, property data, intentions for the future, and access to information.

#### Kind of data obtained – West Darfur

Statistics regarding the composition of the populations before and after the crisis, movements (IDPs, refugees, returnees) and sectoral statistics (type of settlement, education, health, water, livelihood, food, security etc.) on the communities.

#### Kind of data obtained - North Caucasus

Personal data, address (prior and after the displacement), demographic data, vulnerability category in Ingushetia. In Chechnya and Dagestan DRC also collects data on income, kind of housing, and types of ownership.

### 3.3. Who does DRC profile?

To begin with, IDP profiling obviously deals with IDPs generally defined as population forcibly displaced, and therefore at risk, due to various reasons, such as armed conflict, violence, human rights violations, and environmental degradation, and where displacement takes place within national borders. However, on the ground it is often difficult to identify and categorise IDPs. Unlike a refugee, an IDP has not crossed a border, and often in many ways holds the same characteristics as the host community and other vulnerable communities in the area. IDPs living in designated IDP settlements are generally the most straightforward and easily identifiable. In other cases, IDPs live in pockets amongst the host community and may be more or less integrated. It adds to the confusion that many poor and destitute people live in the same conditions as IDPs and reside within IDP settlements.

As the choice of profiling methods, approaches, and tools depends on the specific caseload and the specific circumstances, it is important to address the issue of who the target population for profiling actually is. The circumstances that often surround displacement make it at times very complicated and difficult to come up with a simple answer. There are two issues to deal with: 1) What type of IDPs should DRC be concerned with? and 2) should profiling be dealing with IDPs only or include also host communities, returnees, or others?

Although this toolbox deals with IDP profiling, DRC advocates that profiling in many cases should not necessarily be limited to IDPs only. IDPs are often displaced within communities that have been affected by the same circumstances; and more often than not these communities are affected by the presence of IDPs both socio-economically and due to the fact that the presence of IDPs is a potential political problem. This approach fits with the DRC mandate for international activities that covers the protection of a wide variety of groups affected by conflict. It also fits with the intention of 'do no harm' and the wish to balance the work by supporting also host communities. By including non-IDPs and those that fit into what may be considered 'grey-areas' in the definition of IDPs, it is possible to get a better understanding of the caseload that DRC is working with and of the internal and external elements that affect them.

#### Who is being profiled - Somalia

IDPs living in identified settlements generally considered as IDP settlements. In the process, however, some of the inhabitants in these settlements turned out not actually to be IDPs; some were host community and others were urban as well as rural poor people or returnees. The profiling helped DRC understand the different strata of vulnerable war affected populations within well-defined settlements.

### Who is being profiled – West Darfur

The profiling mainly focuses on villages that are inhabited (including host community, IDPs, refugees and sedentary pastoral communities (Arab nomads) living in the surrounding area). For mapping purpose, non-inhabited or destroyed villages are to a lesser extent mapped/profiled.

### Who is being profiled - North Caucasus

DRC registers IDPs (Ingushetia, Chechnya, Dagestan), and host population (Ingushetia)

#### 3.3.1. When does displacement end?

The question of *when does displacement end* is critical when dealing with IDP profiling. In some protracted displacement situations, IDPs actually become integrated in the host community after a certain period of time and enjoy protection and other benefits, as normal inhabitants of that community would do. In such cases it may be argued that the concerned persons no longer are IDPs. It may also happen that IDP households appear integrated in the sense that they have been able to move into 'normal' houses and have got 'normal' jobs etc., but at another level they may still suffer from not being socially accepted in the new location, denied access to local health clinics, or their children not being accepted in local schools. They would still be in need of humanitarian support.

In cases of prolonged war, such as in Somalia, the emergency situation of internal displacement is persistent even though many of the IDPs have been displaced for many years. The case may be that even though many daily routines have been established in terms of earning a living, the IDPs still live in designated IDP settlement and have a hard time finding other accommodation. They may also have chosen to continue living in IDP settlements because they still hope soon to be able to return home so why bother integrate, or to be able to better attract humanitarian aid as part of their survival strategy. It is not always straightforward to determine when displacement ends and people no longer qualify for humanitarian support.

#### 3.4. Who does the profiling?

Since the phenomenon of internal displacement has been recognised to be a great humanitarian problem, there has been a collective and collaborative approach adopted along with it. This approach, centred on the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee, is the management model for assistance and protection to IDPs. It involves the inclusion of governments, local authorities, UN agencies, international and local NGOs.

Collaborative profiling, which is often based on the cluster approach, has a number of advantages. In relation to the communities, it limits the negative implications of 'over-surveying', since all the stakeholder agencies can coordinate their sector-specific needs into one tool and burden the community with profiling exercises only once. Another positive element of the collaborative approach is the pooling of available resources and capacities of the participating agencies to make the profiling effective, inclusive, and wider in scope. Collaborative profiling, of course, also allows room for joint analysis of the data and provides a great basis for stakeholders, subsequently, to cooperate on the ground with implementation of specific interventions thus limiting the risk of duplication of programmes (that in turn maximises use of funds). A potential obstacle in the collaborative approach is the obvious need to agree on definition of target group and scope of profiling. In this regard, compromises may have to be made in order for the profiling to be successful.

It is advocated by IDMC that within the collaborative approach, it is the responsibility of the lead protection agency to advocate with governments to undertake a profiling initiative as required. Where the governments are not in a position to do so, it is the responsibility of the humanitarian community.

It is the DRC experience that for a collaborative profiling exercise to be successful there must be a well-defined management system and leadership structure in place that is agreed upon by all partners. It must be ensured that sufficient capacity is onboard to handle all phases of the profiling exercise such as planning, design, data collection, analysis and dissemination.

DRC has for some years been working actively on the ground with IDP situations in many countries and has therefore gained valuable experience in the field. Many DRC staff have specific experience in IDP-related activities, including profiling. DRC would therefore be in position to assume a key role among stakeholders in the implementation of IDP profiling.

In the three DRC cases, the profiling work has been done in the following ways:

#### Who does the profiling - Somalia

The field part of the IDP profiling was implemented by DRC. The work was monitored by a core group of agencies from the Protection/IDP Cluster Work Group consisting of UNHCR, OCHA, UNHABITAT, NRC, and DRC. Data collection was organised and managed by the DRC project management team. The actual interviews were in some cases carried out by hired local NGOs, and in others, by a team of interviewers hired directly by the project (depending on local political and security circumstances). Data processing was done by data management staff of UNHCR Branch Office Somalia in Nairobi while analysis was done by the DRC project management team.

#### Who does the profiling - West Darfur

DRC is responsible for the profiling in all aspects, including data collecting, processing, and analysis.

#### Who does the profiling - North Caucasus

Managers of DRC information centres were responsible for the profiling/registration. The work was for the most carried out by DRC's own staff, sometimes supported by additional, temporary staff. In the location of Dagestan, for security reasons, a local NGO was doing the data collection under supervision of DRC staff. The data was processed by DRC database operators and analysed by the DRC database manager and monitoring coordinator.

### 3.5. Methodologies

As shown in Chapter 2, profiling can be done in many ways applying different methods and tools, depending on the objective and context of the exercise, and as discussed above in the present chapter there are different reasons for embarking on IDP profiling and different types of groups to profile. Most DRC profiling initiatives at the minimum establishes core data (number of displaced persons, age and gender breakdown, and location) to get a basic numerical understanding and a simple statistical overview of the IDP situation. Such information is also needed to feed into the global database on internal displacement. Furthermore, demographic (age and gender) breakdown of internally displaced communities can be the first step to identify groups in the population that are most prone to protection risks and it can help with effectively targeting assistance. Mapping of locations is also a key

task, which can help tracking the movement of IDPs and understanding the importance of environmental conditions on their lives.

Although basic facts and numbers are critical to planning, information of this kind has limited value and often needs to be supplemented by additional qualifying information ('beyond numbers') in order to enable agencies to get a deeper understanding of displacement and the plight of the IDPs.

The following boxes give a brief idea of methods and tools applied in the three selected DRC profiling exercises.

#### Methods and tools - Somalia

Method: Desk study of existing data followed by socio-economic household survey based on simple random sampling in identified IDP settlements.

Tools:

- Focus group discussions as initial data gathering exercise and as door opener to the community. A checklist was developed for the purpose
- Household interviews using a questionnaire (a short and a long version, to be used depending on time available and other circumstances)

#### Methods and tools – West Darfur

Method: Main focus was on mapping of the villages and Arab settlements (whether inhabited, non-inhabited/destroyed or abandoned) in the area of responsibility and gathering of general community-level (not household-level) data.

Tools:

- Mapping of locations, including collection of basic data (no. of HH, tribe, etc.)
- Interviews with community leaders
- Follow-up interviews with community leaders and key groups of persons identified through the first interviews (such as women, children, and others) – using a questionnaire

#### Methods and tools – North Caucasus

Method: Initial survey of larger areas followed in certain locations by specific socio-economic surveys and needs assessments in identified population groups or locations.

Tools:

- Registration, using individual forms, establishing one database to facilitate humanitarian aid distribution and another (in Ingushetia and on behalf of UNHCR) on protection issues in relation to the question of return
- Community-based targeting (in Chechnya) involving meetings with key representative of the communities
- Household interviews, using questionnaires

The DRC programmes working with IDP profiling have developed and tested a range of formats, questionnaires, and other tools available in the June-2007 workshop CD-ROM. These documents should be consulted in preparation of future interventions of a similar nature – keeping in mind, of course, that while part of it may be of direct use in other profiling exercises, the specific context of new interventions will demand specific formats and unique solutions. There is no single model that can be adopted in all situations.

### 3.5.1. Multi-method profiling

Field realities make it obvious that IDPs are more than statistics and that there is a unique story in each displacement. The DRC experience has shown the importance of obtaining qualitative data to compliment quantitative data. Where the purpose is to collect in-depth information, profiling should aim to adopt a multi-method approach, utilising focus groups, questionnaires, and structured, informal interviews. This would result in the combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection activities that can capture basic statistical core data along with demographic information and socio-economic characteristics of an IDP community. This is vital because useful information on IDPs needs to reflect the causes and consequences of the displacement as well as the social, economic, legal and integration problems attached to it.

A number of questions should be addressed when choosing methods and developing profiling tools:

#### Check-list for developing profiling tools

- 1) Does the tool ask the questions in a culturally and context specific appropriate language? (Cultural sensitivity must be observed in formulating questions and subsequently conducting interviews and surveys.)
- 2) Is the wording of the questions simple and straightforward?
- 3) Does the tool ask questions that lead to sufficiently detailed information?
- 4) Is the length of questionnaires and forms appropriate? (Too long questionnaires makes it impossible for some persons to participate, as they have other businesses to attend to, and it may cause survey fatigue and general animosity towards the profiling and the agency.)
- 5) Is the translation precise? (There is a need to be careful of terms and concepts that can be confused or misunderstood in cultural translation.)
- 6) Is the tool simple and practical to use? (Complicated designs are difficult to use for the interviewers and may cause confusion and reduce will of cooperation with persons being interviewed)

### 3.5.2. Test run of tools

It is vital when developing methods and tools to do a test run of all parts. This would include data gathering in the field, data entering into computer software, as well as data processing to check how culture and context specific the tool is and if it works and makes sense all the way through. In this respect key lessons were learnt in the Somalia programme.

#### The need to conduct test run - Somalia

Computer entering of data from the questionnaires turned out to take much more time than anticipated. The profiling survey work in the field therefore had to move on before the first experiences from data entering, raw data presentation, and data analysis were learnt and could be acted upon. This was unfortunate as problems concerning formulation of the questions and the structure of the questionnaire therefore came into light very late in the process.

The lesson learnt is that once a profiling format and a draft of questionnaires has been developed, a test run should be conducted of all phases of the process. This should include a field test run (actual interviews) in the settings where it is intended to be used to provide necessary feedback and allow for technical and socio-cultural adjustments of both questionnaire format and the interview process. It should also include a test run of all aspects of data handling (computer entering) and initial report production (presentation of raw data) and data analysis before a full-scale survey is started.

### 3.6. Governments and local authorities

As mentioned, it is first of all the role of governments to undertake IDP profiling, and only where a government is not in a position to do so, it is the responsibility of the humanitarian community. It is the DRC experience, however, that for the purpose of durable solutions, there is a need to advocate for the involvement of governments to whatever extent possible.

Just as the IDP communities have certain expectations of a profiling exercise (see next chapter), so often does also governments and local authorities, even if they are not directly involved. This could be with regard to certain information coming out of a profiling exercise and with regard to subsequent aid delivery. It is therefore relevant to be clear with governments and local authorities as to the purpose and process of the profiling.

## 4. Community aspects

Any profiling exercise will have an effect on the communities that it is undertaken with – and visa versa. A number of community aspects, including proper access to the community and relationship building, are very important issues to address in order for the profiling to be successful. The sections below will highlight and discuss critical community issues that come into play.

### 4.1. Access to the community

Access to the community must be achieved through community committees, respectable elders, or authorities that are in charge of the community. In both Darfur and Somalia, focus group discussions were held with relevant community leaders to explain to them the purpose and the process of the profiling. This achieved transparency and only through such a process can the IDP profiling be conducted in a sufficiently conducive environment, for quality information to be obtained. When collecting sensitive protection information, it is particularly important to ensure the right community entry and establish good rapport. Working through implementing partners that are well connected and established in the IDP communities gives the profiling an insider status, and allows the IDP communities to drop their guard and be open to the survey.

DRC has experience from working with Iraqi refugees in Lebanon where no immediate point of entry into a community was available because the concerned groups lived more or less in hiding among host communities. The way forward was to find just one person with some connection (for instance someone from a local agency working in the area) and ask that person for an introduction to community links. Gradually, connections were established and DRC was able to get access to the community in a way that could facilitate the work.

#### Access to community - Somalia

Initial meetings were held with IDP settlement management committees, elders, and political and religious leaders, to explain about the profiling project and ask for their facilitation of access to the communities. In the case of Mogadishu, meetings were first held with district committees to ensure local political support to the profiling project.

#### Access to community – West Darfur

Access is ensured through national staff contacting the traditional leadership (*sheiks*, commanders in charge, local authorities) to explain the purpose and process of the profiling.

### Access to community – North Caucasus

The registration system is transparent and based on information provided by the affected local population. The system is described in writing and posted at all information centres, and many of the 120 DRC distribution points in the region. The beneficiary selection criteria are public and beneficiaries are informed in writing (through posters and leaflets) about all major changes in the registration and distribution systems. DRC works closely with the local authorities, soliciting their feedback on beneficiary selection, and relevant humanitarian and recovery interventions for the affected population. Any households in Ingushetia, Chechnya or Dagestan can approach the DRC information centres at any time regarding basic humanitarian assistance.

## 4.2. Survey fatigue

‘Survey fatigue’ is a critical drawback when profiling. Very often, displaced communities are overburdened with surveys and questionnaires and therefore show unwillingness (at times strongly formulated anger and aggression) to go along with the profiling. There are several ways to minimise this, including collaborative profiling, which also minimises ad hoc data collection that is undertaken by many agencies. Another way to minimise survey fatigue is to engage in active dialogue with the community and authorities from the start, as noted above, explaining the purpose and the process of the profiling. It is also important to share and discuss profiling questionnaires with the community. And, finally, it is an important aspect in itself to be aware of the possibility of survey fatigue and the constraints it may cause.

### Survey fatigue - Somalia

Survey fatigue was felt in some cases but generally overcome by explaining the importance of the profiling – though at the same time being quite open about the fact that this profiling was not to be followed by any particular aid delivery. Only in very few cases did the profiling project have to skip a household because the head of the household for various reasons did not want to take part.

### Survey fatigue – West Darfur

DRC mandate as well as the purpose of the survey is always clearly and carefully explained to the communities before entering. However, some communities are getting more and more tired of answering questions without any activities subsequently implemented.

## 4.3. Community participation and ownership

Data collection is often the first activity in a community, and to facilitate the work as well as subsequent interventions it is important that this is done in a way that builds up a positive rapport with the community. Community participation is one way of trying to minimise problems and ensure quality outputs. Participatory survey methods may be applied but the general experience suggests that this is complicated, partly due to time constraints. Instead, emphasis could be on bringing onboard the community in other ways. Ensuring the right access to the community has been discussed above along with sharing and discussing the purpose and the process of the profiling and the questionnaires to be used etc. Community participation can also be increased by sharing the results of the profiling with the community and get an understanding of what interventions they would subsequently like to see. In this way the community may develop an element of ownership over its information.

### Community participation and ownership - Somalia

Community participation was ensured through an open and honest approach explaining what the survey was about and what it was NOT about (such as preparing for specific aid delivery). First, however, the support of the settlement committees and the elders etc. was important.

Community ownership may be achieved by involving the community in discussions of the results of the survey. This has to be a very balanced process, however, since such discussions very likely would generate expectations with regard to subsequent aid delivery or other sorts of services. It also has to be balanced with regard to the local political environment, which may be very sensitive to certain findings or the consequences thereof.

### Community participation and ownership – West Darfur

Firstly, the purpose of the profiling and why the profiling is relevant both for the community itself and for international organisations is clearly explained. Secondly, a mix of group discussions and individual discussions makes the informants feel more confident and willing to participate.

In communities, where DRC-Darfur already is working, the communities are more willing to share/provide sensitive information (especially on sensitive issues such as harassment, rape, killing, abduction, looting and land dispute) – both voluntarily and in relation to a profiling. Trust in DRC is important for the community to actually participate and provide correct information. Furthermore, the feeling that we take them seriously, listen to their needs and use the information to actually plan, coordinate and implement activities helps increase their ownership of the profiling.

### Community participation and ownership – North Caucasus

DRC conducts preliminary meetings with administrations, public organisations, and religious leaders for identification of the 5-10 respected people, who will constitute the committee for identification of the most vulnerable population.

Moreover, DRC started community-based targeting in April 2007 in seven districts of the republic, which had been previously covered by direct food distribution through ECHO. We can say that this activity was conducted and accepted positively. The communities are choosing the most vulnerable population of their villages for the future alternative programmes.

## 4.4. Community expectations

Community expectation for aid provision often makes it difficult to conduct a profiling because IDPs tend to adjust their answers accordingly. This highlights the need to ensure a conducive environment with full transparency where the purpose and process of the profiling – and of what may come after - is understood and accepted in the community. Some would argue that the most important thing is to collect data and information under all circumstances. While this may be a valid point, the consequences may be a compromise in the validity of the data and it could hamper relationships with the community. Community expectations must be addressed before the start of a profiling exercise.

## 5. Data management and security

The management of data is an integral part of profiling and a system for proper and secure data management should be in place from the start of the project. A data management manual should be developed specifically for each profiling operation providing detailed guidelines and instructions on all relevant issues. Data management goes through four

stages: data collection, data processing, data analysis, and data dissemination. Data protection and confidentiality should be observed at every stage and the community should be assured of the confidentiality of the data in the sense that data can not be linked to specific, identifiable individuals beyond the initial interviews.

### 5.1. Data collection

Data collection, of course, is the backbone of any profiling exercise. The first aspect to consider is the format and data collection tool that must be appropriate to collect the information needed. Under a collaborative approach, it must be ensured that all involved parties agree to formats and tools. Linked to this is the importance of training of survey staff on the tool. In some cases the tool will be designed in a language different from the one used in the actual field data gathering, and staff training should therefore include cross-cultural understandings that may be lost in translation.

During data collection and management, modes of data protection must also be ensured since in many cases the information gathered will be confidential. In this stage, data sharing should be on a 'need-to-know-basis' and data should be accessible only to authorised persons. Through transport and storage the data should be kept in protected pouches and confidentiality observed all through.

### 5.2. Data processing

The second stage is where the collected raw data is processed. In this stage data entry is a critical activity. Like the data collection, training must be provided for those entering the data from the questionnaires and other forms into the database. In this stage it is also critical to be aware of the translations in context that can be lost in the data entry process. This is particularly critical if data entry is done in a location disconnected from the survey environment in such a way that quick checks cannot be made in cases of doubt (like the Somalia data being entered at the UNHCR office in Nairobi).

The collaborative approach provides obvious benefits also at this stage to the extent those agencies that are more experienced in data entering and have the required capacity, make resources available for the process. This was the case in both Somalia and Darfur where UNHCR was handling data entry and processing.

In this stage, security of data should also be given highest priority through use of passwords and frequent backup of computers. Besides, the original survey forms or questionnaires should be and stored in a safe and secure place after computer entering has been completed.

#### Data processing and software- Somalia

The database, operated by UNHCR Branch Office Somalia in Nairobi, is based on Access and developed by UNHCR data managers. Dissemination of formats and tools is a key idea behind the pilot project. Using the database, however, is a problem to the extent it is based with UNHCR and requires specialist staff.

#### Data processing and software – West Darfur

The software used is a WebGIS platform which is connected to an offline client in which the data is entered. It was developed by the Italian NGO INTERSOS for West Darfur and cannot be used outside West Darfur. However, the set-up can be used for inspiration for a potential DRC developed database.

### Data processing and software – North Caucasus

The software used is Microsoft Access for Database and Microsoft Excel for statistics, beneficiary and monitoring lists. Some formats and tools will be useful for other DRC projects (the system of information centres, using of the database, registration scheme). We have to consider the fact that all information in the database is based on the personal data and certificates of birth. The system is very well developed in Russia, but may not be applicable in other parts of the world, where the system of identification of citizens is not in place yet.

It should be noted that in other country programmes, DRC has successfully been using the comprehensive statistical software called Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) and is considering to further promote that software.

### 5.3. Data analysis and reporting

Analysing raw data and transforming them into reports is the stage where the light appears at the end of the tunnel. To move beyond the mere statistical data and produce qualitative information, it is important that analysis of raw data is done with involvement of persons who understand the profiling process and have a sufficiently deep insight into the context. It is important to be able to see and draw out emerging patterns in the data and to spot abnormalities or blurred areas in relation to the context.

Raw data reports may be produced as simple printouts of figures and information from the database. On the basis of such raw data reports, data analysis will be done in which data is studied carefully and put together to form a picture of the topics of concern. Simple information could be area of origin; time of displacement; access to certain services etc. Data could also be linked by linking of data fields in the database. This opens up for expanded use of the data asking questions such as when certain people left a certain areas of origin; how many households with children under the age of five does not have access to clean drinking water; of people from a certain area, how many would like to return and how many would like to be integrated in the host community; etc. Possibilities for developing new questions by linking data are endless but, of course, a precondition is that the initial raw data is there – in other words, the right questions must have been asked in the survey to begin with.

The outcome of the data analysis process becomes the final profiling reports. The same set of raw data could be used to produce different reports on different topics depending on how the data linking is done.

### 5.4. Data dissemination

The final part of data management is the distribution and sharing of information with stakeholders, partner agencies, and the government. The critical question to ask here is who needs this information and what are the best methods of dissemination? An initial presentation to stakeholders is a great platform to get 'buy-in' and encourage interested partners to make use of the information. The IDMC also needs profiling data to feed into their global database.

The Internet is a great media for dissemination of profiling data as shown by the experience of DRC in both Darfur and Somalia. In the case of Darfur, due to the protection sensitivity, data is shared with partners through a password protected Internet page. In the case of Somalia, profiling reports for each surveyed location were made freely available on a website for humanitarian agencies.

## 5.5. Consent and confidentiality

The issue of community consent to the profiling and confidentiality of the profiling data is crucial and has already been discussed in various connections in this document. In the following boxes details from each of the three DRC programmes are highlighted.

### Consent and confidentiality – Somalia

Permission to conduct the survey is first obtained from the settlement management committee who then encourages the settlement inhabitants to participate. At the end, it is up to each of the contacted household representatives to accept taking part in the interview. Some did refuse to take part saying that they were fed up with surveys that never yielded anything concrete anyway (survey fatigue), but most of those were, eventually, convinced to take part.

Before starting an interview, the interviewer explained the system set up to ensure confidentiality. While most respondents were not particularly concerned with confidentiality, some did express concern about giving certain information (such as clan affiliation).

### Consent and confidentiality – West Darfur

On confidentiality, reports are only shared with trusted partners and sensitive data and names are left out. Sensitive data is handled separately and reported to UNHCR through their incident reporting database.

### Consent and confidentiality – North Caucasus

IDPs are always keen to provide the requested data during the interview with the registrars, as they know that the information that they are giving will be used for the targeted assistance arranged by DRC as well as other NGOs.

Personal information from the database is provided upon request only to donors and NGOs after the conclusion of the written “Confidential Disclosure Agreement” on ensuring the confidentiality of the data.

## 6. Organisational set-up

### 6.1. Implementation arrangements

Profiling can be done through a variety of implementing arrangements and they are often driven by the context. Choosing an implementation arrangement appropriate to the context is often a difficult task and often involves compromises with regard to level of supervision and quality assurance. Experience from the field shows that the more DRC is involved in the profiling (by doing the work directly or by supervising implementing partners), the more the quality of information gathered can be influenced and assured. However, in many of the emergency and conflict situations that DRC operates in, direct involvement or supervision is not possible because of security risks and difficulties in access.

Below is an overview of different implementation arrangements/partners with an indication of some advantages and disadvantages.

Implementation arrangement / partners	Advantages and disadvantages
<p>Local NGO</p> <p>(Used in Somalia and North Caucasus)</p>	<p><i>Advantage:</i> Local NGOs often already have access to and a good reputation in the IDP community as well as locally based experience in the work. Working with local NGOs may contribute to local capacity building and sustainability of service provision in the area.</p> <p><i>Disadvantage:</i> Local NGOs may have limited and not sufficiently professional manpower to do the work (they need training), and they may have a 'business interest' in the type of work rather than a humanitarian interest in a way that influences quality. Some NGOs may be seen by the IDPs as biased and part of a political situation and therefore not welcome.</p>
<p>Private survey company or university institute</p> <p>(Used in South Caucasus)</p>	<p><i>Advantage:</i> Ideally, such a partner should have the sufficient technical and professional capacity and knowledge to do the work with a minimum of instructions.</p> <p><i>Disadvantage:</i> Whatever the front picture is, often local private survey companies or university institute do not have sufficient professional experience and manpower to do the work. A legitimate 'business interest' sometimes becomes an obstacle to optimal implementation of a humanitarian intervention.</p>
<p>DRC own staff</p> <p>(Used in Somalia, West Dafur, and North Caucasus)</p>	<p><i>Advantage:</i> DRC staff is under direct control of DRC project management, which facilitate training, monitoring, and quality assurance of the process.</p> <p><i>Disadvantage:</i> DRC staff may not have immediate access to the IDP communities or sufficient local knowledge. Besides, security concerns in many cases prevent DRC staff from being in the field in certain areas.</p>
<p>Independently (ad hoc) hired staff</p> <p>(Used in Somalia and North Caucasus)</p>	<p><i>Advantage:</i> Flexibility in staff management as staff is hired only when needed. With sufficient number of candidates (and training options) available, a survey team can quickly be established and the work done under direct and constant supervision of DRC project management. Besides, in sensitive and politically complex situation, a team can be composed of different individuals representing a political balance acceptable to the IDP communities.</p> <p><i>Disadvantage:</i> Ad hoc hired staff often does not have sufficient technical knowledge and would need training.</p>

The following is a checklist with some key criteria for selecting implementation partner.

### Checklist for partner selection

Does the potential partner have:

- Impartiality in mandate and field practise
- Well-established and good reputation within the communities
- Profiling or survey experience
- Staff capacity (or the potential to quickly boost capacity in a qualified way)
- Access to government or local authorities

Factors such as accessibility, security, and time frame can often be decisive in choosing implementation arrangement. Flexibility is important to bear in mind. Again, here the stress of the context comes into play. In Darfur, the profiling on the ground is carried out only by DRC staff because the DRC Darfur programme does not want to damage its relationship with the community in any way. In an environment such as Darfur this is seen as the best implementation approach to suit the context. In Somalia, there were four different implementation arrangements to suit four different geographical and socio-political contexts. The choice of implementation arrangements was made after an assessment and understanding of each location.

### 6.2. Training of survey staff

Training of survey staff – both DRC staff and those of implementing partners - is essential and should cover the whole profiling process as well as provide an understanding of the involved tools and the database. In order to motivate survey staff and at the same time utilise experience often already with the staff, the training should be interactive and participatory. As experienced in Somalia, this would help the DRC profiling project management staff upgrade their understanding of the context, including potential problems in profiling on the ground, which would contribute to improved profiling preparation.

In case of larger and/or ongoing profiling activities, such as in Somalia, it has proven very helpful to produce a training manual, which was a living document during project implementation, constantly updated as new experience was gained. While this training manual is general in nature (dealing with issues such as definitions, survey fatigue, methodologies and sampling, questionnaire handling, and daily routines) it does emphasise the need to be context specific in the actual training and it offers inspiration for designing more locally-specific additions to the manual (for an example of a training manual, see CD-ROM).

### 6.3. Process documentation and experience sharing

Profiling experience is gained in a number of DRC programmes world-wide. To further improve the process and outcomes in each programme as well as in DRC as such, process documentation will be done to facilitate internal learning and an external information sharing.