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EDITORIAL NOTE

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From Policy to Practice: Governance, Education, and Social Transformation in Africa:

Welcome to the October 2026 issue of the Journal of Contemporary Society and Education (JCSE). The sixteen articles assembled in this volume reflect the journal's commitment to rigorous, interdisciplinary scholarship on the pressing social, political, and educational challenges confronting contemporary Africa. Together, they illuminate a central tension of our time: the persistent gap between policy ambition and lived reality.

Several contributions in this issue grapple directly with the question of governance and service delivery. Motadi examines the opportunities and barriers shaping digital transformation in South African government departments, while Moloto and Pillay explore technology's influence on governance at the local municipal level. Akindele, Sanni, and Lamidi assess citizen satisfaction with public transportation in Lagos State, offering an important reminder that the legitimacy of the state rests on the quality of everyday services. Juta and Alao interrogate the democratisation of the administrative state through South Africa's Government of National Unity, and Okudolo examines decentralisation and the effectiveness of local political leaders in Nigeria. Kambiri's analysis of governance challenges in managing internal displacement further underscores the consequences of normative commitment without implementation capacity. Agbor's critical perspectives on the operational independence of Elections Cameroon and the Constitutional Council round out this focus on democratic institutions.

Education remains a cornerstone of social progress, and this issue devotes considerable attention to it. Mtshali and Meyiwa assess the role of climate change education in maritime studies, while Modiba asks whether rural secondary schools are adequately managing learners with special educational needs associated with HIV/AIDS. Babalola interrogates the legal and policy complexities of foreign partnerships in Nigerian higher education, and Shabangu examines how school management teams respond to violence in rural South African schools. Nephawe and Mudimeli offer a distinctive contribution on the indispensability of English as a lingua franca in interpreting selected Pauline epistles.

The issue also foregrounds questions of gender, culture, and well-being. Nesane and Amaechi explore *Mamalo* as a resource for gender equality and women's empowerment in Limpopo, while Gudani, Khosa, and Nomatshila examine adolescents' perceptions of child support grant management through a family systems lens. Matheere offers an exploration of the life journey of traditional healers in rural Limpopo, and Nkuna and

colleagues provide an analytical study of compounding and naming in Siswati personal names. These articles remind us that social transformation is experienced at the level of culture, family, and community.

Collectively, these contributions demonstrate the vitality and breadth of contemporary social science research in Africa. They challenge scholars and policymakers alike to move beyond policy pronouncements toward meaningful implementation. We thank our authors and reviewers for their dedication and trust that this issue will stimulate further inquiry and debate.

Editor

Prof. TJ Mudau

Institute of Gender and Youth Studies

University of Venda, South Africa

Email: Thizwilondi.Mudau@univen.ac.za

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FROM NORMATIVE COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENTATION FAILURE: GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES IN MANAGING INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN AFRICA.

Daniel Kambiri

*School of Public Management, Governance and Public Policy,
University of Johannesburg
South Africa*

dkambiri93@gmail.com

Orcid ID: <http://orcid.org/0009-0002-4479-5338>

Abstract

Despite sound normative frameworks in Africa, such as the African Union's Kampala Convention, internal displacement remains a persistent governance and human security challenge on the continent. Some African states are committed to protecting and assisting Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs); however, a gap persists between normative adoption and effective implementation. This article examines governance dynamics that explain the transition from formal commitment to practical failure in managing internal displacement in Africa. Drawing on qualitative analysis of policy documents, regional instruments, and selected country cases, it examines institutional fragmentation, limited state capacity, weak intergovernmental coordination, and inadequate resource allocation. It further explores how sovereignty concerns and contested state legitimacy constrain collaboration with international actors, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The findings suggest that implementation failure is not merely administrative but deeply embedded in political economy structures, patronage networks, and fragile accountability systems. The article argues that bridging the gap between normative commitment and administration requires strengthening domestic legal harmonization, enhancing institutional capacity, improving vertical and horizontal coordination mechanisms, and embedding accountability frameworks that prioritize durable solutions. This study contributes to African politics and humanitarian governance by offering policy-relevant insights to advance effective and sustainable IDP management across the continent.

Keywords: *governance, internal displacement, internally displaced persons, institutions, human security*

Introduction

The World Bank estimates that by 2050, more than 216 million people could be on the move and regarded as displaced persons within their own countries due to climate change (UNDP, IOM, UNHCR, 2025). The global internally displaced population has grown by over 110% in the past decade and is projected to double again by 2030 under current trends. About 90% of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) flee their homes due to conflict or disasters occurring alongside conflict and violence. Internal displacement situations are volatile (UNHCR, 2025). As of November 2024, 34 out of 55 African Union (AU) Member States were parties to the Kampala Convention (Caterina & Cantor, 2025). Around 55 million people were living in situations of internal displacement across the world, 48 million as a result of conflict and violence, and 7 million as a result of disasters. The number of IDPs is greater than that of refugees or other forced migrants (Cantor & Maple, 2021). Internal displacement remains one of Africa's most pressing humanitarian and development challenges. The main drivers of internal displacement include conflicts, natural disasters, climate change, and development-induced displacement. Millions of people are forced to flee their homes without crossing international borders and often without their consent. While African states have shown leadership by adopting progressive frameworks,

including continental frameworks such as the Kampala Convention and national policies, IDPs' lived realities suggest a persistent failure to translate commitments into tangible outcomes.

Overall research objective

To examine the gap between policy commitments and actual implementation in the governance of internal displacement in Africa.

Specific objectives

1. To assess the level of awareness and adoption of national, regional, and international frameworks on internal displacement among key stakeholders.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of institutional frameworks and governance structures responsible for managing IDPs.
3. To identify key governance challenges that hinder effective implementation of IDP policies.

Normative frameworks and commitments

Globally, Africa is recognised for its sound normative framework on internal displacement. The adoption of the African Union's Kampala Convention marked a significant milestone, as it became the first legally binding regional instrument dedicated to protecting and assisting IDPs on the continent. Many African countries have also developed national policies aligned with

international standards such as the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. These frameworks emphasise state responsibility, human rights protection, preventing displacement, and pursuing durable solutions. Theoretically, they reflect a strong commitment to addressing displacement comprehensively, but these frameworks have not consistently translated into effective action on the ground to achieve their intended goals.

The implementation gap

Despite these commitments, a significant gap persists between policy and practice. Internally displaced persons in Africa continue to face problems such as inadequate access to shelter, healthcare, education, and livelihoods (Lwabukuna, 2021). Protection mechanisms are often weak, and displacement situations become protracted. This implementation gap is not merely a technical issue but reflects deeper governance challenges. Policies are often underfunded, poorly coordinated, and insufficiently integrated into national development agendas. As a result, responses to internal displacement tend to be reactive rather than proactive.

Literature review

The Guiding Principles define internal displacement as a situation in which individuals or groups are forced to flee their homes due to armed conflict, violence, human rights violations, or

natural or human-made disasters, but remain within their country's borders (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2025). Internally displaced persons do not cross an international boundary and therefore do not acquire a special legal status under international law. The movement is involuntary; it occurs within national borders, and a person can be displaced in a country where they are not a citizen. Legal frameworks relevant to IDPs include International Human Rights Law (IHRL), International Humanitarian Law (IHL), International Criminal Law, International Disaster Law, and National laws or policies. Key instruments on IDPs include the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (UN, 1998) and the Kampala Convention, adopted 23 October 2009 and entered into force 6 December 2012 (UNHCR, 2024).

Displacement falls into two categories: voluntary and forced. Voluntary displacement occurs when people move in search of better opportunities (pull factors). In contrast, forced displacement occurs when people involuntarily move from their homes due to circumstances beyond their control, such as armed conflict, persecution, natural hazards, and human-induced disasters (push factors). It advocates protecting IDPs and addresses the root causes of internal displacement by eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development (Bamidele & Adefisove, 2024).

The Kampala Convention seeks to promote and strengthen regional and

national measures to prevent or mitigate, prohibit and eliminate root causes of internal displacement as well as provide for durable solutions, establish a legal framework for preventing internal displacement, and protecting and assisting internally displaced persons in Africa, establish a legal framework for solidarity, cooperation, promotion of durable solutions and mutual support between the States Parties in order to combat displacement and address its consequences, provide for the obligations and responsibilities of States Parties, with respect to the prevention of internal displacement and protection of, and assistance, to internally displaced persons, provide for the respective obligations, responsibilities and roles of armed groups, non-state actors and other relevant actors, including civil society organisations, with respect to the prevention of internal displacement and protection of, and assistance to, internally displaced persons (African Union, 2012).

Humanitarian and development actors lack adequate data to assist IDPs. The needs and vulnerabilities of IDPs are not properly documented and understood in order to be adequately addressed in development planning (Agalvizhi, Varshini, Jeyasri, & Amarnath, 2024). Some of the major stumbling blocks when collecting data on IDPs include that families are separated by conflict or disaster; IDPs can easily blend in with host communities; and non-IDPs may present themselves as victims so that

they can receive assistance. These problems stem from inadequate independent data collection by development actors, IDPs' failure to provide sufficient data, and a lack of transparent information sharing. Responsible authorities, both local and national, are unable to provide reliable figures on internal displacement (Debarre, 2018).

In 2023, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) reported that at least 35 million people were still internally displaced by the end of the year. Africa is recognising disasters and climate change as significant drivers, outlining measures to prevent and manage disaster displacement, including early warning systems and disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies. Integrating internal displacement into DRR frameworks is crucial because stakeholders will need to shift from a reactive to a preventive approach. For instance, countries such as Burkina Faso, Mozambique, and Nigeria have successfully incorporated displacement into their national DRR frameworks. This indicates the importance of embedding displacement-specific measures in national strategies. Conflict and violence are the main drivers of internal displacement in Africa. For the past 15 years, in Africa, the number of IDPs as a result of conflict and violence tripled from 10.2 million in 2009 to 32.5 million in 2023. Five countries, namely Sudan, DRC, Somalia, Nigeria, and Ethiopia, had the highest numbers and

accounted for 80 per cent of the IDPs displaced by conflict and violence across Africa in 2023. Nigeria remains one of the countries with the most displaced population in Africa, with over 3 million IDPs and thousands of refugees. Nigerian government has introduced several policies, including the National Policy on IDPs (2021), the African Union's Kampala Convention (2009), and the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement and Settlement. However, implementation gaps, weak institutional frameworks, and funding constraints continue to hinder effective resettlement and long-term integration (Olusola, Eniola, & Victor, 2025). Most innovative norms for protecting IDPs have been conceptualised in Africa, but have not durably addressed displacement, due to limitations in implementation.

The occurrence of conflict-induced displacement causes immediate humanitarian challenges, underdevelopment, and instability. The region of Northwest and North of Nigeria remains unstable and the largest population remains displaced because the state is failing to provide security and provide socio-economic needs to the affected populations (Stephen & Shendam, 2017). There is loss of life, insecurity, population relocation, intolerance toward other ethnic and religious groups, and the operation of militia groups. The government's response to the situation of Internally Displaced Persons in the region is not concrete, with no long-term fix for the

situation (Babajide, Sunkanmi, Bolutife, Iwuoha, & Oduh, 2024). Internally Displaced Persons face obstacles in replacing lost documentation because going to government offices is costly or dangerous because they are targeted, or because they cannot pay the fees needed to obtain these documents.

Most IDPs are trapped in cycles of vulnerability due to food insecurity, inadequate shelter, and lack of economic opportunities (Housset, 2025). The hallmark of the Kampala Convention is cooperation among governments to manage displacement, which has especially affected Nigeria, Mozambique, South Sudan, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (Bamidele & Adefisove, 2024). For example, IDPs face several challenges in the 4 blocks of Bakassi IDP camp where 150 respondents were interviewed, which include poor housing conditions (17%), lack of food and water (22%); another set of IDPs revealed that they face the problem of inadequate and insufficient medical facilities (19%); others indicated inadequate education (16%); some of the IDPs said that they face the problem of sexual abuse (13%) and the remaining respondents indicated domestic violence as the challenges they face in IDP camp (13%) (Emmanuel & Alexandra, 2022).

Internally displaced persons require health management processes which include coordination, resource allocation, service delivery, surveillance, and community engagement. Weak

coordination, fragmented services, inadequate financing, and poor continuity of care exacerbate morbidity and mortality among IDPs. Globally, over 43 million people are internally displaced, and Africa accounts for nearly one-third of this number (Yahaya, Suleiman, Ngwai, Akyala, Salisu, Ishaya, Farida, 2025). National authorities are responsible for protecting IDPs; this responsibility is a core concept in any response to internal displacement, and international actors come in to reinforce, not replace, national responsibility (Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons, 2006). Critical areas such as education, finance, farming, and employment were notably underrepresented in the available data on IDPs (Mudefi, 2024).

Over the past decades, Zimbabwe has experienced high levels of internal displacement and irregular migration, driven by serious socio-economic failure, secondary effects of land reform, natural disasters, and the expansion of cities, towns, and growth points (Mudefi, 2024). Tensions persist between IDPs and the host communities due to limited resources such as grazing lands, water, and land. In rural communities of developing countries, there are weak land rights, and villagers face risks of being displaced by infrastructure development projects such as dam constructions, for instance Kariba and Tokwe Mukosi, urban development and expansion projects, or

large-scale business projects, such as mining, for example Chiadzwa in Manicaland, timber, and agriculture. Displacements lead to the loss of land and property and negatively affect the livelihoods and socio-economic development of affected people. Zimbabwe has yet to adopt any legislation and/or policy specifically targeted at the protection of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and people affected by Development-Induced Displacement (DID). Although Zimbabwe signed the African Union Convention on the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (the Kampala Convention), it has not yet ratified or domesticated it (Centre for Conflict Management and Transformation, 2019). The Zimbabwean government's approach to compensation reflects a complex interplay of political interests, economic constraints, and cultural insensitivity. The government lacked proper planning, struggled to value traditional assets and cultural heritage, and prioritised the needs of the displaced, as shown by deliberate delays in compensation and the diversion of allocated funds for Tokwe Mukosi (Dube & Mudefi, 2025). There are no long-term solutions arise due to the lack of specific policies addressing the management of displacements and relocation Cyclone survivors in Tshino and Sawudweni villages-Tsholotsho (Ncube & Murray, 2025).

Research methodology

The study used both primary and secondary data. The study used a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. Secondary literature and policy documents were used to contextualise and interpret the survey findings; they were not treated as a second primary qualitative method. The survey comprised of 52 respondents with direct or institutional knowledge of internal displacement. Respondents included government officials, NGO/CSO

representatives, community leaders and internally displaced persons. Snowball sampling was used because the study sought respondents with relevant experience and knowledge of displacement governance. This approach facilitated access to specialised participants but limits statistical generalisability because the sample was non-probabilistic.

Stakeholder category	N	%
Government officials	12	23
NGO/CSO representatives	17	33
Community leaders	11	22
Internally displaced persons	12	22
Total	52	100

Table 1. Respondent composition (n=52).

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered through KoboToolbox. The dataset was exported to Excel for cleaning, organisation and descriptive analysis. The analysis focused on frequencies and percentages for respondent characteristics. The questionnaire was aligned with the study objectives and organised around normative awareness, institutional capacity, implementation challenges, service delivery, participation, accountability and outcomes. The study considered validity, reliability and ethical principles including informed

consent, respect for human dignity, justice and beneficence. Respondents participated voluntarily and informed consent was obtained.

Theoretical framework

The study adopted institutional theory. Drew (2024) argues that institutions are rules and regulations. In other words, institutions are the rules of the game and reflect issues of power and interest. Institutional theory highlights how institutions constrain and empower human behaviour. Institutional theory argues that institutions matter in policy

processes because policymaking is inherently embedded in a state's institutional framework, which is why it is often considered the best theoretical lens for understanding policymaking. Sociological institutionalism goes beyond formal rules and regulations and considers the moral factors that shape individual behaviour in solving problems. It states that individuals act within a context, and the context is socially constructed. Sociological institutionalism argues that institutions are created not only to improve problem-solving efficiency but also to enhance social legitimacy and accommodate patterns of behaviour. Institutions play a pivotal role in decision-making (Mahmud, 2017). It demonstrates that organisations are shaped not only by technical considerations but also by socially constructed norms, rules, and expectations. A central claim of this approach is that legitimacy plays a pivotal role in organisational survival and stability. The good governance principle in institutional theory provides a normative framework that is widely accepted in contemporary public administration literature. Good governance refers to an approach to governing that secures mechanisms of representation, participation, transparency, and oversight in the administration of a country, and that is grounded in fundamental principles such as an effective civil society, the rule of law, the strengthening of local governments, transparency, and accountability (Huseynov, 2026). The

emergence and function of these institutions ensure that arrangements serve the interests of particular groups (Mohamed, 2017); in this case, service delivery must consider IDPs' interests.

The institutional theory was operationalised through three analytical dimensions: (i) formal institutionalisation, measured through awareness and perceived alignment of national, regional and international frameworks; (ii) organisational capacity and implementation capability, assessed through institutional capacity, role clarity, coordination, financing, monitoring and data systems; and (iii) institutional legitimacy and accountability, assessed through participation, complaints and feedback mechanisms, transparency and perceived responsiveness. The implementation gap was examined as the perceived difference between the existence or awareness of formal commitments and their consistent translation into practice. The framework therefore links rules to implementation through identifiable organisational and accountability mechanisms rather than treating institutional theory as a descriptive background.

The theory generates the following analytical propositions rather than statistical hypotheses: P1: higher awareness of formal displacement frameworks does not necessarily correspond to effective institutionalisation; P2: implementation capacity is constrained where mandates, resources, coordination, information and

monitoring systems are weak; and P3:
 limited participation and accountability

can weaken institutional legitimacy and
 the consistency of implementation.

Findings

Respondent category

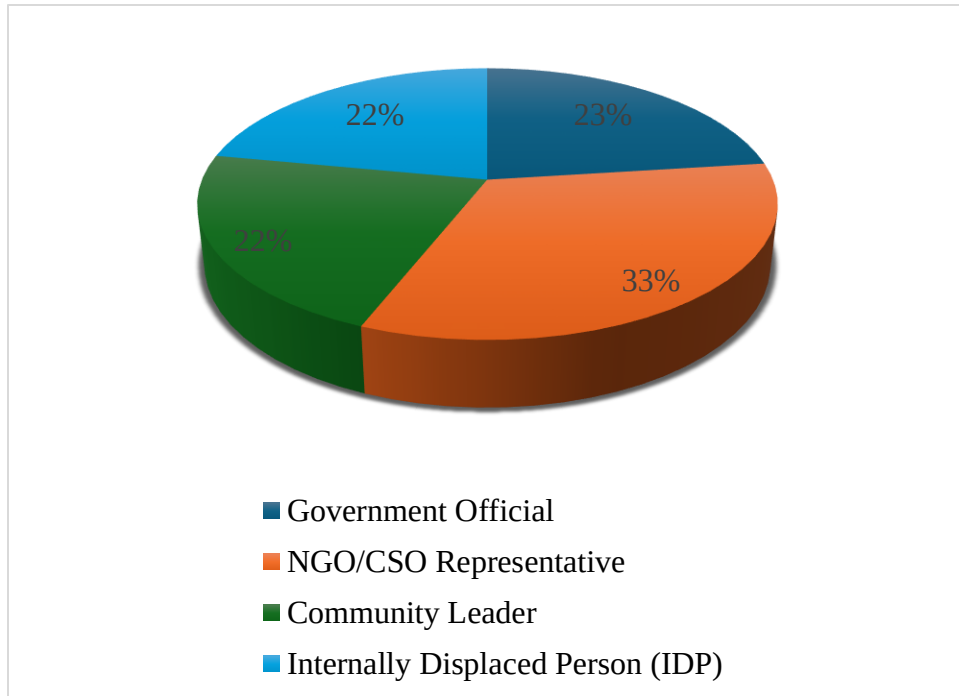


Figure 1. Respondent categories

This category classifies respondents by group within the study. It helped identify whether participants came from government institutions, non-governmental organisations, or communities. Understanding the response categories was important

because different groups have different perspectives, responsibilities, and levels of influence in managing internal displacement. This classification therefore provides a basis for comparing viewpoints across different stakeholder groups.

Gender

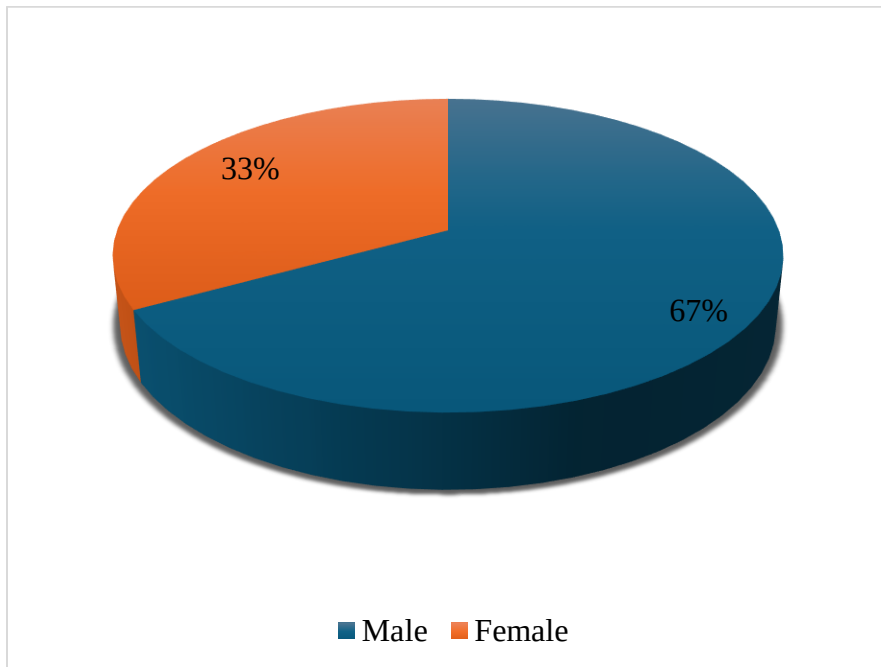


Figure 2. Gender of respondents

The gender category describes the distribution of respondents based on sex. This was important for assessing whether the study captures perspectives from both males and females in a balanced manner. Gender representation influenced findings, as men and women may experience and respond to internal

displacement differently. It enhanced inclusivity and ensured that the study reflected diverse experiences and insights.

Age group

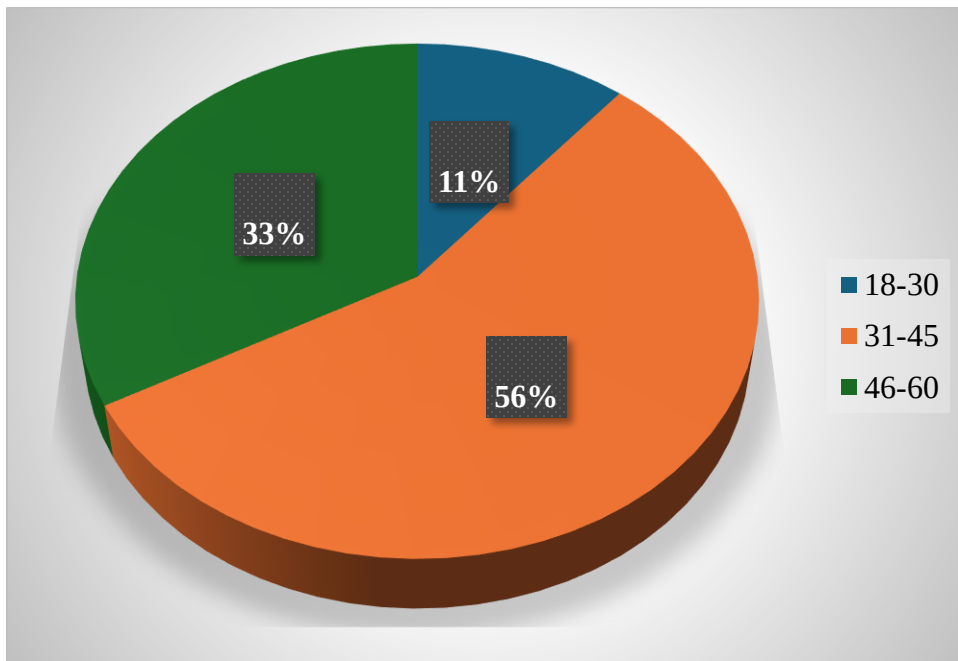


Figure 3. Age of respondents

The age group variable provided insight into the generational composition of the respondents. It helped to determine whether the study includes younger, middle-aged, or older participants. Different age groups have varying levels of experience, knowledge, and attitudes toward governance and internal displacement.

Education

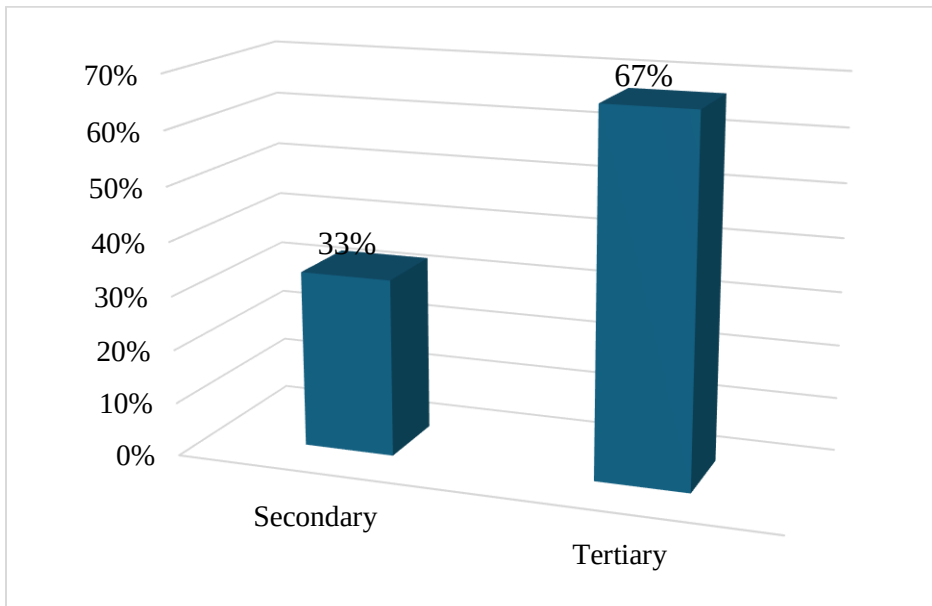


Figure 4. Qualifications of respondents

This category outlines respondents' educational background. Education level was a key factor in determining respondents' ability to understand complex governance frameworks, policies, and institutional arrangements related to internal displacement. Higher

education levels were associated with greater awareness of legal and policy issues, while lower levels may reflect limited access to such information. This variable helps to assess the capacity of respondents to engage meaningfully on IDPs.

Experience with IDPs

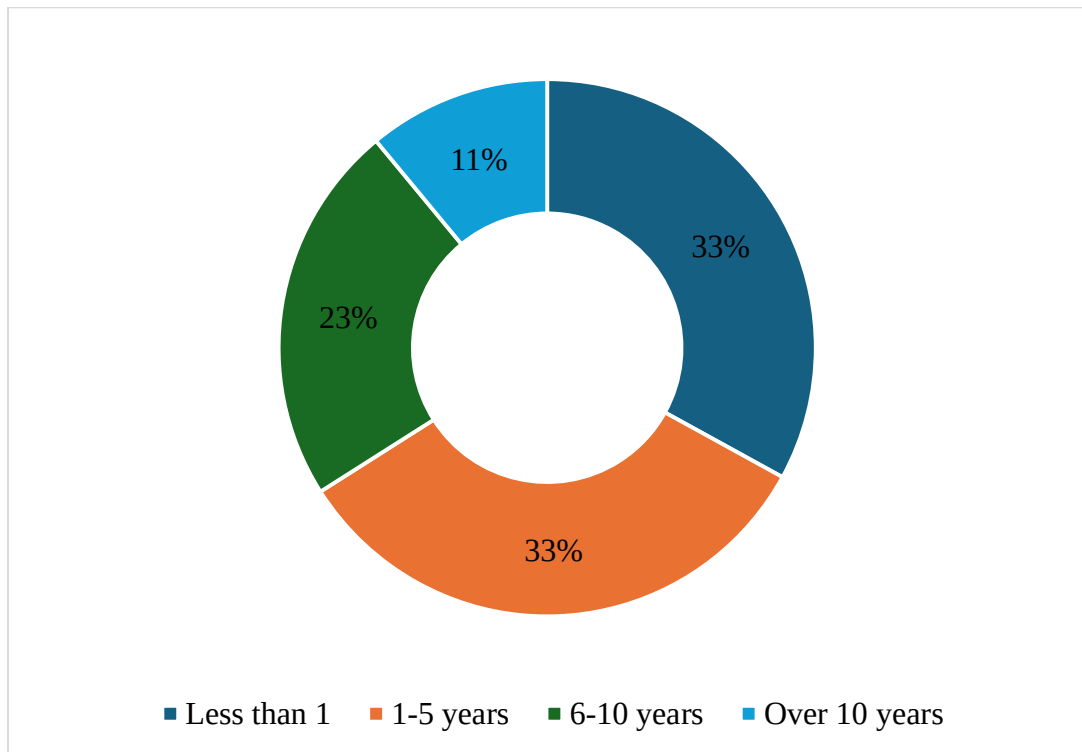


Figure 5. Experience of respondents

This section measures the extent to which respondents have interacted with or worked on issues related to internally displaced persons. Experience with IDPs is crucial because it directly affects the depth and reliability of the information provided. Respondents with direct

experience provided informed and practical insights, while those with limited experience may offer more general or theoretical perspectives. This variable therefore helps to assess the credibility and relevance of the responses in relation to the study topic.

Components guiding the research

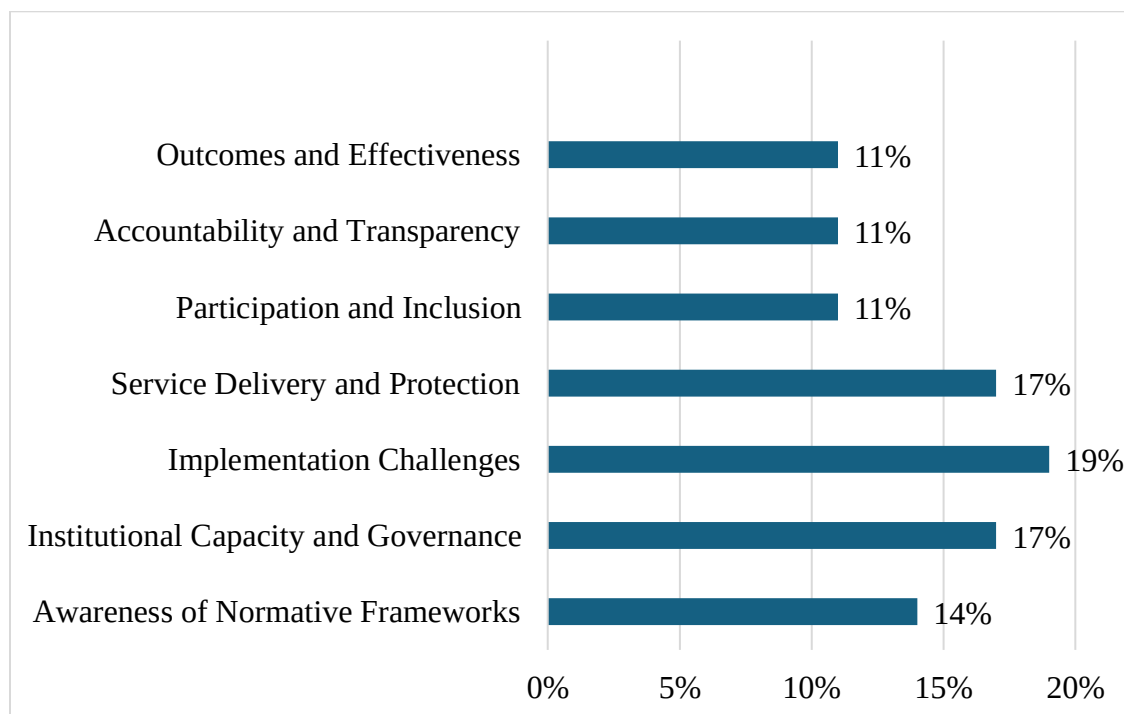


Figure 6. Components for the research

The bar chart presents the distribution of responses across several governance-related dimensions, expressed as percentages. The findings show that implementation challenges received the highest proportion, at approximately 19%, indicating that respondents perceive significant obstacles in putting policies or frameworks into practice. This suggests that while structures or commitments may exist, actual execution remains a major concern.

Institutional capacity and governance and service delivery and protection each account for around 17%, highlighting that the ability of institutions to effectively govern and deliver services is also a critical issue. These relatively high

percentages point to systemic capacity gaps and challenges in ensuring adequate protection and service provision.

In addition, awareness of normative frameworks stands at about 14%, suggesting a moderate level of understanding or knowledge of existing policies, laws, or guidelines. While awareness is present, it may not be strong enough to support effective implementation fully. Participation and Inclusion, Accountability and Transparency, and Outcomes and Effectiveness each fall around 11–12%. This indicates comparatively less emphasis or weaker performance in these areas. It implies that there is

limited stakeholder engagement, gaps in transparency mechanisms, and concerns about whether interventions are achieving desired results.

Awareness of normative frameworks

Aware of national policies on internal displacement

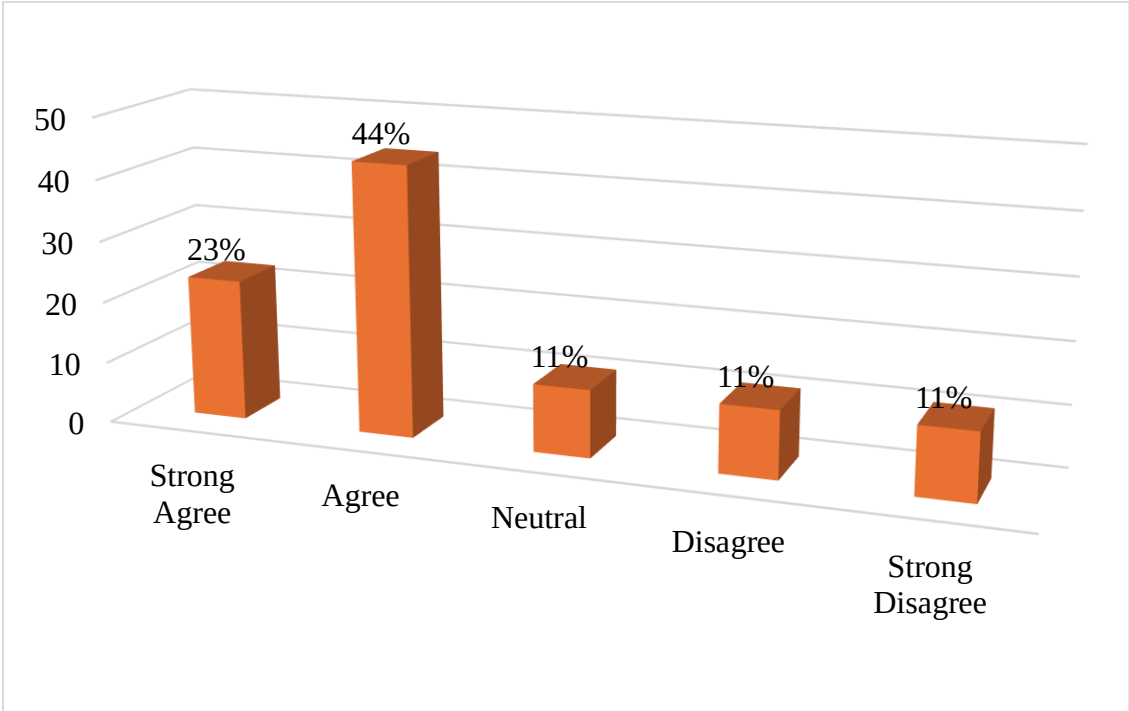


Figure 7. Awareness of national policies by respondents

The bar chart shows a generally positive level of awareness of national policies on internal displacement. A combined 67% of respondents either strongly agreed (23%) or agreed (44%) that they are aware of these policies, indicating relatively high policy visibility. However, a notable proportion of respondents expressed uncertainty or

lack of awareness, with 11% remaining neutral, 11% disagreeing, and 11% strongly disagreeing. This suggests that while awareness is fairly strong, gaps remain and need to be addressed through improved dissemination and sensitisation so development actors working with IDPs are well equipped with proper guidelines.

Familiar with regional frameworks such as the African Union’s Kampala Convention

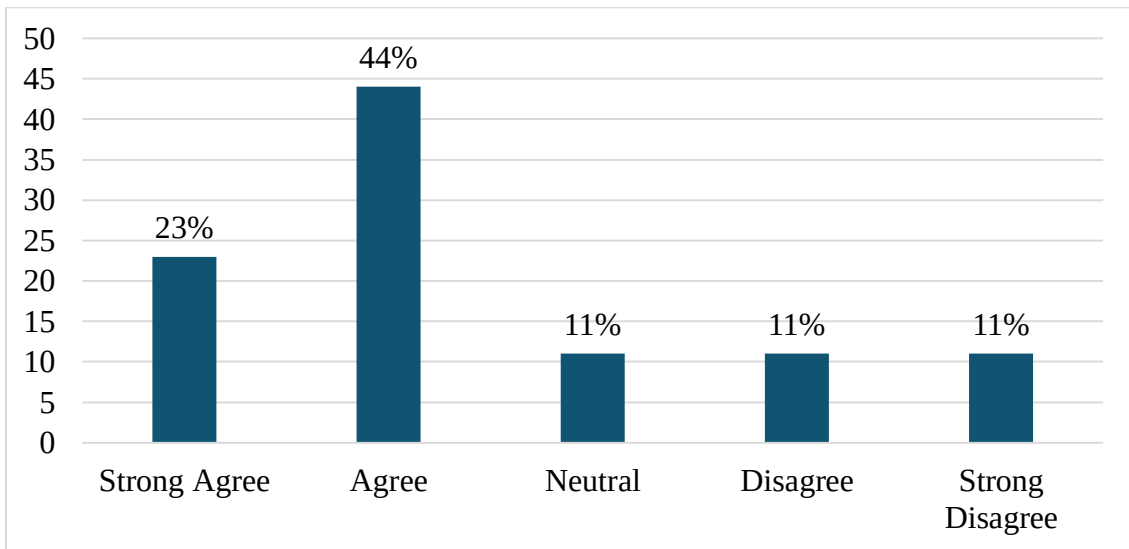


Figure 8. Familiarity with regional frameworks by respondents

Furthermore, familiarity with regional frameworks, including the African Union Kampala Convention, appears moderately strong but not universal. A total of 67% of respondents indicated familiarity (23% strongly agree and 44% agree). However, 11% remained neutral,

while 22% were unfamiliar (11% disagreed and 11% strongly disagreed). This indicates that although over half of the respondents are aware of regional instruments, a significant proportion still lacks sufficient knowledge of these frameworks.

International guidelines on IDPs are well communicated to stakeholders

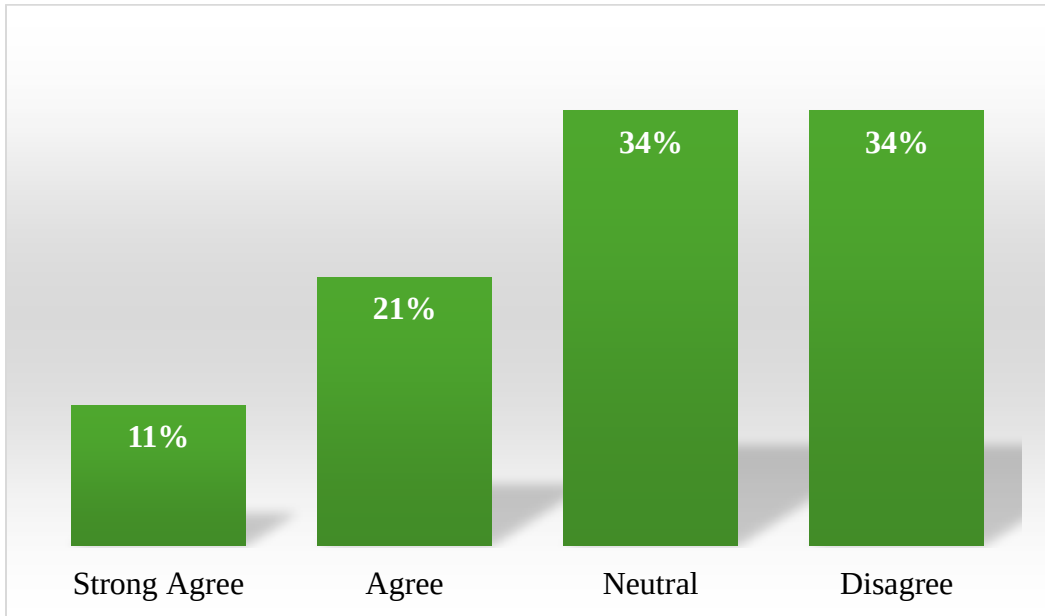


Figure 9. IDP guidelines are communicated to stakeholders

The communication of international guidelines on internally displaced persons (IDPs) appears to be a key weakness amongst respondents and victims. While 32% of respondents felt these guidelines are well communicated (11% strongly agree and 21% agree), a

larger proportion (68%) disagreed. This suggests respondents see gaps in how international and national IDP standards are shared with stakeholders, pointing to challenges in outreach, coordination, or information-sharing mechanisms.

Governments demonstrate commitment to protecting IDPs in policy documents

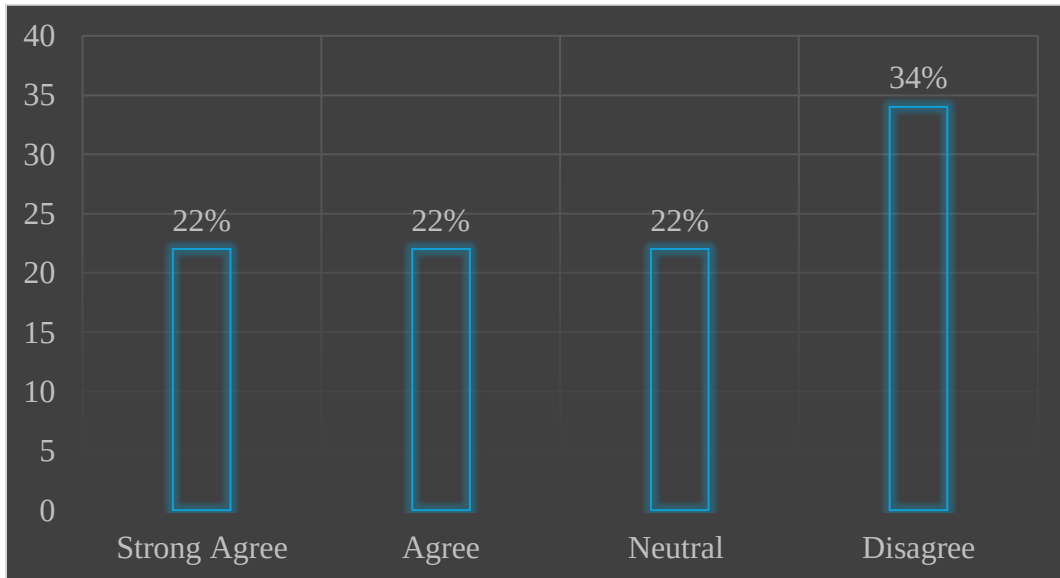


Figure 10. Government commitment to IDPs

Government commitment to protecting IDPs in policy documents is largely mixed and somewhat uncertain. A significant 34% of respondents disagreed, indicating ambiguity or lack of clarity in assessing commitment. Meanwhile, only 44% expressed

agreement, while 22% remained neutral. This reflects a general perception that, although policies may exist, their strength, clarity, or enforceability is still lagging.

Alignment between national laws and international standards on displacement

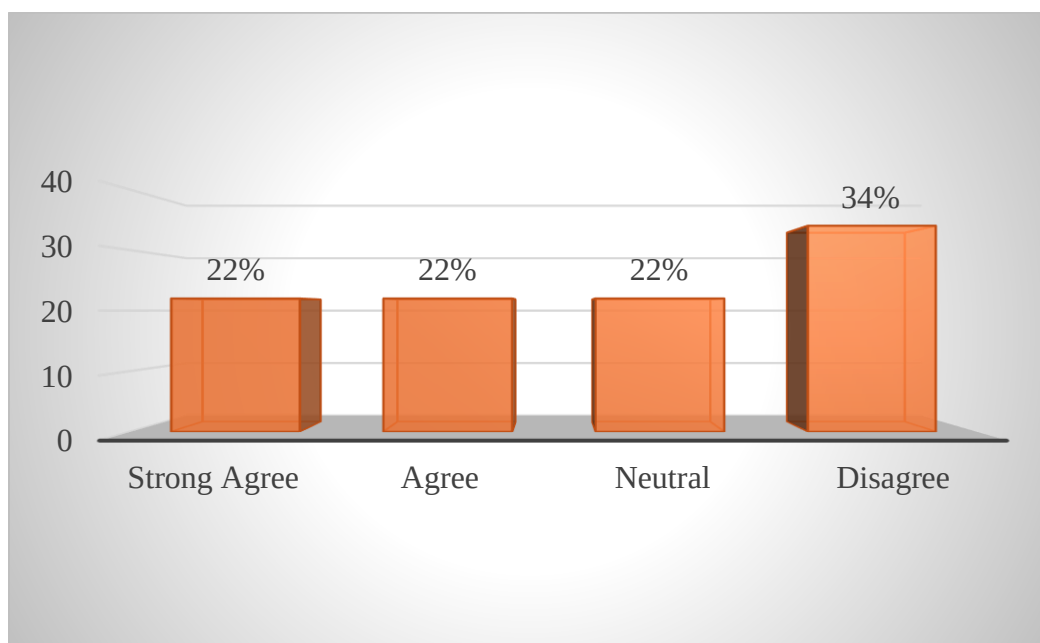


Figure 11. Alignment of laws

The data reveals divided perceptions of alignment between national laws and international displacement standards. While 44% of respondents agreed (22% strongly agree and 22% agree), 34% disagreed, and 22% remained neutral. This split suggests inconsistencies or varying interpretations of how well domestic legal frameworks correspond

with international norms, highlighting a potential gap in harmonisation. While some countries have adopted progressive policies, these are not always harmonised with existing laws or effectively enforced. Inconsistencies between national legislation and policy frameworks create confusion and hinder implementation.

Institutional capacity and governance

Government institutions have the capacity to manage internal displacement

The findings indicate concerns about institutional capacity. A majority of respondents expressed negative or uncertain views, with 34% disagreeing and 22% strongly disagreeing, totalling 56% who doubt the government's capacity. Only 22% expressed confidence (11% strongly agree and 11% agree), while 22% remained neutral.

This suggests that institutional weaknesses, such as limited resources or coordination challenges, are undermining effective IDP management. Many governments lack the administrative and technical capacity to implement displacement policies effectively. Institutions responsible for IDP management are often under-

resourced and lack skilled personnel. This leads to poor planning, limited-service delivery, and weak monitoring and evaluation systems.

Roles and responsibilities of agencies dealing with IDPs are clearly defined

The clarity of roles and responsibilities among agencies dealing with IDPs appears moderately defined but still inconsistent. About 44% of respondents agreed (11% strongly agree and 33% agree) that roles are clear. However, 34% were neutral, indicating uncertainty, and 22% disagreed (11% disagree and 11% strongly disagree). This suggests that while some structures may be in place, clearer institutional frameworks and coordination mechanisms are still needed.

Coordination among government departments is effective

The findings on coordination among government departments reveal a highly polarised perception, with 50% of respondents expressing agreement (20% strongly agree, 30% agree) and an equal 50% expressing disagreement (20% disagree, 30% strongly disagree). This split suggests the absence of a consistent or well-institutionalised coordination framework. While some stakeholders may experience functional collaboration, others encounter fragmentation and inefficiencies, indicating that coordination mechanisms are either unevenly implemented or context-dependent. Effective management of internal displacement

requires coordination among multiple actors, including government agencies, humanitarian organisations, and development partners. However, coordination mechanisms are often weak or fragmented, leading to duplication of efforts, gaps in service delivery, and inefficiencies.

There is strong collaboration between the government and NGOs

Perceptions of collaboration between government and NGOs are generally positive, with 67% of respondents indicating agreement (22% strongly agree, 45% agree). However, neutrality (22%) and a small proportion of disagreement (11%) suggest that collaboration, while relatively strong, is not universally experienced. This implies that although partnerships exist and function in some contexts, there may be gaps in inclusivity, consistency, or operational effectiveness across different regions or interventions

Adequate funding is allocated for IDPs management

The data strongly indicates dissatisfaction with funding levels for IDPs management. A majority of 78% of respondents expressed negative perceptions (56% disagree, 22% strongly disagree), while 22% remained neutral. The absence of any positive responses underscores a critical resource gap, suggesting that financial constraints significantly hinder effective planning, response, and long-term support for internally displaced persons. A major

implementation barrier is the lack of sustainable financing. Many IDPs-related programs rely heavily on donor funding, which can be unpredictable and short-term. Domestic budget allocations for displacement issues are often insufficient, limiting the scale and sustainability of interventions.

Monitoring and evaluation systems for displacement programs are effective

Responses on monitoring and evaluation systems point to notable weaknesses. While a small proportion (12%) strongly agree that systems are effective, a dominant 66% of respondents express dissatisfaction (33% disagree, 33% strongly disagree), alongside 22% neutrality. This suggests that existing M&E frameworks are either inadequate, poorly implemented, or lack credibility, limiting their usefulness in tracking progress and informing decision-making.

Implementation challenges

Policies on internal displacement are effectively implemented

A majority of respondents (67%) believe that policies on internal displacement are effectively implemented (23% strongly agree, 44% agree). However, a significant minority (33%) strongly disagree, indicating that implementation success may vary across contexts. This reflects partial effectiveness: policy intentions are sometimes realised but inconsistently applied, and some

countries have yet to develop domesticated IDPs policies.

There is a gap between policy commitments and actual practice

A strong consensus exists regarding the disconnect between policy commitments and actual practice, with 77% of respondents agreeing (33% strongly agree, 44% agree). This highlights a systemic implementation gap, suggesting that formal frameworks are not adequately translated into tangible outcomes on the ground. The lack of actual practice is attributed to poor funding, corruption, and political interference. The responsible authorities are not prioritising the subject of IDPs.

Bureaucracy delays response to displacement crises

Similarly, 77% of respondents agree that bureaucracy delays responses to displacement crises. This indicates that administrative inefficiencies and procedural bottlenecks significantly impede timely interventions, exacerbating affected populations' vulnerability.

Corruption affects the delivery of services to IDPs

Corruption is perceived as a major challenge, with 78% of respondents acknowledging its impact (45% strongly agree, 33% agree). This suggests that mismanagement and misuse of resources undermine service delivery, reducing the effectiveness and fairness of assistance provided to IDPs.

Political interference undermines implementation efforts

A substantial 78% of respondents agree that political interference undermines implementation efforts, while 22% remain neutral. This suggests political interests may distort priorities, delay interventions, or influence resource allocation in ways that do not align with humanitarian needs. Internal displacement is frequently politicised or deprioritised. In some contexts, governments may be reluctant to acknowledge the scale of displacement due to political sensitivities or concerns about national image. This results in limited commitment to allocating resources or enforcing policies.

Lack of reliable data affects planning for IDPs

Most respondents (78%) agree that inadequate data affects planning for IDPs. This reflects challenges in data collection, management, and utilisation, which hinder evidence-based decision-making and efficient resource allocation. Reliable data on internal displacement is often lacking. Weak data systems make it difficult to plan, target interventions, and monitor progress. Without accurate information, responses may fail to address the actual needs of affected populations.

Security challenges hinder effective intervention

Perceptions of security challenges are less definitive, with 56% of respondents

remaining neutral and 44% expressing agreement. This suggests that while security concerns exist, they may vary significantly by context or are not universally perceived as a primary barrier.

Service delivery and protection

Internally Displaced Persons have access to adequate shelter

A majority of respondents (56%) disagree that IDPs have access to adequate shelter, while only 44% express agreement. This indicates significant gaps in housing provision, leaving many displaced persons in precarious living conditions.

Internally Displaced Persons have access to safe water and sanitation

Access to safe water and sanitation is also inadequate, with 45% disagreeing and only 22% agreeing. The relatively high neutrality (33%) suggests variability in service provision across locations, but overall points to insufficient WASH services.

Internally Displaced Persons receive sufficient food assistance

Responses on food assistance are mixed, with equal proportions agreeing and disagreeing (both 33%), and 22% neutral. This suggests inconsistent food distribution, where some IDPs receive adequate support while others do not.

Health services are accessible to IDPs

Access to health services is relatively better, with 45% agreeing, though 55% either disagree (22%) or remain neutral (33%). This indicates moderate access but highlights ongoing challenges in ensuring universal healthcare coverage for IDPs.

Education services are available for displaced children

Education services for displaced children show relatively positive trends, with 56% agreement. However, disagreement (22%) and neutrality (22%) indicate that access is not uniform and may depend on location or available infrastructure.

Protection mechanisms for vulnerable groups are effective

Protection mechanisms for vulnerable groups, namely women, children, and the elderly, appear weak or uncertain, with 56% neutrality and only 44% agreement. This suggests limited awareness, inconsistent implementation, or inadequate effectiveness of protection systems.

Participation and inclusion

Internally Displaced Persons are consulted in decision-making processes

Responses are divided regarding IDP consultation, with 45% agreement, 22% disagreement, and 33% neutrality. This indicates partial inclusion: some IDPs are engaged, but many remain excluded from decision-making processes.

Community participation is encouraged in displacement management

Community participation is viewed more positively, with 56% agreement. However, 44% either disagree or remain neutral, suggesting that participatory approaches are present but not consistently applied.

Local leaders are involved in governance processes

Local leader involvement is relatively strong, with 55% agreement. Nevertheless, the high neutrality (33%) suggests that their role may not be clearly defined or consistently operationalised across all contexts.

Marginalised groups are included in planning and implementation

Inclusion of marginalised groups is a notable weakness, with 33% disagreement and 33% neutrality outweighing the 34% agreement. This suggests vulnerable populations are often overlooked in planning and implementation.

Accountability and transparency

Mechanisms to hold authorities accountable

Most respondents (56%) remain neutral on the existence of accountability mechanisms, while 44% express strong opinions (equally split between strong agreement and strong disagreement). This suggests uncertainty or limited visibility of accountability structures.

Complaints and feedback systems are accessible to IDPs

Perceptions of complaints and feedback systems are evenly distributed across all categories, indicating inconsistency in accessibility and effectiveness. This reflects a lack of reliable channels for IDPs to voice concerns.

Resources allocated for IDPs are used transparently

Responses on transparency are similarly fragmented, with equal proportions across agreement, disagreement, neutrality, and strong disagreement. This indicates a lack of trust or clarity regarding how resources are managed.

There is regular reporting on displacement interventions

Moderate agreement (56%) indicates that reporting occurs regularly. However, the presence of strong disagreement (22%) and disagreement (22%) suggests that reporting may not be comprehensive or accessible to all stakeholders

Outcomes and effectiveness

Current governance systems adequately address the needs of IDPs

Perceptions are evenly distributed, with no clear majority, indicating uncertainty about whether current governance systems adequately address IDP needs. This reflects mixed outcomes and inconsistent performance.

Policies have improved the living conditions of IDPs

A majority of respondents (66%) either strongly disagree or remain neutral regarding improvements in living conditions, suggesting limited tangible impact of policies on IDP welfare.

Durable solutions are effectively implemented

Durable solutions such as return, resettlement, and integration are perceived as weak, with 55% expressing negative views. This indicates challenges in achieving long-term resolution of displacement.

There has been progress in reducing displacement-related vulnerabilities

Responses are evenly distributed, indicating no clear progress in reducing displacement-related vulnerabilities. This suggests that interventions have not significantly altered the risk environment for IDPs.

Limitations of the study

The study has some limitations. The sample comprised only 52 respondents, which limits the precision and transferability of the findings, snowball sampling is non-probabilistic and may over-represent participants who are connected to existing networks, creating selection bias and the results are based primarily on self-reported perceptions, which may be influenced by respondents' experiences, expectations or social desirability.

Conclusion and recommendations

The study demonstrates that Africa's normative leadership on internal displacement has not eliminated the implementation gap. The survey indicates relatively strong awareness of national and regional frameworks but continuing weaknesses in communication, institutional capacity, financing, coordination, monitoring and evaluation, data availability, accountability and durable solutions. The findings also reveal that implementation is uneven rather than uniformly absent: some respondents recognise policy implementation and government NGO collaboration even while identifying systemic constraints. Institutional theory provides a useful explanation for this pattern. Formal rules become effective institutions only when they are supported by organisational capacity, resources, coordination, legitimacy and accountability. Closing the gap between normative commitment and implementation therefore requires more than adopting additional instruments. It requires domestic institutionalisation of existing commitments and governance arrangements that enable displaced people to participate in decisions affecting their lives.

1. *Strengthening Institutional Capacity:* Governments must invest in building the capacity of institutions responsible for displacement management. This includes training personnel,

improving infrastructure, and establishing clear accountability mechanisms. Government to put effort into including IDPs in development planning:

2. *Enhancing Political Commitment:* Sustained political will is essential. Governments need to prioritise internal displacement within national development agendas and demonstrate commitment through policy enforcement and resource allocation.
3. *Improving Coordination Mechanisms:* Establishing effective coordination platforms can enhance collaboration among stakeholders. Define clear roles and responsibilities to ensure coherent, efficient responses.
4. *Increasing Domestic Financing:* Reducing reliance on external funding requires increased domestic investment in displacement-related programs. Integrating IDP issues into national budgets and development plans is critical.
5. *Strengthening Data Systems:* Improved data collection and management systems are necessary for evidence-based decision-making. This includes investing in national statistical capacities and leveraging technology for real-time data.
6. *Promoting Durable Solutions:* Efforts should shift from short-

term humanitarian responses to long-term development-oriented solutions. Addressing root causes of displacement and supporting recovery and resilience are key.

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