

**Results from the Lessons Learned Workshop on
“Internal displacement/internally displaced persons,
Responses of development cooperation to an invisible crisis”
Berlin, 9/10 October 2018**

1. Background

Over the past two decades, the numbers of internally displaced persons have risen steadily. Some two-thirds of the 68.5 million people worldwide who have had to flee from conflicts, violence and persecution are internally displaced – i.e. they have not crossed international borders when they fled. These numbers are expected to increase further in the coming years.

In 2017, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the United Nations *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, the Global Plan of Action (GP20) was launched to improve the situation of internally displaced persons. This brought internal displacement, often referred to as an ‘invisible crisis, back onto the international agenda. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) supports these efforts. To commemorate the anniversary and raise the profile of the issue, BMZ organised a Lessons Learned workshop with a variety of development-oriented projects working on internal displacement.

This workshop was part of a series of events organised by BMZ as part of the **Special Initiative “Tackling the root causes of displacement – (re-)integrating refugees” (SI Forced Displacement)**. Since 2014, this Special Initiative has supported around 165 projects in 46 countries, and by the end of 2017 it had reached some 7 million people. The projects are being implemented by various German and international organisations, in particular by GIZ and KfW, as well as United Nations organisations. The **GIZ Sector project on Forced Displacement** supports BMZ and the other organisations involved.

The objective of the workshop was to gain **insights** into the experiences gained in the various projects funded by the Special Initiative on Forced Displacement, and to generate **recommendations for the further strategic orientation** of the special initiative.

2. Participants

The workshop was attended by a total of 50 participants from Germany and around the world. These included members of BMZ Unit 221, the *UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs* Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, Bina Desai from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), and representatives from the German Federal Foreign Office, GIZ, KfW, non-governmental organisations, the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (Stiftung für Wissenschaft und Politik - SWP), and from United Nations’ organisations. Local partners and staff joined the workshop from Colombia, the Philippines, Nigeria and Georgia. Sixteen projects from eleven countries presented their experiences and lessons learned (for an overview of the participating organisations and projects see Annex 2).

3. Introduction

Following a brief welcome by Silvia Morgenroth, Head of BMZ Unit 221, **Cecilia Jimenez-Damary** emphasised the importance of the GP20. The integration of internally displaced persons and consideration of their concerns in development measures was essential in order to prevent displacement, protect human rights, and achieve durable solutions for the internally displaced. Particularly with regard to protracted displacement situations, which now count an average of 20 years in duration, effective development efforts to include the plight of IDPs and address their durable solutions are necessary to break the impasse.

Bina Desai pointed out that although internal displacement was not a new phenomenon, the issue was still neglected nationally and globally, and insufficient attention was paid to preventing internal displacement. Suitably designed development cooperation could make a valuable contribution to this agenda. The most important aspects included the recognition of the existence of internal displacement, support from the highest political levels, and the provision of the corresponding financial resources. According to her, it was also necessary to integrate internal displacement issues in national development strategies and investment plans, in combination with targeted investments in the host communities in relevant sectors (e.g. social security and economic development sectors).

Achim Johannsen, from the responsible department in BMZ (Unit 221), highlighted the importance of durable solutions. It focuses on three main issues: (i) supporting internally displaced persons and the local population equally in accordance with the principles of **integration** and **doing-no-harm**, (ii) implementing structural and longer-term development measures beyond humanitarian aid, and (iii) the creation of durable solutions for internally displaced persons (local integration, return to the region of origin, resettlement in another part of the country).

4. Results of the workshop

Specific **measures in the context of development cooperation to improve the livelihoods and rights of internally displaced persons** should (i) promote IDP participation, (ii) address long-term displacement and (iii) promote durable solutions. Specifically, projects should:

- Promote the involvement of internally displaced persons in the planning and organisation of measures, and strengthen their representational rights and capacities to enable meaningful participation
- Address long-term displacement: Obtain reliable data about internal displacement that can be used in project planning and lobbying, taking into account the often higher vulnerability of the internally displaced compared with the host population,
- Promote durable solutions: Plan and implement integrated approaches that support both internally displaced persons and the local population, paying sufficient attention to the protection and empowerment of women, and supporting the dialogue between internally displaced persons and host communities in order to prevent conflict.

Key success factors are:

- Activities & methodology (of projects): For project teams to understand the local context and have a clear vision of what success looks like (e.g. is a project successful when internally displaced persons return, or is success measured in terms of their integration in the local economy and community?); the recognition of a crisis/conflict/displacement situation by the national government; the quality and motivation of national partner organizations; for project teams to build on existing capacities and strengthen networks of local actors; for projects to adopt a holistic and coherent approach that includes internally displaced persons.
- Procedures and processes (in project management) Inclusion of internally displaced persons in planning and implementing local development measures.

Special challenges for measures of the SI Forced Displacement are:

- Activities & methodology (of projects): Preventive measures to avoid internal displacement should be strengthened, solutions should focus on sustainability rather than focusing on reaching a large numbers with short-term benefits; existing structures

should be used and strengthened rather than favouring *quick fix* options are often implemented by introducing parallel structures.

- Procedures and processes (in project management): Taking into consideration the capacities of one's own organisation and of partner organisations; making use of what is known and what has proved successful.

Transferable elements that are important for all development cooperation measures include context analyses, the empowerment of women, the provision of psychosocial support, the participation of the target groups, and the creation of equal standards for internally displaced persons and the local population, i.e. treating all people equally (irrespective of their status). Project teams should also raise awareness about political sensitivities among all actors involved in the implementation of the project.

5. Main recommendations

Important recommendations were directed to:

- **The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)**: Maintain flexibility, keep the topic high on the agenda within BMZ and internationally, use political influence on governments and support political solutions for internally displaced persons. Focus on *preparedness*, *protection*, and *prevention*, and create a compendium of good examples.
- **The organisations themselves (project work)**: Promote exchange, ensure that internally displaced persons participate in project planning and implementation, and examine to what extent existing projects comply with this principle; ensure transparency and accountability towards internally displaced people and the local population; generate economic prospects; and create groups for formal and informal exchanges;
- **The actors involved in the SI Forced Displacement**: Continue to ensure that protracted displacement situations are not forgotten, adopt rights-based and needs-based approaches, take proactive measures to prevent internal displacement, combine peacebuilding measures with measures directed towards internally displaced persons, strengthen governments in their responsibilities for internally displaced persons, ensure that the needs of the local (host) population are considered, and support relevant actors to network and cooperate with each other.

BMZ in turn asked the participants to:

- Submit proposals for ambitious projects of up to six years in duration which tackle the underlying causes of displacement. Proposals can be submitted via the annual calls of BMZ country divisions;
- Coordinate activities locally with other projects and to inform and involve the development cooperation officers in the embassies;
- Collect and provide disaggregated data for monitoring purposes;
- Where necessary, submit project amendments or adapted project proposals, and to report challenges openly (setting ambitious project objectives/indicators that might have to be corrected is better than starting with low ambitions from the outset!), and
- Make active use of the support offered by the sector projects of GIZ and the Wiki platform (www.si-fluechtlinge.de) of the SI Forced Displacement.

The second day of the workshop was used for in-depth dialogues on three topics that the participants identified as being particularly relevant. These were: Preparedness, Prevention, and Durable Solutions (see Annex 1).

Annex 1: Results of the dialogues on selected topics

Preparedness

Humanitarian aid is often the first response to displacement. Development cooperation could make an important contribution to preparing for such situations and to long-term responses, as well as to strengthening the capacities of local actors and authorities. Transitional aid (in the German context with a specific budget line allocated to these activities by BMZ) can be a useful approach.

In order to better define the role of development cooperation, it is important to clarify the responsibilities of the government and non-governmental organisations, so that these actors can effectively fulfil their mandate, in accordance with their individual roles and remits, responsibilities, and interests. This is closely linked to the question of whether countries affected by internal displacement assume ownership of the situation, or leave the task of finding solutions to others.

The goal is to prepare contingency plans and to establish community-based disaster risk management mechanisms that can be activated when displacement occurs. It is useful to carry out in-depth risk analyses in regions that may be affected, and to integrate contingency measures into development projects.

Preparedness requires situational awareness and new approaches. It is vital to integrate local partner organisations, to prepare them for possible internal displacement and to strengthen their capacities. Training measures should be directed equally at partners and internally displaced persons.

Prevention

The international community should play an important role in the prevention of internal displacement. The following aspects should be given particular consideration: (i) Structural and legal considerations, (ii) Establish early-warning mechanisms for possible increased tensions between the government and various societal groups, (iii) Avoid displacement induced by unsuccessful development cooperation measures, and (iv) Place a specific focus on women in conflicts and internal displacement.

An important task for development cooperation is the prevention of conflicts that could generate internal displacement. To work towards this objective, the link between conflict and development needs to be considered, and programmes need to be sensitive to the local context, and integrate representatives at the political and at the community level. Communities with strong representational and organisational structures are in a position to enter into dialogue with conflict actors and to mobilize their members to avoid internal displacement.

In an ongoing conflict, the actors involved in development cooperation, in line with the *do-no-harm* approach, should observe and proactively address conflict dynamics in order to avoid new conflicts (e.g. between internally displaced persons and local residents), to promote coalitions of organisations and/or networks, and to support the host communities, for example by improving the access to basic services. An important question in this context is: "At what point in time do we start to take concrete measures to prepare for forced displacement?"

Durable solutions

It is necessary to enter into a dialogue with internally displaced persons in order to understand which solutions could be possible. It takes time to establish the necessary trust for these processes. Furthermore, internally displaced people do not necessarily constitute a homogeneous group. It is also crucial that the internally displaced could and should accept responsibility for creating durable solutions. However, the influence that they have on their lives is often limited, in particular in contexts in which

- there are major political interests,

- international and legal considerations must be taken into account, and where
- there are different approaches for internally displaced persons inside and outside camps (which may only allow for limited ownership).

There are three possible durable solutions:

- i. Local integration: For this solution to work, internally displaced persons need to be agents of their own development (rather than merely “receiving” aid). Monitoring, and the inclusion of internally displaced persons in monitoring activities, are crucial for success.
- ii. Voluntary return to the region of origin: In this context, it is important to strengthen self-help mechanisms and increase confidence.
- iii. Re-settlement to other parts of the country: This requires finding locally adapted solutions. Actors at various levels must work together, i.e. in local communities and at the national level.

New studies¹ and experiences in various contexts show that in reality there are few truly durable solutions. For many people, local integration, voluntary return to the region of origin, and resettlement in other parts of the country offer viable temporary options until they move on again.

¹ E.g. www.bicc.de/research-clusters/project/project/protected-rather-than-protracted-strengthening-refugees-and-peace-122/)

Annex 2: Participating organisations and example projects

Organisations

- Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ)
- German Federal Foreign Office
- GIZ
- KfW
- NGOs (action medeor, AGEH, Caritas international, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe (WHH), Deutscher Genossenschafts- und Raiffeisenverband (DGRV, German Cooperative and Raiffeisen Confederation), Misereor)
- United Nations organisations (OHCHR, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Habitat)
- Partner organisations (*Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process*, Philippines and Taller Abierto, Columbia)
- IDMC
- Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (German Institute for International and Security Affairs)

Example projects

- GIZ: “EPIC – Economic and Social Participation of Displaced Persons” (South Caucasus: Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan)
- Civil Peace Service/AGEH: “Civil Peace Service Programme – Strengthening citizen responsibility, good governance and the rule of law; dealing with the past” (Central African Republic)
- GIZ/Civil Peace Service: “Prevention of displacement – Reintegration of IDPs” (Kenya)
- GIZ: “CAPID – Strengthening capacities dealing with conflict-induced forced displacement in Mindanao” (Philippines)
- UNICEF: “Access to Quality Education for Vulnerable Children” (Iraq)
- UNICEF: “Strengthening Basic Services for Children and Youth in Iraq” (Iraq)
- GIZ/EU: “Support to strengthening Resilience in North-East Nigeria” (Nigeria)
- GIZ/Caritas: “Social Centre – Provision of social services and support in livelihoods to internally displaced persons and the most vulnerable host communities in Eastern Ukraine by establishing a multifunctional social centre in Dnipro” (Ukraine)
- UNDP: “Fast Facts: Stabilization” (Iraq)
- Misereor: “Mobile Clinic in Northern Iraq” (Iraq)
- DGRV: “Promotion of local economic activity to alleviate causes and consequences of internal displacement in Colombia” (Colombia)
- GIZ: “Support for internally displaced persons in Yemen” (Yemen)
- WHH: “Agricultural vocational training for IDPs and unemployed youth” (Central African Republic)
- UNDP: “Resilience-building of crisis-affected population in Syria through Rehabilitation of basic infrastructure, sustainable livelihoods and social cohesion” (Syria)
- WHH/Metta Development Foundation: “Strengthening the resilience of the conflict-affected population, Myanmar” (Myanmar)
- Taller Abierto/action medeor: “Reduction of individual vulnerability of female IDPs, returnees and residents, victims of the armed conflict in health in Colombia” (Colombia)