



Dialogue on migration and asylum in development

***EU policies supporting development and lasting solutions for
displaced populations***

Expert Roundtable, Brussels, 13 October 2014

REPORT

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The paper provides a summary of the discussions and key recommendations from the Expert Roundtable on '*EU policies supporting development and lasting solutions for displaced populations*' held in Brussels on 13 October 2014. The Expert Roundtable was organised as part of the DOMAID project ('Dialogue on migration and asylum in development') and its aim was to discuss the role that the EU can play as a global donor and policy actor supporting protection and solutions for the displaced around the world in the coming years, this way contributing to the EU's ongoing and future programming. Some of the questions raised were: how can the EU better link humanitarian and development responses to displacement situations from the outset? How can the needs of refugees and IDPs be better incorporated into national and regional cooperation programmes? How can the EU maximise its current instruments in support of these objectives. The Roundtable also made specific reference to the Solutions Alliance and the need for Member States and the EU to become more closely associated to its work in the next years at national and regional level.¹

The Expert Roundtable brought together representatives of the European Commission, the EEAS, the European Parliament, EU Member States, UN agencies and civil society and was held under Chatham House Rules.

Participants agreed that the current model of response to forced displacement needs to be revisited and steps need to be taken towards building a new model that will promote realistic solutions from the outset. Displacement has to be addressed from the very moment an emergency appears, with a view to establish long term development approaches rather than coming in after the humanitarian response has been phased out. Long term strategic planning has to be incorporated into all responses and activities building around post conflict and displacement.

It is important to recognise, map and bring forward the beneficial development and socio-economic effects of refugee and displaced populations. More data needs to be collected on the positive effects on host communities and more research needs to be conducted on how these benefits can be further fostered and advanced. Refugee advocacy needs to incorporate this positive message about the contribution that refugees and IDPs can make at national level. Relief and development donors and actors tend to work in silos; it is essential to move away from compartmentalised approaches and replace them with cooperation and integrated solutions. Holistic approaches are needed that include all those concerned, host governments and donor states. As a global donor and policy actor the EU can play an important role at national level, in cooperation with host countries concerned and individual Member State donors. Essentially, the only way to reach lasting solutions is by building partnerships and working in cooperation with governments of partner countries.

NGOs highlighted the need to strengthen engagement with local host communities, local actors and key stakeholders. No one model will fit all, and local actors have experience of local needs and understanding of the communities that can shape specialised, context-specific strategic plans to promote solutions for the displaced they are hosting.

While promoting the role of refugees and IDPs as economic actors and the potential of developmental solutions, it is important to ensure that fundamental rights are safeguarded throughout the process. Capacity building in the area of good governance, justice and democratisation needs to support institutions and frameworks to safeguard human rights and support the country to meet its international obligations, this way also ensuring the protection of the rights of refugees and IDPs. Seeing the displaced as economic actors and highlighting the need to support their self-reliance essentially means that a status and set of economic, social and cultural rights including residence, work and mobility also needs to be ensured. Moreover, gender perspectives need to be mainstreamed from the outset and special regard should be paid to groups having multiple vulnerabilities, including children.

¹ For more information on the Solutions Alliance initiative see <http://www.endingdisplacement.org>

In 2013 a Communication entitled '*Maximising the Development Impact of Migration*' was adopted which highlights the need to address displacement in the framework of development.² Significant steps have been taken to enhance coordination within the European Commission with DEVCO and ECHO developing a joint Issues Paper on Protracted Refugee Situations.³ DEVCO has also further been requested by the Council to move forward and develop operational approaches, after conducting consultations with Member States. These will be followed by consultations with partners, international organisations and civil society. At the same time, it seems that while displacement is more and more included under human development, economic and political cooperation between the EU and partner countries have not yet sufficiently integrated the displacement parameter.

Further to national level cooperation, participants stressed the importance of regional political dialogues as another strand under which displacement issues should be included more prominently. A number of such regional dialogues on migration are currently underway between the EU, Member States and different regions in the world (Africa-EU Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment and Rabat Process; Prague Process; Budapest Process; EU Latin America dialogue; and most recently, the Khartoum Process with the Horn of Africa). They all include displacement issues in some ways, but rather insufficiently and often following a compartmentalization logic that treats forced migrants as a marginal issue, whereas in reality forcibly displaced persons may constitute the majority of migrants in certain regions.

Suggestions for the way forward

Roundtable participants put forward a series of suggestions for a possible way forward:

- Displacement needs to be mainstreamed in all development sectors while socio-economic factors should also be introduced to humanitarian assistance
- A closer link between humanitarian responses and national development plans should be developed to ensure a long term vision of humanitarian assistance
- Good organisation is of the essence in order to prevent the longer term development aims slowing down the response to the immediate, humanitarian need on the ground
- Different funding streams and cycles in humanitarian assistance and development cooperation are often not easily combined. At the same time, there is a lot of convergence between instruments and it is often a case of terminology or procedures, rather than objectives, which prevents them from bridging the gap; overcoming the barrier of terms and definitions might be helpful in this direction
- More information needs to be collected and shared on the role of different actors and stakeholders in refugee hosting countries
- Many cities have established effective mechanisms to involve different stakeholders within larger communities; experience and good practices should be used and explored further in relation to displaced populations in urban settings
- Understanding the role of the private sector, locally and regionally, needs to be fostered within the field, and the opportunities it offers

² European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions '*Maximising the Development Impact of Migration: The EU contribution for the UN High-level Dialogue and next steps towards broadening the development-migration nexus*', 21 May 2013, COM(2013) 292 final

³ European Commission, *Issues Paper 'Development, Refugees and IDPs* (2014)
http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/2014_dev_refugees_idps_issuespaper.pdf

- The field of disaster resilience should be explored further as a potential platform for cooperation between the two sectors of development and humanitarian assistance
- An integrated approach to displacement in the context of the development of the Post-2015 Development Agenda is crucial to future developments. Highlighting examples of the positive impact of displaced populations on host communities is important in that context.
- Inspiration could be drawn from German and Japanese international development agencies that have already organised displacement programmes within the development sector

Lessons learned and developments in East Africa and the Horn

Participants presented case studies from East Africa and the Middle East aiming to highlight the ways in which developmental and humanitarian approaches are coming closer together. The example of Dadaab in Kenya is a success story that could be explored further for positive lessons; in particular, the Refugee Incentive Workers model has shown good results in terms of working together with the local host community.⁴ On the contrary, in the Kakuma camp the relationship with the host community has been becoming strenuous. There are currently discussions of creating a new camp using a different approach that would place more emphasis on the local community and the benefits that the camp can bring about. Positive socio-economic effects will be harnessed by the use of agriculture and training for refugees.

Participants suggested that South Sudan could be a good place to put cooperation between humanitarian assistance and development sectors to the test, perhaps through disaster resilience programmes, due to the sudden refugee influx. Preventing a protracted refugee situation in South Sudan would be possible if sufficient resources are provided. The refugee response still lacks funding and programmes are currently focused on emergency responses and short term solutions. On the other hand, positive aspects include the increased access of university training for population in the camps, including in teaching and nursing.

In Ethiopia, the scarcity of available land is a great challenge to the refugee response, but refugees generally tend to stay closer to the borders where land is available.

Uganda's self-reliance policy can be counted as a positive example in terms of its developmental approach. The response is more costly and therefore discouraging for donors; in fact, while such methods call for greater funding at first, they are a good investment that will give returns. Refugees' access to the public welfare system has been an important part of the success of the Ugandan system as well as the multiple sources of funding.

Still, more work needs to be done to involve host governments in the region. Guidelines and alternative strategies to approaching governments need to be developed. There is also room to explore further the possibilities and opportunities of cooperation with the private sector.

A ministerial conference in November 2014 launched the Khartoum Process (EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative HoAMRI) which includes border management, facilitating legal migration by bilateral agreements, addressing trafficking and smuggling, the protection of unaccompanied children, refugees and IDPs, and return. While overwhelmingly focused on migration management, the framework places displacement and migration more prominently in political dialogues. At the same time, some partner governments in East Africa have now included

⁴ For further information on the project see UNHCR Office in Nairobi, *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Strengthening Protection Capacity Project*, 'Additional Project Proposals Kenya; Strengthening Protection Capacity Project and Comprehensive Plan of Action for Somalia', available at <http://www.unhcr.org/4371be692.pdf>

migration in their national development programmes.

Lessons learned and developments in the Middle East

Participants also brought the example of displacement in the context of the Syria conflict. In Lebanon, the absence of opportunities for refugees there is the biggest challenge, and this is where substantial support is needed. Following recent funding shortages, funding now seems to be stabilised, but the needs are still significant and widespread because the Syrian crisis affects all aspects of socio-economic life at local level and the authorities at all levels. There is a significant need for more data and for better data collection and management strategies in order to assess development and emergency needs.

Iraq is faced with a major humanitarian crisis as 1.8 million persons are currently displaced, following three different layers of crises and conflicts. A development crisis should have been anticipated, but when the last crisis hit, there was no time for developing an integrated, inter-sectorial response. The result was that NGOs replicated pre-existing models of humanitarian response, without including development prospects. This response had to rely on resources, infrastructure and a community that were already strained. Integrating resilience building into this and similar situations of large scale emergencies might be more meaningful. The situation is a development challenge and market opportunities need to be explored, in order to promote IDP self-reliance.

In Syria, the European Commission started working on a joint humanitarian and development response from the outset. This began with funding mainly for humanitarian assistance which then moved over to development. Complementary stability responses to the situation may have made the coordination too complex, which points to the importance of coordination guidelines and the need to improve cooperation capabilities between sectors. Tracking systems for actors in the field of development would be useful to coordinate and approach the situation in a comprehensive way. ECHO is exploring a joint programme to examine further situations of vulnerable populations in the Middle East and how funding streams can complement each other better at regional level.

The current three-year Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq (2014-2017) is perhaps the laboratory of such a new integrated developmental approach to displacement. Supported by a platform of humanitarian and development donors involving the European Union, Denmark, Ireland, UK, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic it aims to better understand, plan, mitigate and, where possible, maximise the effects of Syria refugees' forced displacement into their countries. It will work with national and international actors to provide better protection to those displaced by the Syrian conflict and create socio-economic development opportunities for the most vulnerable. The RPP is based on the premise that refugees will be displaced for a long period of time; that the humanitarian approach, while necessary, has to be complemented with more development-led strategies; and that hosting communities and refugees need to be supported in tandem. The programme has four main components: a) assessment and analysis of the impact of displacement on refugees and host communities with the aim to provide inputs for long-term planning, b) strengthening the protection of refugees through legal support, community empowerment and conflict mitigation, better capacities of national institutions for protection and asylum, c) advocacy and political dialogue and d) socio-economic development through support for economic opportunities and livelihood capacity of vulnerable populations.

Participants highlighted the need for sectors to agree on a structural and prolonged response, and for donors to divide labour more effectively between themselves. Regional coordination programmes could be further explored with regards to instruments relevant to displacement. In addition, the EU needs to coordinate more closely with other actors in the region.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the most important first step for participants is to work towards a change in how forced migration is perceived, by all concerned, and to harness and emphasise the opportunities it provides. The challenges are numerous and forced migration affects all countries, whether those of origin, transit or destination. The EU needs to create integrated and holistic approaches based on good coordination, information sharing and dialogue, and inclusive of all relevant stakeholders. Operational guidelines may be needed to set the framework for cooperation and integrated approaches. Working with host governments and communities is paramount. Rather than a top down approach, dictated by development actors, programming needs to be guided by stakeholders and the needs on the ground.

The DOMAID Project

DOMAID (dialogue on migration and asylum in development) was a two-year (2012-2014) networking and dialogue building project funded by the European Commission (EuropeAid) and implemented by the European Council for Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the Italian Refugee Council (CIR). This Expert Roundtable on EU policies supporting development and lasting solutions for displaced populations marked the end of the DOMAID project.

The aim of DOMAID was to strengthen the debate between civil society and European Institutions and build advocacy on the role of the EU as a global actor in migration and refugee protection. The role and impact of EU policies in supporting protection of refugees and IDPs around the world, and the position and experiences of civil society actors have been examined. Three main themes ran through the project and connected different actors and areas of work together: building capacities and systems in the area of asylum in third countries; supporting solutions to protracted displacement; and refugee Diasporas as development actors. DOMAID has collected information, facilitated exchange and dialogue between NGOs, international organisations and the EC around these themes. More information on the project can be found here:

<http://www.ecre.org/component/content/article/63-projects/373-domain.html>

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