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Governance and Flight Development Approaches

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UNHCR estimates that in recent times around 65 million people worldwide have had to flee their homes, which is the highest number since the Second World War. This includes 25 million international refugees and 40 million internally displaced people.

In most cases, their displacement can clearly be attributed to deficits in governance.

People abandon their homes for many and complex reasons. The structural factors are poverty and lack of prospects, corruption, insufficient rights and freedom, absence of the rule of law, and the oppression of minorities. Structural factors are long-term and are, on the whole, not the sole cause of refugee movements.

Extreme events, such as violent conflicts, political repression, food insecurity or natural disasters are also needed to trigger such movements. At present, the majority of refugees are attempting to escape hostilities and

large-scale human rights violations. It is apparent that almost all decisive structural factors and drivers for flight are inextricably bound up with "governance deficits".

What is meant by "governance" in this context?

The term "governance" refers to the normative understanding, firmly established internationally since the 1990s, of how political decisions are prepared, made and implemented. Good governance has emerged as a synonym for conditions that foster development and is regarded as the main prerequisite for peace and security. Distribution conflicts and tensions also occasionally arise in "good governance" countries. However, these can normally be resolved through mechanisms intended to achieve the peaceful balancing of interests.

Good governance is based on universal human rights and the principles derived from them: empowerment, participation, equality of opportunity

and non-discrimination, transparency, and accountability.

States where this kind of conditions that foster development do not exist are often fragile, and subject to recurrent crises and violent conflict. These fragile states mostly have weak state structures and institutions and are barely able either to curb violence or settle conflicts constructively and by peaceful means. When this results in people's lives being put at risk, the population often has no alternative but to flee.

Approaches by Development Cooperation: crisis prevention, refugee aid and reconstruction

In longer-term Development Cooperation (DC), there are three complementary approaches in connection with refugees:

- (1) Preventing potential crises: adopting long-term preventive measures against the causes of flight, in particular by promoting good governance;

»» Good governance in German DC

The Federal Government's list of criteria for assessing partner countries' orientation towards development defines the following elements of *good governance* as key:

Pro-poor, sustainable policy design

For German DC, good governance is when state actors and institutions make a genuine effort to design policy in a way that benefits the poor, has a sustained effect and is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). There is a clear relationship between good governance and alleviating poverty. Good governance makes it possible to create reliable conditions that foster far-reaching economic growth (pro-poor growth) and help reduce poverty.

Respect for, protection and fulfilment of all human rights

A state demonstrates development orientation in its actions when it respects and protects all human rights, and makes a genuine effort to guarantee them for every person, regardless of his or her status, gender, age, ethnicity, religious or cultural identity.

Democracy and the rule of law

The state acts in accordance with democratic principles and the principles governing the rule of law. These comprise the political participation of the population, the responsible role of parliament, the legitimacy of state action and a sufficient separation of powers. Also relevant is the state's ability to resolve conflicts in a constructive manner and without violence.

Effectiveness and transparency of the state

The main elements are the performance capacity and transparency of the public administration. The focus here is the government's political will and ability to implement measures as well as a transparent, effective administration designed to benefit citizens. The latter aspects are also relevant for the system of public finances, in particular with regard to effective anti-corruption in state institutions.

Cooperative behaviour in the international community

Given the growing importance of regional and international collaboration, cooperative behaviour in the international community is another feature of the orientation to development.

- (2) In acute crises, supporting refugees and strengthening host communities;
- (3) After the crisis, providing support when refugees return to their

place of origin, reconstruction in the home communities and restoring trust in the legitimate state institutions (state-building).

All three approaches touch on core elements of the governance concept.

Prevention: DC to fight the causes of displacement and thus prevent it

The long-term prevention of crises and flight must address the main governance factors. These include policies directed towards alleviating poverty, the safeguarding of human rights, participation and the rule of law, the efficiency and transparency of the public provision of services, and cooperative international behaviour (see box "Good governance in German DC").

There may also be setbacks when using development policy instruments to influence these factors. However, there is no alternative to this in the long term: addressing the root causes is the most effective and efficient form of aid.

The following are typical measures within Financial Cooperation:

- direct contributions to protecting human rights with regard to the supply of basic social services (e.g. equal access to the water supply, basic education and basic health care services) and to generating productive employment and income;
- reducing inequalities through the targeted promotion of disadvantaged regions and population groups;
- promoting the legitimacy and performance capacity of state structures (e.g. decentralisation, support for elections, fostering systems intended to boost participation, accountability and transparency in the public sector).

In acute crisis situations: supporting refugees and strengthening host communities

If the crisis has already erupted, immediate response measures have to take priority over long-term prevention measures. As far as humanitarian aid is concerned, this initially means providing specific and direct support for refugees and other crisis victims

(accommodation, food aid, etc.).

The transition from humanitarian aid to stabilisation and longer-term development cooperation has to be well planned if there are to be no discontinuities, leading to renewed destabilisation. In general, municipalities are the first bodies to deal with refugees in the host regions, both within the crisis countries and their neighbours. Their performance capacity is often so limited that they very soon reach their limits.

»» Burkina Faso: funds for strengthening municipal infrastructure

Burkina Faso's municipalities hardly have any funds or resources at their disposal to adequately perform the task transferred to them in the process of decentralisation. These responsibilities include providing water and power supplies as well as health and education – core elements of basic provision for the population. They are also tasked with creating good prerequisites for economic development. The financial transfers from the central government and their own revenues are very low, meaning they are scarcely able to make the necessary investments.

On behalf of, and with funding from the German Federal Government, KfW is supporting municipalities in remote parts of Burkina Faso in their efforts to provide basic services. This is carried out via a fund, which predominantly finances municipal infrastructure that meets the needs of the populations and boosts the local economy. At the same time, investment-related advice is given on the selection, planning and execution of individual projects, strengthening local governance.

The objective is to improve local governance and living conditions for the population, creating long-term incentives for them to remain and consequently preventing displacement.



Source: KfW Photo Archive / Joerg Boethling

»»» Jordan: Drinking water supplies for Syrian refugees and host municipalities

The persistent influx of Syrian refugees into Jordan is a burden on the water situation there, which is already precarious. Both refugees and the local population suffer as a result of unsafe drinking water and inadequate waste water disposal. Especially in the host communities in the north of the country, the influx of refugees sometimes results in severe strains on the water supply. On behalf of the Federal Government, KfW is supporting these communities by expanding the water supply network for both refugees and locals. The project is being planned and implemented with the state water utility as executing agency. The investment projects derive from the national strategy documents. Jordan has final responsibility for planning and implementation. In this way, sustainable infrastructure is created, while the governance capabilities of the country are enhanced in the long term.



Source: KfW Photo Archive / photothek.net

Frequently, the municipal infrastructure (water supply, treatment plants, transport, energy, accommodation, etc.) in the host region, which is already deficient, is completely overwhelmed by the influx of refugees. The aim here must be to create additional capacity quickly to prevent the total collapse of the systems. In so doing, it is important not only to involve the municipalities in planning and implementing measures, but also to strengthen their own performance capacity.

Typical measures of Financial Cooperation in this context are:

- strengthening host communities' municipal infrastructure systems;
- providing cash transfers and creating accommodation for refugees and

other victims of the crisis;

- creating employment opportunities that enable refugees and other crisis victims to provide for themselves as soon as possible.

Here it is particularly important to design all measures in such a way that the conflict is not (unintentionally) exacerbated ("do no harm") and new areas of conflict do not arise (for example, between refugees and the local population). For these reasons, measures should also ideally benefit the indigenous population in the host communities, not least in order to strengthen their willingness to receive migrants, and to prevent conflicts.

After the acute crisis: reconstruction, reintegration of refugees, state-building and prevention

Once the political situation in the home regions of the refugees has normalised sufficiently for them to go back, DC can support the return and the reintegration of the displaced persons.

In this phase, one of the priorities is to stabilise the situation locally in order to escape the "fragility trap" and prevent the frequently imminent risk of sliding back into a new crisis. It is vitally important to restore the population's confidence in the legitimate state structures (state-building) and strengthen their performance capacity.

In this phase, typical measures of Financial Cooperation are:

- reconstructing destroyed social and economic infrastructure and accommodation, thus enabling people to live in the regions again;
- relaunching the local economy by means of start-up assistance and employment programmes;
- enhancing the performance capacity of the local administration so as to ensure the adequate provision of basic public services.

Conclusion: governance matters

Governance deficits are among the main reasons why people flee their homes. That is why prevention has to

focus on addressing these deficits. When acute crises occur, Development Cooperation is chiefly concerned with strengthening state structures so that refugees can be accommodated and otherwise provided for.

In the reconstruction phase, the focus is again on the state's performance capacity – at the local level, when the refugees return to their home communities, and at the national level in stabilising the country to prevent a relapse into fragility (state-building). This is where the prevention of crises comes full circle: through the promotion of good governance.

»»» DR Congo: peace fund for restoring and improving basic infrastructure

The Democratic Republic of Congo has been dominated for decades by armed conflicts. The ongoing violence hinders the economic and social development of the country and has meanwhile driven almost two million people from their homes. On behalf of the German Federal Government and in partnership with the Congolese government, KfW supports the crisis-ridden and overwhelmingly poor population through a "peace fund". The rapid and visible improvement in living conditions as a result of restoring and improving basic infrastructure is intended to gain the people's trust and secure a stable peace. To date 60 individual projects have been financed by the fund, including the rebuilding of schools, health care units, rural roads, bridges and markets.

The local population is actively involved during planning. To ensure employment-intensive project implementation, mainly local workers are taken on, including former combatants, so that they can be reintegrated into society. This generates income, strengthens local governance and offers a future beyond violence.



Source: KfW Photo Archive/ phototek.net



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