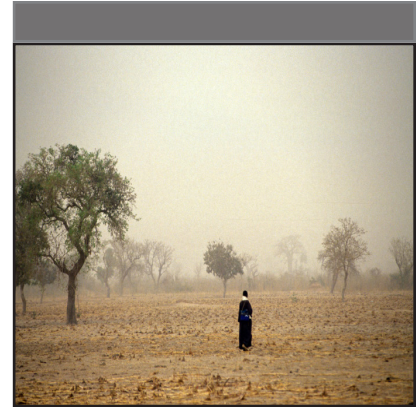


# GFDRR Consultative Group

## Discussion Paper



# Disasters, Conflict and Fragility: A Joint Agenda

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## Acronyms

ACF	Action Contre la Faim
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FCS	Fragile and Conflict-affected States
FY	Fiscal Year
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation
HPG	Humanitarian Policy Group
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Organizations
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PDNA	Post-Disaster Needs Assessment
SFDRR	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNU	United Nations University
WCDRR	World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction
WEF	World Economic Forum
WHO	World Health Organization
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit



# I. Introduction

At the Fall 2015 meeting of the Consultative Group of the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) (Berlin, 28-29 October, 2015), the GFDRR Secretariat was asked to prepare a discussion paper on the nexus between natural disasters, conflict and fragility in order to guide GFDRR activities in the future. This version of the paper is jointly sponsored by the GFDRR and the Government of Germany.

This discussion paper is timely for three reasons:

1) **Increasingly complex crises** – The current global context is one in which the international community faces an era of unprecedented multiplicity and complexity of crises. These include natural disasters, climate change, rapid environmental degradation, pandemics, armed conflict and intensification of violence, forced displacement, irregular migration, trafficking in persons, radicalization, and terrorism. Key facts and projections borne out by recent research on the links between disasters, fragility and conflict, as well as other threats such as climate change and forced displacement are detailed in the paper as well. For instance, between 2005 and 2009, more than 50 percent of people affected by disasters lived in fragile and conflict-affected states; in some years this reached 80 percent (ODI, 2013b).

2) **Mobilizing for Agenda 2030** – The international community is collectively reaffirming its global commitments to international development, peace and security. It is also rethinking the roles and structures of the peace and security, humanitarian and development architecture through a number of high-level processes as outlined later in the report.

3) **The Disaster-Crisis/Conflict Overlap** – As an example of this overlap, the GFDRR has since its inception been working in fragile countries affected by or vulnerable to disasters and has mobilized significant investments in countries such as Haiti, Yemen, Togo, Somalia and Afghanistan. Over the past two years, there has been a dramatic increase in demand for GFDRR's risk and post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA) methodologies to be applied to conflict contexts, including Syria, Iraq, Gaza, Nigeria, Ukraine, and Yemen.

## **The Challenge for the International Community**

The current international humanitarian and development architecture presents multiple and overlapping risks and complexity. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity for development and humanitarian partners to think more strategically and innovatively about their future engagement in fragile and conflict countries. The World Bank, the United Nations and other global partners increasingly recognize the value of this context, and the need for stakeholders and institutions at all levels to address interrelated and mutually reinforcing risks and to effectively respond to crises together.

A core finding emerging from the past decade of research on the interface is that there is a need to reduce disaster risk including in fragile and conflict-affected states. There is growing evidence from the field that people and institutions in fragile and conflict-affected states are much more vulnerable to natural hazards. Thus, for the international community to most effectively address vulnerability to disasters, it must consider fragility and conflict as core drivers of vulnerability for many millions

of the world's poorest people.

Going forward and by drawing on its existing strengths, development and humanitarian partners would need to consider the following questions:

1. How can the international community better understand the multi-dimensional nature of risk and crises?
2. How international partners integrate the implications of this analysis for their own, strategies and approaches?
3. How can strategic partnerships be strengthened in future engagements in fragile and conflict countries?

This paper provides an analysis on current thinking about the intersections between natural disasters, conflict, fragility, forced displacement and other crises in order to respond to these questions.

The paper is structured as follows:

#### I. Introduction

#### II. The Context and Challenge

#### III. The Interface of Disasters, Conflict, and Fragility

#### IV. Implications, Experiences and General Lessons

#### V. Specific Lessons from GFDRR's Engagement Conflict-Affected and Fragile States



## II. The Context

A discussion about the links between natural disasters, conflict and fragility is timely for three reasons:

### A. Increasingly Complex Crises

The international community is facing multiple-complex crises, including natural disasters, climate change, environmental degradation, pandemics, armed conflict, forced displacement, irregular migration, trafficking in persons, radicalization, and terrorism. Recent research on the links between disasters, fragility and conflict, as well as other threats such as climate change and forced displacement, has revealed some startling facts and projections:

- Between 2005 and 2009, more than 50 percent of people affected by disasters lived in fragile and conflict-affected states; in some years this reached 80 percent (ODI, 2013b).



- Research in 187 countries over the period between 1950-2000 reveals that disasters increase the risk of conflict in the medium-term, and that disasters occurring shortly after conflict intensify the risk of outbreak of violent conflict (BMZ, 2016).
- Of the 15 countries with the highest vulnerability to disasters, 14 are among the top 50 fragile states. Investments in disaster risk management (DRM) in these countries, however, has been low (ODI, 2013b; OECD, 2013; BMZ, 2016).
- Approximately 42 percent of the world's poor now live in conflict-affected and fragile states, and that figure is expected to rise to 62 percent by 2030. (United Nations, 2015). Disasters and poverty have a symbiotic relationship and are among the top reasons that people fall into poverty (GFDRR, 2015; Narayan et al., 2009).
- By 2030, up to 325 million extremely poor people will be living in the 49 most hazard-prone countries if current trends continue, many of which are fragile and conflict-affected (ODI, 2013a).
- While the overall number of armed conflicts globally is on the decline, conflicts are becoming more deadly and are increasingly being characterized by intense violence, with 63 armed conflicts leading to 56,000 fatalities in 2008, and 180,000 fatalities – more than three times as many – across 42 conflicts in 2014 (IISS, 2015).
- The lives of hundreds of millions of children are being disrupted by disaster, conflict and fragility; by the end of 2014, an estimated 230 million children lived in countries and areas affected by armed conflict and an estimated 66 million children were affected by disasters each year of the last decade of the 20th century with the number set to triple over coming decades (UNICEF, 2014 and 2015).
- Forced displacement due to conflict and disasters has reached its highest

level since the end of World War II, with an estimated 38.2 million internally displaced and 19.5 million refugees outside their countries of origin. In 2015, half of the world's forcibly displaced people were women. At the same time, the average length of time of displacement in protracted crises is now 17 years (UNHCR, 2015; United Nations, 2015a; World Bank, 2015).

- The majority of refugees move to other developing countries, including countries affected by poverty, fragility or conflict. In 2014, 86 percent of refugees lived in developing countries and 25 percent in least-developed countries (UNHCR, 2015).
- By 2050, an estimated 70 percent of the world's population will live in urban areas. Urban populations will be increasingly exposed to a wide range of risks and shocks, including hazards, violence, financial shocks, and forced displacement (UN-Habitat, 2015).
- It is estimated that 80 percent of humanitarian aid goes to protracted crises, while less than 4 percent of humanitarian aid and less than 1 percent of development assistance is spent on ex-ante disaster prevention and risk reduction (GHA, 2013; ODI, 2013b).

## **B. Global Commitments and Rethinking of International Peace and Security, Humanitarian and Development Architecture**

The international community is collectively reaffirming its global commitments to international development, peace and security and rethinking the roles and structures of the peace and security, humanitarian and development architecture through a number of high-level processes:

- Sustainable development, through the adoption of the post-2015 SDGs and Agenda 2030;

- Disaster risk management (DRM), through the third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR), which adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR);
- Climate change through the Paris Agreement adopted at the 21st Conference of Parties;
- The UN's engagement in peace-building and peace-keeping through the High-level Independent Panel on Peace-keeping Operations and the 2015 Review of the UN Peace-building Architecture;
- Fragility and state-building, through the New Deal for Fragile States, the establishment of the g7+ and the fifth global meeting of the International Dialogue on Peace-Building in April 2016;
- Humanitarian crises, with the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in May 2016; and
- Refugees and migration, with the upcoming summit on refugees and migration in September 2016.

### **C. Disasters and Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries: the GFDRR Example**

Demand for GFDRR's disaster-related expertise in fragile and conflict-affected countries has been growing. GFDRR has since its inception been supporting fragile countries affected by or vulnerable to disasters, and there has recently been an increasing demand for application of disaster risk and needs assessment methodologies to be applied to conflict contexts.

- Since its inception, GFDRR has expended over 13% of its resources to conduct work in 26 fragile and conflict-affected countries (though this was not by

design) including Afghanistan, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Lebanon, Madagascar, Mali, Nepal, Sudan, Syria, Timor-Leste, Togo, and Yemen.

- Four of GFDRR's country partners – namely Haiti, Papua New Guinea, Togo, and Yemen – are members of the g7+, a voluntary association of countries affected by conflict and that are now in transition. g7+ membership by these countries appears to indicate the political will needed to address governance challenges, strengthen institutions, ensure ownership of international commitments, and align with national policies, processes and development plans.
- GFDRR has mobilized investments in fragile and conflict affected countries between 2007-2015, including over US\$8 million in Haiti, over US\$8 million in Nepal, almost US\$8 million in Togo, over US\$ 5 million in Somalia, US\$2.5 million in Afghanistan, and US\$2 million in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- In response to requests from the World Bank, GFDRR teams have recently supported damage and/or recovery/peacebuilding assessments in seven countries affected by conflict, violence and forced displacement: Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon, Palestine (Gaza), Ukraine and Nigeria.
- Demand for GFDRR's expertise is growing, due to increased need but also GFDRR's timely response to post-disaster needs in fragile and conflict-affected contexts as well as being able to apply its methodologies to areas where access is not possible.

#### **D. The Challenge for the International Community**

Recognition of the new context on peace and security, humanitarian engagement

and development has led the international community to reflect on whether the international aid architecture is fit for addressing these challenges. For example, there is a need for integrated risk-informed approaches that address the nexus between disasters, fragility and conflict which could take place within the context of numerous policy processes. These include, for instance – the High-Level Independent Panel on Peacekeeping Operations, the Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture, the third WCDRR, the WHS, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The World Bank, the United Nations and other global partners recognize not only the value but also the necessity for stakeholders and institutions at all levels to work in partnership to address interrelated and mutually reinforcing risks and to respond effectively to crises together. In the words of World Bank President Jim Yong Kim at the 2016 Fragility Forum, innovative partnerships and tools are needed to address today's crises and these would only be possible "by working towards collective outcomes, based on comparative advantage." Thus, the challenge is for development and humanitarian partners to identify their areas of comparative advantage and consider how they can contribute to the global effort to address and prepare for crises more effectively.

### III. The Interface of Disasters, Conflict, and Fragility

Over the past decade, there has been increasing recognition in both humanitarian and development communities of the interrelated nature of crises, risk and vulnerability. Research and experience in the field have led to the emergence of a general consensus within the humanitarian and development community that the interface between disasters and conflicts warrants serious attention, more nuanced and contextualized understanding and more targeted interventions.

Much of the existing literature reflects a recognition that there is little evidence pointing to linear causality between disasters and conflict. As stated in the Overseas Development Institute's 2013 report on disasters and conflict, the evidence base for the 'natural' disaster-conflict interface is fragmented and contested (ODI, 2013b). The literature displays a common finding, however, often drawn from an examination of specific case-studies, that while the link may not always be a causal one, the relationship between disasters and conflict can be mutually reinforcing—that disasters that occur in conflict-affected and fragile contexts are likely to exacerbate the impacts and fault-lines of that conflict, while the impacts of a disaster, such as food insecurity and disruption of markets, have the potential to reinforce drivers of conflict (International Alert, 2015; Kostner and Meutia, 2013; UNDP, 2011).

Some specific conclusions from the literature are that:

- The world is facing an ever more complex horizon of multiple crises, risk and vulnerability, including disasters, climate change, wars and protracted conflict, forced displacement, food insecurity, ecological erosion, urban crises, and pandemics;
- The intersections between disasters and conflict and fragility are manifold and affect countries and communities facing multiple risks and vulnerabilities. There is a need to better understand the ways in which risks interact, reinforce and compound one another;
- There is an interdependence between disaster risks and risk related to conflict, fragility and violence. Evidence suggests that conflict and fragility increase vulnerability to hazards and can weaken the capacity of governments and local institutions to protect communities from and respond to disasters. Disasters can also exacerbate conflict fault-lines and social exclusion. Inequity in post-disaster assistance can either fuel new grievances by deepening the conflict and strengthening one faction over the other (as in post-tsunami Sri Lanka) or open up political opportunities for building trust and cooperation as in Myanmar following Cyclone Nargis. (BMZ, 2016; ODI, 2013b; HPG, 2013);
- There are important differences between natural hazards and situations of fragility and/or conflict, e.g. disasters can be rapid, one-off events, while conflicts often have a longer time horizon and more political nature with responders adhering to a “do no harm” credo; and
- With the increasing frequency and intensity of complex and converging crises, ‘risk’ must become a central and cross-cutting feature of development, humanitarian and peace and security agendas, including the post-2015 development agenda (ODI, 2014a; BMZ, 2016; WEF, 2016; UN, 2016).



The review of the literature conducted in preparation of this discussion paper identified the following themes as key intersections of disasters, fragility and conflict. While these themes allow for the conceptualization of the intersections of disasters, fragility and conflict, the language of each originates from specific or shared conceptual frameworks (e.g., Risk originates from the DRM community, Protection and Peacebuilding are more widely used in situations of armed conflict, and Vulnerability, Resilience and Governance are part of both conceptual frameworks), demonstrating the cross-fertilization across the DRM community and the conflict and fragility community.

#### **A. Resilience and Risk**

Resilience and Risk have emerged as dominant lenses through which intersections of disasters, conflict and fragility are being understood. While the concept of risk has long been applied to disasters, conflict, and fragile contexts alike, resilience has come into prominence more recently.

##### **• Resilience**

Following the publication of the Humanitarian Emergency Response Review in 2011, which recommended a focus on resilience be adopted in the British government's humanitarian and emergency response approach, the concept of resilience has become increasingly central in humanitarian thinking and in donor approaches (Ashdown, 2011; DFID, 2011; ODI, 2014). Over the past few years, numerous definitions of 'resilience' have been developed, some explicitly drawing a link between disasters and conflicts as an external shock that threatens the well-being of a household, community, or country. DFID's definition of resilience for instance, is "the ability of countries, communities and households to manage change, by maintaining or transforming living standards in the face of shocks or stresses – such

as earthquakes, drought or violent conflict – without compromising their long-term prospect” (DFID, 2011).

The increasing importance of resilience reflects the growing recognition across the international community of both the interrelatedness of different risks and the importance of preparing for crises by strengthening the capacity of people, communities and countries to cope with risks, shocks and crises (OECD, 2013; Ashdown, 2011). At the same time, it is widely acknowledged in the literature that the resilience banner serves as a useful tool for leveraging better linkages across humanitarian, development and peace-building communities (OECD, 2013; ODI, 2013b; HPG, 2014b; Welsh, 2014).

While a recent concept, the pivot towards ‘building resilience’ has also re-energized long-running discussions within humanitarian and development circles about approaches for engaging in protracted crises and fragile contexts, as well as ways of linking relief, rehabilitation and development (OECD, 2013; HPG, 2014b and 2004). However, translating commitments to resilience into good practice and impact on the ground has proven to be challenging.

- **Risk**

Related to the rise of resilience, a renewed focus on managing risk more holistically has also evolved. A number of global risk indexes have been developed, including the World Economic Forum’s Global Risk Report, the World Risk Report and the World Risk Index, produced by the United Nations University’s Institute for Environment and Human Security and Alliance Development Works, to map risks and countries’ capacities to cope with risks (WEF, 2016; UNU-Alliance Works, 2014). The DRM community has been advocating for development sectors to be risk informed and integrate appropriate measures where risks exist. This signals a shift of engagement from focusing on disaster response to one on risk identification, risk reduction, and preparedness, as also reflected in the SFDRR.

In the literature related to conflict, fragility and peace-building, a focus on risk is also present but conceived more as risk to the security of populations, personnel, and mitigating the risks of recurrent conflict and violence. Literature exploring the nexus between disasters, conflict and fragility engaged more readily with the notion of risk as multi-dimensional, interrelated and mutually reinforcing (International Alert, 2015; OECD 2013). There is a growing body of literature on how international donors and agencies can manage risks in disaster, conflict and fragile contexts, including on risks to their own programs and institutions, and the financial risks of funding programs in such contexts (HPG, 2010; OECD, 2012).

## **B. Vulnerability and Protection**

### **• Vulnerability**

One of the most evident intersections of disasters, conflict and fragility emerges around the long-accepted notion that certain groups of people are more vulnerable to disasters and conflicts. Much of the literature agrees that existing vulnerabilities in conflict and fragile contexts are often exacerbated by disasters, and that conflicts can make the impact of disasters worse (International Alert, 2015; Feinstein International Center, 2013). Many key studies reviewed underline the need to examine the conditions and drivers of vulnerability and the risks associated with this nexus in a way that tries to understand how multiple vulnerabilities accumulate and affect specific populations in a given context (ODI, 2013b; ACF, 2011).

The concept of vulnerability itself binds DRM to a range of other fields, including poverty, conflict, and livelihood security. This provides an entry for DRM to be applied in both secure and insecure environments (ACF, 2011). Vulnerability analysis has

long been used to inform livelihoods, food security and nutrition interventions, and much literature has been generated from fieldwork exploring the linkages between vulnerability and how these are affected by the disaster and conflict interface, both in terms of risks and impacts. As a result of such research, there is now a strong body of evidence on the relationship between drought and conflict over resources, as well as data which reveal that many countries facing drought also face conflict (UNDP 2011; INFORM Index for Risk Management 2015; BMZ 2015).

As an example, studies on pastoralism, drought and food crises in the Horn of Africa have examined the intricate interlinkages between cycles of drought, livelihood insecurity and conflict vulnerability, and how these dynamics increase and reinforce risks. Some case studies have found that conflict has been higher in drought years, though without a proper understanding of how these dynamics relate, affect and reinforce one another. Programmatic interventions that focus narrowly on one or another risk without considering the interlinkages could unwittingly exacerbate drivers of conflict and increase risks (IFRI, 2014; Feinstein International Center, 2013; UNDP, 2011).

Such a nuanced understanding of vulnerability can only be conducted through an analysis that goes beyond a conventional focus on “vulnerable groups” (i.e., women, children, elderly) towards one that is (i) differential (varying across physical space and between and within groups); (ii) scale-dependent (relating to time, space, household, community, state); (iii) dynamic (with characteristics and drivers of vulnerability changing over time); and (iv) accounts for how political economy dynamics affect vulnerability at different levels. Such an approach has been undertaken by several agencies in response to the Syrian regional refugee crisis in Jordan and Lebanon (UNHCR, 2014; UNDP; ODI 2013b), and a similar vulnerability framework is being developed by INGOs for Rakhine State, Myanmar. Such an approach to vulnerability allows for vulnerability assessments to include analysis at different levels (state, local; community; household/individual) and incorporate factors such as proximity /access to services, community cohesion and safety.

- **Protection**

Closely linked to the concept of vulnerability is that of protection. Protection has long been a central component of the normative framework that underpins humanitarian action and its relevance cuts across contexts of conflict, disasters, and forced displacement. The concept has, however, been far more prevalent in the international community's engagement in conflict, including work on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, than in the context of disasters. In recent years though, this has started to change, and more attention has been paid to protection in all crisis contexts.

In its 1999 policy on the protection of internally displaced populations, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) adopted the following definition of protection, one first developed by the International Committee of the Red Cross, stating that "all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law, i.e., Human Rights Law, International Humanitarian Law and Refugee Law)" (IASC, 1999). This was reiterated in the IASC's Operational Guidelines for the Protection of IDPs in Natural Disasters, published in 2011 (IASC, 2011). The document recognizes the importance of protecting human rights of disaster-affected persons, and identifies a range of human rights challenges that people may face in the aftermath of a disaster, including:

- A lack of safety and security;
- Sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation;
- Unequal access to assistance and services and discrimination in the provision of aid;
- Family separation and loss of community;
- Loss of identity documents, including birth registration, land and property

documents, and difficulties in establishing ownership, inheritance or guardianship rights over orphaned children

- Loss of physical assets and access to land and other natural resources
- Lack of access to justice
- Forced relocation and involuntary return

Attention to these issues and to the protection of the rights of disaster-affected populations are critical in all disaster situations, but even more pronounced in situations of disasters in conflict affected and fragile contexts. Protection activities can range from (i) responsive (efforts to stop ongoing or prevent imminent violations); (ii) remedial (providing redress, access to justice) or; (iii) environment-building (supporting the creation of necessary legal and policy frameworks and institutional capacity to promote respect for human rights in crises situations) (IASC, 2011).

In spite of a renewed commitment to protection by the international community, and with the development of an increasingly strong normative protection framework at internationally, there is growing criticism of the failure of the international community to adequately protect people in practice, both in situations of conflict and disaster. Blatant violations of international humanitarian law include, (i) sexual and gender-based violence; (ii) targeting of civilians (including displaced persons); (iii) lack of access to affected populations; (iv) destruction of hospitals and attacks against health workers; and (v) exploitation of disaster and conflict-affected populations by human smugglers and traffickers. Such violations have become rampant and the international community continues to struggle to effectively protecting those whose rights are violated.

The definition of protection in humanitarian action has been interpreted too broadly, leading diverse actors to engage in a range of activities under the label of protection. These activities may not have a direct impact on the protection of human rights

and safety of disaster affected persons, as illustrated by research in post-earthquake Haiti (Ferris, 2012). Research on the different ways protection is conceived among humanitarian actors and military actors has also revealed challenges in finding common ground on what effective protection of affected populations might entail in practice (HPG, 2012). Thus, while the concept of vulnerability has moved towards being more multi-dimensional, the concept of protection requires to be more effectively applied in ways that actually protect those affected by crises from the key human rights challenges they face.

A common thread linking approaches to vulnerability and protection in situations of disaster and conflict is the need for continued focus the different way in which diverse groups of people are affected. This could be because certain groups are more vulnerable or face more structural discrimination. Research shows, for example, that girls are often among the most vulnerable groups in contexts of disasters and displacement. Restrictive societal norms on women's participation in risk reduction initiatives have led to higher mortality rates among women, further exacerbated by violent conflict (UN Women, 2013; Neumayer and Plümper, 2007).

Accordingly, it is important for those engaging in DRM in complex conflict and fragile situations, to understand the ways in which particular individuals and groups, (including women and children, ethnic and religious minorities, stateless populations or those seen to be loyal to rival political groups) may be deliberately discriminated against from receiving aid. It is important also for the humanitarian and development community to work together to find ways of overcoming such challenges of exclusion without exacerbating tensions or further eroding trust. In such contexts, humanitarian and development actors will likely face ethical dilemmas, such as whether delivering aid or working with a government that is party to a conflict simply reinforces (Slim, 2015)



### **C. Demographic, Geographic and Ecological Dynamics: Forced Displacement, Urbanization, Natural Resource Management and Climate Change**

Another set of critical issues where intersections of disasters, vulnerability, fragility and conflict become evident are on shifting demographic, geographic and ecological patterns driven by forced displacement, rapid urbanization and climate change.

- **Forced displacement**

According to the World Bank's new report on its response to forced displacement, forced displacement is arguably the defining humanitarian and development challenge of our time (World Bank, 2015). In 2015, global forced displacement reached its highest levels since the end of WWII, with almost 60 million people displaced within and outside of their countries (UNHCR, 2015). Multiple protracted conflicts, combined with disasters, climate change and food insecurity, have resulted in a dramatic rise of the numbers of people forcibly displaced from their homes. For example, the Syria conflict alone has left an estimated 6.6 million people internally displaced and has resulted in another 4.6 million Syrians fleeing their country to seek protection and survival.

Forcibly displaced persons today often travel in mixed migration flows that include refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants, environmental migrants, smuggled persons, victims of trafficking, and others. Each group has a different set of humanitarian and protection needs, vulnerabilities and options. Involuntary population movement is also a public concern, topping the list of likely risks for 2016 in the World Economic Forum's Global Risk Survey (WEF, 2016). Indeed, forcibly displaced persons today face a difficult environment: they are displaced for longer periods; fewer are returning voluntarily; risk detention, and greater lack of access to basic services and livelihoods. In some cases, there may be refoulement, while at the same time facing growing xenophobia and a politicization of in many countries of transit and destination. All these challenges occur in the context of a funding gap

between needs, resources and capacity.

The literature on displacement highlights challenges in managing forced displacement crises and in understanding the drivers of displacement in diverse contexts. Indeed, some studies argue that the insufficient understanding of these drivers and patterns, is one of the biggest stumbling blocks to addressing root causes and engaging the right resources and capacities to manage displacement comprehensively (IDMC, 2015). One common misconception, for example, is that displaced persons are always on the move and that they have significant freedom of movement. While multiple displacements are a phenomenon that has been studied in some depth, the movement of refugees and internally displaced persons are regularly restricted due to conditions of (i) detention as 'illegal migrants'; (ii) fear of arrest; (iii) lack of resources; (iv) lack of knowledge of the local language in the case of refugees; (v) due to fear of loss of property; (vi) lack of access to inhabitable land; (vii) fear of eviction and; (viii) fear of internment. Understanding these complex patterns requires analysis on security, political economy, land tenure, land management, climate change, social exclusion, and psycho-social vulnerability among other things and the ways in which these factors interrelate and interact (IDMC, 2015).

- **Urbanization**

Today's unprecedented rapid urbanization is another phenomenon in which disaster, fragility, conflict, and climate risks converge. It is estimated that more than two thirds of the world's population will live in cities by 2050, and that the fastest urbanization will take place in Africa and Asia (WEF, 2015). It is also estimated that 40% of the world's urban expansion is occurring in urban slums. While cities can bring many benefits, they can also amplify risks for instance, of disasters, violence, marginalization, poverty, climate change and disease.

Patterns of displacement are also changing, with internally displaced persons and

refugees increasingly seeking refuge in urban settings. It is estimated that over half of the 38 million IDPs already live in urban areas. In line with rapidly rising urbanization, urban refugees will also be increasingly exposed to the same risks and shocks, including hazards, violence, financial shocks, and forced displacement. Refugees and undocumented migrants are often not targeted as populations for increasing risk awareness and from national disaster risk planning. (UN-Habitat, 2015).

The need to better understand the risks that climate change poses for urban areas in developing countries has been highlighted in many studies as an area for more work. Urban areas have become increasingly vulnerable to compounding risk due to greater concentration of populations and poverty, an increased potential for epidemics and health risks, and the high propensity for violence.

- **Natural Resource Management, Livelihoods and Climate Change**

There is also a growing body of research on the interface between natural resource management, conflict and peace-building, the effects of climate change on disasters and conflict, and the impact of conflict and fragility on climate change mitigation and adaptation. These issues encompass a broad but defined area of topics where the dynamic, reinforcing interplay of risks has been clearly observed (UNDP, 2011; UNEP, 2015; Feinstein Centre, 2013; UN Women, 2015).

It is well-recognized that many conflicts are intricately linked to natural resources. Contestation over access to and control of natural resources, such as oil, water and forests, can be a powerful driver for conflict. Profits from natural resource exploitation, such as gems and timber, can finance armed conflicts. Furthermore, peace negotiations often include discussions around natural resource management arrangements and sharing. Because of this, more and more aid actors are trying to understand the linkages between natural resources, livelihoods and peace-building. A growing number of experts now believe that “peace-building substantially

depends on the transformation of natural assets into peace-building benefits” (Young and Goldman, 2015).

In situations of conflict, it is necessary to understand natural resources in the context of the local political economy, political interests, the contestation of rights and entitlements related to natural resources, and the impact on different actors, particular vulnerable groups. Research has shown that, in times of conflict, women tend to be disproportionately affected by loss of access to natural resources. This is because their livelihoods depend on gathering these resources for their households’ daily needs, and because access may depend on social and cultural local management systems that are disrupted during conflict (UN Women, 2015). Disasters in such contexts can cause added stress to the availability of and access to natural resources and the livelihoods that depend on them. In fragile and conflict-affected societies, disasters often expose and exacerbate pre-disaster vulnerabilities, political fault lines and threats to their protection.

One example of the complex interplay between climate change, disaster, vulnerability, violence and political conflict, is the 1998 famine in Bahr El Ghazal (now in South Sudan). Three years of drought caused by El Niño occurred in a context of years of conflict-related impoverishment and violence that had weakened the asset base, eroded security and perpetuated cycles of human rights abuses, and paralyzed local institutions, who were unable to provide protection or services. Raids and attacks by armed militia on vulnerable communities caused massive displacement from towns into rural areas that were already facing acute food insecurity. These events, in turn, triggered a famine which resulted in some of the highest malnutrition and mortality rates on record (HPN, 2004).

Likewise, climate change impacts cannot be understood in isolation from a broader social reality and, thus, must be understood in relation to other risks people face in specific contexts. Research on pastoralist and climate adaptation in the Horn of Africa has shown how important it is to understand the interaction between climate change and broader development challenges such as rising food prices, the spread of disease or contestation over access to and control of natural resources, and the

strategies that local communities take to adapt to and address these multiple and interrelated pressures (ODI, 2011).

The links between climate risks, fragility, vulnerability to and ability to adapt to climate change warrant further research. The recent G7 commissioned report, 'A New Agenda for Peace', identifies seven compound climate-fragility risks (Adelphi et al., 2015):

- Local resource competition
- Livelihood insecurity and migration
- Extreme weather events and disasters
- Volatile food prices and provision
- Transboundary water management
- Sea-level rise and coastal degradation
- Unintended effects of climate policies

International aid flows to help fragile countries address climate risks are also in need of critical review. According to Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index, Somalia is the most vulnerable country to climate change, and seven of the ten most vulnerable are G7+ members. These same countries, however, receive very low levels of climate change adaptation funding, amounting to an annual average of only seven cents per capita (ODI, 2015).

#### D. Governance, Peace-Building, State-Building, and Service Delivery

A fundamental area where disasters, conflict and fragility converge is around governance, peace and state-building, and service delivery. Disasters that occur in fragile states can have negative impacts on governance, and undermine the capacity of already weak institutions to respond adequately through delivery of assistance and services. Failure to respond often leads to a loss of trust in the government, weak legitimacy of government, and the emergence of new grievances and old fault-lines (International Alert, 2015; BMZ, 2016; ODI, 2013b). Examples of such situations are for instance, in Haiti, where following the 2010 earthquake, weak governance delayed progress in reconstruction. Similarly, the 2011 Horn of Africa drought exacerbated grievances between communities over governance of the food crises, resulting in famine and violence across the region. At the same time, there are a few examples of situations where disasters have had a positive impact on peace-building, stabilization, or simply opening up humanitarian space, such as in post-tsunami Aceh or in Myanmar following Cyclone Nargis.

While there is a lot of evidence on the need to focus on addressing fragility, current efforts to assist poor, fragile and conflict-affected countries remain fragmented. This is partly due to a lack of consensus on priority countries, as there is no agreement on which states are fragile and no single harmonized list of conflict-affected and fragile countries, the latter being a term that the UN does not use. Many studies have stressed the importance of paying careful attention to the distinctions between different spectrum fragility and typologies violence, the characteristics of affected countries and societies, and the willingness of the government and society to engage in development cooperation, including on DRM, peace-building and state-building (ODI, 2013b; International Alert, 2015; BMZ, 2016).

Disasters can also have a positive impact on both state-building and peace-building, provided there is leadership and political will to address long-standing problems through a disaster response. Examples of where this happened are post-tsunami

Aceh, where leadership came from the national government, and in Myanmar, after Cyclone Nargis, where leadership for the recovery came through the then Secretary-General of ASEAN.



## IV. Implications, Experiences, and General Lessons

The above analysis holds important implications that should be considered by international partners who seek to work on the nexus of disasters, conflict and fragility and complex crises. The multi-dimensionality of the issues point to several common strategic principles that cut across all thematic areas:

- The need to work in a way that harnesses the comparative advantages of a range of partners across peace and security, humanitarian and development communities, including on joint analysis, joint preparedness, and joint response;
- The need for leadership and incentives to encourage institutional changes towards a multi-dimensional risk approach and long-term outcomes that assist countries and communities to transition out of fragility and violence;
- The need for both development and humanitarian actors to learn new skills. For development actors to better understand processes of vulnerability at the micro-level and how they can be affected by macro-level policies, and for humanitarian actors to better understand the root causes of crises and

how to work with other development partners to institutionalize attentiveness to different forms of vulnerability;

- The need to develop a lingua franca across the multitude of actors, sectors and disciplines and hence a common understanding of problems, concepts, strategies and interventions;
- The need to recognize tensions. For example the humanitarian approach of rapid and impartial response and the peace-building and state-building objectives of transformative engagement to end conflict and strengthen legitimate institutions in the long term;
- The need for multiple risk-sensitive project management, covering assessments, planning, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation; and
- The need for flexibility of funding time-frames and for management and decision-making approaches for fragile contexts. This would allow a better understanding of the changing context, and appropriate and adaptable interventions in such a context.

Based on case-studies and evaluations of experience in the field, some potential approaches for intervention are identified below. This list is by no means exhaustive, but could serve as a point of entry for international partners.

#### **A. Multi-stakeholder Partnerships to Address Specific Problems**

In protracted crises, such as the Horn of Africa, the Sahel and the Syrian conflict and regional refugee crises, processes that were most effective were those that adopted the following approaches:

- Ensuring that analysis is used as a basis for designing interventions;
- Developing shared results-based frameworks and systems for the monitoring of both results and risks on-going basis; and
- Sharing analysis, engaging in joint area-based planning and working in close coordination and collaboration with other partners to achieve common outcome.

Some examples include: Joint Planning Cells in Sahel and Horn of Africa (USAID); Global Alliance for Resilience (EU, ECOWAS, West African Economic and Monetary Union, Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel); and the Solutions Alliance (Denmark, Turkey, UNHCR, UNDP, International Rescue Committee).

## **B. Disaster Reconstruction and Recovery in Fragile and Conflict Affected States**

Reconstruction and recovery processes can offer windows of opportunity to secure political commitments towards inclusive, resilient and conflict-sensitive recovery. This includes a 'build back better' approach, which supports resilient recovery; mainstreaming DRM into policies and programs; strengthening crisis preparedness among a wide range of stakeholders at all levels; and focusing on land-use planning and strengthening of land rights, particularly for vulnerable crises-affected populations.

This is illustrated by the following examples:

- Post-tsunami Aceh - support for the Government of Indonesia's Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency and protecting the land rights of vulnerable groups including, women, orphans, landless tsunami victims, and renters and squatters;

- Post-earthquake Pakistan - support for the Earthquake Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Authority and adopting owner-driven reconstruction; and
- Post-earthquake Haiti - investment in the Department of Civil Protection capacity-building; increasing tenure security through conducting community based enumeration of occupants and 'adressage' (giving official dwelling numbers to residents) in affected neighborhoods including informal settlements.

### **C. Linking Post-Conflict Recovery with Disaster Risk Management and Sustainable Natural Resource Management**

In post-conflict recovery contexts, more emphasis must be placed on disaster risk management and sustainable natural resource management, as a means to reduce disaster risk and vulnerability. This should be linked to all stages of post-conflict recovery including demobilization of armed groups, wider reform of the security sector and livelihoods generation, as well as land-use and spatial planning. Such efforts could include safeguards to ensure that a conflict-sensitive DRM lens is applied to new investments in a post-conflict society as well as finding ways to give demobilized combatants a role in peacetime, linked to protection of communities, resources and identity.

Some examples include:

- Aceh: following the 2004 tsunami, the Indonesian military's role quickly shifted from conducting counter-insurgency operations to becoming a key actor in the emergency response. Months later, following the signing of the peace agreement, several thousand Free Aceh Movement ex-combatants were trained to become forest rangers as part of a program to support forest conservation and natural resource management. It gave ex-combatants a livelihood and a role in protecting Aceh's environment in a way that was

linked to customary institutions and identity.

- Mindanao: The local government of the Philippines autonomous region of Muslim Mindanao's gender and development team facilitated women obtaining individual rights on a 25-year lease basis through a Forest Land-Use Planning process. Women were recognized as rights-holders and provided livelihoods training and support. They also assumed leadership positions in natural resource conservation and management programs, including as the head of the Banga Watershed Farmers' Cooperative that became the government's partner in forest co-management.

#### **D. Integrating DRM into Priority Sectors in Fragile States**

In fragile and conflict-affected societies, basic services are often weak, under threat and in need of reform. In such contexts, DRM programs could serve as an entry point for broader institutional reform in key sectors such as health, infrastructure, housing, water, and education, ensuring that approaches to DRM in these sectors are inclusive. These help to re-establish the legitimacy of the state and build the peace dividend, as evidenced by ongoing experience in Colombia. This was also done in the WHO's DRM strategy for the health sector for the Africa region.

Another opportunity for integration is by supporting disaster-related regulatory and policy reform in fragile and conflict settings. Since the adoption in 2007 of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance (IDRL Guidelines) by the IFRC, 23 countries have adopted new regulations or procedures drawing on the IDRL Guidelines. Few of those countries are fragile and conflict-affected states. The international community could support a targeted effort to promote IDRL in fragile and conflict-affected countries, linked to wider humanitarian rule of law and state-building objectives.

A wide range of first responders (including national and sub-national governments,

security sector and civil protection, local community leaders and representative, local organizations, local businesses, and local volunteers including students) could be locally prepared to respond to emergencies of all types, including disasters, food insecurity, displacement, and conflict.

While there is a need to intensify work with national governments, it is also important to engage two complementary levels of government, namely sub-national and regional. Sub-national governments are responsible for ensuring that national policies are implemented and are also first responders in times of crises. Regional intergovernmental organizations on the other hand, offer policy frameworks, norms and standards in areas of regional cooperation for emergency response, including disaster response and risk management, food insecurity, peace-keeping, and refugee and migration management.

Some examples are:

- ASEAN: DRM and emergency response
- Inter-Governmental Authority on Development: food security and drought
- ECOWAS: peace-keeping, Ebola
- Mindanao: Humanitarian Emergency Assistance and Response Team of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
- Aceh: Government of Aceh's Standard Operating Procedures and Code of Ethics for Managing Humanitarian Assistance to Refugees

## V. Lessons from GFDRR's Engagement in Conflict-Affected Areas and Fragile States

### A. GFDRR Engagement

GFDRR existing and potential engagements in fragile and conflict-affected countries has been evolving and increasing over the past few years. Highlights include:

- Supporting countries with weak governance systems to prepare for and respond to disasters, such as in Nepal. GFDRR has provided technical assistance to the government of Nepal for the PDNA, recovery planning and the establishment of a reconstruction authority following the 2015 earthquake.
- Supporting vulnerable and marginalized communities in fragile countries to build resilience to disasters and support inclusive DRM processes. Examples include pastoral women and disaster resilient livelihoods in Ethiopia and Kenya, and convening multi-stakeholder dialogues between local communities, civil society, government and private sector in Papua New Guinea.



- Generating and collecting data on damage, loss and needs in countries facing ongoing conflict and areas that have been difficult to access by international partners. For example, GFDRR has recently supported damage and needs assessments in six cities in Syria (Aleppo, Dar'a, Hama, Homs, Idlib, and Latakia), across seven sectors (housing, health, education, water and sanitation, energy, transport, and agriculture) as well as in four cities in Yemen (Sana'a, Aden, Taiz, and Zinjibar) focusing on six sectors (housing, health, education, water, energy, and transport). The assessments also gathered data on the impact of damage on service delivery.
- The development of new methodologies and data tools, combining existing post-conflict and post-disaster assessment tools as well as remote assessment methodologies through the utilization of satellite imagery, social media analytics, data mining, and verification by local partners on the ground. These methodologies, which lay the ground work for more detailed assessments, are cost-effective and replicable, providing the World Bank and other international partners with a remote assessment tool that can be deployed rapidly in insecure contexts where access is difficult. They also contribute to post-conflict needs assessments and peace-building assessments more generally.
- Supporting countries affected by conflict and forced displacement to move forward through international support for peace-building and state-building processes. Additionally, building confidence and trust in fragile and conflict-affected countries between a range of stakeholders, including governments, citizens, national institutions and the international community. For example, in West Bank, Gaza, GFDRR supported the Palestinian Authority to conduct a damage and needs assessment to determine needs and priorities for recovery and reconstruction, develop institutional arrangements for recovery, and financial mechanisms to manage donor funding. In Lebanon, support was provided for the implementation of an Economic and Social Impact Assessment to assess the impact of and capacity to manage the massive influx of Syrian refugees into the country. In Iraq, GFDRR supported

the government by conducting a rapid, preliminary assessment of physical infrastructure damage and the impact of conflict on municipal services in key cities where government control has been re-established. This in turn became a guiding document for the preparation of the government's emergency operation in May 2015. In Ukraine, at the request of the government to the World Bank, UN and EU, GFDRR supported an assessment of infrastructure and service delivery needs in conflict-affected regions of the country as a contribution to the rapid peacebuilding assessment, covering medium-term recovery, rehabilitation and social cohesion needs.

- Strengthening operational collaboration with other parts of the World Bank (including the Fragility, Conflict and Violence unit) as well as the UN, EU and other international partners through assessments, joint actions and bilateral and multilateral initiatives.

## **B. Lessons about GFDRR's Comparative Advantages**

These results reflect GFDRR's current capacity to support engagements in contexts that are affected by disasters, fragility, conflict, and forced displacement, and highlight its comparative advantages in such engagement. Most interviewees, both from within the World Bank and externally, agreed that the GFDRR possessed the following relevant traits:

- A track record of effective, quality and rapid engagement with developing countries in the less politically-charged areas of disaster risk management, preparedness and recovery has made GFDRR a reliable, trusted and neutral partner for governments. For example, all recent assessments in conflict-affected countries were conducted in partnership with affected national governments, with the exception of the assessment in Syria, which was conducted at the request of World Bank leadership as an internal exercise so the World Bank could keep itself abreast of the situation on the ground.

- Strong technical expertise, methodologies and tools that can be adapted to meet the specific requirements of fragile and conflict-affected contexts, and that are cost-efficient and can be rapidly mobilized, including use of remote methods in areas that are difficult to access.
- The ability to successfully collaborate within the World Bank across sectors, e.g. the Fragility, Conflict and Violence unit, Social Protection, Country Management Units, sector teams, and DRM Regional Coordinators, to support work in fragile and conflict-affected situations. As a global partnership, GFDRR's existing agreements and strong collaboration with international partners ensure that its contributions to risk reduction and recovery from crises are conducted in a way that complements the role of other international partners. This collaboration also allows that the role of the GFDRR within the wider international architecture remains focused and complementary to the role of other actors.

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# GFDRR

Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery

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The Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) is a global partnership that helps developing countries better understand and reduce their vulnerabilities to natural hazards and adapt to climate change. Working with over 400 local, national, regional, and international partners, GFDRR provides grant financing, technical assistance, training and knowledge sharing activities to mainstream disaster and climate risk management in policies and strategies. Managed by the World Bank, GFDRR is supported by 34 countries and 9 international organizations.