

DISPLACEMENT AND MIGRATION



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CHALLENGES

Many people are forced to leave their homes due to armed conflicts, political repression, violation of human rights, terrorism, food shortages or climate change. The world has been witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record in recent years. In Syria, Iraq, South Sudan and elsewhere, internal and external displacement creates highly vulnerable populations in need of immediate humanitarian aid as well as prospects to integrate into a new environment. Given the large and sudden influx of people, host communities struggle to cope with these tasks, both in the delivery of public services and the mitigation of potential tensions that threaten social cohesion between locals and newcomers.

At the same time, regular and irregular migration flows are increasing worldwide. Many people are looking for work, education and training opportunities as well as a better future overall outside their home countries. While the issue is at the forefront of fierce policy debates in Western countries, its challenges along the migration routes are clear and apparent. Displacement

and migration have given rise to organized crime in human trafficking, and created tremendous challenges for communities involved both as transit zones and destinations.

GFA APPROACH AND SERVICES

GFA approaches the issue of refugees, displacement and migration at different levels of development. As displaced people need support and prospects for a better future, our services combine short-term assistance with medium and long-term projects. The latter include governance reforms, migration management, private sector development, for example, as well as education, training and employment promotion. GFA focuses on direct support measures to individuals as well as on capacity building of those communities and institutions that deliver crucial public services to migrants.

To us, refugees, displacement and migration is a cross-cutting topic of interdisciplinary nature that builds on concepts and solutions across many technical areas. This needs optimal use of our wide range of techni-

cal and methodological competences and broad regional knowhow. We have maintained a reliable network of strategic partnerships in various regions and contexts for many years in order to meet the complex challenges in this particular field more effectively. Bringing local expertise on board through dialogue puts us in a position to adapt technical concepts to local context and reinforce ownership.

To this end, GFA has established a technical working group Refugees & Migration. This team combines in-house expertise monitoring trends and developments with a focus on conceptual discussions and the development of suitable project approaches.

SUPPORTING REFUGEES & STRENGTHENING HOST COMMUNITIES

Tackling the immediate consequences of a refugee crisis, the physical safety and access to basic services of those seeking protection must be safeguarded in countries of origin and in host countries. Therefore, GFA experts support measures aiming at improving the living standards of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), providing psychological support, reinforcing their rights and increasing their participation in decision-making and planning processes, in refugee camps and elsewhere.

Two-thirds of all refugees have been displaced for an average of three years, and half of them for ten years or more. Decades of instability and conflicts such as in Afghanistan, Somalia and elsewhere continue, resulting in millions who cannot return home. Protracted displacement has become a reality for numerous refugees. To prevent the emergence of a lost generation, our services include improved access to education, vocational training and labour market services for refugees and vulnerable citizens from host communities.

Most refugees are hosted by developing countries. The majority of them are often incapable of providing basic services to their own population. The simultaneous arrival of many refugees on short notice often creates severe capacity problems for the host countries' regional and municipal infrastructure and provision of basic public services. Health and education systems as well as water supply systems are often overburdened. As a result, both refugees and the local population suffer, and host countries are confronted with critical economic and social consequences.

In order to mitigate the impacts of a refugee crisis, GFA services entail measures benefiting refugees and the local population, as the latter also suffers from the situation. We support initiatives counteracting overburdened regional and municipal infrastructure and services, and enhancing the absorption capacity of education systems. We also foster capabilities related to the management of conflicts at the local level to facilitate the coexistence of various groups. In the medium run, these measures aim at preparing refugees to return to their home countries or to integrate them in host communities.



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MANAGING AND SHAPING MIGRATION

As part of the efforts for better migration management, our services strengthen the capacities of local authorities and public institutions to deal with the adverse effects of migration along major routes. The objective is to assist authorities in better understanding the impacts of migration on the country's development, and managing the latter more coherently. To this end, GFA is developing individual and organizational capacities through the promotion of dialogue on experiences and achievements in the field of migratory effect management, trainings and local support to municipality personnel. This will help the latter in analyzing local impacts of migratory dynamics as well as in mainstreaming migration issues into local development, planning and infrastructure at the community level. In terms of labour migration, GFA services comprise the promotion of mobility of human capital inside the EU and between the EU and its neighboring countries.

REINTEGRATING RETURNEES

Refugees often enjoy temporary protection in their host countries only. Eventually, the situation in their home countries permitting, they will return home. The same holds true for migrants who do not fulfill the necessary criteria to obtain resident status abroad. Migrants are often particularly vulnerable upon their return, having invested time, effort and large financial assets to afford emigration. When returning home, many of them face social stigma. GFA services aim at smoothing the reintegration in their country of origin. We promote access to education and advanced training, provide tailored guidance on job hunting and placement and advise on how to access support to start a business, e.g. through small loans and microcredits.