GUIDANCE NOTE

Forced migration and protracted crises

A multilayered approach
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Contents

Acknowledgements iii

Key messages iv

Forced migration and protracted crises: key considerations 1

FAO’s multilayered approach to forced migration 7

Challenges and areas for further investigation 19

The way forward 21

References and resources for further information 23

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This guidance note is part of a series on improving food security and nutrition in protracted crises. Drawing on FAO technical experience, the guidance note series supports implementation of the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition In Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA), endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in October 2015.
Forced migration is a crisis centred in developing countries. At its root are the same ten conflicts which have accounted for the majority of the forcibly displaced every year since 1991, consistently hosted by about 15 countries – also overwhelmingly in the developing world.

Most drivers of violence – and resulting cycles of displacement and protracted crisis situations – are due to structural, developmental, economic and political factors. Real and substantial improvements can only come about by addressing root causes.

Agriculture cannot be an afterthought when addressing the immediate and longer-term needs of the forcibly displaced and of the community hosting them. In the face of enormous challenges, it remains the backbone of rural livelihoods. Maintaining food production and rebuilding the agricultural sector are fundamental conditions, and the agriculture sector is an engine of stabilization and recovery for people living in or fleeing from fragile contexts.

Food security, sustainable agricultural practices, access to and management of natural resources, employment and social protection benefits are all key in sustaining peace efforts, mitigating the adverse impact of climate change and supporting populations affected by forced migration to transition towards durable and sustainable solutions.

Support to affected populations needs to be associated with investments in the community of origin and destination to avoid a relapse into conflict and to work towards durable and sustainable solutions for all.

Building the self-reliance of the forcibly displaced is crucial in enabling them to become agents of their own development and of the communities hosting them, particularly when displacement is protracted.

Strengthening livelihoods and food security in areas bordering countries of origin and in the areas where IDPs are settled is not only cost-efficient, but it also leads to longer-term social and economic benefits once countries stabilize.
Forced migration and protracted crises: key considerations

The global challenge of forced migration

Migration has always been an intrinsic feature of human societies, often a manifestation of a drive for innovation and development. Yet, there are aspects of the contemporary landscape of human mobility that are emerging as critical development and humanitarian challenges, in some contexts undermining efforts to sustain peace. Forced migration is on the rise, from 39.9 million in 1997 to 65.6 million in 2016, and due, among other things, to the protracted nature of contemporary crises and conflicts, and the increasing frequency and intensity of climate-related extreme events.

A fairly small number of conflicts, which have been going on for years or even decades, compounded with natural disasters, are largely responsible for these movements. The global forced migration crisis is in fact a juxtaposition of a few local and regional crises affecting mostly developing countries. In 2016, about 11 countries in protracted crises and 15 neighbouring countries were at the origin and hosted the majority of forced migrants.

On average, about 60 percent of the population in countries affected by conflict and protracted crisis live in rural areas, where agriculture is the mainstay of people's livelihoods. In these contexts rural livelihoods are also highly exposed to the negative impacts of extreme climate change events, as countries’ capacities to withstand shocks are constrained and agriculture sectors are often hit disproportionately hard by disasters.

The impact of conflicts and disasters on agriculture sectors, compounded with the breakdown of health services, reverberates on the food and nutrition security of both those who live in and flee from protracted crises, as comparative estimates on the prevalence rates of undernourishment in crisis and non-crisis situations highlight. Yet, these situations go beyond a simple correlation between crises, food and nutrition security, and forced migration: not only do protracted crises and migration have an impact on the food and nutrition security of migrants, their hosts and those who cannot migrate; but food insecurity, compounded with other factors, is among the drivers of forced migration, which in some instances can then aggravate conflict stressors.

The challenges to food and nutrition security are manifold, as are the linkages between protracted crises, forced migration, food security and nutrition. Far-reaching changes are therefore needed in the way policies and programmes address these challenges, moving beyond ‘care and maintenance’ to rebuilding lives and livelihoods, with humanitarian, development and peace and security actors each having an essential role to play at all levels. The humanitarian-development-peace nexus has generally been seen as sequential. In fact, rather than a continuum, different sets of actors can engage in complementary efforts to increase resilience and sustain livelihoods, food security and nutrition in all phases of protracted crises, and throughout the entire period of displacement.
## What do we mean by forced migration?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Protection regime</th>
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|                              | People who, in fear of their lives, are forced to flee their homes because the state authorities are unable or unwilling to protect them from armed conflict including civil war; generalized violence; HR abuses, and persecution on the grounds of nationality, race, religion, political opinion or social group. | **Refugees**  
The most important international organization with responsibility for refugees is the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, the UNHCR is mandated to provide protection and assistance to refugees.  
Palestinian refugees are not covered by the mandate of UNHCR, but by that of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). |
| Conflict-Induced displacement | **Asylum seekers**  
Their protection falls under the primary responsibility of states and UNHCR.  
People displaced in this way are sometimes also referred to as ‘oustees’, ‘involuntarily displaced’ or as ‘involuntarily resettled’. | **IDPs**  
Unlike the protection regime established for refugees under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, the international regime for IDPs is made up of non-binding frameworks and policies that recognize the primacy of states and call on international support, as required.  
States hold the primary responsibility for protecting the rights of those displaced and addressing internal displacement within their jurisdiction.  
IDPs are protected by various bodies of law, including domestic law, human rights law and – if they are in a state involved in armed conflict – International Humanitarian Law (IHL).  
Although the UNHCR’s original mandate does not specifically cover IDPs, this agency is increasingly engaged to ensure the protection of IDPs. |
|                              | People who are compelled to move as a result of policies and projects implemented to supposedly enhance ‘development’. These include large-scale infrastructure projects such as dams, roads, ports, airports; urban clearance initiatives; mining and deforestation; and the introduction of conservation parks/reserves and biosphere projects. | The primary responsibility of their protection and/or compensation resides on states (most of those displaced by development are within national borders). |
## What do we mean by forced migration?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
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<th>Protection regime</th>
<th>Internal movements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disaster-induced displacement</td>
<td>Sometimes referred to as ‘environmental refugees’ or ‘disaster refugees’, these people are forcibly displaced as a result of natural disasters (floods, volcanic eruptions, landslides, earthquakes), environmental change (deforestation, desertification, land degradation, global warming) and human-made disasters (industrial accidents, radioactivity).</td>
<td>There is no comprehensive international framework or set of national policy instruments for addressing disaster-induced displacement, and the primary responsibility for the protection and well-being of affected populations rests with the states concerned. Although often referred to as refugees, this group does not benefit from the status and protection regime granted to the conflict-induced displaced. The 1951 Convention may apply only to specific situations, such as where «victims of natural disasters flee because their government has consciously withheld or obstructed assistance in order to punish or marginalize them on one of the five [Convention] grounds.»</td>
<td>The IOM plays an important role in assisting IDPs as well, as part of its growing engagement in relief efforts. The African Union (AU) has formulated a binding treaty for the protection of IDPs: under the AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa – known as the Kampala IDP Convention – states parties commit to take measures to protect and assist persons who have been internally displaced as a result of natural or human-made disasters, including climate change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survival migration</td>
<td>Movements from one’s usual place of residence, undertaken when the individual and/or family perceive that there are no other options for survival with dignity open to them is to migrate.</td>
<td>There is not a global framework for addressing survival migration, as traditional mechanisms for managing economic migrations prove increasingly ineffective, and refugee law does not apply. The Global Migration Group is working on the “Principles and Guidelines, supported by practical guidance, on the human rights protection of migrants in vulnerable situations” that will constitute a non-binding instrument to provide advice to states and other stakeholders on how they should implement their obligation to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of migrants who are in vulnerable situations. These principles are drawn from international human rights law and related standards and will also address the rights of so-called ‘survival migrants’, although not targeted exclusively to them.</td>
<td>There is not a particular international protection regime granted to those who migrate internally to escape dire livelihood conditions. In some countries (e.g. China), internal movement is also regulated, meaning that some citizens may move without being able to formally register their new address.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The IOM plays an important role in assisting migrants, while the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), as the guardian of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Organized Crime Convention) and the Protocols thereto, and assists states in their efforts to fight the smuggling of migrants.
Forced migration in the CFS framework for action for food security and nutrition in protracted crises (CFS-FFA)

This guidance note will review both the opportunities as well as the challenges of livelihood interventions in protracted crises in the context of forced migration, review FAO’s value added and contribution and propose key elements to consider when devising and implementing these interventions.

This note contributes to the implementation of the Framework for Action adopted by the Committee on Food Security (CFS-FFA) for food security and nutrition in protracted crises, particularly with reference to the principles below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forced migration in the CFS-FFA</th>
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| Is a core objective of CFS-FFA principles | **Principle 1:** Meet immediate humanitarian needs and build resilient livelihoods  
**Principle 4:** Protect those affected by or at risk from protracted crises |
| Also contributes to CFS-FFA principles | **Principle 2:** Focus on nutritional needs  
**Principle 5:** Empower women and girls, promote gender equality and encourage gender sensitivity  
**Principle 9:** Contribute to peacebuilding through food security and nutrition  
**Principle 10:** Manage natural resources sustainably and reduce disaster risks |

Nigeria – Kukareta. In northeast Nigeria, FAO provided agricultural assistance to 12 400 IDP households and host families for the rainfed cropping season. ©FAO/Sonia Nguyen.

**KEY FACTS**

The number of new displacements was equivalent to 20 people being forced to flee their homes every minute of 2016.
The multiple intersecting links between crises, forced migration and food and nutrition security

The 19 countries FAO identified with protracted crises in 2016 were all engaged in conflict and violence during the last two decades, and these crises were typically compounded by adverse climatic events, such as prolonged droughts, that severely affected food production and rural livelihoods. Where conflict persists over long time periods, livelihoods, food systems and resilience become dangerously undermined, creating a downward spiral that results in extended and severe food and nutrition crises.

In these contexts, developing countries are particularly prone to severe food insecurity and malnutrition; they tend to be more exposed to clashes over natural resources and extreme climate change events yet have less resources and coping capacities. These countries are also at the origins and destinations of the majority of the forced migration movements.

Those living amid conflict and violence often have to choose between the risk of remaining without means of subsistence and/or becoming victims and the risk of leaving what they have behind for an uncertain future. Both staying and leaving carry high risks to people and either option may threaten their survival. Migration is in fact one of several possible coping strategies amid conflict. When natural disasters strike, the odds in favour of remaining or fleeing are many, and not everybody has the means or the opportunity to leave, nor to do so safely.

People living in protracted crises try to manage a situation of high risk and high uncertainty, and make decisions based on the capacities they have and on what they perceive to be the optimal coping strategy at a given time. Evidence suggests that security plays the main role in migrants’ decisions to flee and aim to reach a new destination. Yet, food security, livelihood options and social networks have been also found to be important determinants of why people decide to stay or, when moving, where to go and when to return.

The breakdown of the economy, markets and health systems, common in protracted crisis situations, have a negative impact on the food consumption and health of both those who remain as well as those who flee. The destruction of food stocks, the loss of crops and productive assets, displacement from land, livestock grazing areas or fishing grounds, limited access to water and to fuel for cooking, the increase in food prices and the disruption of markets or inability to access them, all have an impact, affecting all four dimensions of food security: availability, access, utilization and stability.

These factors are further aggravated by the disruption or abandonment of formal and informal social protection mechanisms and the reduced or hindered access to health and social services and safety nets. Furthermore, crisis-induced economic contractions and displacement shrink employment and income opportunities, which result in increasing poverty and the inability of households to meet their food and health-care needs.
Different vulnerabilities and resilience capacities determine how and to what extent individuals, households, communities and institutions are able to cope with and adapt to the impacts of protracted crises and migration. When coping options are exhausted or disappear and food security worsens, people are more likely to employ more extreme and potentially damaging strategies that are less reversible and could put them at further risk. In displacement contexts, for instance, the absence of livelihood options increases the rate of early marriages and transactional sex.

Inflows of forced migration are also likely to have profound consequences on the distribution of socio-economic outcomes among the host population. A number of factors at individual level, including age, gender, education, occupation, access to resources, as well as the presence or absence of an enabling environment, determine the distribution of impacts – whether positive or negative – on local households.

INFO BOX 1. Forced migration and gender

Gender-differentiated impacts of conflict and disasters indicate that women and men experience displacement in different ways. Gender inequalities may obstruct the mobility of some and force the migration of others. Single men, for instance, may be refused entrance in third countries when travelling from conflict-affected countries. Women, on the other hand, may lack the resources to migrate or be restrained in their mobility by socially constructed norms.

During migration journeys, and upon arrival, women and men are also exposed to different risks. Gender-based violence (GBV) tends to be exacerbated where family and community protection structures have broken down, as is frequently the case in protracted crises and displacement contexts, often to the detriment of women and girls.

A 2015 global study, conducted by the International Federation of the Red Cross on GBV in natural disasters, found that there were specific patterns in the ways GBV manifested across different contexts. For example, sexual violence often peaked when people were displaced by disasters in comparison to situations where they could stay in their own homes. Of special concern are the long-term consequences that can emerge as a result of protracted displacement, including increasing poverty, malnutrition and illiteracy; all of which erode household resilience and disproportionately affect women and girls.

In host communities, female refugees and IDPs may face legal barriers preventing them from gaining employment and constraining entrepreneurship. The World Bank reports that the 15 largest refugee-hosting countries in 2014 had, in all, 170 women-only legal restrictions on seeking employment. Constrained in their livelihood options, women may in extreme cases resort to adverse coping strategies, such as transaction sex, to support themselves and their families.

Return to their country of origin may also entail new hardships for women and girls, many of whom are not given a real choice about the decision to leave. Once back in their country, female-headed families may face particular difficulties in securing livelihoods and accessing land, natural resources, agricultural assets and services.

Not only do women experience migration differently than men, but migration may have substantial effects on gender roles. Migration may entail changes in i) how families are structured and the role of individuals within the household; ii) the economic role of women and men; and iii) how men and women participate in societies, with regard to both the communities that host them during displacement and their own communities of origin upon return.

The changes in gender roles that often accompany displacement can open up options that may have been previously unavailable to women, and situations of displacement can provide an opportunity for re-negotiating gender roles. Empirical evidence suggests that displaced women tend to take on more and different roles as providers and protectors of families, to gain confidence and determination and improve their agency as contributors to household needs.
FAO’s multilayered approach to forced migration

In protracted crisis situations humanitarian and developmental needs often coexist for prolonged periods of time as these situations are particularly susceptible to repeated cycles of violence and displacement. Rather than being limited to one single impact, protracted crises tend to create multiple, compounding and simultaneous outcomes, the complexity of which must be fully understood when designing policy and programme responses.

By acknowledging these complexities a range of pathways can be identified through which support to livelihoods, food security and nutrition can be provided and also help build resilience to conflict and disasters. Support would also reach those who are forcibly displaced and those left behind, while helping to mitigate further forced displacement.

Addressing the root causes and mitigating some of the drivers of forced migration

Protracted crises impact food and nutrition security and the livelihood options of rural populations. Such impacts will influence people’s decisions of whether to migrate or not. Conversely, food insecurity and dispossession or loss of agricultural assets can trigger conflict. However, as pointed out by FAO et al. (2017), the causal relationship between these factors is never straightforward.

Some studies found that food insecurity, when coupled with poverty, increases the likelihood and intensity of armed conflicts, creating a potential downward spiral of further IDP and refugee outflows. Recent empirical evidence has suggested that in some cases ordinary people join armed groups in order to avoid destitution and hunger, and to secure protection from violence for themselves and their families.

Investments in food security and nutrition, including building more resilient livelihoods and risk-informed programmes, may help to prevent and mitigate conflict and the impact of disasters, and thereby reduce forced migration. Interventions that improve food security and provide for basic needs may weaken some – but not all – welfare-related motives that lead some individuals to become fighters or supporters of armed groups. To prevent this from happening, it is of key importance for food and nutrition security interventions to be sensitive to the different socio-economic and power dynamics that characterize conflict-affected and post-disaster contexts.

As state structures tend to be absent or ineffective in protracted crisis situations, new power structures and governance mechanisms can often emerge in their place. One important characteristic of such contexts is the emergence of many non-state actors and organizations that provide food and regulate access to markets and local services. These new structures of governance are likely to have a significant impact on the effectiveness of food and nutrition security interventions and therefore need to be carefully mapped out when designing programmes.
Natural resource governance and tenure systems may also be altered or affected by displacement. Changes in these structures may be detrimental to some communities and give rise to grievances. In these contexts, interventions that strengthen local participation in decision-making processes on natural resource management and food security are vital, and can provide technical entry points to engage different groups and foster the emergence of inclusive governance systems. Such interventions can increase peace dividends and widen the options providing alternatives to migration, when it is safe for people to remain.

At the same time, large movements of people, compounded with pre-existing fragilities, may intensify conflict stressors. The socio-economic changes brought about by migrant inflows could also have an impact on the social cohesion of host communities. Understanding how social constructs, such as mistrust or tensions, may change because of the advent of migrants and associated polices or interventions forms another important aspect integral to enhancing resilience to conflict in local communities.

KEY FACTS

The vast majority of chronically food-insecure and malnourished people in the world live in countries affected by conflict – an estimated 489 million of 815 million undernourished people and an estimated 122 million of 155 million stunted children.

South Sudan – Ganyiel. Women carry sacks of food distributed by WFP in Ganyiel, Unity region, South Sudan. ©FAO/Albert Gonzalez Farran.
INFO BOX 2. Support for preventive management of conflicts over access to natural resources in pastoral and agro-pastoral zones of Niger

In Niger, pastoral groups inhabit arid areas where soil, rainfall and temperature conditions constrain land use options. To reduce risks and maximize the productivity of variable and widely dispersed resources, these communities depend upon flexibility (through seasonal mobility, temporary rangeland exploitation and herd diversification) and social capital, including social and gender relations and divisions of labour (within and between pastoralists and other groups), to ensure access to resources.

In situations where environmental factors obstruct pastoral mobility and narrow down pastoral livelihood options and/or other migratory movements are putting pressure on resources, the incidence and intensity of clashes within and between pastoral communities and other land users may increase.

Conflicts may arise concerning access to and use of strategic resources between different pastoralist groups, or between pastoralists and other resource users (e.g. over water points, livestock corridors, forests, flood plains or resources in protected areas).

Supported by the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), FAO is working in close collaboration with UN peacebuilding actors and other agencies in seven towns to prevent natural resource-induced conflicts in Niger. Through a conflict-sensitive management approach, the project aims at building up local actors’ capacities to manage limited water resources in an inclusive and transparent manner, in order to contribute to peaceful cohabitation between population groups (i.e. farmers, herders, refugees, migrants and locals).

Thanks to Farmer and Agro Pastoral Field School (FFS/APFS) and FAO Dimitra listeners’ clubs, different groups are involved in participatory processes to develop inclusive and sustainable governance mechanisms of shared resources. Activities are also aimed at involving all relevant levels of government and traditional authorities, and civil society organizations in dispute resolution processes to ensure that disputes are resolved transparently and equitably when they emerge.

The combined approach of diversifying the mix of livelihood options available to communities through the FFS/APFS, and fostering the inclusive mechanisms for resource sharing through the Dimitra clubs, helps mitigate sources of tension and the exclusion of some groups or individuals who might have been forced to move.

At the same time, mobility remains a highly effective coping mechanism for pastoralist communities facing drought and conflict, and that is why the FAO FFS/APFS approach aimed at expanding traditional livelihood strategies is not meant to substitute mobility but, rather, to widen the options for pastoralist communities when mobility is impeded.

Fostering preparedness measures

When conflicts and/or disasters occur and large movements of people are likely to occur, it is important to set in place preparedness measures that can help manage these movements and ease – as much as possible – the ensuing stresses on livelihoods and food security affecting both the displaced as well as the host communities. In many situations, forced migration does not come about unexpectedly. Refugees and IDP flows are often foreseeable: this is because people strive to stay home and to manage risks for as long as they can and decide to embark on what is known to be a perilous journey only once all other means of coping have been exhausted.

The World Bank reports that, on average, outflows of forcibly displaced persons peak 4.1 years after the start of the conflict or disaster they are fleeing.

Preparedness measures allow populations to better respond to and cope with the consequences of crises. They are taken in advance of a forecasted crisis to enhance the capacity and knowledge of the stakeholders involved in order to anticipate, respond to and assist recovery from the (potential) impacts of the crisis. The identification, assessment and prioritization of disaster risks affecting agriculture and food security form an essential aspect of the analysis required to inform short- and long-term policies and programming, targeting both origin and destination countries. Timely food security and livelihood support is vital to avert the potentially irreversible effects of food insecurity and malnutrition, and support both those who stay behind as well as those who leave.
A number of tools and procedures have been developed by different stakeholders to guide risk-specific and cross-cutting preparedness measures for programme interventions targeting displaced populations and host communities. The UNHCR Preparedness Package for Refugee Emergencies (PPRE) sets standards for preparing specifically for a refugee emergency. The approach is informed by a refugee emergency risk analysis and combines general preparedness actions (that are not risk specific) with scenario-based contingency response planning.

The FAO Emergency Preparedness Plan (FERPP), on the other hand, is not linked to a single risk: it provides a sound overall picture of the general preparedness level of a FAO decentralized office, including, where relevant, the need to identify specific response options for forced migration. Contingency planning – when conducted on the basis of specific risks and scenarios related to conflict, disasters and displacement – supports a comprehensive approach to identifying the specific needs, preparedness and response options, and the resource requirements of displaced and host populations.

Depending on the context, preparedness for host and receiving countries and communities as well as humanitarian and development actors may also include: stockpiling of agricultural equipment and food supplies; establishing inter-agency and multi-sector coordination systems; identifying areas for migrant settlement that are not detrimental to the local agricultural landscape and resources; mapping public and informal governance and service systems; assessing the response capacity of national authorities and communities; assessing agriculture and food security markets and practices; building up the capacity of local actors; and engaging with donors.

Support to those directly affected can also be strengthened in advance by, for instance, designing and building flexible and scalable social protection programmes to respond to large-scale influxes; adapting beneficiary targeting mechanisms to include migrants; integrating migration-sensitive monitoring and evaluation into social protection programming; and adapting benefit transfer mechanisms to strengthen the resilience of migrants and their hosts.

Cross-sectoral coordination from the early stages is essential to ensure that livelihoods and food security issues are included in all preparedness phases and measures, both risk-specific as well as cross-cutting. Additional advocacy efforts may be required at times to emphasize the importance of livelihoods and food security interventions from the onset of an emergency and to build consensus around it.

Kenya – Garissa. A farmer herding cattle to the local livestock market. ©FAO/Thomas Hug.
INFO BOX 3. FAO’s Early Warning - Early Action System (EWEA)

FAO’s Early Warning – Early Action (EWEA) System functions as an important instrument that can be used by governments, communities and international actors to anticipate and prepare for conflict and disasters, and to mitigate the adverse impact on affected populations. The EWEA system warnings that forecast climate hazards are particularly helpful in the context of protracted crises where pre-existing fragilities may require strengthened efforts and resources for preparedness. Conflict early-warning systems can also be useful in planning and mobilizing resources for livelihoods and food security interventions as well as devising risk-informed social protection mechanisms. Currently, however, there are not many of these systems and more effort will need to go into expanding them, especially at sub-national level. At community level, enabling households to anticipate conflict or disasters may also facilitate their own planning and preparation through, for example, savings, livelihood adjustments, or managed migration options.

FAO’s EWEA System translates warnings into anticipatory actions to reduce the impact of specific disaster events. It focuses on consolidating available forecasting information and putting plans in place to make sure FAO acts when a warning is at hand.

At the global level, FAO’s EWEA team use both FAO and external early warning sources to monitor main risks to agriculture and food security, publishing the findings in its quarterly Global EWEA report. This forward-looking report complements early warning analysis with practical early action recommendations that could be taken to mitigate or prevent the impact. Risks are divided into high and on watch, depending on the level of likelihood and potential impact. At country level, the EWEA team works closely with country offices to develop EWEA systems tailored to the local context. These systems enable FAO to monitor major risks and to act early to mitigate its effects on the agriculture sector and livelihoods through an operational tool, the EWEA plan, tailored to each country’s needs.

The identification, assessment and prioritization of disaster risks affecting agriculture and food security form an essential aspect of the response required to inform short- and long-term policies and programming, to assist both origin and destination countries. Prioritizing disaster risks contributes to threat-specific emergency preparedness (contingency planning, internal operational preparedness planning, early warning analysis, disaster risk monitoring and resourcing). This in turn will allow countries of origin and destination to identify in a timely, effective and efficient fashion the interventions which can mitigate the impacts of potential crises before they occur, and the necessary capacities, knowledge and resources to manage large movements of people.

Responding to the most pressing needs and building resilience of both those displaced and those who remain behind

Individuals, households and communities face serious constraints in coping with conflicts, natural disasters and displacement, and maintaining adequate nutrition and food security levels in such contexts. Exposure to armed conflicts has both immediate effects on nutrition and food security, particularly of children, as well as and long-term, intergenerational legacies.

Maintaining food production and rebuilding the agricultural sector are fundamental conditions for reducing the long-lasting consequences borne by people living in and moving from fragile contexts and laying the ground for stabilization and recovery. Interventions should not be limited to the provision of life-saving assistance, but also aimed at reducing the need to resort to risky coping strategies that could increase people’s vulnerabilities, deplete their assets and resources and consequently fuel tensions between host and displaced populations.

A sustainable impact on conflict and migration dynamics becomes more likely when food-security and nutrition and livelihood initiatives are implemented as part of a broader set of multisectoral humanitarian and developmental interventions. Country ownership and the involvement of local communities, although often challenging in crisis situations, would also be integral to ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of interventions.
Activities may include direct life-saving food security and livelihood support, facilitating access to natural resources (such as land and water) and markets for displaced persons, hosts and those trapped in crises, as well as reconstruction, rehabilitation or strengthening of food and agriculture infrastructures, services and markets. The modalities of these interventions vary depending on the context, and include assets and inputs provision; cash and voucher programmes, such as cash-for-work, voucher schemes, and unconditional cash transfers; and capacity building and skills development.

Support should be provided to all affected populations, including migrants, host communities and those left behind, since most people do not leave when facing situations of forced migration. The World Bank reported that, at the end of 2015, more the 90 percent of the population was still in place in 80 percent of countries of origin. Although international attention is focused on those who flee, those who stay behind, in a highly volatile and violent environment, also face formidable challenges. They may eventually lose the ability to withstand even minor shocks and be forced to leave in order to survive because their resilience has been dramatically eroded.

Protracted crises are rarely, if ever, linear and sequential processes. Rather, they escalate and de-escalate in intensity and are often cyclical in nature, characterized by periods and geographic pockets of relative peace and stability. Opportunities to support livelihoods and food security, through a mix of humanitarian and development interventions, are to be seized whenever possible as they serve the threefold purpose of providing relief, building resilience to conflict and widening migration options. They can thus offer local populations alternatives to displacement, given that security is provided.

The development of adequate approaches and instruments that can help seize these opportunities could reinforce the resilience of those who stay behind, and contribute significantly to reducing forced migration. The effects of support to livelihoods during conflicts must, however, be balanced against the long-term risks and effects of violence on the affected populations. Those who are helped to stay could still eventually become victims of violence. Most importantly, food security and livelihoods intervention should be carefully crafted in a conflict-sensitive manner and coordinated so as not to be seen as a substitute to providing asylum to those who flee.

**KEY FACTS**

A survey conducted by FAO to assess the state of the agricultural sector in the Syrian Arab Republic, after six years of conflict, found that 94 percent of the local community interviewed said that had they received agricultural support fewer people would have fled and more would have felt encouraged to return.
INFO BOX 4. Livelihood and food security support to those who remain behind in Syria

Since March 2011, violence in Syria has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and injured countless civilians. Over half of the population has been forced to flee their homes. Those who have remained face great challenges, with around 8.7 million people facing severe food insecurity.

Over six years of conflict have had a devastating impact on Syria’s agriculture sector. The overall financial cost of damage and loss in the agriculture sector over the 2011–2016 period is estimated to be at least USD 16 billion, equivalent to just under one-third of Syria’s GDP in 2016. The violence has weakened essential services, depleted agricultural assets and significantly reduced national production capacity. Many farmers cannot access or afford once-subsidized inputs that have soared in price and degraded in quality. The conflict has also severely affected vegetable production and the poultry sector, negatively impacting nutrition. Livestock production is also in jeopardy as vulnerable herders cannot source or afford enough animal feed and lack veterinary services, increasing the threat of transboundary animal diseases.

Despite the huge impact of the crisis on agriculture, the two main sources of income in rural areas remain the sale of agricultural production and livestock. Over 75 percent of rural households still grow food for their own consumption and more than a third of rural households rely on their own production for over a quarter of their food requirements. FAO is working with partners to increase food security and build up the resilience of households, communities and institutions in Syria. Support to small-scale, household-level production is increasingly important, given the fragmentation affecting the country’s agriculture sector. In addition to saving livelihoods, agricultural interventions increase local food availability, access and variety.

FAO is operating in 13 of Syria’s 14 governorates, including in hard-to-reach areas in the north, thanks to the “Whole of Syria” approach, and is focusing its support on:

i) strengthening staple food production through seed distributions and training;
ii) increasing household nutrition and income through support to backyard food production (micro-gardening kits for displaced families and poultry production packages) and conditional cash assistance;
iii) increasing and protecting livestock assets through vaccination and treatment campaigns, distribution of animal feed and small livestock, and building capacity for improved veterinary services; and
iv) coordinating an effective food security response.

FAO’s interventions are not only intended to provide short-term relief, but are also aimed at paving the ground for recovery once the conflict will be over. Rehabilitation of agriculture extension services and the promotion of functioning structures, such as seed multiplication at local level, are examples of support to agricultural and food production that will facilitate a resumption of larger-scale production and encourage economic growth. Ramping up investment in the agriculture sector would also greatly reduce the need for humanitarian aid, which is currently costing the international community approximately USD 5 billion a year.

Managing changes with host communities

The availability and effectiveness of livelihood strategies adopted by individuals and households during displacement are determined not only by their own choices, but also by the formal and informal institutions and policies of their host countries, and how they shape migrants’ access to markets and opportunities. However, hosting large numbers of forcibly displaced persons creates new opportunities and challenges that affect host communities’ social, cultural and economic life, both positively and negatively.

Many communities in low- and middle-income countries accommodate disproportionately large influxes of displaced people over extended periods of time and this may have a negative impact on local markets, infrastructure and services. Local impacts on food and agriculture markets of receiving communities are often unevenly distributed: some people gain and others lose out, particularly on jobs and prices. The long-lasting presence of refugees and IDPs and their economies, on the other hand, create opportunities for local economies by bringing skills, capital and connectivity to broader markets that potentially fill unmet needs of the host communities.
As the majority of refugees and IDPs are residing in developing countries, and often in the less developed areas of these countries, the potential for the forcibly displaced to contribute to the development of food systems and agricultural markets takes on added value.

From the start, until durable solutions to displacement are found, support may be needed to strengthen host communities’ services, infrastructures and rural institutions to compensate for the strain on local resources. At the same time, this support will need to ensure that access and quality of services benefit both host communities and migrants. In some contexts, targeted food price stabilization policies and/or financial incentives for agriculture inputs might be needed to balance price shocks and market disruptions and/or externalities that could be detrimental to the most vulnerable categories of both host and migrant communities.
Rural and urban landscapes may also be affected, and environmental concerns may arise when the influx of displaced people is large and poorly managed. In situations where natural resources are scarce, the presence of large numbers of displaced people could increase resentment between host and displaced populations and, in some cases, lead to tensions. In these contexts inclusive livelihood support interventions, targeting both displaced and host communities, can serve the twofold objective of enhancing economic opportunities and increasing social cohesion.

Regardless of the reality, perceptions still persist of forcibly displaced persons as competing with the poorest hosts and pushing them deeper into poverty and, in some contexts, into food and nutrition insecurity. Livelihood and food security interventions should therefore be inclusive and sensitive to the local dynamics and, where necessary, must be accompanied by information campaigns to avoid giving rise to feelings of dispossession or discrimination.

The impact of return on receiving communities is in many aspects similar to the impact of forced displacement on host communities, and support may be needed to ensure that the return is not detrimental to either returnees or receiving communities. The political, socio-economic and legal frameworks might have been changed before their return and returnees may face challenges in re-entering their previous employment. In some cases competition with receiving communities may arise over assets and livelihoods options. It is therefore vital for livelihood and food security support to be associated with the promotion of inclusive processes that addresses critical issues, such as land tenure and determination of resettlement areas.

### INFO BOX 5. The FAO Welcoming Capacity Approach (WCA)

For migrants, particularly those originating from rural areas, the ability to reclaim their land or to obtain access to land elsewhere is critical. Land belonging to migrants may have been appropriated by others during displacement, especially in protracted crisis situations or where land is scarce.

Restitution may raise complex issues, including the risk of compromising livelihoods and food security for those who had settled on abandoned land and risk being ejected. Land disputes can become major obstacles to a successful return and a key impetus for rural returnees to move to urban areas in search of opportunities. Unless institutions and mechanisms are in place to deal with these issues effectively, they may lead to tensions and escalate into conflict.

To address land-related issues in post-displacement contexts FAO has developed the Welcoming Capacity Approach (WCA) which focuses on improving trust, strengthening social cohesion and social inclusion in decision-making processes. The approach addresses critical issues of the determination of resettlement areas, reintegration and rehabilitation processes, and the inclusiveness of these processes.

The main objective of the approach is to promote inclusive and participatory processes, involving national and local stakeholders, receiving communities and returnees to negotiate the resettlement modalities in post-conflict situations. The WCA approach provides a practical introduction to systemic processes which offer room for inclusion and recognition of receiving communities’ as equally important actors and their engagement in all decisions and implementation.

The WCA approach is founded on a thorough understanding of the issues that affect social relationships between returnees and receiving communities, as well as the role the latter may have in sustaining peace efforts and fostering peaceful reintegration. The approach is also meant to raise awareness on natural resource management challenges and to identify – with a view to prevention – nascent differences or ‘low-key conflicts’ from spilling over into violent, widespread confrontations.

The WCA is a valuable tool in not only protecting mutual land rights and fostering social cohesion, but also in empowering both returnees and receiving communities and preparing them for the development process ahead. The WCA approach can assess the needs of all stakeholders and develop a prioritized set of reconstruction and development initiatives.
INFO BOX 6. The Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) approach and forest restoration in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is host to the second-largest refugee population in Africa. It hosts over 830,000 refugees, from 19 countries, with the majority originating from neighbouring South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea and Sudan. The humanitarian needs of displaced and host populations are aggravated by recurrent droughts, with their devastating impacts on local livelihoods and increased pressure on natural resources.

The forests and woodlands in areas immediately surrounding refugee camps have been under increasing strain, resulting in forest degradation and deforestation. In areas with high population pressure, such as communities hosting large number of displaced persons, the extraction of wood for fuel purposes may accelerate deforestation and forest degradation, which in turn increases the risk of drought, soil erosion and landslides. Conversely, both slow- and sudden-onset natural hazards impact the availability of woodfuel resources. As this availability declines, e.g. as a consequence of drought and overharvesting, competition between displaced and host communities may arise.

Access to fuel and energy, and management of forest resources, therefore need to be carefully considered when addressing issues of forced migration, as these would have an impact not only on the local landscape but also on social dynamics between the displaced and their hosts.

In 2015, FAO and UNHCR, as part of the Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) initiative, collaborated on an assessment of woodfuel demand and supply in and around two refugee camps in Ethiopia, Kule and Shimelba.

The assessment included the following components:

- energy demand assessment focusing on the fuel types, cooking technologies, energy needs and associated challenges inside the camps;
- woodfuel supply assessment, using both onsite surveys and satellite imagery analysis of the distribution of woodfuel resources, and estimations of stocks and stock changes; and
- integration of the supply and demand to identify deficits and appropriate interventions to address fuel supply and demand management.

Based on the results of the assessment, FAO has produced i) a technical handbook for assessing woodfuel demand and supply in displacement settings; ii) a complementary toolbox to support field-based actors in the analysis of data for planning interventions; and iii) a series of remote sensing analysis tools to assess woody biomass change using high-resolution satellite imagery.

In collaboration with the UNHCR and the Government of Ethiopia, FAO is also implementing a project which seeks to provide appropriate options for a sustainable management of the energy needs of crisis-affected households in and around four Ethiopian refugee camps.

From resilience to self-reliance: towards durable solutions

Most displacement crises persist for many years. More than 80 percent of refugee crises last for ten years or more; two in five last 20 years or more. The persistence of crises in countries with internal displacement is also significant. Countries experiencing conflict-related displacement have reported figures for IDPs over periods of 23 years on average.

Characteristics of protracted displacement situations vary – the displaced may be in camps or largely dispersed in cities, towns and rural areas. Protracted displacement is not static; people can repeatedly experience short-term displacements as well as become victims of secondary displacement, particularly when faced with violence and evictions in areas where they found refuge. Nonetheless, all refugees and IDPs living in protracted displacement share the absence, in a short-time horizon, of an endpoint to their journey and of the possibility to rebuild their lives in dignity away from the homes they have left.
Some degrees of progress towards durable solutions are possible even when people are still in displacement. In situations where achievable durable solutions cannot be found, steps can still be taken to gradually improve the living conditions and resilience of the forcibly displaced, helping them to regain at least some degree of self-sufficiency and equipping them with the means to withstand further shocks and seize opportunities as they arise.

People in protracted displacement struggle to improve their economic situations as a consequence of the specific vulnerabilities they have acquired through their displacement experience as well as their future uncertain prospects. Their livelihood strategies are thus affected by this situation, possibly resulting in sub-optimal choices for the households’ food and nutrition security. Displacement may hinder young people’s access to education and skills development, further jeopardizing their ability to access livelihoods and work opportunities.

Stimulation of the local economy, particularly in situations of protracted displacement, helps integrate displaced populations not only into the economy, but also into the social fabric. Innovative agricultural practices can increase local production when sources are limited, such as in urban or peri-urban areas, or camp settings. Building on refugees and IDPs’ skills, and in particular their portable skills, enhances their positive contribution to their host communities’ local economies, while also turning out to be a valuable asset for their country or areas of origin when displacement will be over. Beyond its economic and nutritional value, this also has important social and psychological impacts.

The possession of transferable skills and the opportunity to access productive activities and decent work can create a sense of hope. This can provide the displaced with a longer-term perspective, breaking the walls of the ‘limbo’ situation they are confined in. Strengthening life skills and agriculture skills can help re-inject hope (‘purpose in life’) and affect the overall level of autonomy of displaced populations. This has the intrinsic consequence of increasing self-respect and self-esteem as well as the instrumental value of enabling households to take up new challenges when opportunities arise.

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_Nigeria – Damaturu. IDP women in a field of cowpea and millet grown with seeds provided by FAO._
©FAO/Sonia Nguyen.
INFO BOX 7. Fostering innovative agricultural practices in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

Food production in the Gaza Strip is particularly constrained by an arid environment and limited access to reliable sources of water. This threatens the food security and nutrition of local communities, which is further undermined by a wider context of protracted crisis and displacement, and continued restricted access to critical livelihood resources for fishing and farming. The high costs of livelihood inputs – such as fertilizer and animal feed – reduce farmers’ profits and inflate market prices. These conditions lock communities in a situation of poverty, leaving one in five Palestinians food insecure.

Women are particularly disadvantaged: in the current context of increasing unemployment, poverty, psychological trauma and destruction of property, crops and land, women are faced with the challenge of financially supporting the household and finding alternative income-generating opportunities in order to cope with household economic insecurity.

Since 2010, FAO has been helping to enhance the resilience of at-risk populations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip through projects that focus on protecting and strengthening their food security and livelihoods. One of the methods used by FAO is aquaponics: integrated fish and plant production. Aquaponics combines soilless vegetable growing (hydroponics) and fish farming (aquaculture) within a closed recirculating system that uses nutrient-rich wastewater from the fish tanks as an organic fertilizer for plant production. This removes both the need for chemical fertilizers as well as the disposal of fish wastewater; this technique reduces reliance on water for both aquaculture and farming.

To increase the use of aquaponics techniques, FAO’s initial methodological approach consists of an assessment of locations and communities that would benefit the most from aquaponic systems. Once the communities have been identified, FAO provides education and training programmes to develop farmers’ technical capacity and set up demonstration units. Through these units the aquaponics system is introduced, using simple and locally available materials including plastic containers, gravel, pumps and plumbing, and tested before establishing and running the systems. Aquaponics can only be established where there is consistent electricity and access to plant seed and fish seed.

Aquaponic systems have proved effective in diversifying livelihood options, and have been found to be particularly beneficial for women as these techniques allowed them to work from home and thus continue to perform their habitual caregiving tasks.

KEY FACTS

Some 600 million young people live in fragile or conflict-affected areas across the globe, and over half of refugee populations are under the age of 18. As situations of crises and displacement become protracted, children and youth face heightened challenges.
Challenges and areas for further investigation

The sheer number of conflicts, and of displaced populations caused by conflict, are two worrying signs that traditional prevention mechanisms have proved ineffective in their efforts to address the root causes of forced migration. Events in origin and host countries are intrinsically linked. Any partial response addressing only some of the problems would remain suboptimal. Hence more efforts are needed to provide for a complementary set of context-specific engagements within a comprehensive and cross-sectoral global agenda. Interventions aimed at sustaining peace should be carried out in conjunction with those addressing the challenges of forced migration. Furthermore, additional efforts should be devoted to the development of conflict early warning systems to foster preventive and preparatory response measures.

Another major remaining challenge is the protracted nature of most displacement crises, which disproportionately affect developing countries. The arrival of large numbers of people in specific areas creates both risks and opportunities. Development and humanitarian actors should help host communities manage these new circumstances so that they can continue to reduce poverty, while providing an accommodating environment for migrants. Host countries and development actors should also remain engaged over the medium term to help overcome lasting vulnerabilities. Forced displacement may leave legacies that may take years, even decades, to overcome. This would be particularly crucial for IDPs who often remain practically unseen and do not benefit from national and international frameworks.

Furthermore, there is scope for the international community to broaden its range of financing approaches to engagement in forced migration. For example, there are still relatively few financial instruments that allow for the implementation of the New Way of Working (NWOW) being discussed within the UN system, aimed at transcending humanitarian-development divides, working towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It would be particularly important to foster financial mechanisms that ensure that development-oriented support can effectively complement diplomatic, political, security and humanitarian interventions to support displaced and host communities.

Data gathering presents a major challenge to going forward with the approaches described above. There is no systematic collection and analysis covering the issues of forced migration, in all of its aspects. Forced migration conceals a multiplicity of different situations, in which the different categories of migrants blur and change over time. Notably, there is a paucity of reliable and comparable data on i) forced internal migration; ii) motivations and drivers of forced migration; iii) main patterns of forced migration; and iv) disaster-induced migration.

Assessments tend to focus on humanitarian needs, without analysing the evolving legal, socio-economic and institutional contexts and their implications for both migrants and their hosts. Existing household surveys do
not often include questions on the role perceptions play in shaping migrants’ and host communities’ decisions and livelihoods strategies. The impact of reintegration of returnees and the engagement of diaspora groups are also inadequately investigated.

Action is still lacking with regard to food and nutrition security interventions that are sensitive to the different social dynamics characterizing conflict-affected contexts, as well as to determining the degree to which specific interventions work or not in such contexts. There is great potential for food and nutrition interventions to have considerable positive effects on migrants and receiving communities, as well as on peace outcomes in post-conflict contexts that still need to be fully understood.

Sudan – El Geniena. A trainer, right, showing displaced women how to make fuel efficient stoves out of mud. ©FAO/Jose Cendon.
The way forward

Humanitarian, development and peace actors all have a role to play in addressing the global forced migration challenge, and critical future steps should include the following:

• Promote conflict-sensitive programming when addressing issues of forced migration.
• Adapt and extend existing methodologies to develop conflict early warning systems, particularly at sub-national level.
• Support the design and establishment of formal or informal shock-responsive social protection systems that also address the most vulnerable among the forcibly displaced.
• Multiply efforts towards achieving an increased economic and social inclusion of refugees and IDPs, particularly in protracted displacement situations.
• Promote innovative livelihoods strategies that can maximize economic and social opportunities for migrants and their hosts in close collaboration with the private sector.
• Advocate for the social and economic inclusion of migrants and their positive contribution to development.
• Advocate for the need for more comprehensive and development-oriented support to countries facing issues of forced migration and for the need to align financial mechanisms accordingly.
• Advocate for the adoption of policies that combine the economic and social integration of refugees and IDPs with the broader goal of fostering the economic growth of inclusive and peaceful communities.
• Advocate for a global framework that addresses ‘survival migration’, as traditional mechanisms for managing economic migrations are proving to be increasingly ineffective and refugee law does not apply.
• Advocate for a comprehensive framework or set of national policy instruments to address climate-induced displacement.
• Foster policy coherence among key policy sectors, including migration, agriculture and rural development (ARD), employment, social protection, environment, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation.
• Advocate with national stakeholders, especially agriculture and rural development ministries, for them to mainstream migration issues in their sectoral policies, strategies and programmes related to rural poverty, agriculture, rural transformation and employment.
• Define a data and research agenda to address key evidence gaps, including: (i) data on the main forced migration patterns and drivers, including indicators and survey tools; (ii) analysis of the contribution of migration to agriculture and the resilience of rural households; and (iii) impact analysis of key interventions.
According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) definition forced migration is migratory movement in which an element of coercion exists, including threats to life and livelihood, whether arising from natural or man-made causes (e.g. movements of refugees and internally displaced persons as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects). For the purpose of this guidance note the terms forced migration and forced displacement will be used interchangeably.
References and resources for further information


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For more information, visit FAO portal on resilience

www.fao.org/resilience

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