

Workshop on IDP Self-reliance

“Strengthening Protection Capacity Project”

Venue: UNHCR, Tbilisi
May 14, 2009

Time: 10:00-13:30 hrs

Consolidated Recommendations on IDP livelihoods Assessment in Georgia

1. IDP concept is used in the assessment as gender-neutral and the study in general does not include a gender analysis of the IDP situation in Georgia, It is important to include age and sex indicators (GenCap gender advisor FAO/UNIFEM).The author considered the comment as fully acceptable and explained that in the assessment only two aspects are covered in this regard: health issues and domestic violence. In comments from UNIFEM that were provided earlier for the Draft Action Plan on IDP State Strategy this gender component is well reflected. It represents a priority issue and Action Plan covers it. Gender analysis and gender mainstreaming of strategic documents, like Recommendations on IDP Livelihoods Assessment in Georgia, is crucial, in order to address the different needs and capacities of men and women and to include their different experiences. UNSC resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security, calls for women’s participation on all levels of decision making in post-conflict peace-building and recovery. It is also against this background important to include a gender mainstreaming approach in recommendations. This way the application of international agreements and standards are promoted. Finally, in order to target the special needs of the IDP population we need tools (age and sex disaggregated data, capacity building, etc) to identify these needs. The bottom line is to develop data on all the population, including those specific for women and men.
2. SDC provided written comments before the workshop as well as present some general comments at the meeting. The General recommendations were provided with regards to the need of outsourcing training or employment training opportunities and not employment itself. Employment is always external and outsourced unless the trainer hires the trainee after the training. The comments provided in writing touches upon the following issues:
 - a. According to SDC, training and/or retraining has always been outsourced. Thus, some concrete suggestions could be provided with regards to improving and refining the outsourcing opportunities. For example, outsourcing to those agencies that proved themselves in helping IDPs find jobs.
 - b. Making sure that vocational training and retraining services are certificated and acknowledged.
 - c. Efforts to link the IDPs’ vocational trainings with their actual employment by having different prospective employers and labour market specialists on board. This is what IDPs need because only attending trainings with no prospects of getting employed is disappointing and frustrating for them. That eventually results in a growing number of persons who refuse to get trained if no employment is guaranteed.
 - d. The recommendation on “creating state guarantees for small credits when IDPs initiate SMEs” needs to be further clarified. IDPs, as usual, obtain loans from MFIs and commercial banks. How can the state intervene here and provide the guarantees if the loan taken by an IDP is not from a governmental body?
 - e. The recommendation on “supporting legal labour migration; hiring vulnerable people to work on the construction of dwelling, irrigation systems or other types of economic

infrastructure that will benefit them” needs to be interpreted in terms of implementation tools and methodology: how can the vulnerable persons be motivated to apply? Should there be vacancies announced and only vulnerable people selected? Will an employer have to visit all the applicants to double-check their vulnerability?

3. International Relief and Development came up with two ideas during the session; the first was a need to decide if the implementation of the Action Plan was to be done targeting specific points of need, such as number of grants to conduct vocational training through various organizations, or holistically which might mean vocational training as a part of the market demand driven program that considers more than vocational education. The second point was mainstreaming projects rather than creating interventions that address IDPs. Integration of IDPs can be facilitated by designing programs that will work for non-IDPs and applying many of the main aspects to assisting IDPs.

Correspondingly two interventions can be examined;

- The use of state assets as collateral for IDP economic development loans that have an expected positive rate of return based on their business plans and supervision by an implementing (NGO) partner. This has been designed elsewhere, such as in the Northern Caucasus.
 - The use of IDP homes and land as loan collateral. This last can be risky, but has been tested elsewhere by the World Bank and found doable and low risk under the same circumstances of having well prepared business plans and supervision of implementation by an implementing (NGO) partner.
4. State guarantees some credits for IDPs, though the issue is how they can get credits in favorable conditions. The banks generally ask for collateral that should be somehow replaced. Though some bank grant credits without collateral.
 5. The UNHCR Gori Office offered to take into consideration the existing demand on the market as well.
 6. Education, namely higher education, was identified as one of the main problems. Lack of special programs for IDPs, often result in IDP children in poor families preferring to work rather than to learn. They should be provided with some opportunities, all the more they can benefit from the existing vocational trainings. MRA explained that education up to higher is free of charge in Georgia and fully accessible for IDPs. Interventions regarding vocational trainings are under development. Priority is given to creating decent living conditions for IDP children so as they have possibility to study.

It was also pointed out that education is quite a complex issue and in some cases IDP children are even in better conditions than children from rural areas.

7. UNICEF suggested that livelihoods should be directly linked with the social-economic development and self-reliance. When it comes to tailor-made projects one final report should be elaborated as the issue is critical to success. As return is currently not available, there is a need for socio-economic development. UNICEF had two remarks as well: 1. The author's name should be included in the assessment, 2. Pre-school education should also be reflected, though the system is non-existing.
8. WFP flagged the issue concerning the linkage of livelihood to agriculture. Around 50% of IDPs are engaged in agriculture and the attention should be paid to what the rest of IDPs is doing, what is the proportion of people who were given the access to the land. If government considers the access to the land as the basic income source for IDPs that should be properly justified. IDPs should be given access to the land as well as provided with support to cultivate the land.
9. The lack of statistics of how many IDPs have access to land was highlighted. The livelihoods opportunity of the IDPs settled on badlands is low and other interventions should be developed to support them with the income generation, for example moving them closer to rural areas.
10. The livelihood support was provided directly during the emergency phase, currently the country is moving to the recovery phase. While direct and cash assistance are being phased out the

need for support systems still remains as IDPs are not able to sustain themselves. Support to the new settlements should be prioritized as there is a risk for migration. There is a further risk that IDP returnees are forced to give up on agriculture activities and resort to alternatives including migration for urban based work should insufficient support be provided to restarting their livelihoods. FAO encourages safeguarding agriculture based activities given their overall importance vis-à-vis the economic development of Georgia. FAO would not recommend promoting support to agriculture based livelihoods with urbanization as a solution. Agriculture activities requires a wide range of skills that go beyond farming including food processing, marketing, etc.

11. Population in returnee area should also be considered as they are even more vulnerable. Lack of proper attention can foster some negative developments as returnee may move back from the former buffer zones and adding vagueness to who they are: IDPs or returnees. According to MRA if they leave returnee areas they will be considered as IDPs though it will be more economic migration than that of security reasons. While there is a term that UNHCR generally uses in such cases – returned displaced people - their legal status should be identified.
12. Sometimes the problem arises with the IDPs who already participated in vocational training and refuse to participate in another. In order to recall IDPs interest in vocational training it should be useful in terms of income-generation. Lack of opportunity to be employed contributes to decrease of IDPs' interest, as most of them considers the issue in a pragmatic way and do not want to waste time.
13. It is also important to fill the local communities with life that mainly rests on the community centres built in new settlements.
14. In Georgia there are no employment agencies, so it is also a problem. Probably UNDP will participate in development of national policy with this regards.
15. Specific approaches should also be developed when referring to new and old IDPs. New IDPs should be further encouraged, and provided with trainings and job opportunities.
16. In order to promote integration of IDPs the corresponding projects should be result-oriented. Though it is risky, but they should be provided with private sector loans under close supervision.
17. Mere access to land is not the unique way to safeguard IDP income-generating from agriculture. Support with the respective facilities and equipments to successfully cultivate land and process crops, as well as assisting in marketing their production, providing relevant trainings should be envisaged in order to ensure IDP self-reliance.
18. IDP participation and ownership in planning and decision making process is crucial as it directly contribute to their livelihoods.
19. LNGO Fund "Sukhumi" underlined that IDPs generally lack access to the credits either due to the high level of interest (as for instance credits provided by the micro credit companies or banks) or the limited capacity of such state programs (state credits in favourable conditions). The NGO representative mainly focused on the following recommendations: increase the capacity of the NGOs working on IDP with self-reliance and income generation opportunities; support such NGOs in providing targeted funding for the IG projects ensured that the level of risk will be kept low and thoroughly controlled by the NGO; ensure involvement of the local population covered under the TSA program.
20. LNGO "Amagdari" outlined the following issues to be considered while assessing the IDP Livelihoods in Georgia:
 - a. A special coordination agency should be organized in order to communicate with the private companies and ensure IDP employment on regular basis. The vacancies provided by the private companies will contribute to career-guidance and job placement of unemployed IDPs.
 - b. Due attention should be paid to the IDP population in rural areas moreover in terms of gender equality. Efforts should be applied to ensure opportunities for women in rural areas through access to land, credits and grants.

- c. There is a lack of comprehensive and effective policy by the Government to support vulnerable IDPs with appropriate social services moreover when IDP population face harsh social and economic challenges.
 - d. Georgian and international experts, NGOs representatives with the support of the donor organizations should exercise monitoring in order to assess the needs of the IDPs, the problems they face and the existing system of protection and social security. Based on the monitoring findings draft legislation on effective and realistic social security should be developed and presented to the respective state agencies
 - e. GoG should create a united coordination system to find solution to IDP socio-economic problems, to rise IDP community awareness and ensure their empowerment. In the other words, MRA should establish and lead the permanent coordination council consisting of NGO representatives from the different regions of Georgia as well as from Tbilisi, local and international donor organizations, experts in the field and officials from respective agencies.
21. UNHCR protection unit provided written recommendation anticipated to be reflected in the final version of the document along with the recommendations developed by the participants at the livelihoods workshop:
- a. Assessment of the legislation to reflect recommendation on the legislative amendments and / or changes of administrative practices which might be needed and therefore should be proposed in order to prevent any discrimination of IDPs (e.g. equal treatment when it comes to acquisition of arable land and participation in related privatization auctions, to ease access of IDPs to work opportunities, including in the public services, and assist in replacing diploma and other documents related to vocational skills.
 - b. Possibility of any linkage of vocational and retraining initiatives with the vocational training system in Georgia as it is presently developing in light of the reform process. In this context more specifically the following questions should be addressed: Could a voucher system for participation in vocational training be developed, who could be partners of such project, can it be paired with a scholarship project; how best can a systematic overview of existing vocational training opportunities be shared with the IDP community and how can they be assisted finding opportunities suitable for them; Is there room for more decentralized course or could possibilities for participation in distant learning programs be strengthened (e.g. through computer rooms in community centers)
 - c. Which segment of craftsmanship and services are under represented in Georgia and have a particular potential of providing long term income opportunities.
 - d. Existing mechanism for small business support and space to be used or expanded to service IDP.
 - e. Micro-credit schemes already existing in Georgia; can they be used by IDPs and under which conditions they could be opened to them.
 - f. Good existing practices of income generation projects, not least with view to identify the most promising size and format of such projects, (i.e. individual, family or group based projects, use of farmer societies, and grant vs credit based projects).