Community Stabilization

Aperçu

As crises have become increasingly recurrent, protracted and multidimensional, there has been growing recognition that, while humanitarian assistance and protection remains critical, it is on its own insufficient to sustainably reduce needs, risks and vulnerabilities. Development and humanitarian crises are inter-related, with development deficits underpinning or exacerbating the humanitarian impacts of crises, and humanitarian crises in turn disrupting – in some cases, reversing – progress toward the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In view of these issues, in fragile, transitional and/or crisis-affected contexts, Community Stabilization (CS) programming can help to address the drivers of instability in order to prevent or mitigate conflict and displacement. Unlike development programming, CS programming does not tend to address the root causes of crisis, but rather to mitigate the immediate drivers of crisis or conflict, in order to stabilize communities. As stabilization is often a precondition to development programming to address the root causes of crisis, CS can be seen as a "bridge" between humanitarian and development interventions. Consequently, in IOM, CS programmes are sometimes referred to as addressing 'the missing middle'.

CS is an objective or outcome, as well as a process, which employs specific methodologies. While the tools used in CS programming may be familiar (e.g. livelihoods, health, WASH, education or community infrastructure interventions), it is *why* these tools were selected and *how* these tools are used which determines whether a programme constitutes CS. For example, while humanitarian assistance is needs-based (e.g. IOM may rehabilitate a primary health center (PHC) because communities do not have access to essential health services), stabilization programmes prioritize activities which address the drivers of crisis or conflict (e.g. IOM may rehabilitate a PHC because the strain on health services is creating tension and undermining confidence in the local government in a particular community).

Principles and methodologies applied in IOM's CS programming aim to maximize its impact in addressing drivers of crisis and conflict. In particular, CS programming places a strong emphasis on community ownership and participation and government leadership and visibility – often, in CS programming, IOM works in the background to support the local government partners to respond to local needs and concerns, and tries to avoid the perception that an international organization is delivering assistance or services which the government should ultimately provide. CS programming is also context-driven and because contexts are not static, it needs to be flexible and adaptable to respond to emerging risks and capitalize on new windows of opportunity.

IOM Community Stabilization programmes operate at the local level to build stability from the ground up and take advantage of IOM's presence and relationships in the field. The broad array of stakeholders targeted include those with capacities to have a transformative impact on unstable contexts. In displacement-prone and displacement-affected areas, CS programming can play an important role in preventing displacement, as well as act as a stepping-stone toward the resolution of displacement.

Community-Based Planning

At the center of IOM's approach to CS is community-based planning (CBP). **CBP, *as a process*, contributes to restoring the social fabric needed to establish inclusive, resilient and cohesive societies**, as it creates space to enable structured dialogue and address grievances and, in doing so, helps to promote peaceful co-

existence. As a senior government official in Southern Somalia remarked: "Through CBP, we build the social infrastructure and then use the social infrastructure to build the physical infrastructure."

To implement the CBP approach at scale, **local government officials or traditional leadership** are trained to lead a participatory process, enabling them to fulfil their responsibilities and build confidence with communities. Given that local government or traditional leadership are present in every district, ward or municipality, this also enables the **rapid expansion of CBP**, with IOM playing a technical support role.

Plans developed at community levels are incorporated into broader area-based development plans and in many cases feed into national level planning process. For example, the vertical linkages are well illustrated in the case of Somalia, where Community Action Plans developed through CBP in Baidoa and Kismayo towns were incorporated into broader district development planning.

Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus (HDPN)

IOM's CS programming contributes to the objectives of the HDPN as it provides a bridge between dependence on humanitarian aid and longer-term development programming. On one hand, it supports communities to mitigate the immediate drivers of crisis and conflict, which trigger and exacerbate humanitarian needs, while on the other, it helps to establish preconditions needs to engage in longer-term development and efforts to resolve internal displacement.

Considérations clés

Convergence between Early Recovery and Community Stabilization:

There are many points of intersection between early recovery and stabilization as each contain elements of both, and the absence of elements from either can undermine opportunities for transition away from humanitarian crises. Nevertheless, early recovery focuses on the material, economic and infrastructural conditions needed to transition out of humanitarian crises whereas community stabilization's places more importance on the normalization of social and political conditions required to prevent areas from backsliding into crisis. As such, recovery places greater emphasis on the deliverables required to enable recovery (from crisis), such as services or livelihoods, and stabilization gives greater emphasis to the process required to produce the deliverables, such as civic dialogue and participation, in addition to the deliverables themselves. The difference, therefore, is one of emphasis.

Programming Principles:

IOM's approach to Community is underpinned by the following eight programming principles.

- Context specific
- Community owned and driven
- Government partnership and leadership
- Flexible and adaptable
- Multi-sectoral and integrated
- Catalytic
- Integrate strategic communication
- Conflict sensitive approach

These provide overarching standards and approaches that should be considered in the design and implementation of all CS programmes. More information on the programming principles can be found in [IOM's Operational Guide: Community Stabilization Programmes and Approaches (Internal Link)](#).

Leçons apprises / Meilleures pratiques

- [Community Stabilization – An approach for facilitating progress towards durable solutions and operationalizing the Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus: Lessons from Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Somalia](#)?
- [IOM: Community Stabilization Resources](#)
- [IOM: Community Stabilization Approach](#)

Liens

- [Community Stabilization SharePoint Site (INTERNAL)](#)
- [Online Course: Introduction to Transition and Recovery Programming](#)
- [Online Course: Community Stabilization](#)
- [Panel Event: "Rethinking Stabilization: Best Practices from the Sub-Saharan Reg…](#)

Contacts

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Points clés

- With crises becoming increasingly recurrent, protracted and multi-dimensional, it has become critical to look beyond immediate humanitarian needs and consider and address underlying needs, risks and vulnerabilities.
- Community Stabilization (CS) programmes are designed to address the drivers of instability in order to prevent conflict and displacement and establish the preconditions for development interventions which may address the root causes of crisis in a more sustainable manner.
- CS is an objective or outcome, as well as a process, which employs specific methodologies and emphasizes community ownership and participation and government leadership and visibility. It is context driven and, because contexts are not static, CS programming needs to be flexible and adaptable to respond to emerging risks and capitalize on new windows of opportunity. While the tools used to promote CS may be familiar (e.g. livelihoods, health, WASH, education or community infrastructure interventions), it is why these tools were selected and how the programme is delivered which determines whether it constitutes CS.

Références et outils

- [Community Stabilization Infosheet (EN)](#)
- [Community Stabilization Infosheet (FR)](#)
- [Community Stabilization Infosheet (ES)](#)

- [Livelihoods and Economic Recovery Infosheet (EN)](#)
- [Livelihoods and Economic Recovery Infosheet (FR)](#)
- [Livelihoods and Economic Recovery Infosheet (ES)](#)
- [Operational Guide for Community Stabilization Programmes and Approaches (2019)](#)

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