Displacement and migration crises, whether human induced, environmental or a combination of the two, can have a diverse, complex and devastating impact on people's lives. This includes physical, visible impacts as well as less visible effects such as inter- or intra communal tensions over scarce resources, marginalization of different social ethnic or religious groups, insecurity, exploitation, and criminal or rent-seeking power structures. Leaving the different factors driving instability unaddressed weakens the social, physical, cultural, economic, judicial and security structures and systems required for societies to function. This can result in the re-emergence of violence, humanitarian crises and displacement and prevent impacted populations from embarking on pathways towards recovery and 'Durable Solutions' to displacement. Empowering communities and their local leadership through inclusion and active participation can play a catalytic role both in improving stability and harnessing the agency of individuals to drive positive change.

GLOBAL OVERVIEW OF IOM'S STABILIZATION PROGRAMMING IN 2021

IOM has over 20 years of experience implementing stabilization programming in complex crises contexts across the globe. In 2021, IOM implemented over 146 stabilization and recovery projects in 60 countries. IOM's institutional expertise and on the ground operational presence allows a tailored approach to migration and displacement challenges through stabilization programming.

COMMUNITY STABILIZATION APPROACH

IOM's Community Stabilization approach is a process rather than a physical set of products, intended to address the multivariate drivers of instability to facilitate transition away from crisis and fragility. In displacement affected areas, Community Stabilization provides a necessary incremental step towards sustainably resolving displacement by creating the conditions for the restoration of basic rights and security; and by promoting social cohesion and empowerment; functioning state governance; non-violent political processes; effective social policy; livelihoods and service delivery. Although Community Stabilization is multi-sectoral, the rationale for intervention is to improve stability.

A second, but no less important, aim of Community Stabilization is to lay the foundation for longer term development and provide a transitional bridge between humanitarian action and development assistance. Consequently, Community Stabilization programmes are sometimes referred to, in IOM, as addressing 'the missing middle'.

ENHANCING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE PROJECT (ECRP) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES WITH BOMA DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES © IOM 2022 / MAURO TALAMONTI

IOM works with governments, civil society and individuals to promote stability at the local level as a step out of crisis or fragility, paving the way for more sustainable development approaches. The broad array of stakeholders targeted include those with capacities to have a transformative impact on unstable contexts.

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN AND OWNED

At the center of IOM's Community Stabilization approach is the Community-Based Planning (CBP) methodology. CBP is IOM's flagship approach to participatory programming in displacement and migration crises. It offers a step-by-step approach that covers planning, assessments and recovery phases of programmes and can be used to meet outcomes across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.

While versatile, the CBP methodology holds particular relevance to IOM's Community Stabilization approach. It is a people-centered methodology that approaches communities as having capacities, agency and motivations to drive positive change. It allows vulnerable and marginalized populations (IDPs, refugees, returning migrants, ex-combatants, women, youth), local authorities, and members of civil society to drive their own recovery. This is achieved through the creation of local project implementation teams called Core Facilitation Teams. These teams work with representatives from socio-economic groups that are self-identified by the community themselves. The entire CBP process is then held together by the development of Community Action Plans which link prioritized projects to the broader vision of the entire community.

Overall, this process can help produce empowered communities, strengthened support networks, improved social cohesion, improved capacity of community members and structures and local ownership improving stability and leading to more sustainable recovery outcomes. The Community Stabilization process builds trust and includes dialogue at every stage of implementation. IOM Community Stabilization programmes operate at the local level in order to build stability from the ground up and take advantage of IOM's presence and relationships in the field.
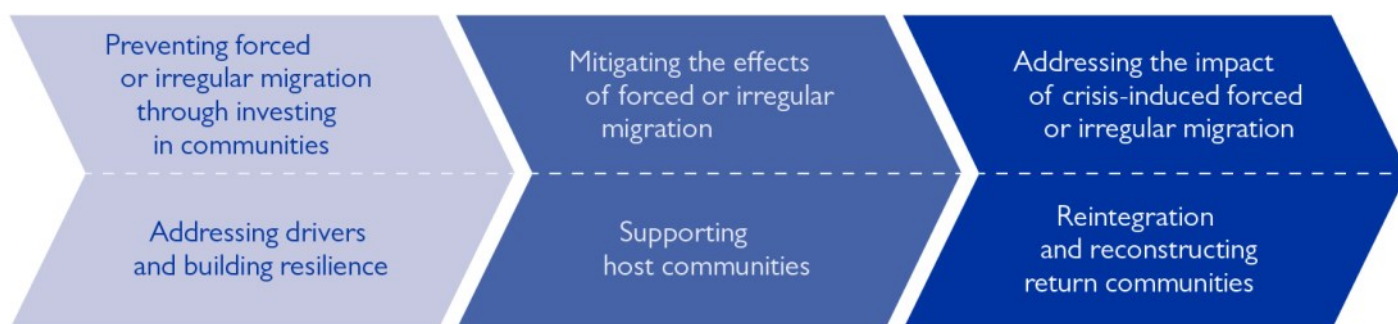
MULTI-SECTORAL

IOM's community stabilization initiatives work across multiple sectors to address the numerous and complex drivers of instability and insecurity, with a focus on inter alia:

- Improving access and provision of essential services such as health, education, water, and sanitation
- Rehabilitation and augmentation of basic community infrastructure, including local markets
- Supporting local governance capacity
- Economic recovery, including through short-term work opportunities, livelihoods development and market improvement
- Improving access to information
- Using community engagement to improve inclusive participation and social cohesion

FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE

IOM's Community Stabilization interventions can be implemented during any phase of a crisis, preventing forced displacement by addressing at-risk community drivers and root causes as soon as they are identified, mitigating the longer-term effects of displacement during the crisis, and addressing the impact of displacement on return communities by ensuring sustainable reintegration of returnees.

Using a flexible, community-driven process, programming is designed to respond to the rapidly changing circumstances in the context as well as the evolving community priorities throughout the lifespan of the programme. By integrating continuous research, monitoring, evaluation and learning during implementation, new opportunities can be identified, and projects adjusted to suit the contextualized needs at the community level.

Preventing forced or irregular migration through investing in communities

Mitigating the effects of forced or irregular migration

Addressing the impact of crisis-induced forced or irregular migration

Addressing drivers and building resilience

Supporting host communities

Reintegration and reconstructing return communities

For more information: https://www.iom.int/stabilization-and-recovery   Contact: TRDCoreGroupHQ@iom.int   Follow: @UNMigration