Topic: Alternatives to Camps – Displacement in an Urban Context

Objective: Be aware of forms of displacement and reconstruction involving urban areas, its particular demands and challenges on shelter solutions

Facilitator: Øyvind Nordlie and Martin Suvatne
Shelter Advisers Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
Unlike IDPs in camps who are more easily identified and assisted,

IDPs in urban areas comprise a hidden population.

Aid agencies and governments have difficulty identifying them and understanding their [relation to host population]

Relatively little is known about their precise numbers, demographics, basic needs and protection problems.

Source: Internal Displacement to Urban Areas: the Tufts-IDMC Profiling Study Khartoum, Sudan: Case 1, Karen Jacobsen, Feinstein International Center, Tufts University in collaboration with Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Geneva
"Guidance on Profiling Internally Displaced Persons"

- Tool to **estimate** the **number** and **distribution** of IDPs living in **urban settings**;

- Gather **information** about **assistant** and **protection needs**;

- **Case studies** in **Khartoum** (Sudan), **Abidjan** (Côte d’Ivor) and **Santa Marta** (Colombia) between 2006 and 2008;

Feinstein International Center at Tufts University in collaboration with Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), Geneva
There are 3 different possibilities where shelter support is linked to urban context:

- **reconstruction** in urban areas after war or natural disaster
- **transitional shelter** in urban areas (temporary)
- **durable solution** in urban areas (resettlement)
Abkhasia-Georgia, 2005
Collective Centre, Georgia, 2005
Individual houses in Kutaisi, Georgia:
Southern Lebanon, 2008
Mohajareen Area, Nahr al Bared Camp, Tripoli, Lebanon, 2008
What kind of guiding document exist?

first UNHCR policy on refugees in urban areas, 7 May 1997 (IOM25/97FOM30/97)

- promoting **self-reliance** of refugees
- **advocating** for integration of refugee **assistance** into national programs

- policy **lacks focus** on refugee **protection** as the central consideration (stated in the DRAFT of UNHCR POLICY on REFUGEES and ASYLUM-SEEKERS in URBAN AREAS, 2008)
• new “UNHCR Policy on Refugees in Urban Areas” on 12 December 1997 (IOM/90/97/FOM/95/97)

• addressing urban protection issues in more comprehensive fashion.

• still lacking guidance in core protection issues

• need for yet another new policy framework which would address critical protection challenges in urban settings.

→ UNHCR POLICY on REFUGEES and ASYLUM-SEEKERS in URBAN AREAS, (DRAFT Geneva 2008)
UNHCR POLICY on REFUGEES and ASYLUM-SEEKERS in URBAN AREAS (DRAFT), 2008

• primary responsibility of the State to ensure … adequate accommodation

• In urban situations, many … do manage to find their own accommodation

• certain parts of urban centers … rise to slum-like conditions of living

• Various options … existing public structures, or paying incentives to private home owners to expand their houses

• Initiatives … negotiations with landlords to reduce rents, … ensure security of tenure; support for short term stay in economical hostels; shared accommodation schemes, … and small subsidies

Source: Chapter V, PROTECTION INTERVENTIONS AND STRATEGIES, page 27, 9) Accommodation, Draft UNHCR POLICY ON REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN URBAN AREAS, Geneva 2008
Why are IDPs/Refugges coming to Urban Areas (Push/Pull Factors)

- social, economic, social status, ..... generell urbanisation related factors
- frustration with lack of livelihood options in the camps
- reunification with family members (already in the city)
- lack of adequate protection provided in rural camps

A number of people also fled directly to urban areas at a time when official IDP camps had not yet been established

Source: Refugee Law Project, Faculty of Law, Makerere University, Briefing Paper December 2007, WHAT ABOUT US? THE EXCLUSION OF URBAN IDPS FROM UGANDA`S IDP RELATED POLICIES AND INTERVENTIONS
How to Distinguish between an Urban IDP and a Urban Poor?

may be reluctant to give conflict as the reason for coming because

• they do not wish to be defined as IDPs/refugees, or are fearful of repercussions (hidden population that seeks anonymity)

• they may have come to the city for work related reasons, even though they were initially displaced by conflict and/or food insecurity

• tend to live alongside the urban poor and economic migrants (in Khartoum concentrations range from 5% to 57%)

Source: Internal Displacement to Urban Areas: the Tufts-IDMC Profiling Study Khartoum, Sudan: Case 1, Karen Jacobsen, Feinstein International Center, Tufts University in collaboration with Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Geneva
Aspects of urban displacement

• Future migration intentions

  50% intend to remain in Khartoum,
  Only 22% expressed the desire to go “back home”.

• Registration and Profiling

  Beside the basic data, migration plans, mobility, type of livelihood for both IDP and host population, education are important to assess.

Source: Internal Displacement to Urban Areas: the Tufts-IDMC Profiling Study Khartoum, Sudan: Case 1, Karen Jacobsen, Feinstein International Center, Tufts University in collaboration with Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Geneva

Reference: Chapter V PROTECTION INTERVENTIONS AND STRATEGIES, page 27, 8) Food, water and other essential items; financial and material assistance, Draft UNHCR POLICY ON REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN URBAN AREAS, Geneva 2008
Aspects affecting Shelter Planning

• Tracking
  Difficulty of accessing **detailed maps of slum areas** to keep track of IDPs/refugees living among host population. **Flow monitoring** of inner urban migration.

• Various support mechanism
  Type of **vocational and live skills** needed in an urban context. **Land ownership** and protection. **Food distribution**.
Aspects affecting Shelter Planning

- Employment
  The study states that 25% were self-employed, and 18% were housewives

- Building materials
  The study states that 48% lived in mud houses, 39% lived in brick houses, 9% in concrete houses, just 3% in temporary dwellings (or shacks)

Source: Internal Displacement to Urban Areas: the Tufts-IDMC Profiling Study Khartoum, Sudan: Case 1, Karen Jacobsen, Feinstein International Center, Tufts University in collaboration with Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Geneva
Aspects affecting Shelter Planning

• Mobility and forced evictions
  The study states that **56%** of all our respondents had moved within Khartoum.

• Addressing beneficiaries
  In urban situations, voluntary repatriation often takes place on an individual or single family basis; general problems of addressing and access the community.

Source: Internal Displacement to Urban Areas: the Tufts-IDMC Profiling Study Khartoum, Sudan: Case 1, Karen Jacobsen, Feinstein International Center, Tufts University in collaboration with Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Geneva
Specific Urban Conditions

Different to rural settings, the social structure is in an urban context often reflected in the spatial distribution of dwelling spaces.
The end of displacement

• decisions on when displacement ends have tended to be ad hoc and varied.

• we may judge urban IDPs as integrated into their “new” local communities and therefore no longer in need of assistance.

• can living in slum conditions be accepted as a durable solution?

Source: Walter Kälin (the UN Representative of the Secretary-General on Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons), together with the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, and the Institute for the Study of International Migration at Georgetown University
Discussion:

What do we have to consider when dealing with the various Settlement Options?

- Occupancy with no legal status
- House tenant
- Apartment tenant
- Land tenant
- Apartment owner-occupier
- House owner-occupier

Source: Shelter Centre, Shelter Training 08b