Informing humanitarian action in out-of-camp refugee contexts

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Responding to refugee crisis in out-of-camp settings

Recent displacement trends show an increase in numbers of displaced population living out of designated areas such as refugee camps, often adding up to a rapidly growing trend of urbanisation. While assessing the needs of refugee populations living in camps is relatively simple, out-of-camp settings bring a new set of challenges for humanitarian actors who need new tools to properly assess and understand local dynamics, vulnerabilities and capacities of displaced and host populations. The establishment of clear communication channels with these communities is as well instrumental to better inform aid planning and leveraging on communities' resilience.

Area-based approach to data collection

Funded by the U.S. State Department, this two-year programme led by IMPACT aims at developing a complementary approach to context understanding and data gathering by humanitarian actors working in out-of-camp refugee contexts. In the course of the project IMPACT, will develop and field-test a toolbox which combines two approaches:

(1) An **Area-Based Approach** to define and understand areas,

(2) The use of the **Social Network Analysis** theory to identify best sources of information within defined areas.

By developing a framework for key informant area-based data collection, the toolbox will contribute to the broader body of knowledge on area-based coordination and responses by humanitarian actors. The toolbox will enable aid actors to collect consistent and relevant information on host and refugee communities in a specific area, for more efficient planning and delivery of aid.

Programme overview

1 **Toolbox preparation:** the toolbox will contain a step by step practical guidance to (1) delineating areas and (2) identifying best informed Key Informants in a given area through Social Network Analysis Theory. A first draft of the toolbox has been developed and will be finalised after the three planned field pilots.

2 **Testing of toolbox through field pilots:** IMPACT is facilitating three field pilots to test and refine the toolbox. The first one took place in Jordan (city of Mafraq) between January and May 2017, upcoming pilots include Niger (region of Diffa) and Afghanistan (city of Kabul). During these pilots, the methodology for delineating areas and identifying Key Informants through the Social Network Analysis Theory will be used and strenghtened. Each pilot will culminate with a lessons learned workshop to identify challenges and incorporate best practices in the development process of the toolbox.
Each pilot will be implemented under the guidance of a country advisory board with relevant stakeholders, including UNHCR, government counterparts and donor. At global level, a steering committee comprising the U.S. State Department, UNHCR and the World Bank is providing overall advice and ensuring strong institutional linkages and impact of the programme.

3 **Training of Trainers:** In 2018, once the toolbox is ready to be disseminated and used at field level, IMPACT will develop a training course which will be the basis for three training of trainers for UNHCR staff, sector coordinators and, if relevant, other humanitarian partners staff, focusing on the content/roll-out of the toolbox and on the utilization of this combined approach in humanitarian response planning and delivery. The training programmes will take place at Geneva-level and in regional hubs.

4 **Organisation of global and country-level presentations:** IMPACT will facilitate the organization of global and country-level presentations on this new approach. This will include presentations in Geneva, a regional hub and in the three countries targeted through the deployment.

Products from Mafraq pilot are available on REACH Resource Centre. More information on AGORA programmes: www.impact-initiatives.org/agora

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