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Conference Services

Please find attached the presentation by Mr. David Stone, Director – Livelihood and Environmental Security (LIVES) Advisory Group, delivered to the Session III (*Environment and Migration*), of the 13th OSCE Economic Forum, Prague, 23 -27 May 2005.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF DISPLACED POPULATIONS

Dealing with Issues rather than
the Problems

SOME FACTS...

- ◆ More than 160 wars have been recorded since the end of World War II
- ◆ Almost 40 million people worldwide have been uprooted from their homes by war alone
- ◆ 28 million people affected by natural disasters in 1960s; 64 million in 1980s:...
- ◆ Nearly every country in the world hosts refugees - including many of the poorest nations
- ◆ 11 million refugees today - 25% in Africa



...AND ISSUES

- ◆ Natural resources – diamonds, timber, water... - are increasingly becoming a cause of conflict and population displacement
- ◆ Ecosystem services & functions collapse under pressure of sudden, concentrated human displacements
- ◆ Many camps & settlements are located close to borders and protected areas
- ◆ Significant damage can result, but preventive and/or mitigation measures can be taken



WHO ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

- ◆ **Refugees** - conflict generated; outside of country of origin; unable to return under prevailing circumstances
- ◆ **Internally displaced people** - some, but not all, conflict generated; may be unable to leave their country
- ◆ **Environmentally displaced persons** - environmental degradation is a major (but not the only) cause of displacement
- ◆ **Voluntary migrants** - voluntary movement for economic, social, cultural or personal gain
- ◆ **Returnees** - refugees (mainly) who are able to return home following political changes

SOME ISSUES OF CONCERN

- ◆ FUELWOOD, BUILDING MATERIALS AND CHARCOAL: USE & COMMERCE
- ◆ OVERGRAZING
- ◆ POOR AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES
- ◆ EROSION
- ◆ WATER POLLUTION
- ◆ WASTE MANAGEMENT
- ◆ POACHING (BUSHMEAT)
- ◆ INTRODUCED INVASIVE SPECIES
- ◆ SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DISRUPTION
- ◆ CONFLICT



WHAT CAN BE DONE?

- ◆ Understand the situation
 - ◆ Identify what is/might be at risk
 - ◆ Assess what environmental mitigation opportunities might be available
 - ◆ Consider the impact of institutional assistance - including donor and government responses - on the environment and existing communities
 - ◆ Consider the implications of "no action"
- 4 PHASES**
- ◆ Normal/Pre-emergency
 - ◆ Emergency
 - ◆ Care and Maintenance
 - ◆ Durable Solutions

NORMAL / PRE- EMERGENCY

SITUATION

- ◆ Stable conditions suddenly disintegrate and dissolve, for part of population
- ◆ Multiple reasons possible – conflict over natural resources, competition (drought), political...
- ◆ Affected people probably have no prior experience of this type of situation
- ◆ May have no option but to flee, abandoning possessions
- ◆ High demand builds for natural resources (water, wood resources, pasture, wildlife), leading to competition and possible conflict

ACTIONS TO TAKE

- ◆ Identify potential hotspots/ flashpoints
- ◆ Identify high risk sites (e.g. protected areas) using different dispersal/movement scenarios
- ◆ Prepare contingency plans
- ◆ Train and equip for initial response (e.g. park wardens)
- ◆ Best practices applied
- ◆ Capacity building (institutions, government)
- ◆ Rapid response system – contingency plans
- ◆ Conflict prevention/resolution of disputes at local community level
- ◆ Awareness raising
- ◆ Best practices applied

EMERGENCY

SITUATION

- ◆ Sudden onset – little or no warning
- ◆ Impact transferred to another region
- ◆ High population (and livestock) dispersal – sudden pressure on environment
- ◆ Drastically altered social and economic conditions
- ◆ Immediate competition over natural resources – between displaced persons and between displaced persons and locals
- ◆ Emergency relief operations respond (co-ordination)

ACTIONS TO TAKE

- ◆ **Prevention before cure**
- ◆ Identify early needs and risks – integrate environmental concerns where appropriate
- ◆ Cautious planning – try and be proactive
- ◆ Best practices applied
- ◆ Engage local communities in decision-making
- ◆ Influence settlement location and design
- ◆ Identify appropriate alternative systems and practices
- ◆ Awareness raising – all levels – e.g. protected areas or off-limit resources; food provision...
- ◆ Begin to organise management structures
- ◆ Influence policy decisions (e.g. procurement by relief operation)

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

SITUATION

- ◆ Situation begins to stabilise for part of population at least
- ◆ Time/resources available for longer term planning (long-term perspective should always be adopted)
- ◆ Response organisation becomes clearer with improved co-ordination and management
- ◆ Other options may become apparent

ACTIONS TO TAKE

- ◆ Detailed assessments (environmental, social, economic) carried out
- ◆ Establish management plan for affected region/ communities
- ◆ Joint activities initiated for local communities and displaced people
- ◆ Enhanced awareness and information dissemination working through designated leaders
- ◆ Monitor, evaluate and respond to needs
- ◆ Specific training and capacity building
- ◆ Income generating activities encouraged
- ◆ Sustainable practices – agriculture, forestry, fisheries, livestock keeping
- ◆ Best practices introduced and new ones developed
- ◆ Examine broader landscape needs and options for more sustainable environmental management
- ◆ Appropriate practices and good management now will help limit need for restoration

DURABLE SOLUTIONS

SITUATION

- ◆ Possible upheaval if returning to home country (refugee) or town/region (IDP) or new country (refugee/migrant)
- ◆ Returnee (refugees/IDPs) population may add further stress to existing situation
- ◆ Few dominant actors – are they the right/most appropriate ones?
- ◆ Often weakened government and civil society structure – incapable of making good decisions
- ◆ Lack of clarity/transparency over ownership issues, as well as security

ACTIONS TO TAKE

- ◆ Careful pre-planning to assess actual situation and anticipated/expected needs of returnees
- ◆ Examine broader landscape needs and options for more sustainable environmental management
- ◆ Re-housing and resettlement takes environmental considerations into account
- ◆ Dispute resolution skills for all community members – new and existing
- ◆ Confidence building and stakeholder involvement
- ◆ Legal rights clarified, e.g. land tenure
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Skills training based on experiences and needs
- ◆ Livelihood restoration
- ◆ Poverty reduction, socio-economic development and benefit sharing
- ◆ Best practices applied
- ◆ Monitor and evaluate

THEORY TO PRACTICE

- ◆ No blueprint available – every situation is different
- ◆ Co-ordination and co-operation between all stakeholders/actors becomes all the more important
- ◆ Regular consultation is required between displaced persons, local inhabitants, migrants, nomads, local and central government authorities, NGOs, UN teams, donors
- ◆ Many tools and best practices exist, but these often don't reach the intended audiences – re-inventing the wheel, or cost of “no action”
