

GUIDELINE 15: Support migrants' host communities

Interventions should also address the impact on communities in the State of origin to which migrants return, host States from which migrants have fled, or States of transit to which migrants flee. Such communities may lack sufficient resources, services, and infrastructure to support migrants. If migrants receive assistance to the exclusion of members of host communities, perceptions relating to preferential treatment may create or exacerbate tensions and lead to discrimination, stigmatization, or social exclusion. An approach to post-crisis action that incorporates the needs of host communities is more likely to be successful than one that solely targets migrants and their families. Such an inclusive approach can foster community and social cohesiveness and stability in the long-term. This may be particularly important if migrants and their host communities continue to deal with the effects of crises years after they end.

The mass return of migrants to States of origin if not properly managed can also lead to adverse development impacts, including the loss of remittances, unemployment and underemployment, pressure on infrastructure, resources, services (including water, electricity, waste management, education, health, housing, and transportation), and increased poverty, all of which can cause broader societal tensions. Similarly, when large groups of migrants are evacuated or leave a host State in haste, their departure may create skill and labor shortages in host States. While migrants also contribute to States of transit, if they remain for unanticipated extended periods of time without effective integration, their presence may burden local infrastructure and services.

Effectively managing migration is important in the wake of a natural disaster or conflict. Host States may want to encourage migrants to return as soon as possible to aid in reconstruction or stimulate the local economy, and towards this end may create flexible visa options to promote migrant return to host States. States of origin may see value in facilitating diaspora engagement in post-crisis action and recovery.

Sample Practices

- *Analysis of short, medium-, and longer-term socio-economic impacts of return following crises, at the local and national levels in States of origin and host States.*
- *Promotion of diaspora contributions through actions, such as matching grants and customs waivers to facilitate financial and in-kind support.*
- *Inclusion of returned migrants' needs in State of origin development plans.*
- *Engagement of and support to host populations through consultations and inclusive responses.*
- *Social cohesion programs addressing migrants, migrant networks, and host communities to prevent and mitigate tensions and foster reintegration.*