

The Challenge of Migration for Crisis and Disaster Management: Key concepts and recommendations

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Abstract

The article discusses the challenges of migration for crisis and disaster management. Based on research for the international “Migrants in Countries of Crisis Initiative” (MICIC), it discusses the state of the art of disaster research with regard to the concepts of vulnerability, resilience building and migration and stakeholder inclusion in crisis preparedness planning and disaster mitigation. It highlights main areas of action for a better inclusion of migrants in crisis management with regard to access of migrants to general services and mobility support and discusses the need for civil protection in Austria to learn from the lessons of the MICIC-Initiative.

Introduction

In the actual political debate, the terms “migration” and “crisis” are often linked together – the “migration crisis” is depicted as one of the major European political challenges, whereby migration is often framed as element of a crisis instead as a normal fact of life. This paper will focus on a completely different aspect of a crisis: When a country is hit by natural disaster or political crisis, both citizens and migrants are affected, but often access to support and disaster relief is legally or practically limited to citizens. Relief and disaster mitigation efforts are often planned and implemented without considering migration: Other than refugees, who are protected by an international legal framework, the protection needs of migrants in a country experiencing a crisis are not covered by international law. The lack of reflection on the impacts of migration on crisis and disaster governance is one of the major challenges in international humanitarian aid, as it does not only hamper access of migrants to disaster relief, but also neglects the potentials of migrants for resilience building.

Further to the humanitarian dimension, the degree of inclusion of migrants’ needs in disaster preparedness planning also highlights the strengths and deficien-

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cies of migrants' integration into a society. Preparedness planning needs the inclusion of and cooperation with the resident population independent from nationality or place of birth, and the delivery of aid and support in an emergency will be massively hampered if resident migrants are not defined as a relevant target group by humanitarian aid and civil protection agencies and organisations. Including the perspective of migrants in crisis preparedness planning thus has to be understood as an – often neglected – element of integration policies.

The paper is organised as follows: The first part will discuss the key concepts in academic disaster research and the international governance framework of aid with regard to the challenges migration poses to traditional concepts of civil protection, humanitarian aid and crisis and disaster management. A discussion of the specific needs of migrants in crisis and disaster mitigation and the potentials of migrant involvement into disaster preparedness planning will follow. In the third section, the paper will develop suggestions for an improved involvement of migrants into crisis and disaster management based on the results of the MICIC project. The final chapter will discuss the lessons Austria can learn from the MICIC project.

The paper is based on research conducted by the author and his colleagues at the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) (Hendow et al. 2017, Perchinig 2016; Perchinig et al. 2017) within the framework of the EU-funded project “Migrants in Countries in Crisis: Supporting an evidence based approach”², which supported the “Migrants in Countries of Crisis Initiative”³ (MICIC). The MICIC-Initiative was launched in 2014 by the Governments of the Philippines and the United States to address the impacts of crises – conflicts and natural disasters – on migrants with the goal “*to improve the ability of States and other stakeholders to better prepare for, respond to, and protect the lives, dignity, and rights of migrants caught in countries experiencing conflicts and natural disasters*”⁴. Based on stakeholder consultations and research studies, the MICIC-Initiative has implemented a number of recommendations and a repository of good practices (available on the MICIC webpage) for improved protection of migrants in countries of crises, which have also served as background material for this paper⁵.

Key concepts in disaster studies

Until today, the scientific understanding of “disaster” is largely modelled along the concept of a natural disaster, e.g. an earthquake or a tsunami. Nevertheless, the conceptual framing of “disaster” has undergone major changes in the last quarter

² See <https://www.icmpd.org/our-work/migrants-in-countries-in-crisis/>

³ See <https://micicinitiative.iom.int>

⁴ See <https://micicinitiative.iom.int/about-micic/approach>

⁵ These documents are available at: <https://micicinitiative.iom.int/resources-and-publications>

of the 20th century. In the 1970s, the disaster narrative focused on the concept of “hazard”, understood as an unexpected disruptive event caused by natural powers leading to severe damage to infrastructure. Remedies were focused on technical solutions aimed at a reduction of the probability of material damage, e.g. by improving the construction and quality of infrastructure. This “end of the pipe” strategy was later accompanied by a focus on risk reduction and mitigation measures. Whereas the first strategy aimed at a reduction of the likelihood of hazards, e.g. by improved monitoring of potential natural hazards, such as volcanoes, the second sought to mitigate the damage caused by a disaster. Typical examples for this strategy are e.g. the construction of polders to mitigate flood damage or the development of floodplains in order to divert impacts of floods to unsettled areas (Frerks et al. 2011, p. 105f).⁶

In the 1990s, this technical understanding of disaster and crises gradually gave place to a more sociological definition of disaster as a process of interaction between external forces (such as natural hazards and conflicts) and the socioeconomic and political conditions in a society influencing the magnitude of impact and the potential for recovery. From this perspective, the socioeconomic and political conditions of certain groups or communities leading to inequality with regard to both their risk of becoming victims of a disaster and their coping capacity were regarded as major factors previously neglected by the technical disaster narrative (Wisner et al. 2003). In this context, the concept of vulnerability became crucial⁷.

In disaster studies, vulnerability is understood as a concept to describe the differences in the degree of damage incurred from (natural) hazards that are manifested for an individual person, for a community, a city or an entire region. Vulnerability thus refers to the propensity of the exposed persons or systems to experience harm and suffer damages when impacted by hazard events, and thus relates to two aspects: a) the nature and magnitude of a hazard and b) the potential of a person, a community or a system to mobilise resources to protect against hazards and to minimize their impact.

Understanding disasters as complex interactions between the physical environment and society, the concept underscores the social construction of risk and the role of the division of power and unequal access to resources in a society. Highlighting the societal conditions, the coping capacity, the power relations and the social capital of the person or community concerned, the concept of vulnerability is strongly linked to social inequality as major influencing factor. (Fekete et al. 2014, p. 5). The understanding of vulnerability as “*the characteristics of a person or group and their situation that influence their capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of a natural hazard*” (Wisner et al 2003, p. 107) shifted the focus from technical concerns – e.g. the construction of earthquake-safe roads and housing – to the affected population. This paradigm

⁶ This overview of the conceptual framing of crisis and disaster is based on Frerks et al. 2011.

⁷ It is not possible to cover the broad academic debate on different conceptions of vulnerability (i.a. Birkman et al. 2011, Lewis and Kelman 2010, Zhou et al. 2010) in this paper; nevertheless, a short introduction into the framing of the term will be given.

shift also brought politics into disaster science. Now the effects of (poor) governance or political or military conflicts on the social production of vulnerability among specific groups or communities gained prominence in research and the political debate.

This new focusing on the interaction between the susceptibility for natural or other hazards, unsafe living conditions and limited access to resources and political power also directed the attention to the ways in which the organizational, institutional and political contexts influence vulnerability. In this vein, the “new humanitarianism” stresses the need of interventions at a structural level reducing poverty and inequality of power. Although having become more influential in recent years, this position is not shared by all actors in the field of humanitarian aid (Birkman et al. 2011, p. 198).

The sociological framing greatly influenced the international debate on disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management. At the UN level, international cooperation on disaster and crisis management reaches back to 2000, when the UN General Assembly adopted the “International Strategy for Disaster Reduction”⁸ and established the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) as the focal point for coordination tasked to ensure synergies among the disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system.

UNISDR was the driving force behind the World Conference for Disaster Reduction, which took place in Hyogo from January 18-22, 2005. At the conference, the participants agreed to the first common system of international coordination on disaster management, the “Hyogo Framework of Action” (UNISDR 2005). The framework centred around two core concepts: a) disaster preparedness based on a set of indicators for early warning and risk reduction on the one hand, and b) fostering resilience of the population as the central element of the preparation for effective disaster response.

The Disaster Risk Index developed by the UN Development Programme in 2004 (UNDP 2004) clearly showed that disasters affected the poorest groups in society most dramatically, as they were not only most prone to be hit by a disaster, but also most often lacked the necessary means to recover and rebuild. Following this understanding, “vulnerability assessments” – based on either proximity to a place of disaster or pre-defined individual characteristics (mainly gender, age, disability or ethnic minority status) – have become major tools in decision making on priorities in humanitarian aid in the 1990s (Birkmann 2007). This shift towards vulnerability as the core category for disaster preparedness planning is also reflected in the successor of the Hyogo-Framework, the “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030” (UNISDR 2015), which was adopted by the UN on March 18, 2015.

In recent years, academics and development actors have increasingly questioned the institutional delivery of aid towards “vulnerable groups” in case of a

⁸ The current version of the Strategy can be consulted at <https://www.unisdr.org/who-we-are/international-strategy-for-disaster-reduction>, visited 12.8.2017

crisis as paternalistic and unsustainable (Barnett and Walker 2015). According to the critics, linking vulnerability to attributes of persons or groups – e.g. gender, age, or minority status – would contribute to victimisation and disempowerment and neglect the agency of individuals and communities. Inspired by several studies proving that local communities, and not professional aid providers, usually were the “first responders”, both academics and the international aid community now shifted their attention to human agency in crisis situations (De Miliano et al. 2015, p. 23). This debate recently triggered a reframing of the concept of vulnerability. Whereas in the debate of the 1990s and 2000s specific attributes of persons or groups (e.g. women, children, the elderly) were seen as reasons for vulnerability, now the situations producing vulnerability came to the forefront of the debate. This focus-shift to vulnerability-producing situations further strengthened a socio-political understanding of crisis and disaster: If power-differentials and inequality in specific situations produce vulnerability, an analysis of the factors and the development of measures to change these conditions become a main element of action. In this understanding, the empowerment of individuals and communities to withstand vulnerable situations has to stand at the core of humanitarian action: *“Vulnerability is not a fixed criterion attached to specific categories of people, and no one is born vulnerable per se.”* (European Commission – DG ECHO 2016, p. 51).

This focus on human agency and coping strategies linked well with the concept of resilience, which had been gaining prominence both in environmental system analysis and psychology since the 1990s, and now was imported into the field of disaster sciences. Originating in health psychology (Antonovsky 1987), where resilience describes the capacity of an individual to positively adapt to adverse conditions⁹, the term is now widely used both in ecology and in social sciences. Here it is understood *“as the buffer capacity or the ability of a system to absorb perturbations, or the magnitude of disturbance that can be absorbed before a system changes its structure by changing the variables and processes that control its behaviour”* (Adger 2005, 249, in Djalante et al. 2011, p. 5). In this sense, “social resilience” is understood as the capacity of social groups and communities to recover from, or respond positively to a crisis and to mobilise their powers of resistance, recovery and creativity (Maguier and Hagan 2007).

Based on this understanding, resilience analysis has become the dominant approach in disaster preparedness planning today (Park et al. 2013). “Resilience building” within communities and the civil society is a main target of disaster preparedness planning and is regarded as a major element of effective crisis governance (Ahrens and Rudolph 2006, p. 217). Community based disaster management directly involves vulnerable people themselves in planning and implementation of mitigation measures. This bottom up approach has received wide acceptance because considered communities are the best judges of their own vulner-

⁹ Fletcher and Sarkar 2013 give a good overview on the development of the concept of resilience in psychology.

ability and can make the best decisions regarding their well-being (Pandey and Okazaki 2005). The link between vulnerability and resilience has also been stressed by the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), which defines resilience as the ability to *'resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner'* (Fekete et al. 2014, p. 6).

Fostering social and individual resilience as a means to reduce vulnerability is linked well to a needs-based approach to crisis governance (Zetter 2015). While it remains undisputed that governments have the prime responsibility for managing disasters and for assigning the roles of different stakeholders in crisis management, the dominant top-down approach describing authorities as the providers of help to "victims" has often proved insufficient and ineffective. In many cases, it failed to meet appropriate and vital human needs, in particular the needs of the poor, who in first place have limited survival resources and do not enjoy adequate infrastructure and access to social services. In this sense, resilience building has to be understood as a process of social learning and empowerment: *"We suggest that resilience is seen as the shared social capacity to anticipate, resist, absorb and recover from an adverse or disturbing event or process through adaptive and innovative processes of change, entrepreneurship, learning and increased competence"* (Frerks et al. 2011, p. 213).

Despite the embedding of disaster management in the UN framework, migration has been widely neglected in this debate. While the Sendai Framework contains some references to migrants (UNISDR 2015, 9, 17, 22), there are hardly any references to migration to be found in the relevant EU documents. Humanitarian aid and civil protection are still largely conceptualised within the framework of a "nation-state container" with a population imagined as perfectly fluent in the state language and culturally homogeneous. This framing leads to a neglect of the discussion of the needs of migrants in disaster situations.

Migration, vulnerability and resilience

As discussed above, vulnerability is a concept focusing on the effects of social inequality and power differentials on the capacity to cope with hazards. In crisis situations, different aspects of vulnerability become relevant. Further to aspects relating to social conditions and general power differentials, migration may add specific dimensions of vulnerability, but may also be a resource of resilience. Both aspects challenge the dominant concepts of crisis management, which do not consider cross-border mobility as an issue of contingency planning and disaster mitigation.

Following Bustamante's discussion of immigrants' vulnerability in human rights discourses, migration may add to vulnerability through the power differentials between citizens and foreigners enshrined in the very nature of a state, which may be reinforced by cultural elements justifying the lower status of immigrants

as compared to nationals. In this understanding, vulnerability is not associated with personal characteristics and traits of immigrants, but with the legal and social status ascribed to migrants (Bustamante 2002, p. 340). Four specific dimensions of migration-related vulnerabilities have to be mentioned:

- a) All aspects of legal discrimination based on the fact of not holding the citizenship of the country of residence, which lead to exclusion from or limited access to resources and services, e.g. legal differentiations between citizens and foreigners with regard to access to e.g. the labour market, housing and social support provision, education or health;
- b) All aspects related to international border crossing and residence in another country, e.g. the restriction of mobility rights by visa regulations, or temporary or spatial limits of the right of residence. In this respect, a further differentiation between migrants holding a regular status of residence and migrants with an irregular status is necessary (Carrera and Parkin 2011, p. 25ff.; Commission for Human Rights 2007, p. 7ff.): Whereas legally resident migrants may be excluded from a broad array of citizens' rights, access to basic services (electricity, water supply etc.) and their residence status usually will be undisputed, and their place of residence will be recorded in population databases, if existent. Irregular residents, on the contrary, often are denied access even to basic services. As irregular migrants often try to remain invisible to authorities – as to not to threaten their residency in the host country – so too will they remain invisible for the stakeholders involved in disaster mitigation and relief, i.a. due to the lack of registration in the population register. On the other hand, an irregular status will be often instrumental as ground for discrimination and exploitation, or may be tolerated by (weak) authorities to support semi-legal economic activities they may profit from due to corruption.
- c) Socio-cultural factors linked to migration, in particular the lack of integration, e.g. the lack or limited knowledge of the local language(s) or communication practices, limited knowledge of the institutional framework of the country of residence, or lack of or limited access to social networks of residents, may also add to vulnerability.
- d) Discrimination: Whereas the acquisition of knowledge of the local language(s) and on local ways of life may mitigate vulnerability based on socio-cultural factors, ethnic or origin-based discrimination aims at the exclusion or limitation of access to economic, social and political resources. Ethnic and origin-based discrimination may be also an issue for citizens, but is more likely to occur with regard to migrants.

On the other hand, migration may also add to resilience of a local community giving access to a broader range of resources and support by the members of migrant families abroad, or by the possibility to relocate to the country of origin, or to be evacuated from the disaster site by the state of origin. Migration status may in- or decrease vulnerability, depending on context and situation:

“Certain issues, such as displacement, could be considered a threat, vulnerability, or a capacity depending on the scenario, the population concerned and the moment in time. While being displaced is most often considered as a vulnerability, the ability to remove oneself from a threat could also be considered a capacity, and likewise the danger of displacement, including arbitrary displacement, can be a real or perceived threat before it happens or during the actual displacement.” (European Commission, DG ECHO 2016, p. 11).

Migration issues in crisis management

The phases of a crisis

Crises and disasters have a complex and multifaceted development which does not easily allow for a neat separation of different phases. For analytical reasons it nevertheless makes sense to differentiate between the different phases of a crisis in order to improve crisis management. In disaster studies, the concept of a four-phase “crisis management cycle” has gained wide acceptance (Coppola 2015). According to UNSIDR (2009), these phases are defined as follows:

- Preparedness:
“The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, professional response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from, the impacts of likely, imminent or current hazard events or conditions.” (UNISDR 2009, p. 21)
- Mitigation:
“The lessening or limitation of the adverse impacts of hazards and related disasters.” (UNISDR 2009, p. 19)
- Response:
“The provision of emergency services and public assistance during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of the people affected.” (UNISDR 2009, p. 28)
- Recovery:
“The restoration, and improvement where appropriate, of facilities, livelihoods and living conditions of disaster-affected communities, including efforts to reduce disaster risk factors.” (UNISDR 2009, p. 27).

The MICIC Initiative differentiates between a pre-crisis, emergency and post-crisis phase. Compared to the UNSIDR definitions, the pre-crisis phase covers preparedness-planning and mitigation, the emergency phase response, and the post-crisis phase recovery. It is important to note, that these phases should not illustrate a sequence of actions, but describe a crisis as a learning process, whereby recovery should be linked to improved preparedness and mitigation to a reduction of the impact of future disasters.

Areas of intervention

Crises and disasters do not only concern dedicated disaster response organisations. The functioning of societies hinges on a broad variety of services provided to the public by public or private companies and organisations. These “general services” include both infrastructure services e.g. local transport networks, railway or bus services, postal services, or telecommunications; as other essential services provided directly to the person, like e.g. health services, child care, long-term care or social and psychological assistance services. These services play both a preventive and a socially cohesive/inclusive role.

Depending on the institutional framework of a country, these services can be delivered by public institutions, by private companies, or by a combination of both. Further to these services, the provision of goods by private companies and shops is a main precondition for the functioning of everyday life. The functioning of these institutions is a central aspect in all phases of a crisis.

Providing mobility options to victims in order to remove them from areas affected by natural disasters or conflicts into safe areas often is a main element in crisis and disaster management. As an element of general services mobility related services play a specific role in crisis management, as removal from the crisis area often is a key element of first response. In this respect, relocation within a country, removal to a neighbouring country, and removal to the country of origin or to another country have to be distinguished. Whereas in cases of natural disasters relocation in the country or removal to another country will mainly hinge on the capacity of the state and rescue organisations to provide transportation, in cases of conflict security issues, e.g. the unavailability of law enforcement authorities, or the lack of state control of certain areas of the country, may seriously hamper mobility. These issues usually cannot be solved by rescue organisations, but need the involvement of the authorities.

Whereas removal within a country and to a neighbouring country can be provided to both citizens and migrants, migrants may also have the opportunity to move to their country of origin, which will involve also the authorities of the countries of origin of the migrants.

Crisis management

The development of a crisis management cycle with the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including migrants, is a challenge for public authorities. The quality of crisis management hinges on the inclusion of a broad variety of stakeholders, including actors from the public sector, the private sector and civil society organisations on the local and state level. Stakeholders should not only include immediate crisis response providers, general services providers and mobility providers in the country, but also go beyond borders and involve stakeholders from neighbouring states and regional dialogue networks to foster transnational mobility. To facilitate cooperation, sustainable network structures with clear lines of communication and responsibility need to be established.

Inclusive crisis management structures as described above allow the development of improved adaptation strategies in crisis-situations, but also increase transaction costs. The inclusion of stakeholders in crisis management has to be well-conceived in the pre-crisis phase in order to learn ways of successful cooperation before they are needed. Only pre-established networks of cooperation breed innovation and resilience and improve the overall quality of crisis governance.

In several countries crisis and disaster management networks have already been set up and include a broad variety of actors. As their experience has shown, mechanisms of regular exchange of information and training are necessary to improve their functioning, and they need to be connected to a high-ranking focal point within government, e.g. a ministry, to receive sufficient support and be able to fulfil coordinative functions over a broad range of levels of decision making.

In order to successfully reach out to migrants, the inclusion of migrants' organisations, migrant community leaders and interlocutors to migrant communities is crucial already during the development of these networks. Depending on the situation in the respective country, the contact to migrant organisations and the knowledge about their places of residence will differ strongly. In some countries, a registration system and well established networks of migrant organisations will exist, which provide information on the whereabouts of the migrants, whereas in other countries registration systems might be missing, or specific groups of migrants stay invisible, or fear to get into contact with the authorities.

A further channel of communication will be consulates of countries of origin with their tradition to reach out towards the citizens. As well as in the pre-crisis phase, cooperation during the crisis-phase with the authorities of the countries of origin of migrants, as well as of transit countries, is essential. In this respect, consulates can have an important role as access points for information and as providers of first financial and technical support to their citizens.

Lessons from the MICIC – project: Relevant areas of action in the pre-crisis, the emergency and the post-crisis phase

The activities of stakeholders in crisis management follow different internal logics, and different decision making procedures, depending on the task of the stakeholders and the crisis phase. The following section discusses the relevant approaches of stakeholders involved into immediate disaster response, stakeholders providing general services in a region affected by a crisis, and – due to its utmost relevance in emergencies – stakeholders providing mobility related support. It is mainly based on the analysis of reports on the regional consultations in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas within the MICIC-Initiative and on research on the migrants experienced in crises in Central Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, the Lebanon, Libya, South Africa and Thailand coordinated at ICMPD (Hendow et al. 2017), and the “Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict

or Natural Disaster” published by the MICIC-Initiative (Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative 2016).

Pre-crisis phase

As migration can be both linked with vulnerability and capacity, disaster preparedness planning and response has to be based on an accurate analysis of the effects of migration on vulnerability-producing situations and necessary mitigation measures. In this context, both the knowledge of the whereabouts of migrants and a trustful relationship between the migrant population and the institutions providing support and civil protection is crucial.

Both disaster preparedness planning and emergency response measures usually are implemented by state authorities, mainly the police or the military, with support of non-governmental organisations, like e.g. the respective Red Cross and Red Crescent societies. This combination of state authorities and NGOs – which has proven successful in most cases of emergencies – may entail a specific challenge with regard to migration: Irregularly resident migrants might shine away from seeking support from state authorities, as they might fear consequences when notifying the police about their presence. This situation most likely will lead to wrong assessments of needs for emergency response and thus impact negatively on the whole population affected by a disaster. In order to overcome this challenge, there is the need to establish a strict firewall between crisis response and migration control. Migrants should be informed clearly and in a multilingual format that rescue services operate without taking into account the migration status of victims and do not report to the migration authorities not only during a crisis, but also in pre-crisis times.

Disaster response organisations can prepare for a better inclusion of migrants mainly in the pre-crisis phase. In this respect “Know your population!” is a main imperative. A functioning and sustainable population registration system can deliver this information, if migrants are included independently of their legal status and on the same footing as citizens. In practice, population registers are often missing or lack reliability. To overcome these difficulties, administrations of population registers should communicate with migrant representatives and/or NGOs working with migrants on the ground to check and complete their information. Consular services can provide important support if they collect data on the whereabouts of their citizens. Registration of citizens at consulates in the pre-crisis phase will help to collect relevant information. In order to cover all migrants, irregular migrants should be included into registration. Rescue organisations should be informed about the migrant population and their needs and encouraged to recruit migrants among their staff.

Measures to improve the language proficiency of migrants in the main language(s) of the host country are a key strategy in disaster preparedness. Nevertheless, first aid providers should provide information in the main migrant’s native languages and offer interpretation services to be accessible also to those with

insufficient knowledge of the local language(s). In this respect, setting up multilingual hotlines and text (SMS) services, and informing migrants about hotline-telephone numbers and accessibility in pre-crisis time is essential. Mobile phone based and IT based multilingual information services can complete these tools. Consulates and embassies of the countries of origin of the resident migrants should be included into these efforts.

Crisis situations often lead to traumatisation of victims, who will not only need adequate medical care, but also psychological assistance. The effects of trauma on individual behaviour are influenced by cultural traditions, thus post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) may take different forms (Wilson 2005). First responders need to receive adequate intercultural training to be able to cope professionally with PTSD-related behaviour unknown in their cultural context.

Public and general services

The provision of public and general services is organised differently from country to country. It is essential to analyse the structure and institutional set up of providers in the pre-crisis phase, to include them into stakeholder inclusion measures and to develop clear procedures for access to basic services in and at the aftermath of a crisis.

Access to basic services has to be based on the principle of needs assessment and discrimination-free service delivery. In order to successfully reach out to migrants, providers should be encouraged to pro-actively reach out to migrant leaders, interlocutors and NGOs working with migrants to get information about and assess migrants' needs. Also in this field, it will be helpful to prepare multilingual information material. As migrants' vulnerabilities may lead to unequal treatment by service providers, adequate anti-discrimination policies including a revision of procedures leading to unequal access to services are necessary.

Emergency phase

Crisis and disaster response may concern activities in situ and measures to remove victims out of affected areas, and will address both local residents as migrants. Furthermore, crisis responses may be different in cases of natural disasters and civil wars. Whereas in the first case, at least immediate disaster response in many cases will be administered without legal differentiation between citizens and migrants, in cases of civil war there often will be an intentional divide between different population groups with regard to access to support and services. In the case of international migrants, the authorities of countries of origin may also step in as a specific set of actors.

Immediate emergency response

Immediate disaster response concerns immediate life-saving activities, e.g. recovery operations, first medical support, provision of shelter, and the distribution of

food, water and emergency supplies. Disaster relief services are usually implemented following the principle of triage. Triage systems categorise victims in different categories regarding the gravity of damages in order to provide (medical) support to those most in need first (Robertson-Steel 2006). When on scene, rescue teams usually do not differentiate according to any other criteria, thus migrant status usually does not play a role in first response rescue operations on the spot. Triage approaches are also applied when deciding which locations to focus on first for disaster relief. In this respect, the number of people affected and the gravity of disaster impacts are the main indicators for prioritisation of disaster response.

Triage can be an effective tool for levelling systemic power dynamics, which create barriers for marginalised persons to access to emergency response services; however, there are several specific challenges with regard to migration:

- a) The application of a triage-approach has to be based on a sufficient level of information about the resident population.
- b) Communication between the rescuers and the victims is essential to apply triage successfully.
- c) Basic trust between victims and rescuers has to be established.

In cases of a complex emergency – a major humanitarian crisis of a multi-causal nature that requires a system-wide response (Duffield 1994, 5) – immediate emergency response may be hampered by the full or partial breakdown of national institutions, the infrastructure and/or the public order. “Complex emergencies” are typically characterized by an extensive violence and loss of life, the displacements of populations, widespread damage to societies and economies, the hindrance or prevention of humanitarian assistance by political and military constraints and significant security risks for humanitarian relief workers in some areas, and need large-scale and multifaceted humanitarian assistance¹⁰. These emergencies usually lead to large scale mass movements of refugees and displaced persons and often overwhelm the capacities of national disaster management structures. In these cases, the involvement of International Organisations and the cooperation with other countries is necessary to deliver support to victims, which can be fostered by the development of cooperation agreements with international relief organisations in due time.

General services

In the emergency phase, reaching out to migrant communities and the provision of services irrespective of the legal status is a clear priority. Migrants should be addressed in multilingual formats, and there should be a clear message that authorities involved into rescue operations provide relief irrespective of legal status.

¹⁰ See also <http://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/disaster-management/about-disasters/definition-of-hazard/complex-emergencies/>

Furthermore, procedures granting equal access independently from migration status, national origin or citizenship should be established.

Information on available services should be given by all available means of communication. If possible, community leaders and interlocutors should be asked to spread the information. In any case, the provision of services should not be hindered by the migration status of the person concerned. Access to all services – if available – should be provided to the population concerned on a needs based paradigm, including free service provision.

Access to information and to communication facilities is a major issue in a crisis. This does not only concern the communication of authorities with migrants, and the distribution of information to migrants making use of different channels of communication including both personal and digital communication, but also migrants' communication needs. In this respect, access to public internet terminals or free WiFi-spots, and access to a sufficient number of sockets for charging mobile phones, or the supply of cheap sim-cards for mobile phones, will help migrants to communicate with each other and with their families. As in a crisis WiFi connections might not function, mobile phone service providers should be encouraged to grant a certain number of free or cheap minutes for calls and a certain number of free or cheap megabytes of data-transfer for communication with the main source countries of immigrants.

For dissemination of information, a broad variety of channels should be used. Regarding electronic communications, text services (SMS) have proven more stable in a crisis than internet-based services.

Mobility related services

Equal access to services and access to information about mobility options, and protection against violence and exploitation during travel and transit are a central element of crisis management. Main stakeholders in this area are law enforcement authorities, public and/or private transport providers, and public and/or private providers of related infrastructure. Removal to a neighbouring country will involve the authorities of this country, which will need to grant border-crossing and (temporary) resident permits to disaster victims. Removal to the country of origin will involve both the authorities of this country and the authorities of (potential) transit countries as stakeholders.

Migrants' vulnerabilities may increase the risk of becoming victims of violence and (sexual) exploitation during travel. In particular, irregular migrants, migrants restricted in their mobility by lack of identity documents, which might have been lost or withheld by employers, or migrants not holding a visa for countries they intend to reach for protection, will be confronted with increased travel risks.

These risks can be mitigated by public authorities of the country of residence through the provision of provisional identity and travel documents, and by third countries through the granting of humanitarian entry and residence visa inde-

pendently of the legal status of the migrant, and by the organisation of safe and reliable transport facilities for migrants in transit.

The consulates of the countries of origin can facilitate mobility by the smooth issuance of travel documents and by material, logistic or other support to migrants. Neighbouring countries can support mobility by granting humanitarian entry or transit visas and/or (temporary) residence permits. In case of a serious breakdown of the public order, evacuation procedures for migrants, if necessary with the support of international organisations, might become necessary.

Both (temporary) return and re-integration in the country of origin as remigration to the country of residence are options taken by migrants affected by a crisis in their country of residence. Both options link the authorities and public service providers of the countries of origin to the crisis country, in particular if the crisis leads to mass returns of citizens challenging the reintegration capacity of the country.

Post-crisis phase

Public and general services

Whereas in the post-crisis phase emergency response organisations reduce their involvement and their services are taken over by general service providers, the transfer of information about their activities and experiences, and the specific needs encountered by migrants to general providers is essential. Thus there is a need to include the issue of services for migrants into an organised hand-over to general service providers and to secure a follow-up with migrant organisations, consulates and intermediators.

The re-establishment of basic services is a main task in the post-crisis phase. When re-establishing services and rebuilding, “rebuilding better” should be the target. “Rebuilding better” does not only concern the material infrastructure, but also the empowerment of the population and social cohesion. In this respect, adequate inclusion of migrants should be secured not only by safeguarding access to adequate information, but also by the implementation of clear antidiscrimination and equality procedures which prevent the privileging of nationals over immigrants, and by pro-active inclusion of migrants into rebuilding activities.

Mobility related services

Both the migrant and the non-migrant population may have left the area of crisis and consider either return or settlement in another place. Although “rebuilding” is a guiding paradigm in disaster response, it is important to note that rebuilding does not always need to be the best solution for everyone affected by a crisis. Mobility and resettlement should also be considered as a valid choice, and persons wishing to remove should also be supported.

Other than citizens, migrants may also choose to return to their country of origin or to another country, which will involve authorities of the country of

origin. Return of ex-patriate citizens will often also involve the import of money, household goods, cars, or machinery or equipment used in companies owned by the citizens abroad. To foster return, many countries have implemented tax exemption for returning citizens. Financial authorities are thus to be seen as major stakeholders in the return process.

Re-integration mainly concerns housing, access to the labour market, schooling and access to health and social services. Independently from legal aspects, the authorities will have to face the challenge of providing housing, recognising training certificates obtained abroad, and integrating children, who might not be fluent in the main language(s) of the country, into the education system. Information, orientation and language classes may be required for spouses or children, or for returning adults born and raised abroad. These tasks might involve authorities, private companies and civil society organisations and will be akin to those required for the integration of immigrants.

Migrants returning to the country of origin will often stay connected to their previous country of residence. In immediate post-crisis situations, unpaid salaries or loan repayments might have to be claimed, or property rights might have to be secured. Migrant entrepreneurs might need to claim open payments of business partners, or solve situations regarding loans or the selling or re-opening of their business. All these activities will involve transnational legal and financial service providers, like attorneys or business agencies, but also trade unions or civil society organisations supporting migrants in the enforcement of their entitlements. In this respect, regional migration dialogues can be an important venue to solve issues related to transnational payment and property claims by bringing the relevant regulatory authorities of the countries concerned together under the umbrella of improved migration and mobility management.

Family members or children of migrants not holding the passport of the country of origin of the spouse or the parents of the children, but also household personnel or widowers of citizens are most often excluded from the right to travel to and take residence in the country of origin of the spouse. To mitigate this situation, it is advisable to pass legislation granting access and – at least – temporary residence to spouses and children of (deceased) nationals and to facilitate their naturalisation.

Conclusion: Lessons for Austria

Although this paper has been developed in a context related mainly to crises in non-OECD countries, the experiences of the MICIC project also can provide valuable lessons for Austria.

Whereas Austria as one of the richest countries of the world has established a well-organised civil protection and crisis management system involving public authorities, the military and a variety of voluntary organisations, like fire brigades

or the local Red Cross societies¹¹, the framing of civil protection still follows a nation-state container model. The “Austrian Security Strategy” – the core document for crisis management planning – mentions migration several times as a potential challenge for stability and potential security risk¹². There are only two references to the migrant population in the document. Whereas the first statement “*The relatively high proportion of individuals with migration background living in Austria entails additional expertise which can also be used in the interests of security. At the same time, it also brings about specific challenges concerning internal security*” (Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria 2013, p. 8) mainly links migration with security, the second highlights the potential of soldiers with migration-background for the Austrian army (Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria 2013, p. 10). Nowhere the document mentions activities aiming at the inclusion of migrants in crisis preparedness planning, and no reports on measures including migrants into preparedness planning can be found on the relevant webpages.

This lack of reflection on outreach to and inclusion of migrants also characterises the various brochures on civil protection issues available to the public at the webpage of the Ministry¹³. Although most brochures on fire protection, earthquake protection or radiation protection are available in German and English, none of them is available in the most relevant languages of settled migrants in Austria. The mobile-phone application “KATWARN” sending localisation-based civil protection warnings to its users, even is available only in German.

With a population of some 1,9 million migrants or children from migrant families (Statistik Austria 2016, p. 22), Austria is one of the countries with the highest proportion of migrants and persons with migrant parentage in Europe. Despite the increased focus on German language acquisition in integration policy, a certain percentage of (newly arrived) migrants will not be fluent in German (yet) also in the future, and the functioning and structure of the crisis response system in Austria will not be known to a large part of the migrant population too.

Reaching out to migrants in the field of crisis preparedness planning and preparing the main civil protection organisations for the challenges of a migration society obviously has not been perceived as a major challenge by the main actors in this policy field yet. As the results of the MICIC-project highlight, these challenges should become a priority of action for the next future in order to safeguard inclusive crisis management.

¹¹ See the overview at the homepage of the Federal Ministry of the Interior: <http://www.bmi.gv.at/204/start.aspx>, accessed 12.8.2017

¹² See e.g. Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria 2013, pp. 5, 7, 10, 11, 13, 18.

¹³ See http://www.bmi.gv.at/204_english/start.aspx, accessed 12.8.2017

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