

**TRAINING ON THE PROTECTION OF IDPs**  
Workshop for non-governmental organizations in  
Turkey  
Ankara, 8-9 June 2006

Report

## Introduction

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) conducted a workshop on the protection of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) for representatives of the NGO community in Turkey. The workshop was sponsored and by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Turkey, as part of the UNDP's support to the development of an IDP programme in Turkey. The workshop was held in Ankara on 8-9 June 2006.

The workshop targeted about 30 representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in the protection of IDPs in Turkey (see annex 1 – list of participants). The objective of the workshop was to strengthen the capacity of Turkish NGOs to interact with the Turkish authorities with regard to their recent initiatives to address and resolve the IDP situation in the country. The workshop aimed at providing NGOs with training on key tools, knowledge and skills relevant to the protection of IDPs and the search to durable solutions to internal displacement. In particular, the workshop endeavored to disseminate the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and build the capacity and awareness to apply them (see annex 2 – agenda).

## Assessment

The IDMC conducted a preliminary assessment of the training needs among the NGO community in Turkey with regard to the protection of IDPs. The first step of this assessment was a written questionnaire sent to all NGOs invited to the workshop, of which 16 replied. Furthermore, 5 NGOs were interviewed on the phone. The objective of the assessment was to have more information on the profile of the NGOs and their contribution to the protection of IDPs in Turkey. The assessment confirmed that the NGOs invited were dealing with IDPs, although most do not target them as such, but include them among their target groups because of their vulnerability.

NGOs were also asked to identify the issues which they think should be addressed in the workshop, and their expectations as to the impact of the training on their work (see list below, in order of priority as indicated by the NGOs):

- The right of IDPs to return home and compensation for lost or damaged properties
- Responsibility of national authorities towards IDPs
- When does internal displacement end
- International standards for the protection of IDPs
- Who is an IDP
- The protection of vulnerable IDPs
- What NGOs can do to improve the protection of IDPs and returnees in Turkey

The NGOs also shared their expectations from the workshop, with regard to its impact on their work and the protection of IDPs. In general, NGOs wished to improve their current level of knowledge about standards and tools for the protection of IDPs, and thereby raise the quality of their activities. NGOs expected that the training should make them more aware of IDPs' rights, and that they should be more able to inform IDPs accordingly. Also, NGOs wanted to be able to develop projects which are based on the rights of IDPs, as well as international policies and standards. NGOs also expected that the training should help them to develop their strategy in response to displacement, as well as to improve their advocacy work. One NGO underlined that they would be interested for organizing other training workshops on this topic.

## Main issues discussed during the workshop



In the first session, participants reviewed the definition of an internally displaced person contained in the Guiding Principles. It was highlighted that IDPs are persons who moved involuntarily, as a result of causes leaving them no choice but to leave their homes, such as armed conflicts, violence, human rights violations, and disasters. Second, IDPs have been displaced within their own country. They remain under the responsibility of national authorities of their country of habitual residence. As citizens, they should enjoy the same rights as the rest of the population. In Turkey, the authorities have acknowledged that about 350,000 villagers were evicted from their homes by the Army in southeastern Turkey, during the security operations against the Kurdish armed groups. However, participants highlighted that a much higher number of civilians left their homes because of the violence in the area, and the consequences of the conflict on the economic situation.

One session was devoted to the international legal framework pertaining to the protection of IDPs. Participants were briefed on the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which restate the rights of IDPs under international humanitarian law and human rights law. The Guiding Principles explain how international human rights and humanitarian law standards apply to issue of internal displacement, with regard to protection from and during displacement, and durable solutions. Participants identified the sources of selected principles by comparing them with the main instruments binding on the Turkish authorities. It was acknowledged that the Guiding Principles are an important reference in the advocacy work of NGOs, all the more since the Turkish authorities have made reference to them in national policy documents.

In groups, participants were asked to identify the various problems and needs of IDPs in Turkey. After doing so, the groups had to relate each of the issues identified to the rights of IDPs as restated in the Guiding Principles. In order to illustrate the relevance of the Guiding Principles as a monitoring tool, participants were then asked to discuss the situation in IDPs with regard to the principles not discussed so far. This helped participants to establish a more comprehensive picture of the situation of IDPs with regard to all their rights, whether they relate to assistance (such as housing, education, etc) or other, less visible, needs (documents, voting, etc).

Participants discussed the protection risks for specific and gender groups, another essential step when identifying the protection concerns relating to IDPs. It was agreed that particular attention should be given to the groups most at risk, including women and children, who constitute the majority of the displaced in all situations of IDPs. However, the risks faced by other groups, such as the male population, and elderly, are also often neglected and should be reviewed carefully.

In plenary, the groups merged their findings in a table organizing IDPs' rights into four categories: (a) rights related to physical security and integrity; (b) fundamental rights related to basic necessities of life; (c) rights related to other economic, social and cultural protection needs; and (d) rights related to other civil and political protection needs (see annex 3).

The responsibility for the protection of IDPs was discussed by the participants on the basis of the following definition of protection, provided by a group of humanitarian and human rights actors:

*Protection includes "all activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law, i.e. human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law"<sup>1</sup>.*

Participants agreed that the primary responsibility for the protection of IDPs rests with the national authorities, as restated in the Guiding Principles. Authorities have also the duty to ensure that their response to displacement is the result of an inclusive process, involving civil society actors, in particular NGOs. Furthermore, national authorities should request or accept the support of the international community, in particular from the relevant regional and international agencies.

<sup>1</sup> See *Strengthening Protection in War : a Search for Professional Standards*, ICRC, 2001

Participants acknowledged that the Turkish government has shown an increasing will to address the displacement crisis more comprehensively than in the past, and are more open to cooperation with international actors, such as the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the human rights of IDPs and UDNP.

The IDMC briefed participants on the main standards relating to durable solutions to internal displacement. Participants compared the government's Framework Document<sup>2</sup> and globally agreed that it was in line with the standards restated in the Guiding Principles.

A special session was organized to discuss the issue of compensation for damages and losses of properties resulting from the violence in southeastern Turkey. Ms. Dilek Kurban, from the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV), and Mr. Sahin Altuner, from the Diyarbakir Bar Association, discussed the Compensation Law No. 5233 and its implementation. It was recommended that the law should be amended to compensate the pain and suffering of IDPs in accordance with the European Court of Human Rights case law. It was also observed that the law is not implemented consistently by the compensation commissions from province to province. The panel suggested that the government should create guidelines for the commissions to ensure uniformity in the implementation of the law.

The contribution of NGOs to the protection of IDPs was discussed with the view of identifying the various modes of action used in response to violations of IDPs' rights. First, NGOs can try to convince the authorities to fulfill their obligations towards IDPs (persuasion), through dialogue. NGOs may also pressure the authorities through information campaign among the public (denunciation), or through other actors who have more capacity to influence the authorities, such as donor states, international or regional organizations (mobilization). Another contribution of NGOs can be to help authorities to fulfill their obligation (capacity-building), for instance through training. Where the authorities fail to provide the necessary response, NGOs can fill the gap and deliver the assistance needed directly to IDPs (substitution). The modes of action were discussed in relation to specific issues, such as the lack of IDPs' access to healthcare and education, and outlines for sectoral action plans were drafted in plenary.

In order to illustrate the "persuasion" approach, participants were asked to prepare a statement to be presented to an imaginary delegation of the human rights committee of the Turkish Grand National Assembly. In their groups, participants represented their NGO in an NGO coalition. The statements, which should not exceed 5 minutes, were supposed to address the coalition's main concerns with regard to IDPs and contain recommendations. Time to prepare the statements was given at the end of day 1, while the session of the "human rights committee" was scheduled at the opening of day 2.

The exercise allowed participants to draw some lessons on good practices for such statements. They observe that timing is a challenge, as NGOs are often given very little time. It is therefore important to prioritise the messages and select only a few number of them, to ensure that the recipients will register them properly. It was suggested that a written document including more detailed information and developing other messages can also be prepared and handed out to the officials. It was highlighted that NGO coalition should present itself shortly and highlight its broad membership and the privileged access of its members to first hand information on the situation of IDPs, through their projects and presence on the ground. It was also agreed that NGOs should not only highlight problems and shortcomings and but also formulate recommendations, which are rights-based but also practical and constructive. References to international standards and policies can also be useful, when correctly made.

## Conclusion and evaluation

<sup>2</sup> "Measures on the Issue of Internally Displaced Persons and the Return to Village and Rehabilitation Project in Turkey", issued by the Council of Ministers on 17 August 2005

In conclusion to the workshop, participants shared suggestions and reflected on good practices which can help NGOs to reinforce the impact of their work on the ground as well as their advocacy activities.

- Strengthen the coordination of NGOs, in particular for advocacy projects: Participants valued the experience of inter-NGO collaboration for the preparation of the statement during the training exercise and believe that this can be replicated.
- Targeting national authorities at the provincial and local level: this was seen as necessary in order to improve dialogue between NGOs and authorities through the promotion of a common language on the issue of IDPs. Training events, where both representatives of the state institutions and civil society are invited, should be promoted.
- Continue the training of NGOs at the local level, and train trainers among NGOs: participants highlighted that many other NGOs could benefit from the training and that more efforts should be made to reach out to them.
- Provide more IDP-related information to NGOs. It was suggested all relevant documents on IDP policy and standards developed at the international and regional level should be made accessible to NGOs, through translation and via a webportal. This should be done with the support of international organizations.

In general, participants expressed their satisfaction about the workshop, as illustrated below by selected quotes from the written evaluations given by participants.

“The session that action plan was formulated was beneficial since it gives the opportunity to work actively and leads to concrete results.”

“The workshop was so useful and beneficial to our work. I was not able to make the definition of IPDs but now on I am leaving here with different project proposals in my mind.”

“It was a hard programme but I learned a lot!”

“Despite everything it was a good work. We learned a lot and I also would like to thank both the facilitators and administration for their objective observations.”

“The session about the problematic areas raised during displacement and their consistency with the Guiding Principles was interesting. Through this way, I got the practical knowledge about how to use them.”

“UNDP makes these kinds of workshops in a successful way. Congratulations.”

“The subjects were reflected in a successful way. When I compare it with other workshops that I have participated so far, I can say that it is one of the best.”

“I was not prepared for the workshop, but I can say that I am leaving the workshop and can understand the problems and needs of IDPs.”

“It was a hard programme but in general information sharing about the law was interesting.”

“The workshop focused on the subjects with which I was not familiar, so that it was beneficial for me.”

“I found this awareness raising work for NGOs very beneficial but I think its sustainability is very important. I think taking part in any kind of work about IDPs is a social responsibility for everybody.”

“I got upset that the people that have no right to get education and have to leave their homes were not mentioned during the workshop.”

The methodology used during the training was also welcome. Participants also made suggestions on how the workshop could be improved

“The homework given at the end of day 1 was not in the plan. It should have been included there and more time should have been provided for the exercise.”

“There should be more time, given the wide range of subjects, in order to make the workshop more efficient.”

“One can create more concrete results regarding the Action Plan to ensure implementation by NGOs.”

“There can be workshops that bring the different groups NGOs with different opinions.”

“The training materials can be sent before the workshop so that we can make the necessary preparations.”

“There should be more workshops for the capacity development of NGOs administrators, so that they can reach the level to give the own training.”

“Groups should be smaller. Large groups create intellectual complexity, despite its richness. Thus, it is more tiring to work in large groups.”

“There were too many time restrictions, and we cannot concentrate during shorter periods.”

“The discussions should be more based on the data and concrete solutions.”

“Training of trainers should me provided as soon as possible so that the information flow can be managed among other NGOs.”

“It should be known that the IDP issue is in line with the democratization process in Turkey. International organizations should take active role in this process and develop the partnership with NGOs.”

## Annex 1 – List of participants

NAME	SURNAME	ORGANIZATION
GÜLCAN	YERÖZ	Amnesty International
HAKAN	GÜNDÜZ	TOHAV (Social and Law Researches Foundation)
GÜL	ATMACA	Solidarity with the Refugees and Migrants Association
İBRAHİM	KAVLAK	Solidarity with the Refugees and Migrants Association
M.SEZGİN	TANRIKULU	Diyarbakır Bar Association
MAHSUNİ	KARAMAN	Diyarbakır Bar Association
BİLGİN	CENGİZ	Accessible Life Association
YEKBUN	UZUN	Accessible Life Association
İDRİS	CANBAY	Van Göç-Der
BURHAN	BORAK	Van Göç-Der
MEHMET ALİ	CANTÜRK	Sea Lantern Assistance and Solidarity Association
AHMET	GEGEZ	Akdeniz Göç-Der
SELAHATTİN	GÜVENÇ	Akdeniz Göç-Der
ŞEFİKA	GÜRBÜZ	Istanbul Göç-Der
MALİK	BARANSEL	ÇATAK – Van
ŞEVKET	TUCİ	ÇATAK – Van
FUAT	DEĞER	MAZLUMDER-Van
ABİDİN	ENGİN	MAZLUMDER-Van
RAMAZAN	GÖKDEMİR	Supporting Women Entrepreneurship Association (Van)
ONE PARTICIPANT		Van Bar Association
BARIŞ	KARACASU	Turkey Human Rights Foundation
ARİF	AYÇİÇEK	Yedibaşak Association (Van)
NİLGÜN	YILDIRIM	KAMER
1-2 KİŞİ		MAZLUMDER Ankara
BİLGİN	SEZER	Yaka Women Cooperative (Van)
ONE PARTICIPANT		International Blue Crescent Relief and Development Foundation
ŞENİZ	YÖRÜK	International Blue Crescent Relief and Development Foundation
PERİHAN	ÖZBEY	Van Women Counselling Center
KEREM	ALTIPARMAK	Ankara University Human Rights Center
LEVENT	KORKUT	Amnesty International
FİLİZ	CONWAY	Bar Association
FİLİZ	SASAOĞLU	Human Resource Development Foundation
AYŞE	DAĞGİBİ	MAZLUMDER Diyarbakır
DİLEK	KURBAN	TESEV
1 Kisi		Diyarbakır Development Center

## Annex 2 - Agenda

### 8 June 2006, Thursday

- 09:00-10:30 Opening session
- 10:30-11:00 Coffee Break
- 11:00-12:30 Who is an IDP?
- 12:30-13:30 Lunch
- 13:30-14:30 The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement
- 14:30-15:30 Protection upon and during displacement
- 15:30 – 16:00 Coffee Break
- 16:00 – 17:00 Protection upon and during displacement (continued)
- 17:00 – 18:00 Durable solutions to internal displacement

### 9 June 2006, Friday

- 09:00-10:00 Role Play: Statements to the Human Rights Committee of the Turkish Parliament
- 10:00-11:00 Property issues
- 11:00-11:30 Coffee Break
- 11:30-12:30 Prioritising areas of concern
- 12:30-13:30 Lunch
- 13:30-15:00 Responses to the protection needs of IDPs
- 15:00-15:15 Coffee Break
- 15:15-16:15 Responses to the protection needs of IDPs
- 16:15-17:00 Closing remarks and evaluation

## Annex 3 – Protection risks facing IDPs in Turkey

IDP Protection Framework for Addressing the Needs of Displaced Persons <sup>3</sup>	
<p><b>1. Rights related to physical security e.g killings, rape, torture, arbitrary detention</b></p> <p>Threats of violence against villagers e.g. village guards, conflict in South-East <b>11(2)c GP</b></p> <p>Rape of women <b>11(2)a GP</b></p> <p>Unexploded land mines are killing and injuring villagers <b>11(1) 10(2)e GP</b></p> <p>Forced marriage (gender specific violence) <b>11(2)a GP</b></p> <p>Human trafficking <b>11(1) GP</b></p> <p>Forced labour of children <b>11(2)b GP</b></p> <p>Forced prostitution <b>11(2) GP</b></p>	<p><b>3. Rights related to other economic, social and cultural rights e.g. health, education, property</b></p> <p>Access to education, especially for women who do not speak Turkish <b>22(1)b GP</b></p> <p>Access to health care, especially for women who do not speak Turkish <b>19(1)(2) GP</b></p> <p>Discrimination/Disadvantage as a result of displacement for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to employment opportunities, especially for women who do not speak Turkish <b>19(1)GP</b></li> <li>• Exploitation of IDPs in employment <b>19(1) GP</b> e.g. underage child labour, wages, working conditions</li> <li>• Access to psychological and social services <b>19(1) (2) GP</b></li> </ul> <p>Language is a barrier especially for women <b>22(1)e GP</b></p> <p>No protection against illegal appropriation, occupation or use of property <b>21(3) GP</b></p> <p>Recovery of property and possessions where possible 21, 21(3) GP Compensation <b>29(2) GP</b></p> <p>Inadequate information for and participation by IDPs and NGOs <b>28(2)GP</b></p>
<p><b>2. Rights related to basic necessities of life e.g. food, shelter, potable water</b></p> <p>Lack of basic shelter and housing <b>18(2)b GP</b></p>	<p><b>4. Rights related to other civil and political rights e.g. documentation, voting rights</b></p> <p>Discrimination/Disadvantage as a result of displacement</p>

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from the document by framework developed by the Secretary General's Representative for the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons

Lack of potable water 18(2)a) GP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• in being registered for voting 22(d) GP</li><li>• access to documentation e.g. passport 20(2) GP</li></ul>
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