

DECEMBER 2016

Information Update

CHA Information Update



Making the invisible visible – and empowered

To mark International Migrants Day on 18 December, Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, the new Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), talks about her new role and highlights the need of a synchronised approach towards migrants, refugees and IDPs in order to assure effective and relevant policies as well as appropriate levels and allocation of funding.

Internal displacement has been driven to the forefront of humanitarian debate in recent months amid

The Centre for Humanitarian Affairs and the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies is pleased to present activities undertaken in the month of December

concerns that the issue of IDPs does NOT feature sufficiently high up on the global policy-setting agenda and risks being further marginalised in international affairs. The New York Declaration that emerged from the 2016 UN Summit on Refugees and Migrants basically set aside this issue even though it is unquestionably linked to that of refugees and migrants. This situation necessitated the “Open Letter” entitled “Invisible Majority: Helping Internally Displaced People” co-signed and published by my predecessor with OCHA, UNDP, NRC and IRC last September.



On assuming my mandate in November 2016, I was drawn to the many achievements of my prestigious predecessors in bringing to the fore the issue of IDPs, which before that had been totally neglected. I still remember the time when, as a practitioner and advocate, we dealt with the “problem” of “internal refugees” and had no Guiding Principles to rely on. Humanitarian work was haphazard and relied completely on human rights advocacy. With the recognition of the primary responsibility of states for addressing the plight of IDPs, particularly through the endorsement of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the evolution of the work of the Special Rapporteur and the international community (i.e. creation of the cluster system), ensuring the human rights of IDPs has become increasingly recognised as a valid, legitimate and necessary endeavour, both for national jurisdictions and the international community. The establishment of IDMC was a welcome addition to the stakeholders working on IDPs because

of its monitoring, analysis and data-gathering functions. At regional level, the adoption of the Great Lakes Pact and the Kampala Convention were exemplary breakthroughs. At national level, more and more states, including those with IDPs, now acknowledge their primary responsibility through the enactment of laws and policies to protect IDPs.

But more needs to be done

The main lesson learned from recent months, exemplified by the respective outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit in May and the UN Summit in September, is that greater recognition of IDPs and their human rights will require further efforts by various actors. This will entail simultaneous political will on the part of international agencies and especially states to ensure that IDPs are never forgotten. The approaches towards migrants, refugees and IDPs will need to be synchronised in order to assure effective and relevant policies as well as appropriate levels and allocation of funding.

Human Rights of IDPs at the core

In order to confront these challenges, as the mandate holder I believe that the focus of building such political will would benefit enormously from the application of human rights based approaches. With universal human rights as the framework, states, agencies, organisations and donors can address the needs of IDPs systematically and thoroughly, by preventing arbitrary displacement, protecting IDPs during displacement, and achieving durable solutions. The UN Guiding Principles on IDPs represent a brilliant one-stop source of what these human rights obligations are. The benchmarks for durable solutions for IDPs, as contained in the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions, are based on accepted human rights standards. In fact, there has never been such a plethora of sources, references and guidance to address the situation of IDPs, especially those displaced by conflict and natural disasters. Experience shows that the achievement of

durable solutions is complex and long term and necessitates a combination of humanitarian and development approaches.

In reference to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Agenda for Humanity, the “Open Letter” stated: “There can be no sustainable development if the more than 40 million internally displaced people are left behind.” And those IDPs cited concerned only those displaced by conflict and generalised violence.

So what next?

In order to contribute to making the invisible visible, I would like to address one essential issue throughout my mandate: the need for a genuine participation of the IDPs themselves in all phases of efforts to address displacement issues that directly concern them. This need is stated

in many sections of the Guiding Principles, is rooted in the rights of IDPs to recognition as legal personalities and to participation in the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of society, and is recognised in many laws and policies. The engagement of IDPs in helping to resolve the causes of displacement, in protection and in finding durable solutions will assist states in enabling relevant, effective and efficient ways to address the many facets of internal displacement. Moreover, such engagement will encourage ownership and the long-term resilience of IDP communities.

This in turn will empower IDPs to become part of the solution, rather than merely a “problem”. For this to happen, I encourage all stakeholders to devote particular attention to the human rights of IDPs. And hopefully, we will raise their profile and visibility AND empower them to play an active

role in determining their fate.

About the author

Cecilia Jimenez-Damary is the new Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs. She has worked in the field of human rights for nearly 30 years at the local, national and international levels with NGOs, national human rights institutions, UN agencies and governments. Since 2013, she has worked as National Manager of the Philippine Commission on Human Rights’ special project on Internally Displaced Persons. Prior to that, she worked for five years at IDMC as a Senior Legal Advisor and Training Officer, where, among other valuable contributions, she developed the IDMC training module on durable solutions to displacement.

<http://reliefweb.int/report/world/making-invisible-visible-and-empowered>

Afghan Emerging Civil Leaders Study Tour to Sri Lanka- 30th November- 10th December 2016

Under the “Emerging Civil Society Leaders” (ECSL) program, which is a key component of Afghan Civic Engagement Program (ACEP) of the Counterpart International, The centre for Humanitarian Affairs (CHA) hosted a study tour for 35 Afghan civil society activists from the 30th of November 2016 to the 10th of December 2016. The main objective of the study tour was to expose these emerging Afghan leaders to individual civil society activists, informal civil society organizations and also relevant public institutions, youth parliament to learn from their best practices of working





with citizens/communities and engaging citizens in creating positive social change. Sri Lanka has been chosen for the study tour in 2016 as a country that has gone through years of conflict and has many common issues with Afghanistan, including emerging CSOs, active youth and youth networks and diverse communities in terms of ethnicity and religion.



The programme encompassed meetings in Colombo, Kandy, Anuradhapura, Jaffna, and Killinochchi where they met with different NGOs, visited resettlement camps and engaged with survivors of the armed conflict. The key areas focused on during this tour were transparency, empowerment, religion, poverty, governance, peace reconciliation, conflict resolution, anti-corruption, and human rights. Their visit also involved trips to cultural sites such as the Temple of The Tooth, religious sites in Anuradhapura and governmental establishments which included the Parliament and Bribery Commission where they were exposed to formal procedure.



Active aging and Senior citizens



The Centre for Humanitarian Affairs under its program Elder care hosted a lecture by Prof. Samudra Kathriarachchi Professor of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medical Sciences University of Sri Jayewardenepura On “Caring for senior Citizens: Understanding the aging brain and Dementia” December 16th 2016 at CHA. The lecture was attended by Senior citizens, Ngo representative, faculty members of the department of psychology, students of psychology, civil society working on elder care and representation from NISD. This lecture is the first of a series of lectures to be held in the next few months. Prof Kathriarachchi lecture can be accessed on the CHA web site. : <http://www.humanitariansrilanka.org>
The program looks at producing



material and holding programs to understand dementia and early detection.; Promote active aging through brochures, web sites and programs at the community level in partnership with regional health

officers and the Elders Secretariat staff in the districts and promoting greater community awareness and support groups amongst senior citizens to improve their health and provide support to families.

Employment for Senior citizens

Although the baby boomer generation is approaching retirement age, many have found it necessary to continue their participation in the workforce. Other seniors wish to remain in their jobs as they are healthy, engaged and continue to contribute their skills and expertise.

Still others must re-enter the workforce and yet find opportunities difficult, or discover the search process challenging. CHA is designing an initiative which packages services necessary for senior citizens to be active in acquired professions and skills.



No Elderly

... should make their final years sitting around at home. Dear elderly, go out and have fun! Stay active and you'll be just...

Fine

Helping persons with special needs



Special Needs – E Resource Center

Special Needs and Disabilities are often seen as a liability or burden by society, and those who suffer from them are often cast aside, yet there is so much more to a person than their disability there is beauty, kindness, intelligence and the ability to change lives. We have created a web page with several

areas of support for users accessible at <http://www.humanitariansrilanka.org/special-needs/>. This page is an E-resource centre set up by the Centre for Humanitarian Affairs, to bring you useful tips and information you can use to help you support and help your children or family members to overcome the barriers and use their naturally given strengths to become the best version of themselves and progress in society.

Advocating for policy focused on-

All such persons are assessed for their needs by competent persons with sensitivity; Each is supported to realize their maximum potential whilst recognize any social constraints; We aim to have in place national competency standards and qualifications which support avenues for livelihood and therapeutic support; Every such person is provided options to study from homes, study over longer periods to acquire qualifications.

The latest data is being accessed from the Department of Census and Statistics. Concurrently we have sought assistance of the National Chamber of Commerce to seek assistance of members wishing to support empower such persons including commissioning for revenue generating activities whilst reaching out to Corporates.

Climate Diplomacy



We have advocated with Foreign Ministry the concept of Climate Diplomacy in South Asia. Climate change will impact on the region. Decreased availability of natural resources and an increasing number and intensity of natural disasters will be the main challenges. In the Himalayan sub-region, food, energy and water are closely interlinked. The sub-region is most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change,

in particular due to the effects on wetlands. If these crucial elements of the overall regional ecosystem are damaged, a vital link in flood warning and protection against floods may be lost. Countries of the region will face problems for want of water, food, and energy to meet the needs of their people. India has agreements on water sharing with China, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Across the World Regions have developed several initiatives around the environment.

Suggested areas for Climate diplomacy could include-

Environmental management and protection as an integral part of economic development and regional integration for sustainable development. This includes the use of sustainable trans boundary natural resource management (TBNRM) as an opportunity for regional economic development and integration. Cooperation in wildlife and Bio diversity management by establishing trans boundary parks, to mountain conservation areas, to integrated management frameworks for shared marine ecosystems, to spatial development initiatives.

Bhutan is a leader in terms of exceptional best practices. Sri Lanka could consider working with Bhutan in pursuing this concept.

Promotion of professional standards



Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission - Sri Lanka (TVEC)

CHA has initiated a partnership with TVEC and will hold NVQ3 level introductory course in Care and counselling.

- Communication Skills in counselling

- Current social problems in SL
- Ethical and Professional responsibilities of carers and counsellors
- Different recipients of care and the skills needed to support them
- Basic child care
- Introduction to Social care.

Course commencement: February 2017

Course on Toddler care

The Centre in partnership with MothersTouch will conduct a course for young women who wish to pursue a career in Toddler care and be QUALIFIED homebased Child Caregiver/child development assistant. The program will be conducted from February 2017 and focus on assisting school leavers, those hoping to find employment overseas and those with work experience in the area of child care and child development obtain further skills and certification of their skills. The course will focus on – Child development, nutrition, health and safety, protection, psychology, social development and many more.

Course commencement: February 2017

The Street Store Sri Lanka



of challenge...some are orphaned, abandoned...or victimized...some of these girls are from unsuitable home environments where the parents or guardians are either addicted to alcohol or drugs or are engaged in criminal activities or are unable to provide for their children due to extreme poverty. In all cases these girls are extremely traumatized and need special care and attention. The home contains nearly 54 girls in total. They all enjoyed the new shopping experience. Unlike the traditional way of donations the Street Store allowed them to choose what they want and they were excited to learn that they can choose their clothes also they managed to match accessories for the set of clothes they chose.

The Street Store Sri Lanka held its second pop up shop in Colombo at Sri Lankadhara Society, Ballika Home, Colombo 06 on

18th Dec 2016 from 10am – 1pm. This is a haven for disadvantaged girls between the ages of 5 and 18 years. These girls have faced all manner

Disaster Risk Reduction Activities

For further reading on our Disaster Risk Reduction and Management projects you may refer to the A-PAD Bulletin, our bi-monthly publication which carries an expanded overview of all disaster management activity at the CHA. (Also visit us at our DRR programme website <http://www.apadsl.org/>)

Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction Project – December 2016



Workshops were carried out on Creating Disaster Resilient Community and Disaster Resilient Homes for students and community members in Batticaloa District.



In Jaffna training on Water Management and Benefits of Organic Farming was conducted for selected youth leaders.



No 1, Gower Street, Colombo 05.

Tel: 0114061461 Ext: 634

Email: info@cha.lk

The Information Update is also available on the CHA website: <http://www.humanitariansrilanka.org>

For further information please contact Hashini on info@cha.lk