

K4D Impact Stories #4

K4D strengthens partners' ability to deliver improved results for inclusion in crises

Achieving Sustainable Development Goals requires the inclusion of the most vulnerable people affected by intersecting inequalities. Inclusion is an approach and objective that serves to counter structural discrimination and enable affected people and communities to withstand the causes and impacts of crises. Recognising the need to address this issue, the UK government has sought to implement a range of commitments relating to inclusion in its programme and policy responses to crises. The K4D Inclusion in Crises Learning Journey has played a key role in supporting reflection on the opportunities and challenges for operationalising these commitments and equipping participants with the tools needed to make sure programmes can deliver high-impact results, improving the lives and wellbeing of people who are marginalised and crisis-affected.

The opportunity

Structural discrimination has a significant impact on the nature and scale of crisis, risk and vulnerability. The disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on people who are marginalised and crisis-affected drew the world's attention sharply to this fact. In crisis settings, structural discrimination informs the policies, practices, attitudes and behaviours of the associated stakeholders: authorities, non-state armed groups, humanitarian actors, civil society, households and individuals. These are manifested as barriers which restrict access for marginalised people to resources, social participation and services.

Inclusion is an approach as well as an objective, founded on the human rights principles of inherent dignity, participation and respect for diversity. These principles serve to counter structural discrimination and enable affected people and communities to more effectively anticipate, prevent, prepare, respond, recover and withstand the causes and impacts of crises. The creation of the new Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO) has provided an opportunity to restate commitments and strengthen action on inclusion in humanitarian and protracted crises.

K4D contribution

The Inclusion in Crises Learning Journey brought together a broad range of [FCDO cadres](#) (specialised teams of advisors and experts), departments and posts, providing a vehicle for colleagues to build a shared understanding of the relationship between inclusion, programme effectiveness, efficiency, conflict sensitivity and the principles of do no harm. Central to this learning journey was providing support to advisors, programme teams and others to deliver improved outcomes for marginalised and crisis-affected people. In realising this aim, the Inclusion in Crises Learning Journey facilitated peer engagement, the development of key evidence-based resources and set the stage for ongoing learning by laying the foundation for an Inclusion in Crises Community of Practice.

Delivered across three phases, the Learning Journey supported a range of workshops and events designed to facilitate reflection on the challenges and opportunities for strengthening actions on inclusion, within both humanitarian and protracted crises. Overall, these events were valued for the space they lent to quality engagement on key topics.

“People were actually coming in a nuanced way and were able to engage. They brought issues they were struggling with and asked questions on how to approach things more effectively. It wasn’t ‘101 level’ – people were able to engage substantively with the topics we were talking about and the challenges we were bringing.”

Later phases in the learning journey focused on laying the ground for ongoing learning through the development of easily accessible resources and learning products. Resources were viewed as a key element of the Learning Journey and praised for their utility and relevance to key programming challenges. Specifically, advisors expressed an appreciation for their ‘short and snappy’ nature which was well suited to the high-demand schedules of most team members. FCDO advisors also praised the K4D team for their contributions to the establishment of a constructive and responsive work environment.

“[We] developed such a great rapport, lots of technical talk back and forth in terms of content, which made it really enjoyable and really productive, an iterative approach that was hugely valuable. We were able to tackle topics that were arising through the course of the job as well, able to keep things current, able to respond to issues as they arose.”

Impact

Increased awareness

While the Learning Journey specifically aimed to engage programme managers and advisors involved in crisis-related programming and policy, active participation from across the humanitarian, social development, education and peacebuilding sectors was strongly encouraged as a means to achieve cross-learning and further ground theory into practice. Work with K4D was seen as a key driver in extending the pool of advisors engaged in Inclusion in Crises learning.

“Engagement with K4D facilitated a lot of technical discussions around ongoing work with this large group that wouldn’t necessarily have come to fruition without it – that was a lovely, unexpected result of the Learning Journey – it enabled me to find a way to reach folks who didn’t even know what they didn’t know, they weren’t aware of their knowledge gaps, then when being made aware were eager to fix things.”

Discussions with in-country FCDO advisors indicated engagement with the learning journey has provided useful learning that can be directly applied to day-to-day programming and to policy work in the field.

“[The learning journey] enabled me to find a way to reach folks who weren’t aware of their knowledge gaps...[but] were eager to fix things.”

“Working in the Yemen context is completely new for me from the other contexts, it’s having that broader thinking that has been useful and provided information I can take forward in other roles as well. It’s definitely been useful.”

Access to resources

A key component of the Inclusion in Crises Learning Journey has been providing access to easy-to-consume and readily accessible products that can support continued engagement and learning on how to deliver improved outcomes for marginalised and crisis-affected people. The creation of an Inclusion in Crises Community of Practice from which stakeholders can access resources and engage with peers was recognised as a key step in supporting the delivery of improved outcomes. Easily accessible learning products and associated Helpdesk Reports were recognised for their quality design and utility in supporting advisors to connect theory to practice. Specifically, advisors expressed an appreciation for access to multi-media resources that were readily available for engagement when needed.

“I can go back and have a look at the videos; the fact that these are available is really helpful. I’ve been more engaged with the learning journey on an independent level, with the products, the stuff that came through K4D that you could pick up and read at your own pace, I will definitely use that. I have used some of that as evidence within the work that I do.”

Evidence-based action

While increasing awareness and providing access to key resources have been central to the Inclusion in Crises Learning Journey, the broader objective has been transferring learning into evidence-based action. Evidence indicates that Learning Journey activities and/or engagement with products have informed the design of several pieces of programming. For example, reports indicate that learning has fed directly into FCDO business cases in both South Sudan and Kenya. FCDO collaborators also note learning has fed into projects working on Gender-Based Violence and Gender Equity

in Somalia and Nigeria. In these cases, learning journey products were shared as a means to bring in technical learning and inform consultancy objectives. Notably, while acknowledging the key role K4D has played in supporting these learning objectives, one FCDO advisor highlighted that there was still much work to be done in realising the implementation of widespread inclusive practices.

“What I think this has done, is enable understanding that we’ve only hit the top of the iceberg in terms of inclusion challenges in humanitarian access.”

FURTHER READING

Helpdesk Reports

- > [Inclusion in Crisis Response, Recovery and Resilience](#)
Becky Carter
14 May 2021
- > [Impact of Social Inequalities and Discrimination on Vulnerability to Crises](#)
Becky Carter
13 April 2021
- > [Social Inequalities and Famine and Severe Food Insecurity Risk](#)
Becky Carter and Luke Kelly
30 June 2021

Learning Products

- > [Briefing Note #2](#)
[Inclusion Across the Nexus in Protracted Conflicts](#)
Becky Carter
1 March 2022
- > [Briefing Note #3](#)
[Monitoring Inclusion in Crises](#)
Jo Carpenter
September 2022

Nb. Briefing Note #1 is internal to FCDO.

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