

Think
new things
Make
new connections

A HUNGRY WORLD ON THE MOVE: THE IMPACT OF THE FOOD CRISIS ON MIGRATION AND HOW WE MUST RESPOND

Friday 14 October 2022

Conference debrief summary notes

*These notes are a summary of the debrief discussion. The notes do **not** reflect the position of The Ditchley Foundation, neither is any participant in any way committed to their content or expression.*

It is also emphasised that these are summary notes of the debrief discussion: it is not feasible to reflect every point of view that was raised but we hope that these notes provide a good overview of the major lines of discussion.

Importance of narrative and addressing low salience of food security. Migration is seen as a one-way system and the narrative tends to be about threat and failure. However, we have seen countries welcome refugees in their droves (a response not always led by their Governments) which builds immediate and common response. For example, in the Polish city of Lublin, 97 per cent of Ukrainian refugees are being housed by private homes. The city's response was built up from the grass roots which sends a powerful message to other communities about the opportunity in bottom up action. If we can create and report positive stories and frame the issue differently, we can encourage increased engagement and solutions.

Concrete ideas and tailoring messages can help engage new partners. Surprising narratives that speak to others interests can bring more actors to the table. For example, food insecurity has implications for the wider security sector. If the messaging is correct, food security can be a higher priority for many interests, although it is always crucial to listen to the migrants themselves and understand what is needed rather than second guessing.

Digital nomads. The geography of work is changing, something which the war in Ukraine has brought into the spotlight. There are clear labour needs for economies across the world and these could be met by those who have been displaced. We should harness these opportunities. Technology can be used to support migration in this way and also for visa processes and cash transfers to migrants.

Climate, food security and migration are inextricably entwined. Those at risk of going hungry are likely to be those on the move (the average weight loss per person in Venezuela, for example, is 8 kilos over 5 years).

Food insecurity issue around the globe has been deteriorating since 2015. More people are now in need of assistance than at any time since the second world war. During 2000-2015 the world made huge progress which resulted in number 2 (Zero Hunger) of the Global Goals agenda. Almost from the day that was agreed, the situation has gotten worse as we contend with increased conflict and the existential risk climate change poses.

A person is likely to die every 36 seconds as a result of hunger in East Africa because of drought. Although current conditions in Africa are being fuelled by what's happening in Ukraine where dependency was high on grain, climate breakdown is the root cause of what's happening through droughts, wild fires and hurricanes. A further pressure on the amount of land needed to help mitigate burning fossil fuels is going to increase pressure of displacement.

Horizon scanning and long termism. We are so often focused on crises, but we should think about issues more long term. The pandemic showed clearly how fragile our systems are.

A global coalition of local solutions. It is likely not possible to find a common solution but fostering a shared global responsibility should be part of the solution. It is a geo-strategic failure of the West that strong enough relationships do not exist with countries across the global south. Funding cuts have affected aid and that gap needs to also be addressed – private sector sponsorships could be a partial solution.

We are a heavily interdependent world which can't tackle any crises through unilateral measures. We must think creatively and boldly about how we manage these global challenges together. Migration is it always a problem. The world has shown that we can address world hunger effectively and we can do that again.