



# EFFECTIVENESS OF GERMAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN DEALING WITH CONFLICT DRIVEN MIGRATION CRISES

*Executive Summary*

*2021*

## Imprint

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## SUMMARY

This evaluation analyses the effectiveness of German development cooperation in dealing with conflict-induced forced migration crises based on the case of the Partnerships for Prospects Initiative (P4P) in the Middle East in the period from 2016 to 2019.

After the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) had declared reduction of the causes of forced migration and the support of refugees to be an important goal of German development cooperation back in 2014, this objective gained additional political momentum when the forced migration crisis spread to Europe in 2015/2016. In the course of the subsequent public debate in Germany about tackling the causes of forced migration, over time development cooperation has come to be seen as especially significant. Many of the development cooperation measures initiated since then have therefore been aimed at creating long-term prospects for refugees in their host countries. However, this only appears to be attainable if these countries receive massive support, such that besides supporting refugees, development cooperation is also focused on the construction and upkeep of key infrastructure in the host communities.

Many of the people caught up in the events of 2015/16 were forced into “secondary displacement” or expulsion from their home country in the Middle East. Today the causes of this have still not been eliminated. Although the crisis in Syria is a protracted one, tackling its repercussions on the ground initially required very rapid and comprehensive action to help the affected people cope with their emergency situation. This kind of short-term support is usually carried out by humanitarian assistance rather than development cooperation, which is designed to be long-term and structural. Hence it was primarily the international conferences on humanitarian assistance that drove progress in tackling the repercussions of the Syrian crisis while increasingly involving development cooperation actors. A fundamental and recurring question at these conferences was how medium- and long-term effects might emerge from short-term support measures most effectively.

The P4P is an ambitious attempt to bridge this gap. Initiated during the Supporting Syria and the Region conference held in London in 2016, it was conceived as a substantial German contribution to supporting the countries bordering Syria. In concrete terms, the conference aimed to organise the simultaneous deployment of short-term stabilisation measures and the creation of at least medium-term prospects for refugees. Out of this emerged the key political objectives for the P4P: it is intended as a contribution to creating labour-intensive jobs for the highest possible number of refugees and vulnerable people in the host communities and to building and maintaining infrastructural public goods such as schools, basic roads and parks.

Since the P4P is concentrated solely on the Middle East and predominantly on temporary employment, obviously it is not representative of the whole of German development cooperation in conflict-induced forced migration crises. Nevertheless, its current topicality, its considerable scale and its envisaged aim of bridging the gap between short-term measures (e.g. short-term employment) and longer-term outcomes (e.g. contribution to stabilising the host communities) make it a very important object of evaluation in development policy terms. In this regard it is also an appropriate object of evaluation from which to derive fundamental insights about German development cooperation measures in the context of forced migration.

The beginning of the evaluation was characterised by the fact that the P4P was intended to create a large number of jobs quickly. Initially the plan was to create 500,000 cash-for-work (CfW) jobs within two years, operating on the basis of a multi-donor trust fund. This involved substantial time pressure and a stringent reporting system. Given the difficult and very divergent framework conditions in Syria’s four neighbouring countries (Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq), this entailed considerable challenges which applied both to appropriate conceptual preparation and to the implementation. Apart from the coordination of humanitarian assistance and development cooperation, the main factors to mention in this regard are divergent interests between Germany and the host countries regarding fundamental issues of migration policy, and the dynamic course of the protracted conflict. In the clarification phase of the evaluation, there was a comparatively high degree of uncertainty among local implementing agencies about whether and to what extent the short-term measures of the P4P were even suited to contributing effectively to creating

prospects for refugees. In parallel, those responsible for the programme were already beginning the next phase of programme development.

The evaluation therefore concentrates on taking stock of the effectiveness of the measures implemented so far. On this foundation, the second step was to examine the question of how far the continuing development of the programme is backed by the impact findings. The impact-oriented study covers the two core areas of the P4P Initiative at the beginning of the evaluation in the years 2017 and 2018: labour-intensive employment in various sectors and salary payments to teachers for the schooling of Syrian refugee children in the education sector. For this purpose the evaluation team in collaboration with those responsible for the programme developed causal logics mapping out which outcomes could be expected and their likely durability.

The results of the evaluation are presented chiefly with reference to the criteria of coherence, relevance, effectiveness and sustainability as these are defined by the Development Assistance Committee, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD DAC). Due to the specific object of the evaluation, namely bridge-building from short-term to long-term effects, the crucial matter of sustainability, i.e. the durability of outcomes, is considered within the scope of most of the effectiveness questions. The findings on sustainability are additionally summarised in a dedicated chapter – although chiefly in the sense of sustainability potential, because the time span since the launch of the P4P has been too short for a comprehensive assessment to be made. Also, given its objective of providing support for as many people as possible in emergency situations, the programme itself had only very limited ambitions in the direction of sustainability to begin with. Likewise, this evaluation does not include a comprehensive assessment of the efficiency of the P4P. The heterogeneity of the instruments employed and of the contexts do not permit efficiency to be measured with precision. Moreover, findings from a comparison of allocation efficiency that is useful in its own right, e.g. comparing CfW measures with unconditional cash transfers, would not be generalisable because of the context-specific effects. Here once again, however, findings with a bearing on the efficiency criterion are summarised in a dedicated chapter. Overarching development impact is considered in the course of answering the question of whether or not life prospects have been created for refugees in the region and whether the host communities have been stabilised, because the large scale of the P4P also brings the broad-scale effectiveness of the measures to the fore.

In order to answer the evaluation questions, a mixed-method design was chosen which is aimed at examining how, why and in which context different measures are effective or ineffective. Essentially it consists of three different steps:

1. a theory-building step, by producing causal logics for the P4P,
2. a theory-checking step, in which outcomes were identified primarily by means of qualitative survey methods and on-the-ground visits to schools and other infrastructure facilities, and
3. a rigorous impact-measuring step using quasi-experimental methods on the basis of two panel surveys addressed to a large number of refugees and vulnerable people in the case-study countries, Jordan and Turkey.

## Results

With reference to the OECD-DAC criteria, the following results can be reported:

**Coherence:** Overall, the P4P shows a high degree of coherence. During the evaluation period from 2016 to 2019, it was highly coherent with German development policy and with international programmes addressing the forced migration crisis. The goals of the P4P correspond to the overarching strategic goals of the German government and the BMZ in respect of tackling causes of forced migration. The interventions are well embedded in other projects of the Special Initiative on Displacement, which has resulted in a high degree of internal coherence. Moreover, projects of the P4P are coordinated with those of international institutions and national governments and are highly complementary with them (high external coherence). For instance, the projects demonstrate a high degree of complementarity with the other sectors of the Regional Refugee

and Resilience Plans (3RPs), to which Germany is contributing via the P4P to two key sectors: as the lead donor for CfW and for the salaries of teachers who teach Syrian refugee children.

**Relevance:** Based on its bridge-building from short-term to medium- and long-term effects, the P4P can be rated as relevant. It began – appropriately for the crisis context – by creating as many short-term jobs as possible and thereby attained a high degree of relevance. By changing course in the direction of more intensive measures and longer-term effects, it is building a bridge to long-term development cooperation or to measures run by the national governments in the countries concerned. Furthermore, with its labour-intensive employment measures and salary payments for teachers, the P4P is addressing two highly relevant sectors. The orientation of the goals and conceptual design of the P4P are aligned to key needs of the addressees, both with regard to the final beneficiaries and to the partner governments and institutions. However, in view of the high and unabated need for broad-scale support and the protracted crisis context, the potential for bridge-building to long-term effects is still as constrained as ever by contextual factors.

**Outcomes:** The picture that emerges here is mixed. All in all, the P4P can be described as effective. Considered as a whole, it becomes clear that the Initiative – in the form of the first-generation projects in the foreground of the evaluation – is effective precisely where the desired outcomes are temporary, e.g. the temporary alleviation of the precarious situation of people in need. It is distinctly less so, however, when looking at effects geared towards bridge-building to sustainable, long-term outcomes. A fundamental distinction must therefore be made between effectiveness in attaining the temporary goals and the degree of effectiveness in the medium to long term (sustainability in the sense of durability of outcomes).

Above all, the labour-intensive employment measures make an effective temporary contribution to alleviating the precarious situation of refugees and vulnerable people in the host communities. Initially their effectiveness is primarily material, since they contribute to a short-term increase in household income, which is used to meet basic needs. The effects are especially significant in the case of poorer households and for women. Comparing average household income while participating in CfW to the income amounts prior to participation, women register higher gains than men. CfW also alleviates the participants' precarious social situation by providing comparatively good working conditions and paying a higher wage than alternative employment opportunities would offer. Finally, there is also evidence of positive psychosocial effects such as greater optimism about the future among participants. Success in reducing negative coping strategies such as child labour or indebtedness can plausibly be assumed but cannot be measured exactly on the basis of the available data.

However, the effects mentioned above are more or less consistently short-term in nature. Looking at the outcome areas geared towards longer-term prospects such as the establishment of professional contacts or opportunities for subsequent employment, effects are barely in evidence.

The various CfW jobs in the labour-intensive category vary not only in relation to the sectors in which they are based, but above all in terms of duration. While a CfW measure can be assumed to last an average of about 40 working days, variance is found in specific instances ranging from only ten-day jobs – for instance in the refugee camps administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) – to jobs lasting more than 100 days. These longer-lasting jobs can mainly be explained by a latent causal assumption on the part of those in charge of projects on the ground, who expect longer employment duration to produce better outcomes on the individual level. This cannot be confirmed on the basis of the quasi-experimental impact measurement carried out, however. Neither with regard to alleviation of the precarious situation nor to the prospect of subsequent employment does longer duration of employment result in a higher degree of effectiveness.

However, the finding that the labour-intensive employment measures are limited to short-term effects is not valid for the social outcomes, especially the alleviation of social tensions or – expressed in positive terms – the strengthening of social cohesion. Overall the contribution made by the labour-intensive CfW jobs of the P4P is stabilising an already relatively high level of social cohesion in Jordan and strengthening social cohesion in Turkey.

In both countries, the labour-intensive jobs are putting public utility infrastructure in place, which can be used at least temporarily and in some cases permanently by the local people. This has a stabilising effect on

community life and thus helps to defuse potential social tensions. In addition, both the parity-based distribution of support measures between refugees and local people and the joint projects are proving effective. Both contribute to the propensity of the different population groups to view each other in a more positive light.

Also on the dimension of participants' attitudes, the panel surveys show markedly positive effects for the CfW measures in Turkey. Participating Turks permanently trust Syrians more than non-participants. And Syrian participants feel more a part of the local community than non-participants in CfW. In view of the difficult framework conditions in the context of an increasingly xenophobic mood in 2019 and the political instrumentalisation of refugees in Turkey, these sustained effects on the attitudes of participants merit special attention.

Even though the salary payments to teachers are formally recorded as CfW jobs, the teaching salaries projects have some particularities. For that reason, their effects are presented separately from those of the labour-intensive measures. The particular differences are, firstly, that the teachers are consistently employed in the national education systems for lengthier periods of time and, secondly, that their work is intended as a contribution to the public good of the schooling of Syrian refugee children.

Although teachers are employed for several years in most cases, this does not result in longer-term alleviation of their precarious situation. On the contrary, while an overall assessment can be made that labour-intensive jobs under the P4P are at least temporarily effective for the alleviation of precarious situations, this is only partly the case for teachers. This is principally explained by the teachers' status as part-time employees: they are paid less than other cash workers and are also under severe psychosocial stress due to side-jobs and the lack of contractual security. This evaluation finding is negatively influenced by the fact that the assessment of the situation of Syrian teachers in Turkey returned significantly worse results than were obtained for their Jordanian colleagues in Jordan: on the one hand, Syrian teachers had to endure a loss of real income over many months because their salary was not adjusted to the runaway inflation of the Turkish currency. On the other hand, their lack of integration also keeps them in a more precarious situation socially than their Jordanian colleagues. Impact findings for teachers are more positive in relation to having a meaningful experience: since they are working in an area acknowledged to be important and mostly in accordance with their trained profession, they almost unanimously report high motivation to work despite difficult working conditions. However, because there is no formal recognition of their work for the eventuality of later employment as teachers, the contribution of the P4P to the creation of subsequent employment opportunities for teachers can be assessed as partially effective at best. To tackle this deficit successfully, what is therefore needed is an intensified policy dialogue, which is beyond the influence of the P4P.

The weaker effects found on the individual level compared with those in labour-intensive employment are not replicated with regard to the public good of the schooling of Syrian refugee children. Here the contribution of the P4P can be assessed as effective. In both Jordan and Turkey, the P4P contributes substantially to reducing burdens on the education systems. In both countries, the targeted schooling figures have so far been achieved. The rate of schooling was increased in Turkey and stabilised in Jordan. Even if the measures are only partially effective with regard to the quality of education, the P4P also contributes indirectly to stabilisation in the host communities by facilitating schooling for most Syrian refugee children.

## Conclusions

Drawing conclusions, it becomes clear that the effects of the P4P on the socio-economic dimension in particular are temporary in nature. The P4P is thus effective at providing temporary relief during emergencies, but only builds bridges to longer-term developments in a minor way. In contrast, the social effects aimed at bringing about greater social cohesion among those who have participated in one of the measures appear more sustainable. Likewise, the effect of access to schooling for a large proportion of Syrian refugee children can be assessed as durable. However, it remains as dependent as ever on international funding.

In the light of the rather short-term individual outcomes already anticipated, the BMZ has continued to develop the P4P in the last few years. The more recent measures are mainly addressed to professional

capacity development and thus rely on more classic development cooperation approaches such as supporting small and micro enterprises or projects with a stronger focus on vocational training.

On the one hand, this further development can be assessed as appropriate and highly relevant for bridge-building purposes, representing as it does the logical extension of classic short-term CfW measures. On the other hand, the question that arises is to what extent this adequately does justice to the ongoing crisis context: now as ever the conflict in Syria periodically generates refugee flows and the total of 5.6 million refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries has barely diminished. In addition, the vast majority of refugees have no prospect of returning to Syria for the foreseeable future and even the desire to return is almost non-existent in the current situation, as the surveys undertaken for this evaluation clearly show. At least as great a cause for concern is that the economic situation in Syria's neighbouring countries is markedly worse than at the beginning of the P4P. Consequently there is a risk of rising xenophobia towards the refugees, which has already erupted into violence on several occasions in Turkey and Lebanon. Structural prospects of integration, which were at least intermittently discernible in Turkey, do not appear feasible even in the medium term. At the same time, the crisis has persisted for so long that the donor countries' willingness to provide funding declined sharply again in 2019 and 2020, and the situation for refugees is as bad as it was before the 2015 forced migration crisis. Thus, a high need for broad-scale support continues unabated, whereas the P4P is increasingly concentrating on longer-term outcomes for individuals, admittedly with a higher volume of funding, and currently faces a substantial decline in willingness to provide funding on the part of other donors.

In that respect, there is a risk that the P4P, after the first generation of rapidly created, intentionally short-term jobs, will now devote more attention to consolidating a stable bridgehead in the form of individual capacity development, although this bridgehead is on unstable ground. For the immediate future, therefore, the highest potential for results is likely to consist of a mix of mainly temporary bridge-building measures, aimed at involving as many people as possible, and more intensive measures for individuals in particular instances where there are relatively secure prospects of integration. In every case, a high degree of context sensitivity and, consequently, flexible programme development are likely to remain key prerequisites for sustained success. This may take the form of designing integration measures such that their usefulness transfers to other contexts – for example, not teaching Syrian children Turkish to the exclusion of other languages (Arabic, English) so as to open up prospects of finding a home elsewhere as well as in Turkey. Against this backdrop, the further development of the P4P to date only partially corresponds to the current progression of the crisis.

The P4P thus shows how much the effectiveness of measures in forced migration crises depends on the framework conditions in the given context. Temporary effects can be achieved more easily if the operational toolkit of adapted planning and coordination is optimised. Whether contributions are made to the lasting creation of life prospects for the large number of Syrian refugees, however, depends to a very great extent on creating national framework conditions which enable integration and securing continued high inputs of international support. Both presuppose the political will on the part of donors to extend help to the refugees for the long term, and to create genuine life prospects for them even away from their homeland.

Despite the largely temporary effects observed, the measures of the P4P that were evaluated show a higher magnitude of lasting positive socio-psychological effects than might have been expected before the evaluation. One effect that cannot be measured with precision merits an additional mention at this juncture: the strong signal effect of the broad support measures by Germany and other donors. It can be assumed that the socio-economic situation in Syria's neighbouring countries would have taken a far more dramatic turn without the measures analysed here and other interventions. Especially the host communities in the border regions and the Syrian refugees expressed that they have never felt left alone, and for all the critical appraisal of the detail, this is something that should not be forgotten.

Finally, the evaluation shows that CfW is a suitable instrument to alleviate the precarious situation of vulnerable target groups acutely affected by crises. With this in mind, the results of the evaluation support the CfW measures proposed in the BMZ's Emergency COVID-19 Support Programme. Nevertheless, when

using this instrument during the COVID-19 crisis, sensitivity to the constant potential for changes in the local framework conditions should be borne in mind.

## Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** The BMZ should continue the P4P for as long as the crisis in and around Syria persists and tackling its repercussions in the neighbouring countries remains a political priority.

With its high coherence, relevance and effectiveness, the P4P makes an effective contribution to providing relief for refugees in emergency situations and reducing pressure on the infrastructure of host communities. Because no end to the Syrian crisis nor any redistribution of significant numbers of refugees to third countries can be expected in the foreseeable future, this contribution should be maintained.

As part of the BMZ Special Initiative on Displacement, the P4P contributes substantially to the success of the measures thanks to its accelerated procedures in comparison to bilateral development cooperation, its broad-scale effectiveness and its coordination and steering function. In this way it is a fundamentally worthwhile complement to existing development cooperation. However, the tensions found in some respects with development cooperation objectives prior to the forced migration crisis (e.g. on the sustainability of the water supply in Jordan) should be subjected to periodic critical review.

In particular, the combination of temporary employment measures for as many vulnerable people as possible with the construction or upkeep of infrastructure in sectors that are also of long-term benefit to the host countries has proven successful.

**Recommendation 2:** Given the lack of long-term prospects for Syrian refugees in the countries bordering Syria, the BMZ should continue to target the P4P at as many beneficiaries as possible. In doing so, measures should be planned and designed more flexibly to enable a context-sensitive response including swift prioritisation of structure-building support measures.

In view of the sustained crisis context and the fact that the absorption capacity of labour markets is constrained, the P4P should continue to focus on alleviating the precarious situation of as many refugees as possible in the countries bordering Syria, even if this should continue to produce effects of a mainly short-term nature. However, more intensive measures for individuals in terms of duration of employment and components of vocational training represent potentially useful additions if permitted by the context. In view of continuously changing framework conditions, there should be constant dialogue between the steering level and the operational level. Informed by context assessments and situation reports, the planning criteria for operational work should be formulated as flexibly as possible. As part of this, the context-specific concretisation of the strategic orientation of the P4P should be laid down in transparent and comprehensible terms for all parties involved. Furthermore, increased context sensitivity requires a more intense policy dialogue with partners in order to strengthen ownership, and hence also potential structural effects. This should include a critical discussion of the strategic objectives pursued by Germany and its partners.

**Recommendation 3:** The state implementing organisations (IOs) should ensure broad-scale compliance with appropriate labour, social and safety standards for project participants.

During the evaluation period, Syrian project participants in particular had no adequate mechanisms for reporting grievances to begin with, despite sometimes serious shortcomings in labour, social and safety standards. Irrespective of wide-ranging improvements in the dedicated complaints mechanism for labour-intensive employment, participants are still not using the available complaints mechanisms operated by state authorities of the partner governments and communities or by non-governmental organisation (NGOs) to a sufficient extent. KfW Entwicklungsbank in particular should therefore institute appropriate measures in the area of teacher salary payments in order to make further improvements including broad-scale compliance with labour, social and safety standards. This may be achieved for instance by strengthening anonymised complaints mechanisms and involving project participants more actively in the ongoing development of



measures in this regard. Should this be impossible to accomplish on the project level, bilateral policy dialogue would be a suitable framework for doing so.

### ***Labour-intensive cash for work (CfW)***

**Recommendation 4:** The IOs should improve impact monitoring on the level of participants.

Improved impact monitoring would contribute to the effectiveness of both follow-up measures and new future measures; for example, systematic studies of subsequent whereabouts might be conducted.

**Recommendation 5:** In selected projects the BMZ and IOs should take greater care to select particularly vulnerable persons, and especially women.

Giving projects a stronger focus on particularly low-income households and individuals and on women is a promising way to increase their impact. The evaluation showed that due to their more vulnerable situation to begin with, women potentially benefit even more from the projects than men. To avoid unintended negative effects in households, the consequences of the measures in that setting should be more precisely analysed and taken into consideration. Since the selection of participants normally conforms to internationally agreed criteria, these impact findings from the evaluation should be communicated to the relevant international discussion forums.

### ***Teacher salaries projects***

**Recommendation 6:** To improve the reach of the effects of the P4P in the education sector, the BMZ and KfW Entwicklungsbank should dovetail it even better with flanking measures and measures by other international actors.

For the improvement of the extracurricular learning environment for Syrian refugee children in the countries bordering on Syria, greater dovetailing with flanking measures by other donors is necessary in order to reduce such barriers as child labour, food problems and social tensions in the communities as effectively as possible, and thus increase the contribution of the teaching salaries projects to improving education quality.

Precisely in Turkish communities, where prejudices and violence against Syrian refugee children and teachers often radiate into the schools, flanking social measures should be implemented in and with the communities. This should be accompanied by an intensified policy dialogue.

The BMZ and KfW Entwicklungsbank should also dovetail the teacher salaries projects in both countries more closely with measures run by German development cooperation or its partners on labour-market-oriented vocational training offers and labour market services.

**Recommendation 7:** The BMZ and KfW Entwicklungsbank should jointly ensure that the measures of the P4P are better oriented to the needs of the teachers who are its primary target group.

The findings of the evaluation indicate that the incentive payments to Syrian teachers are not sufficient to cover their basic needs and those of their families. This has negative consequences for the quality of teaching. The BMZ and KfW Entwicklungsbank should therefore work within the framework of international consultations and in policy dialogue with partners where appropriate to ensure that the remuneration of teachers is consistently sufficient to cover their basic needs to a large extent. This may be achieved for instance by dynamically adjusting salaries to inflation in a more timely manner and/or through vulnerability reviews.

In parallel, additional familiarisation and integration measures should be carried out in Turkish schools in order to break down actors' prejudices about each other (Syrian teachers, Turkish teachers, school administrators) and develop a shared understanding of values for cooperation.

**Recommendation 8:** Regarding the schooling of Syrian refugee children, as well as access to education the BMZ and KfW Entwicklungsbank should give greater consideration to education quality and curricula when developing their programmes in future.

The evaluation showed that a better quality of teaching provision for Syrian children is often hindered by the lack of appropriate psychosocial support services and sufficient learning materials. Since both exceed the scope of the P4P Initiative measures but cover an important adjacent area, the BMZ and KfW Entwicklungsbank should advocate for improved teaching provision within the framework of the overarching programmes of the teaching salaries project (the UNICEF programme in Turkey and Accelerating Access to Quality Formal Education Initiative in Jordan).

Furthermore, the BMZ and KfW Entwicklungsbank should urge the Turkish government to have its public schools offer more Arabic and English teaching for Syrian children. The narrow focus on teaching the Turkish language is a potential threat to the cultural identity of Syrian refugee children (added to the consequences of the civil war). In view of the children's uncertain future prospects, a sufficient range of languages is worth striving for. In addition to English as the international lingua franca, adequate forms of instruction should therefore be provided in both Turkish (for the possible prospect of integration) and Arabic (for the eventuality of a return to Syria or the Arabic-speaking world).