

## **The extent of internal displacement in Turkey and its consequences on the child educational attainment and health in Turkey**

Hundreds of thousands of people were internally displaced from Turkey's south-eastern provinces during 1984-1999, a period of fighting between the PKK and military and security forces of Turkey. According to official figures, around 353,000 people were displaced during the conflict, while international observers and some of Turkish NGOs estimate that the total number affected from displacement may be as high as 1 to 3.5 million. Return has been possible on a limited scale following the lifting of the state of emergency in the south-east in 2002. The government claims over 120,000 people have returned, but this figure has not been independently verified. It is also claimed that most internally displaced people (IDPs) are unable to return because of obstruction by village guards, landmines, and poor socio-economic conditions in former conflict-areas. Even if government figures are taken as accurate, the figures indicate the return of only a quarter of IDPs. International organizations and NGOs in Turkey claim that the government's return programmes (Return to Villages and Rehabilitation Project) conducted in the 14 provinces (Adiyaman, Agri, Batman, Bingöl, Bitlis, Diyarbakir, Elazığ, Hakkari, Mardin, Mus, Siirt, Sırnak, Tunceli and Van) have lacked transparency and adequate consultation with the displaced population and relevant organisations; and compensation to returnees has been limited. Although many IDPs live in extremely difficult conditions in slums on the periphery of cities and towns, little is known about their concrete situation and needs. Some small-scale studies demonstrated that women and children are more likely to suffer from the results of the displacement with regard to their health, social, economic conditions.

The European Commission describes the current situation of internally displaced people as "still critical", noting that large numbers of IDPs live in "extremely poor conditions" on the periphery of cities and larger villages. IDPs face acute social and economic problems and limited access to educational and health facilities and psychosocial care. This is particularly the case for displaced women and children. However, it is difficult to assess the numbers of IDPs who have not returned yet, their current location, conditions and precise needs, and intention to return, since no comprehensive data-collection or survey has been undertaken so far.

Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies (HUIPS) has conducted eight demographic surveys at a 5-year interval since 1968. In the last demographic survey (TDHS-2003), women are asked a series of questions on migration and reasons for migration. The TDHS-2003 also includes huge and high quality data on education and health of children

under examined. In the TDHS-2003, information on date of migration, and origin and destination were also collected. Based on migration and mother tongue information of women, the study will make an assumption that all migration of Kurdish speaking population taken place from 14 provinces located in the southeastern part of Turkey in the period of 1984-1999 is the forced migration. Based on findings from censuses and demographic surveys, It appears to be safe to make this assumption for the migration occurred in the above-mentioned period.

HUIPS is also currently undertaking a survey (Survey on Migration and Displaced Population in Turkey) on IDPs in order to update the existing information on the size and current location of IDPs, their conditions and precise needs, intention to return and the obstacles to return. The finance for this project is provided by the Undersecretary of State Planning Organization. The main aim of the ongoing part of the project is to determine the size and the current location of IDPs in Turkey by using the existing census and survey data. In the second part of the project, IDPs' conditions and precise needs, intention to return, and obstacles to return the origin will be covered by series of quantitative surveys, and by a nation-wide quantitative survey being conducted in the origin and the destination.

Within this context, the proposed study will be the first attempt to examine the size and current location of IDPs as well as their education and health outcomes and specific needs in Turkey. Data for the first part of the proposed study will be from the censuses and demographic surveys conducted in the period of 1985-2003. Further, the proposed study will focus on consequences of the displacement on the child welfare in terms of educational attainment (gross enrollment ratios, net enrollment ratios, and gender disparity index) and health outcomes (early age mortality rates, vaccination rates, and nutritional level based on anthropometric measurements). Data for this part of the study will be mainly from TDHS-2003 conducted by HUIPS during the years 2003 and 2004. The proposed study will use a comparative approach to examine the educational and health outcomes of IDPs by using the outcomes of non-IDPs. The main contribution of the proposed study will be to provide guidance for the development of a coherent IDP policy, addressing return, resettlement and reintegration.