

LIVES IN DIGNITY GRANT FACILITY



Incentivizing through the granting process

Some examples and lessons learned

June 2022



Communities in the Tahoua region of Niger supported by projects funded by the Lives in Dignity Grant Facility mark World Refugee Day in June 2022

Introduction

The [Lives in Dignity Grant Facility](#) was founded in 2020 to efficiently and effectively channel funding to promote development-oriented approaches to new, recurrent and protracted displacement crises. The facility was designed to benefit a wide range of displacement-affected persons, including refugees, internally displaced persons, returnees and host communities.

Although the projects funded by the facility have not, as of May 2022, been operational for long enough to share learning, some lessons can already be drawn at the facility level following two calls for proposals (CfPs). These calls were based on the [Lives in Dignity Grant Facility Strategy](#), which outlines a flexible funding approach to address diverse forced displacement situations worldwide.

The facility, in particular, considers the use of funding to incentivize policy change in favour of displacement-affected communities to be the bedrock of its approach. Such incentivization is in line with the findings from the [High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement report](#) and the [OECD paper on financing refugee situations](#).

Increasing the participation of displacement-affected persons

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED: Despite the commitment during the Grand Bargain in 2016, the “participation revolution” has not yet been realized to the extent envisaged, as indicated by [IOM and the Egmont Institute in their event on the participation of displacement-affected persons in March 2022](#) and the [ODI in their 2021 report](#).

The Lives in Dignity Grant Facility aims to contribute to the participation revolution at various levels, including but not limited to its governance structure, strategy, through its calls for proposals, and through the process of evaluating project proposals. Some of the measures taken to increase the participation of displacement-affected persons are as follows:

- The facility grants require that projects be built around the priorities of displacement-affected persons. The first call for proposals required potential projects to be built around at least three stated priorities.
- The facility advised all

grantees to foster the inclusion of displacement-affected persons in Local Project Advisory Committees.

- Efforts have been made to include people with lived experience of displacement in the LiD Grant Facility Evaluation Committee through collaboration with [Share the Platform](#), which collaborated with [Scholars at Risk](#) when proposing possible evaluation committee members.
- Refugee/displaced-led organizations were also eligible to apply for the grants.
- Most of the innovation methodologies emphasize the necessity of designing innovative solutions with the end-users in mind. By encouraging the implementation of innovative approaches by its grantees, the Lives in Dignity Grant Facility aims to increase the co-creation and participation of displacement-affected persons in the projects.
- The facility promotes adaptive programming that allows grantees the flexibility to remain relevant in fast-changing operational contexts, in order to modify activities to

LIVES IN DIGNITY GRANT FACILITY



Communities cross the Simón Bolívar International Bridge between Venezuela and Colombia in 2020. The Lives in Dignity Grant Facility funds projects that support communities impacted by the Venezuela crisis.

respond to the changing needs of displacement-affected persons.

- As the facility's guiding values and principles include community-based and people-centred approaches, many projects selected have strong community participation and co-creation approaches or practice participatory monitoring.
- The LiD Grant Facility Advisory Board includes refugee-led organizations to ensure the meaningful participation of displacement-affected persons. Meaningful participation is considered across the work of the facility.

Increasing localization and integration of silos through empowering partnerships

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED: The [enquiry into the advancement of aid localization](#) notes: "while local partners often acknowledge that there have been some positive changes in terms of practices or organisation, they complain that general power balances have not shifted and responsibility for strategic decision-making is still shared unequally." The authors of the inquiry speak of a hampered localization process that is currently at an impasse.

Moreover, although for a few decades various reforms have tried to better connect humanitarian, development and peace operations, they have not delivered on their ambitions, as discussed by [Marc DuBois in his article on nexus approach](#).

Some of the ways in which the Lives in Dignity Grant Facility tries to amplify localization and overcome humanitarian, development and peace and sector-based silos is through empowering partnerships in the following ways:

- The criteria of the facility's calls for proposals notes that proposals have to be submitted by at least two partners, and one of the partners must be a local actor.
- In order to diminish power inequalities in partnerships and to enhance the role of local actors, an equal partnership agreement has been signed by all partners, while funding is provided directly to all partners with the expectation of an equal distribution of roles, responsibilities and funds.
- The facility's calls for proposals encouraged partners to build joint logical frameworks, which led to common impacts and outcomes.
- The facility calls for proposals also required that the proposals state at least two of five LiD Grant Facility themes in order to avoid a siloed approach and promote collaboration between various sectors.
- The first few months of monitoring show that monthly calls unite all partners and further reinforce partnerships between actors, creating momentum for the equal sharing of ideas and resources.
- The facility also requires the filing of joint narrative reports that are signed off by all partners, which reinforces collaboration within the partnerships among LiD grantees.
- Referencing the [DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus](#) in the call for proposal text has led to a majority of those projects shortlisted to have considered and addressed this in the proposal.
- A webinar on how the LiD Grant Facility approaches integration and nexus programming was provided to

those partners shortlisted in the second call for proposals.

- While avoiding possible duplications, the LiD Grant Facility called on proposals to build upon and find synergies with other projects (both past and present), additionally reinforcing internal partnerships and promoting collaboration with external actors.

Increasing a whole-of-society approach

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED: The [High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement report](#) notes that authorities, academia, media, local NGOs and private sector actors could be much better engaged in addressing internal displacement. Indeed, without incentivizing a whole-of-society approach at the proposal stage, the vast majority of proposals come from the non-profit sector, primarily partnerships between INGOs and IGOs and NGOs, which was demonstrated by the LiD Grant Facility's first call for proposals.

Additionally, although [scholars drive knowledge creation in the shaping of better policies and practice for displacement-affected persons](#), the reality is that currently there is a significant gap between research and practice.

UNOPS, being “mandate neutral” when it comes to programming for forced displacement, is in a strong position to function as a connector and facilitator between actors with a variety of mandates. In order to increase the whole-of-society approach, for instance, the LiD Grant Facility has implemented the following:

- In order to diversify partners and to go beyond working exclusively in the non-profit sector, during the LiD Grant Facility's second call for proposals, additional bonus points were given to applicants who partnered with national or local authorities, local academic institutes or private sector actors. The results were positive. In the first call for proposals, of the 28 shortlisted projects only four included a partnership with the private sector or an authority (three with authorities and one with the private sector). However, after emphasizing the importance of diverse applicants during outreach and allocating bonus points for this, of the 29 projects shortlisted in the second call for proposals, four projects had partners from the private sector, 11 had partnered with a research entity, and four with a local authority. An additional four had foreseen collaborations with research entities through sub-granting.
- To better bridge the divide between research and practice, more than half of the external evaluation committee members are scholars researching forced displacement/development issues. In addition, members of the LiD Grant Facility Evaluation Committees were researchers and scholars with expertise in the regions in which the projects they were evaluating were based, providing insights and context with regards to socio-economic and political issues.

- While designing the composition of the LiD Grant Facility Advisory Board, the whole-of-society approach was again one of the guiding principles. For instance, in addition to UN family organizations, the Advisory Board includes, among others, refugee/displaced-led organizations, the Mayors Migration Council, which focuses on empowering local authorities, [The International Association for the Study of Forced Migration](#) (IASFM), which represents forced displacement scholars, and Forus, which is an umbrella organization for national NGO platforms.
- In a similar vein, the grantees were provided a guide to assist them in putting together their project-specific Local Project Advisory Committee, during which they are encouraged to be context-specific and lead the process themselves. The document calls for the partners to include, among others, academics, innovation actors and authorities (except when not possible due to EU and UN engagement rules).

In summary, how the strategy and the calls for proposals of grant facilities were drafted significantly influenced programming for displacement-affected persons. As demonstrated above, donors and others responsible for designing and implementing financing instruments have at their disposal both important and concrete ways to increase the participation of displacement-affected persons, reinforce integration and localization and promote a whole-of-society approach.

LiD Lives in Dignity

LiD Learning Document 1