



**CARE International**

**Position Paper: World Humanitarian Summit – a Gender Transformative Agenda**

**May 2015**

The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in Turkey in May 2016 aims at major reform to adapt the humanitarian system for future crises, as well as to better assist and protect people today. CARE International believes that if the WHS is serious about transformative change, then a strong 'gender pledge' should be factored into the Summit outcomes.

***WHS process recommendations:***

- **Adopt a two-pronged approach** to incorporating gender equality and women empowerment in the outcomes of the WHS, with a stand-alone gender outcome, as well as specific outcomes across the other WHS themes.
- **Establish an official WHS "area" for gender equality and women's empowerment**, including experts from civil society, UN, government and private sector to draft a comprehensive problem statement on gender; identify specific recommendations and targets for the stand-alone gender outcome; and support the other thematic task teams in integrating a strong gender perspective and gender-specific recommendations and targets across all emerging issue areas. **Convene an online consultation on gender towards the WHS**, with translation into multiple languages; building on the online survey on gender undertaken by the WHS Secretariat and UN Women prior to the UN Commission on the Status of Women to feed into the September global thematic consultation event.
- **Consultation outreach through UN Women and OCHA regional and national offices** to networks of experts at regional, national and local levels of women's civil society organisations, IASC gender taskforces and GBV AOR structures, to review emerging recommendations and inform the remaining WHS consultations. Where possible, face-to-face meetings should be convened linked to dialogue with states through national-level gender working-groups.
- **Mobilise stakeholders engaged in the Call to Action on Violence Against Women and Girls (CtA), 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNSCR 1325 and the Post 2015 Development Agenda to bring gender into the WHS process.** New states, civil society and other actors should endorse the CtA communique and forthcoming CtA Roadmap to 2020, and launch their endorsements at the WHS. The CtA Roadmap should include explicit references to catalysing action on gender equality in the implementation of WHS outcomes. The 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary review of UNSCR 1325 and **the Post 2015 Development Agenda** should also make links to the WHS.
- **Ensure participation by women and girls from crisis-affected contexts at the remaining regional consultation and all other WHS preparatory events and the Summit itself** Participation should span the range of expertise that women from civil society, government and crisis-affected communities can bring; including across DRR, resilience, preparedness and response; and conflict and natural disasters.

***WHS content recommendations:***

1. **Put a global partnership between local women's groups and humanitarian agencies at the heart of WHS initiatives to 'localise' humanitarian action**
  - At local level, empower local women's groups to meaningfully participate in efforts to localise humanitarian action and partner with humanitarian agencies. Local gender specialists' knowledge must inform emergency preparedness and humanitarian assessments, programme design, quality and accountability efforts. Social accountability processes can be used to bring women's voices

into the design, monitoring and accountability of resilience and preparedness efforts in dialogue between government authorities and local communities.<sup>1</sup> This was a top recommendation from a March 2015 workshop hosted by UNW, UN WHS and CARE International, for more than 30 local women from conflict and disaster-affected countries.

- At national level, create a new coordination space to champion gender equality in humanitarian action which can include and empower national gender's networks and grassroots women's organisations to work with humanitarian responders. Existing national gender spaces are limited in scope (Gender-Based Violence Sub-Cluster), in membership (UN Gender Task Force) or do not have a humanitarian remit (Gender Theme Group).
- At global level, local women's groups need to be brought into global humanitarian coordination and leadership. A review of humanitarian architecture, funding and standards should identify recommendations on making these processes more inclusive of local civil society in a meaningful way that harmonises approaches between gender and gender-based violence. This should include an immediate, bold and innovative decision by the UN IASC Working Group on Humanitarian Response to designate UN Women a member of the Working Group, in compliance with the system-wide mandate given to UN Women in its establishment by the UN General Assembly. In addition, national governments – both donors and crisis-affected states – should undertake annual reviews of progress on integrating gender across DRR, resilience, preparedness and response efforts at the ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment or UNGA, as part of wider reviews of the WHS outcomes, the Sendai DRR framework and the Call to Action on VAWG in Emergencies Roadmap.

## **2. Factor meaningful participation of women and girls into WHS outcomes on community engagement**

- Use the WHS focus on 'community engagement', to promote inclusive and meaningful participation by women from crisis-affected communities in humanitarian policy and programme design, monitoring and evaluation. Too often women's participation is treated as an afterthought or an assumed outcome of community engagement efforts. All WHS stakeholders should commit to identify and scale up best practices in using gender and age analysis in community engagement efforts, as well as a mix of different practical entry-points and strategies, to reach women and girls excluded due to their ethnicity, age, disability or other forms of discrimination.
- Build capacity to promote women's meaningful participation in government-led strategies on disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness. As outlined in Recommendation 1, partnering with civil society and using social accountability processes to design, monitor and evaluate DRR can make important contributions to this.
- Strengthen efforts on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).
- Make a more systematic gender-sensitive approach to community engagement, as outlined above, a core component of all WHS outcomes on humanitarian leadership, coordination, funding and partnership.

## **3. Commit to globally aligned and comprehensive approaches to gender equality in WHS outcomes on humanitarian effectiveness and accountability.**

- Sex and Age Disaggregated Data has to be systematically gathered in needs assessments, and used to inform a gender analysis as part of design, monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian programmes. Specific attention should be given to enabling national disaster management authorities and other relevant line ministries to build their capacity to gather and use SADD in national disaster risk reduction, resilience and emergency preparedness strategies.

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<sup>1</sup> Potential indicators include: By 2018, post-Sendai DRR national strategies have identified steps to consult women and women's organisations at national, regional and local levels; and partnerships have been established between multi-mandate NGOs and local women's organisations to facilitate women and girls' participation in DRR design, monitoring and accountability. By 2020, partnerships are established between UNW, ISDR, GENCAP and humanitarian agencies to build the capacity of gender focal-points in National Disaster Management Authority offices at local level towards building cadres of local 'gender in emergencies' specialists to support gender-sensitive needs assessments, project DM&E and complaints mechanisms (including PSEA).

- The IASC Gender Marker should be expanded across the project cycle - including implementation, monitoring and evaluation; building on the recommendations from the new Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) global evaluation of Gender Markers and the pilot underway in Jordan to roll-out 'gender equality measures' across the Syrian refugee response.

**4. Integrate strengthened gender-based violence prevention and response into WHS commitments on International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights frameworks, community engagement and humanitarian aid effectiveness.**

- Use the WHS outcomes on IHL, human rights and protection to highlight the importance of tackling conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence, and reaffirm commitments made at the UN, as well as at regional and national levels, to prevent and respond to such violations. Efforts to translate international commitments into national legislation and action should be highlighted.
- Ensure alignment between the Call to Action on VAWG in Emergencies (CtA) 'Roadmap' through to 2020 and the WHS outcomes. The 'Roadmap' should aim to play a catalytic role in championing attention to gender and GBV in the follow-up to the Summit. New endorsements of the CtA communique and/or Roadmap by additional states, private sector and civil society organisations could also be launched at the WHS itself to emphasise these links.
- Commit to promote accountability for the newly revised IASC guidelines on GBV through bilateral and agency-specific policy, funding and programming frameworks. Funding should also be directed to frontline GBV prevention and response programmes; especially for partnerships with local organisations working at grassroots level; as well as addressing gaps in the provision of frontline sexual and reproductive health services building on recommendations in the new Global Evaluation by the Inter-agency Working Group (IAWG) on Reproductive Health in Crises.

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