

FOCUS European Year for Development:
what's in it for humanitarian aid?

2015 is a special year: it is the first ever European Year to deal with the European Union's external action and Europe's role in the world. It is the European Year for Development (EYD). For NGOs all over Europe it is a unique moment to showcase Europe's commitment to saving lives during and in the aftermath of man-made crises and natural disasters and to eradicating poverty worldwide. This is also the chance to link humanitarian and development issues as a contiguum.

Kicking off this issue of VOICE Out Loud, Marius Wanders, Ambassador for the EYD Civil Society Alliance, talks about what he sees as the the opportunities this year for European NGOs. Our members then each take a humanitarian issue where it is important for NGOs to take a longer-term approach. Looking towards more effective disaster risk reduction, Handicap International highlights the keys for resilience and Concern Worldwide calls on the development community to a more in-depth appropriation of this concept and its tools. Caritas Luxembourg emphasizes the opportunities and challenges of being a multi-mandated organisation. DanChurchAid presents the benefits of the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) and the transition to a certification process. Regarding shelter and urbanisation, Habitat for Humanity and International Rescue Committee put forward the necessity to integrate a longer-term view to these programmes.

In the 'View from the EU' section we are happy to hear from Mr. Guerrero Salom, European Parliament Standing Rapporteur on Humanitarian Aid, who shares his views on several themes, such as the role of the EU at a global level in the 2015 UN summits, the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit and the EU humanitarian budget.

In addition we have included two joint statements from NGOs. One developed as a contribution to the World Humanitarian Summit on the humanitarian principles, and one is on the implementation of the post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The 'field focus' written by People in Need looks at the situation in Ukraine where humanitarian actors in the field face difficulties in reaching the most vulnerable, reporting on the consequences of instability there.

VOICE

VOICE stands for 'Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies'. VOICE is a network of 82 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in humanitarian aid worldwide. VOICE is the main NGO interlocutor on EU humanitarian affairs and disaster risk reduction and it promotes the values of humanitarian NGOs.

AUSTRIA	
	
	
	

DENMARK	
	
	
	

GERMANY	
	
	
	
	
	
	

SWITZERLAND	
	

THE NETHERLANDS	
	
	
	

BELGIUM	
	
	

FINLAND	
	
	

GREECE	
	



UNITED KINGDOM	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	

LUXEMBOURG	
	

NORWAY	
	

CZECH REPUBLIC	
	

FRANCE	
	
	
	
	
	

IRELAND	
	

PORTUGAL	
	

SPAIN	
	
	

SWEDEN	
	
	

ITALY	
	
	

SLOVAKIA	
	

EDITORIAL

Nicolas Borsinger, VOICE President page 5

THE ISSUE

EUROPEAN YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT: WHAT'S IN IT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID?

The European Year of Development – a word with the Civil Society Alliance
Ambassador, Mr. Marius Wanders, World Vision EU representative
..... page 6

Disaster Risk Reduction post-2015: keys for resilience
Veronique Walbaum, Handicap International page 7

DRR funding and development
Dom Hunt, Concern Worldwide page 8

Why relief and development must go hand in hand
Andreas Vogt, Caritas Luxembourg page 9

DanChurchAid's take on the Core Humanitarian Standard
Lisa Henry, DanChurchAid page 10

Why shelter focus and long-term development goals are vital
in emergencies?
Mihai Grigorean, Habitat for Humanity page 11

Responding to displacement in a new urban world:
Challenges and opportunities for development and humanitarian actors
Amanda Gray and Lidia Giglio, International Rescue Committee .. page 12-13

Joint Statement on humanitarian principles endorsed
by 50 humanitarian NGOs as a common contribution
to the World Humanitarian Summit consultations page 14

Achieving Impact Where it Matters: A Joint Statement by Civil Society
Coalitions On the implementation of the Post-2015 Framework
for Disaster Risk Reduction page 15-16

A VIEW ON THE EU

Interview with Mr. Guerrero Salom, European Parliament Standing
Rapporteur on Humanitarian Assistance page 17-18

FIELD FOCUS

Crossing the Ukrainian Divide
Daniel J Gerstle, People In Need page 19

VOICE AT WORK

Humanitarian issues at EU level BACK COVER



FROM THE VOICE PRESIDENT



2015 is the European Year of Development. For VOICE, this is an important opportunity to highlight humanitarian NGOs' commitment to addressing the short-term needs of crisis affected people, while thinking and planning for the long term. In reality, on the ground, relief and development issues often arise simultaneously and addressing them in parallel is required to tackle both the immediate and longer term needs of people. The EU strives for better LRRD, linking relief rehabilitation and development, but as VOICE's report last year on NGO perspectives on the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid showed, LRRD, and other issues that straddle the relief-development divide, are often the neglected little sisters of both.

We will keep appealing for the development community to take on its share of work that has been largely carried by the humanitarians. For instance, our Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) experts have consistently stressed that DRR should be the primary responsibility of development actors, and be funded from the much larger development pot. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction has left open many issues related to implementation. There will be a World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, but it will not be the right place to get these crucial aspects of the DRR framework pinned down. As for VOICE we hope this is an outcome of the broader sustainable development, financing and climate change processes in 2015.

The European Year of Development is bringing together the wider civil society to discuss common concerns, and we are bringing in issues that are so acutely apparent from a humanitarian perspective. The majority of our humanitarian caseload is now coming from conflict. Our members are doing what they can to save lives and preserve human dignity in these difficult situations – and ask for the resources to do more, but ultimately, humanitarians are required precisely because system collapses at huge scale have occurred. We thus rely on others who are equipped to do so to work towards political solutions for peace. Humanitarian response is a necessarily insufficient response of the international community to conflict and crisis, but it seems worryingly to increasingly be the only response. We expect the EU to more compellingly play its part at the global level to this end.

Working towards the World Humanitarian Summit, NGOs (seem not to be heard when insisting) that in much of our work, we operate in areas where how we work, what we work on, who we work with and how we are perceived can be a question of life and death. We have seen the security situation of humanitarian workers deteriorate drastically, and aid worker deaths rise steadily over the past decade. In conflict areas, striving for respect for the humanitarian principles, and working with tools, standards and skill-sets that are perceived as humanitarian and non-biased, is absolutely crucial, (even if admittedly this will not always be sufficient to be accepted). Humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality, are not relevant principles, nor do they need to be, for development work, but they are at the core of humanitarian work, being essential tools for access and to be able to reach crisis affected people. Each situation is different. Many conflict settings become protracted crises so a good understanding of the complementarity of our mandates and roles is needed.

May the European Year of Development prove to be a milestone in bringing home to the citizens of Europe, who already show considerable solidarity with people in need, the value of European humanitarian and development aid.

Nicolas Borsinger
VOICE President

THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT – A WORD WITH THE CIVIL SOCIETY ALLIANCE AMBASSADOR, MR. MARIUS WANDERS, WORLD VISION EU REPRESENTATIVE

THE ISSUE – EUROPEAN YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT: WHAT'S IN IT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID?

★ **2015 is a year of big and important milestones on the global development and climate agendas. Humanitarian crises are reaching almost unprecedented levels of severity and complexity. Why do you think a European Year of Development (EYD) is timely and relevant?**

The timing could not have been better. Three major global development and climate processes are converging in the year 2015 and will shape the global development agenda for the next decades. Commissioner Stylianides has already used an EYD event to talk about issues that are of common concern to both the humanitarian and development communities.

This year is also an opportunity for civil society organisations to talk together about the coherence of EU policies. For example, there is currently a huge refugee and migrant crisis in the southern 'border states' of the EU. They are dealing with large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers desperate to escape the violence, misery and poverty in their home countries and seeking safety and a more humane future in Europe. It is linked to development, humanitarian or internal EU questions. We need to be creative about how we work on this. Some organisations, working on both development and humanitarian aid have asked the EU to open 'humanitarian corridors' and ensure safe legal passages into Europe. 1,700 migrants died in the Mediterranean during this EYD, so far. The motto of the EYD is '*our world, our dignity, our future*' and the EU will be judged on its response to this crisis. EU citizens understand humanitarian work is driven by the same desire to support human life and dignity as efforts to support those who come to our shores.

★ **YOU HAVE TAKEN ON THE ROLE OF AMBASSADOR FOR THE CIVIL SOCIETY ALLIANCE. TELL US ABOUT THE CIVIL SOCIETY ALLIANCE?**

The EU asked CONCORD to lead a broad alliance of civil society organisations for the year. The alliance extends to VOICE, its membership and beyond. It enables us to reach out to more EU citizens and to tap into the rich expertise of these different sectors of civil society. In the EYD, we wish to engage and

mobilise citizens as active participants in moving towards the vision expressed in the motto of the year. We want to bust some myths. For many EU citizens, 'development' is synonymous with charitable donations of money and goods given by richer countries to poorer. Too few understand that 'sustainable development' stands for a universal and transformative global agenda that promotes social justice at home and abroad and that will eradicate dehumanising poverty across the world, without compromising the future of the planet we live on.

★ **WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DOES THE EYD PRESENT FOR THE EUROPEAN HUMANITARIAN NGO SECTOR TO PRESENT THEIR WORK AND ITS RELEVANCE?**

One of the main challenges of the EYD is communicating in clear language with citizens about international cooperation. We can tell real life stories about our work, including to many who may either have limited knowledge about the scope and results of it, or who reject the notion of investing resources in reducing poverty in faraway countries, at a time of suffering at home.

In August, the humanitarian month, we should talk about the common denominators in development and humanitarian engagement with the EU, such as resilience building and disaster risk reduction. For us, the agreement reached in Sendai was vague and disappointing – there were too few commitments. We should push the EU to be bolder than the international community in setting DRR standards. It is also important to talk about the conditions for professional humanitarian aid workers. They are people, just like other European citizens, who choose to step out of their comfort zones, into hazardous settings to save lives. We should be proud of them. They face great dangers and it is right that we talk about the support from the EU and Member States for their work in the field. We, humanitarians, should also see what issues we want to talk about earlier than August, for instance in May, the 'Peace and Security' month. The link between humanitarians and the contexts they work in, fragile states and conflict areas, is clear. Humanitarians have a lot of experience to contribute to discussions on the EU's approach to fragile states and conflict.

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION POST-2015

THE ISSUE – EUROPEAN YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT: WHAT'S IN IT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID?

'A shift in perspective is needed; DRR needs to be seen as a fundamental element of development.'

★ Reducing Disaster Risk is an issue on which the international community is now strongly mobilised with the recent adoption of the new Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in March 2015 in Japan during the World Conference on DRR.

The previous Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), adopted by 168 countries, had given itself the objective of "building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters" over 10 years. It has supported work towards more systematic approaches to manage the risk of disaster, strengthening national strategies in many countries and reinforcing early warning systems.

However, the UNISDR¹ evaluation of its implementation, in line with the ones of civil society organisations, highlighted important weaknesses in this framework. One area of least progress was in creating real change at local level and including the 'most at risk groups' in DRR policies and practices. Another failure was to mainstream DRR within the development sector and create ownership out of the humanitarian sector.

2015 brings critical opportunities since not only has the new DRR framework been agreed in Sendai by 187 states but three major international processes are currently ongoing:

- A post 2015 development agenda will be presented in New York in September 2015 with a set of **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** that will build upon and replace current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), preceded by the Addis Ababa conference on financing for development.
- A new **international climate change** agreement to be adopted in Paris in December.
- A first-ever called **World Humanitarian Summit** to take place in Istanbul in May 2016.

It's also a unique opportunity for mainstreaming DRR into the development and climate change agendas in order to increase resilience of the most vulnerable people and communities in disaster prone areas.

★ **IMPLEMENT 'INCLUSIVE' DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**

Evidence shows that most vulnerable groups and among them persons with disabilities, are at higher risk to disasters. Ensuring inclusive DRR is an essential effort to reduce vulnerabilities of the most excluded and to increase their capacities to mitigate risks. It also recognises their right to benefit from and participate in DRR strategy, policies and practices.

In order to translate this political commitment with the adoption of this new DRR framework, defining measurable targets and clear indicators is absolutely necessary. Its implementation must be based on progress achieved to date and include a strong action plan establishing accountability and monitoring mechanisms for inclusion. The introduction of indicators should also help

governments to gather and analyse data in order to report and adjust their progress on inclusive DRR. Since in Sendai States failed to define ambitious and measurable indicators, it is even more important that this work is undertaken and baselines are set at regional, national and local levels for the next 15 years of implementation to be effective.

★ **DRR: LINKAGES BETWEEN HUMANITARIAN AID AND DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**

Humanitarian actors are familiar with dealing with extreme events, and most DRR funding comes from humanitarian budgets. However, when the period of disaster response and rehabilitation is over, attention for DRR is often reduced.

A shift in perspective is needed; DRR needs to be seen as a fundamental element of development. DRR measures have limits when they are in place in an emergency context; a longer timeframe and a participatory process involving multiple actors and a high level of capacity building is required to bring about effective risk reduction. In addition, a strong engagement of local government and regional platforms – difficult in many emergency situations – is a prerequisite for lasting change.

Investing in DRR does not only make economic sense; it is the only way to protect lives and livelihoods and ensure sustainable development. Better progress in DRR is crucial for the sustainability of development investments and outcomes.

These are reasons why the implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR should seek to be recognised within development processes linked to post-MDGs and climate change, promotes effective coordination and integration of DRR in development decision-making.

To further resilience of populations and societies, inclusion of the most vulnerable groups in DRR processes should be a must on one hand. On the other hand, mainstreaming DRR into the next generation of frameworks, and strengthening clear linkages that exist between disaster-risk, poverty and environmental management, will be essential to ensure coherence and effectiveness.

Finally, translating these political commitments into concrete improvements on the ground will require sufficient and predictable resources to reach local level where action is most needed.

These are key messages Handicap International with civil societies actors is advocating for throughout the various international and European negotiations on these upcoming frameworks.

Veronique Walbaum
DRR Officer
Handicap International

<https://www.handicap-international.org>

1. UNISDR – United Nations
Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

DRR FUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT

THE ISSUE – EUROPEAN YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT: WHAT'S IN IT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID?

'In a world of rising likelihood and intensity of disasters, we must ring fence already overstretched humanitarian funds, keeping them for what they are intended – principled emergency response.'

When ODI published their report 'Financing Disaster Risk Reduction – a 20 year story of international aid'¹, it confirmed some things that the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) community had long suspected: not only that DRR financing has been relatively paltry, but that it has largely been confined to the humanitarian budget lines. It showed that, between 1991 and 2010, a total of USD\$3.03 trillion was spent on international aid. 'Of this, USD\$106.7 was allocated to [natural] disasters, and of that just a fraction, \$13.5 billion, was for risk reduction measures before disasters strike, compared with \$23.3 billion spent on reconstruction and rehabilitation, and \$69.9 billion spent on response'². This amount spent on DRR is just 0.4% of total international aid, and has come largely from humanitarian financing sources.

This clearly indicates the failure of the development community – including the donors – to take DRR on board and run with it.

It is easy to understand why the humanitarian community has championed DRR thus far – DRR is an inherently humanitarian idea, concerning itself with preparing for disasters, reducing their impact when they do occur or, even better, trying to stop them from happening in the first place. DRR was born from the idea that it is not good enough to just respond to disasters, but that we should make every effort to prevent them, or reduce their impact, instead of just mopping up after they happen.

What is more difficult to understand is why the development community have lagged so far behind in adopting DRR. Two reasons why they should have done so are identified here.

Disasters have huge impacts on all sectors, including on the gains that development processes have brought – and they are very expensive. In the study period covered by the ODI report, MunichRe estimated that direct financial losses from natural disasters amounted to USD\$846 billion, and stated 'This makes the \$13.5 billion spent on DRR look even more like a drop in the ocean compared with what happens when such investment is not made'³. For development to be sustainable, we must address and reduce risk, not just occasionally following a large natural disaster, but consistently and in every sector. Disasters are very much the business of development.

Most DRR activities are much better suited to the development 'phase' anyway. Establishing and strengthening government institutions that address risk, introducing and implementing risk

reduction policies, establishing early warning systems, undertaking the sometimes large infrastructure projects required to control some hazards, persuading the private sector to make resilient their value chains and workforce, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, controlling population growth or forming basin-wide multi-country watershed management plans are not the business of the humanitarian community. This is the domain of development.

The humanitarian community has other vital jobs that need to be done, and will continue to be needed even if the development community steps up and joins in. However well DRR is implemented, we have to acknowledge that disasters will continue to happen, conflicts will continue to rage, and we will continue to need to respond to the resultant crises. We need to stop expecting the humanitarian community to be the solution to these problems and acknowledge that while emergency response and reconstruction are vital parts of the puzzle, they are still only a part of a much greater whole.

In a world of rising likelihood and intensity of disasters, we must ring fence already overstretched humanitarian funds, keeping them for what they are intended – principled emergency response. This is not to say that we should not do DRR in emergencies – when awareness is high, we have a window of opportunity to accelerate DRR, and we should always strive to reduce future vulnerabilities and build back better in all of our responses. However, continuing to stretch humanitarian funds with more and more demands, such as the majority of DRR or resilience building actions, is a mistake. We need to turn to other funding sources.

Perhaps one of the mistakes that we have made is that we have maintained the artificial distinction between humanitarian and development action. In reality, it is not 'one or the other' – emergency and development phases often happen side by side, or cycle between each other in often predictable ways. Development should not wait for the humanitarians to have done their work, but start work - now - to remove some of the underlying risk factors that the humanitarian community will never be able to address. The two communities can, and should, inform each other, improving the links between them and collectively addressing and reducing risk.

Dom Hunt,
DRR Advisor


Concern Worldwide

<https://www.concern.net>

1. By Jan Kellett and Alice Caravani, September 2013
2. Page 5
3. Page 9

WHY RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT MUST GO HAND IN HAND

THE ISSUE – EUROPEAN YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT: WHAT'S IN IT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID?

 Despite long-standing efforts to bring the two closer together, the divide between humanitarian and development NGOs still prevails today.

Too many actors, including NGOs, have difficulty bridging the gap between relief and development. Some reasons are exogenous, like donor rigidity and requirements, and legal constraints. But the strongest inhibitors seem to be endogenous: branding, mind-sets and procedures. Some are trying, or feel obliged, to distinguish themselves by sharpening their profile. Generally speaking, a significant number of NGOs seems reluctant to be competitive in both modes of action. Coordination with other actors hardly ever compensates for this self-imposed limitation.

Despite NGOs' honest intentions to bridge the gap, some conceptual barriers continue to hinder the development of synergies. In the event of an emergency, most institutions switch to crisis management procedures and rapid decision-making, curtailing standard development procedures, which usually require thorough analysis, benchmarks and time-consuming baseline studies.

Even for NGOs working in both fields, internal organisational procedures, fundraising and personnel development policies do not encourage collaboration between relief and development professionals within the same structure. The imperative of professionalism leads to gathering specific expertise in designated departments and to a certain competition between them.

The divide is apparent when a society undergoes a transition from an emergency to a development situation: humanitarian INGOs may abandon sites from one day to the next due to funding constraints, leaving behind promising local rehabilitation initiatives. Or, more frequently, a situation changes from development dynamics to a fully-fledged humanitarian crisis. Long-standing INGOs find themselves unable to move out, abandoning their local partners. Humanitarian INGOs are parachuted in and seek out local implementing capacities, which are often the very same partners of development actors.

Organisations that are active under two mandates regard humanitarian and development work as two sides of the same coin. One of the ways to achieve this is by working with local partners that are present before, during and after a crisis. This approach has significant advantages in terms of closing the gap between relief and development. It helps local partners implement preparedness programmes and actions aimed at reducing the vulnerability of certain communities.

Local partners must be able to rely on the support of their international partners in the event of

limitations in organisational capacities and/or technical expertise. Effective support to and from multi-mandated organisations includes solid, long-standing partnerships, structural investments and close accompaniment. This means that local partners work with the same international organisation through each transition, giving a degree of stability and visibility. What this means inside Caritas is that when a crisis hits, emergency staff can sit down with development staff and talk through the needs and capacities of the local partner, jumpstarting the effective link between existing resources and the transition from relief to development. The partnership becomes an end, rather than a simple tool to implement a project.

For an INGO to effectively support the development and relief work of a local NGO, it needs dynamic but stable funding sources, multi-skilled and flexible staff (including a pool of experts) and internal procedures to ensure adaptability in case of changing circumstances, such as an immediate shift from peace to conflict or from drought to floods. This requires a clear commitment from management to field staff to remain focussed on overarching goals, like building sustainable partnerships, despite a changing context in a given region. The board must accept that this can entail giving up funding and media opportunities, and could complicate advocacy, as decision-makers may favour advice from specialised NGOs.

Caritas Luxembourg is exposed to all these challenges. However, being a comparably small NGO, predictable funding patterns with the Luxembourg MFA enable the combination of emergency and relief. This allows for substantial leverage when it comes to applying for funding with multilateral donors like the EU. Emergency relief and development are not separated structurally.

Within the global Caritas family, roles of individual member organisations are determined by their existing partnerships, by their expertise and by their potential to respond to specific needs. A pool of external experts and pragmatic knowledge management among staff gives Caritas Luxembourg the necessary flexibility to be active in both emergency response and development.

Given forthcoming policy highlights (European Year for Development, 2016 World Humanitarian Summit and UNFCCC COP 21 conference), in 2015 Caritas will promote its global approach to international solidarity and seek to engage specialised agencies.

Andreas Vogt
Head of International Cooperation
Caritas Luxembourg
<http://www.caritas.lu/index.php>

'What this means inside Caritas is that when a crisis hits, emergency staff can sit down with development staff and talk through the needs and capacities of the local partner, jumpstarting the effective link between existing resources and the transition from relief to development.'

DANCHURCHAID'S TAKE ON THE CORE HUMANITARIAN STANDARD

THE ISSUE – EUROPEAN YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT: WHAT'S IN IT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID?

★ Finally!

The Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) has arrived. Something that a significant number of Humanitarian Organisations in south, north, east and west could agree on - after debating for not so few hours, weeks, days, months, years!

For DanChurchAid(DCA) we welcome the acceptance of the CHS as an industry standard because we believe that:

- CHS means improving the quality of our response.
- CHS means including disaster-impacted people's opinions and local capacities to improve our response.
- CHS means living up to an agreed-upon industry standard.

Prior to development of the CHS, DCA spent six years working within our organisation, within our ACT alliance, and with over 200 partners worldwide on the 6 HAPⁱ benchmarks. The benchmarks made sense to us, to our partners, the communities we were serving, our donors and our board. We launched an HAP dream team within the organisation and went to work rolling it out: Establishing and delivering on commitments. Staff Competency. Sharing Information. Participation. Handling Complaints and Learning and Continual improvement. Our first certification was in 2008 and we have been re-certified since then. All staff members of DCA are proud of this fact. And as time went by many others from the ACT alliance joined DCA in adopting HAP and getting certified. It was all voluntary. And it made good sense given our commitments to quality and accountability within ACT Alliance.

For most of us, the CHS has brought the work we have done to date with HAP to another level. It is basically a natural extension of that good focus. Again, it makes sense. The CHS represents the necessary adjustments needed to make HAP work for the future. We are happy that CHS will have more traction and uptake in the humanitarian community.

Yes, we will have to adjust our systems to reflect the additional focus areas. Yes, it will take time to get the new terminology 'under our skin', understood and implemented throughout our organisation and to our partners. Yes, we will have to invest in getting our donors and Danish constituency to understand this new system. But if there is one thing, we in the humanitarian community are good at, it is adapting to change! So, in DanChurchAid we will adjust and be ready for a certification in 2016.

★ CHS: CHALLENGES TO INTEGRATE STANDARDS ACROSS OUR HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Notwithstanding the achievements of the Core Humanitarian Standard, the transition to the CHS and a certification process based on CHS will also present a multi-mandated, rights-based organisation like DCA with some challenges.

For us, the HAP Benchmarks have been an excellent tool or framework for assessing our level of integration of accountability measures and mechanisms and identifying gaps and weaknesses across different types of programmes and processes – be they development or humanitarian action. Key reasons for this are probably the HAP Benchmarks system-orientation and focus on accountability, and the relatively neutral language in the sense that most of the terminology used is relevant in development as well as humanitarian settings.

In comparison, the terminology and whole focus of the Core Humanitarian Standard is humanitarian – which is very understandable given the mandate of the Joint Standards Initiativeⁱⁱ of drawing together key elements and principles of existing humanitarian standards such as the Red Cross/Red Crescent and NGO Code of Conduct, the Sphere Handbook Core Standards and the Humanitarian Charter.

Seen from the perspective of a HAP certified organisation, however, this change to strictly 'humanitarian lingo' and a focus on humanitarian contexts does constitute a challenge vis-à-vis development staff and partners – the CHS simply does not have the same relevance for development programming as did the HAP Benchmarks. In addition, the CHS is performance-oriented with regard to humanitarian commitments whereas the focus of the HAP Benchmarks was on our accountability mechanisms.

Therefore, while we are committed to the CHS, the transition means that we will design an accountability framework, combining elements of the HAP approach with CHS so we can maintain a continued systematic assessment of our delivery of accountability to beneficiaries - across development as well as humanitarian action.

Lisa Henry
Humanitarian Director
Dan ChurchAid

<https://www.danchurchaid.org>



source:
www.corehumanitarianstandard.org


ⁱ The 2010 HAP standard in Accountability and Quality Management includes 6 benchmarks. For more information see: <http://hapinternational.org/what-we-do/hap-standard.aspx>

ⁱⁱ The Joint Standards Initiative was launched by the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership, People in Aid and the Sphere Project to seek greater coherence in standards for humanitarian action.

WHY SHELTER FOCUS AND LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT GOALS ARE VITAL IN EMERGENCIES?

THE ISSUE – EUROPEAN YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT: WHAT'S IN IT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID?

'After a major disaster, emergency response and relief programs receive the overwhelming share of human, material and financial resources. As the attention subsides, so does the funding. This reality further highlights the need for shelter interventions to be oriented towards early recovery and to become the foundation on which reconstruction can take place.'

 In the aftermath of any natural or man-made disaster like the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, the 2010 Haiti earthquake or the recent Typhoon Haiyan, the first essential step is to provide people in the affected areas with emergency aid and assistance. First aid kits, medicine and food are starting to arrive and are being distributed to the affected areas within hours of the disaster. At the same time, recovery after humanitarian disasters is a multi-dimensional process and consists of various components. One of the approaches that Habitat as an organisation believes in is the importance of thinking about long-term shelter solutions and development principles from the very first days when the assistance arrives. We also like to stress the importance of cooperation and collaboration between the various agencies involved in the assistance on the ground.

This has been our approach in the recovery after many natural disasters. If we do not apply development principles and logic from the first steps of recovery, we might end up in situations where devastation and the aftermath of disasters are not healed years after. One of the most illustrious examples of this situation could be the 1988 earthquake in Armenia. Almost 30 years after this devastating event, many people still live in temporary shelter solutions.

Applying development can imply working on longer planning and implementation processes with a wider variety of actors, including with the local and national authorities.

We also have to remember that international attention and media focus shift swiftly these days. After a major disaster, emergency response and relief programs receive the overwhelming share of human, material and financial resources. As the attention subsides, so does the funding. This reality further highlights the need for shelter interventions to be oriented towards early recovery and to become the foundation on which reconstruction can take place.

There are many divisions within the humanitarian sector, and even more when shelter and settlements are discussed. The fragmentation exists not only around programmatic decisions, but also among organisations (and sometimes among departments within those organisations) and in response to donor mandates. Habitat has been trying to break through these divisions.

The objective is to provide a safe and decent place to live while integrating the need to build communities, settlements and social fabric into

programming. Habitat develops housing solutions and services that promote the early recovery of durable shelter to reduce vulnerability. This involves three interlinked concepts:

1. Applying development principles early on in an emergency setting to ensure the ground for development is prepared. This goes from providing shelter elements to self-built shelter units, distribute shelter repair or clean-up kits to start cleaning and repairing damaged shelter, or offering other housing support services to start self-reconstruction.
2. Ensuring a smooth transition as well as continuity and coordination among interventions on the ground. Shelter and settlements are central to the lives of people. At the same time, it is not enough to just rebuild homes and buildings. A shelter program should also aim to restore social, economic, natural and cultural environments and become a platform for health, water, sanitation, education and livelihoods. That is why we usually work in cooperation with other NGO partners and humanitarian agencies that specialise in other aspects of reconstruction, while we can focus on shelter solutions.
3. Using development cooperation to support prevention and disaster risk reduction. Good recovery must leave communities safer by reducing their risks and building resilience. The identification of hazards and vulnerabilities contribute to the development of mitigation strategies. The best example is rebuilt homes on Philippines that did not suffer any devastation after the 2013 typhoon.

It is also important to highlight people-centred approaches. Interventions in development or disaster response settings are usually more successful when the affected population participates in the decision making. Listening and responding to feedback from affected people when planning, developing and evaluating programs is crucial. How this methodology, called in Habitat Pathways to Permanence, is translated in the field will depend on the scale and nature of the disaster and the corresponding response and the institutes and agencies involved.

Mihai Grigorean
Disaster Response Coordinator, Habitat for Humanity, Europe, Middle East and Africa
Habitat for Humanity
<http://www.habitat.org>

RESPONDING TO DISPLACEMENT IN A NEW URBAN WORLD:

Challenges and opportunities for development and humanitarian actors

THE ISSUE – EUROPEAN YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT: WHAT'S IN IT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID?

'Syrian refugees are not the only people feeling the strain: the poorest and most vulnerable members of the thousands of host communities are also directly affected.'

 The European Year of Development presents a critical opportunity to reflect on the role the international community and particularly the EU has to play in supporting long-term and comprehensive solutions to displacement in an urbanised world.

Displacement of populations across the globe is on the rise. For the first time since World War II, the number of refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons (IDPs) worldwide has exceeded 51 million¹. Moreover, the number of years refugees and IDPs spend in exile or displaced inside their own country is also increasing and now estimated to be approaching 20 years on average.

When we reflect upon the phenomenon of refugees and IDPs, the traditional image that comes to our mind is a camp with hundreds of tents distributed in rows. However, that image only partially encompasses the complex reality of displacement. Today more than half the world's refugees – around 8 million people – and at least 13 million IDPs live in urban areas².

Yet the international response continues to neglect the challenges, and the opportunities, presented by towns and cities.

In an urban crisis, refugees and others affected are often hidden and scattered amongst the host community, and spread across a wide geographical area. This makes it considerably more challenging to identify and assess needs and target responses appropriately. As a result people can fall through the cracks, or receive some services they may not require while not receiving those they do.

In their struggle to build a new life in their adopted city, urban displaced face specific challenges such as poverty, isolation, exploitation and insecurity. Access to basic services is also very difficult, given that in most cases refugees and IDPs in urban areas are not granted any legal status. Women in cities face even tougher challenges, as they are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence, human smuggling and trafficking.

The Middle East, one of the more urbanised areas of the world, provides an interesting example. Towns and cities of the region are now hosting millions of refugees and displaced people. In contrast to the 'traditional' image of

refugees, some 80% of Syrian refugees are not in camps. This poses a challenge for humanitarian actors who are used to managing refugee situations within the confines of a camp, or in more rural areas.

Syrian refugees are not the only people feeling the strain: the poorest and most vulnerable members of the thousands of host communities are also directly affected. In Lebanon, local families are struggling to access services, and compete for scarce resources, jobs and affordable housing with more recent arrivals. Likewise, although Jordan is host to a number of camps, there are still tens of thousands of refugees in urban areas who are dependent on external support as the costs of food and shelter continue to rise.

Ensuring an effective and accountable response to displacement in an urban context means not only meeting the immediate needs of affected populations, but also fostering recovery and sustainable development for all those concerned – displaced people, host communities, and the city itself – so that everyone is safer, healthier, better educated, economically empowered and able to cope with future shocks and stresses. This will require new models of funding, coordination and delivery – and a move beyond the traditional models of response, away from sector-based and short-term objectives.

Addressing displacement in urban settings requires that humanitarian and development actors join forces from the outset of a crisis, to better map and analyse the complexity of urban areas they are operating in, including how existing services are delivered. They must have a clearer picture of what it means to be vulnerable in an urban area, and where populations with greatest needs are located. Responding to those needs will require greater and more innovative forms of outreach, and a focus on community-based models of operation. It means understanding individual, household and community survival and coping strategies and empowering local actors to advocate on behalf of affected groups, including women and girls. Further, in an urban environment, dissemination of information becomes even more critical, to ensure that refugees are informed of available services and means of access.

'Addressing displacement in urban settings requires that humanitarian and development actors join forces from the outset of a crisis, to better map and analyse the complexity of urban areas they are operating in, including how existing services are delivered.'

The current humanitarian coordination system does not lend itself to the existing social, governance, market, and infrastructure systems present in an urban environment. Humanitarian agencies struggle to deal with the complexity and density of towns and cities, do not generally have the resources and tools for comprehensive mapping of the city environment, and are not able to take full advantage of the potential these urban areas have to offer.

As such there is a need to invest in and promote mapping and profiling of urban areas and a coordination protocol that complements existing urban governance structures and accommodates the multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach that cities and towns require. A response must adopt an area-based approach to programming and coordination that incorporates the different scales: household, neighbourhood, city. An adequate response must also categorize the urban context, prioritize sectoral intervention and build on people's coping mechanisms and local markets. Mapping enables humanitarian actors to understand the dimensions of the urban space including infrastructure, markets, governance and services. It requires a lead agency to filter this information for the entire humanitarian response and ensures we avoid duplication of service provision or market distortions.

While we look for effective ways to meet the needs of displaced people, it is crucial for humanitarian and development actors to abide by the principle of 'do not harm'. This means avoiding direct provision by external actors if services are already being delivered through city systems. Indeed, such a model would fail to support local service providers, contributing to inequality in access to services, and making it difficult to scale up and be accountable. It can lead to tension and conflict, with detrimental impacts on the functioning of municipal and private sector actors. Instead, wherever possible, support should be provided to local municipalities, local partners and civil society, complementing existing governance systems and accommodating the multi-sector and multi-stakeholder approach cities and towns require. With clear leadership, this approach allows for a more joined-up response from national and local government, the private sector and civil society.

One transformative intervention has been the use of cash transfers in urban emergencies. Cash programming is not only life-saving, it is also a way to capitalise on new technologies and forge partnerships with private sector actors such as banks and mobile phone companies to ensure delivery is taken to scale. Although such interventions show great potential, more rigorous research and learning is needed to ensure such interventions are as effective as possible.

The global scale of urban displacement compels the EU, as a major development and humanitarian donor, to better define its role and find innovative ways to promote solutions to address displacement in urban areas. The role of the private sector (local, small and medium enterprises) is again critical in this regard. Moving beyond the only-humanitarian approach and fostering development actors' engagement would certainly improve cost-effectiveness and sustainability. There is momentum to mainstream urban displacement throughout all relevant external policy tools and to make it operational. The EU Resilience framework, especially where it promotes initiatives targeting urban contexts and actions targeting refugees and IDPs³, is an opportunity that could provide the basis for systematic inclusion of urban displacement concerns in all the EU's refugee and IDP-related programmes. This has to be part of a broader effort to adopt long-term solutions to displacement through bridging the humanitarian and development divide, as stated in the Issues Paper on Development, Refugees and IDPs⁴ and reiterated by Member States in the December 2014 EU Foreign Affairs (Development) Council Conclusions on Migration in EU Development Cooperation⁵.

Only by working together, EU humanitarian and development actors can make the difference in harnessing economic and employment opportunities for those displaced by conflict in urban areas, thus enhancing their independence, resilience and self-reliance and working towards a 'win-win' situation for affected populations and governments alike.

**Amanda Gray –
Urban Displacement Policy Advisor
Lidia Giglio –
EU Advocacy and Policy Team
International Rescue Committee
<http://www.rescue.org>**

1. UNHCR (2013), *War's Human Costs*, UNHCR Global Trends 2013, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/5399a14f9.html>.
2. Source : NRC <http://www.nrc.no/?aid=9188162>.
3. See in particular action n.11 - Urban resilience Initiatives and action n.12 - Resilience approaches to protracted refugee IDP caseloads in SWD(2013) 227 final, Commission Staff Working Document, Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries 2013-2020.
4. EC (2014), *Issues Paper, Development, Refugees and IDPs*, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/2014_dev_refugees_idps_issuepaper.pdf
5. Council Conclusions on migration in EU development cooperation, Foreign Affairs (Development) Council meeting, Brussels, 12 December 2014.

JOINT STATEMENT ON HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES

endorsed by 50 humanitarian NGOs as a common contribution to the World Humanitarian Summit consultations as of 19th March

THE ISSUE – EUROPEAN YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT: WHAT'S IN IT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID?

Signatories:

- ACF International
 - ACT Alliance
 - ACTED
 - ADRA
 - Alianza por la Solidaridad
 - Arche noVa e.V.
 - Bioforce
 - CARE International
 - Caritas Internationalis
 - CBM International
 - Center for Victims of Torture
 - ChildFund International
 - Christian Aid
 - Church of Sweden
 - Comitato Internazionale Sviluppo dei popoli (CISP)
 - Concern Worldwide
 - DanChurchAid
 - Danish Refugee Council
 - Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe
 - Finnish Church Aid
 - Habitat For Humanity International
 - Handicap International
 - Heinrich-Böll Foundation
 - Palestine Jordan office
 - Help — Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe
 - HelpAge International
 - International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)
 - International Medical Corps
 - International Rescue Committee
 - Islamic Relief Worldwide
 - Jesuit Refugee Service
 - Johanniter International Assistance
 - Life for Relief and Development
 - Malteser International
 - MEDAIR
 - Médecins du Monde
 - Mercy Corps
 - Norwegian Church Aid
 - Norwegian Refugee Council
 - Oxfam
 - People In Need
 - Premiere Urgence — Aide Médicale Internationale
 - Questscope for Social Development in the Middle East
 - Relief International
 - Secours Islamique France
 - Solidarités International
 - Terre des Hommes
 - The Lutheran World Federation
 - Tierärzte ohne Grenzen
 - Welthungerhilfe
 - World Vision International


1. Today, the humanitarian sector faces an unprecedented number of protracted and acute humanitarian crises, such as the crisis in Syria, in Central African Republic, in South Sudan or the regional Ebola crisis, compelling humanitarian actors to stretch existing structures and practices to breaking point. Considering the role the World Humanitarian Summit may play in the future of humanitarian action, it is of utmost importance that the international community uses this opportunity to reaffirm the shared value of humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.
 2. The humanitarian principles emerged from International Humanitarian Law and are based on a common understanding that humanitarian action is driven by a sense of humanity, a willingness to relieve human suffering, regardless of culture, origins or religion. They are encompassed within the core of key humanitarian references, such as the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief or the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.
 3. NGOs are operating in exceptionally volatile and insecure environments where political agendas are interfering with the delivery of humanitarian aid, causing increased threats to the safety and security of humanitarian aid workers and assets, and in some situations hamper impartial access of affected population to relief operations. For example, the growing numbers of counter-terrorism laws and measures adopted by States and inter-governmental organizations are restricting humanitarian actor's ability to develop partnerships, run projects in complex environments, and are delaying programs implementation. The involvement of some donor states in stabilization operations in many contexts where humanitarian aid is needed, are increasingly blurring lines between political, military and humanitarian objectives, thus reducing humanitarian NGOs abilities to deliver aid. Therefore, due respect of the principles implies that governmental and institutional funding must remain detached from political or other agendas.
 4. While affected states keep the primary responsibility to organize and deliver humanitarian support, they also have the fundamental duty to facilitate the work of other actors in situations when international solidarity is requested to answer the needs. Relief operations should not be considered as a challenge to State sovereignty nor the humanitarian imperative be undermined by making national sovereignty an excuse.
 5. We concur that re-shaping aid is urgent with new actors and new donors playing bigger roles. Humanitarian aid must remain based on the needs as assessed by humanitarian actors and donors should abstain from using aid as a crisis management tool.
 6. Consequently humanitarian NGOs, concerned about the threats posed on these principles, take the opportunity of the World Humanitarian Summit to strongly reassert their commitment to the humanitarian principles, as being critical in guaranteeing people in need will have safe access to humanitarian aid. The humanitarian principles must be fully supported and adequately implemented by states and all organizations, and systematically feed all policies and practices on humanitarian aid.
- As humanitarian NGOs involved in crises around the world today, we strongly call upon Humanitarian actors, Donors, States and all parties involved in conflicts, to:
- Re-affirm their commitment to respect and to promote the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, towards any stakeholders involved in humanitarian crises, and re-affirm the value of the humanitarian imperative;
 - Review and design all humanitarian policies in compliance with the humanitarian principles and enhance existing commitments for good donor practices such as the Good Humanitarian Donorship principles;
 - Reaffirm and protect the fundamental right for affected populations to access humanitarian aid;
 - Allow and support full unimpeded access to all people in need of assistance and promote the safety, protection and freedom of movement of humanitarian personnel.
- We request that these recommendations be fully part of the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit.

ACHIEVING IMPACT WHERE IT MATTERS

A Joint Statement by Civil Society Coalitions

On the implementation of the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
March 2015

THE ISSUE – EUROPEAN YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT: WHAT'S IN IT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID?

 The Hyogo Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction (HFA) has provided critical guidance to reduce disaster risk. Its implementation has, however, highlighted gaps in addressing the underlying risk factors and effectively safeguarding communities. Evidence at the local level indicates that impacts are increasing.¹ This is due to policies and plans not adequately addressing reality on the ground. In particular, this includes the constant threat of small-scale, recurrent, localized disasters.² However, these disasters are largely unacknowledged and unrecorded, and communities are usually left to fend for themselves. Both intensive and smaller-scale chronic disasters can wipe out development gains, trap people in cycles of poverty that erode their ability to cope. Further, their impacts disproportionately impact marginalized groups including the poor, children, people with disabilities, women, the elderly, and indigenous groups.

In order to build on the successes of the HFA and address its shortcomings, the Post-2015 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Framework must work to address reality at the local level. The new framework calls for actors to identify their roles in implementation. Below, we outline the commitments that we as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) will make to ensure that policies are translated into meaningful impact at the local level. This will involve working together with governments and other stakeholders.

THREE RECOMMENDATIONS AND 10 ESSENTIALS

1. Empower local communities to manage disaster risk

Local communities are the everyday heroes who tackle small-scale, recurrent disasters that never make the news. They have rich knowledge of the risks they face and if empowered, the capacities to deal with them. One of the weaknesses of the HFA was its failure to empower local communities with the tools, decision making power, and technical and financial capacity to manage both large-scale and everyday risks. The draft of the new Post-2015 DRR Framework recognizes the need for inclusivity and the importance of ensuring the participation of the most at risk such as women, children, elderly and people with disabilities. Implementation of the new framework must go further to recognise the lessons learnt from the HFA by promoting a people- centered and human rights-based approach, empowering at-risk communities as active decision makers and managers of risk.

Governments should commit to:

- Create and strengthen platforms and other governance arrangements that engage local government officials and communities as decision-makers

- Provide a percentage of their DRR budgets directly to local governments for community-led DRR projects
- Utilize data from local level participatory risk profiles to inform more appropriate DRR strategies
- Enforce the implementation of inclusive national laws, policies and frameworks on DRR at the local level

CSOs will commit to:

- Mobilise those most at-risk communities are fully engaged in multi-stakeholder decision-making platforms and budgeting mechanisms
- Undertake and share local-level, participatory disaster risk profiling from the perspectives of those who are directly exposed

2. Enhance accountability

If the Post-2015 DRR Framework is to have an impact it must measure real progress at the local level so that strategies can be well informed. This requires adequate monitoring mechanisms, appropriate national targets and local indicators, and clear roles and responsibilities.

Governments should commit to:

- Set ambitious, achievable, and measurable national targets and local indicators with corresponding roles and responsibilities for national and local actors
- Use data that is disaggregated by sex and age and collected at the local level to inform appropriate and targeted DRR strategies which effectively respond to the needs of those most at risk
- Establish financial monitoring mechanisms to ensure transparency in resource allocation.

CSOs will commit to:

- Raise public awareness of institutional and individual roles, responsibilities, and rights
- Assist in the development and implementation of local level participatory monitoring mechanisms
- Participate in the development of locally-appropriate quality standards for structural and non- structural resilience measures

3. Make DRR a development and humanitarian priority

Disasters continue to hamper economic growth and affect poverty levels. Further, development trajectories are the underlying factors increasing disaster vulnerability. Development as well as humanitarian interventions, whether it be response, recovery, or reconstruction, present opportunities to build resilience to future disasters. Yet DRR has had little ownership outside of the disaster risk management field. Links must be created between the DRR humanitarian, development and climate change agendas to address underlying risk factors. This will be characterized by multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary approaches.

1. ICRC doctrine is the body of documents adopted by the ICRC Assembly with a view to providing long-term inspiration and guidance for the organisation's action and thinking. It takes into account the external environment and is based on: the practice, history and Statutes of the ICRC; the Fundamental Principles and the Statutes and resolutions of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement; and IHL. The main purpose of developing and codifying doctrine is to ensure that the action of the ICRC and its representatives is both consistent over time and more predictable and credible in the actions it undertakes to fulfill its mandate.

THE ISSUE – EUROPEAN YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT: WHAT'S IN IT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID?

Governments, donors, and other stakeholders should commit to:

- Integrate DRR across all relevant humanitarian and development sectors (e.g., WASH, agriculture and food security, education, health, urban planning, shelter and settlements, etc.) and incorporate resilience lessons into longer-term policies, practices and funding mechanisms
- Align national objectives, indicators, and monitoring mechanisms across all Post-2015 Frameworks, including those for development, disaster risk reduction, and climate change adaptation
- Develop and resource DRR measures sensitive to risks in fragile, insecure and conflict-affected communities

CSOs will commit to:

- Share local risk knowledge and technical expertise to ensure that resilience is at the center of approaches taken by all actors. For example, within land use planning by governments and business continuity planning by the private sector.
- Provide DRR training to and build capacity of those engaged in development, climate change adaptation, and humanitarian activities.

★ **WORKING TOGETHER FOR IMPACT AT THE FRONTLINE – 10 ESSENTIALS**

We must ensure we continuously strive towards having an impact on the lives and livelihoods of the people living at the frontline, who are affected by small-scale recurrent disasters and interrelated risks compounded by insecurity, poverty and informality. We can achieve impacts where it matters by collaborating on all of these activities and fulfilling our commitments mentioned above. Below we

provide a list of 10 essentials to help guide local level impact that cut across all activities.

★ **TOGETHER, WE CAN ENHANCE REAL IMPACT AT THE LOCAL LEVEL IF WE:**

- 1. Understand local perspectives of risk**
Listen and understand the experiences of people most at risk
- 2. Consider the local context**
Recognise the real life challenges of fragility, insecurity, and informality
- 3. Leave no one behind**
Ensure the inclusion of all groups, particularly those most at risk
- 4. Collaborate**
Work with and across all groups and levels
- 5. Mobilise local resources**
Build on existing capacities, knowledge and other sources of resilience
- 6. Align across policies**
Ensure coherence across humanitarian, recovery, development and climate change adaptation
- 7. Hold people to account**
Ensure accountability to local communities
- 8. Learn from the past and look to the future**
Learn lessons and recognise future trends to inform recovery and development planning
- 9. Be environmentally aware**
Recognise, protect and strengthen the functions of ecosystems
- 10. Recognise the potential of civil society**
Actively work with civil society to achieve these

InterAction is the largest coalition of U.S.-based NGOs focused on the world's most poor and vulnerable populations, with more than 190 members working in every developing country. The DRR WG works to promote DRR mainstreaming among its membership and the broader global humanitarian and development communities.

The Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction is the largest international network of organisations committed to working together to improve the lives of people affected by disasters worldwide. The network has over 1200 members in 129 countries.

VOICE (Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies) is a network of 82 European humanitarian NGOs, is the main NGO interlocutor with the European Union on emergency aid, relief, rehabilitation and DRR. The VOICE DRR Working Group contributes to improving EU policy and practice on DRR, with particular reference to the UN international policy.

French NGO Network for DRR brings together CARE France, Solidarités International, Action contre la faim (ACF), French Red Cross and Handicap International, with the aim of improving DRR practices through knowledge and resources sharing and building a common strategy to influence national and international policy makers and civil society.

Bond is the network of UK based NGOs working in international development seeking to foster greater collaboration on issues such as training, advocacy and fund raising, with over 440 individual members. The Bond DRR WG works to deliver effective DRR programmes and aims are to share good practice and contribute to and monitor global DRR debates.


The ACT Alliance is a coalition of more than 140 churches and affiliated organisations – 75% from the Global South - working together in over 140 countries to create positive and sustainable change in the lives of poor and marginalised people. The Alliance, supported by 25,000 staff, mobilises \$1.5 billion a year for humanitarian aid, development, and advocacy, and promotes community resilience.

The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) unites Australia's non-government aid and international development organisations to strengthen their collective impact against poverty. The ACFID DRR WG serves as a coordination platform for Australian NGOs and promotes information sharing, learning and policy development and advocacy.

A VIEW ON THE EU: INTERVIEW WITH MR. GUERRERO SALOM, EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT STANDING RAPPORTEUR ON HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE¹

A VIEW ON THE EU

Enrique Guerrero was elected a Member of the European Parliament for Spain in 2009 and he became Vice-president of the Socialists and Democrats Group in January 2012, after being Secretary General of the Spanish Socialist Delegation. He is a member of the DEVE committee and is the Standing Rapporteur for Humanitarian aid. He has worked very closely with the socialist governments in Spain. Among other positions, he became Secretary-General for relations with the Parliament (1993-1996) and Deputy Director of the Prime Minister's Office (2004-2008).

 **This year's series of conferences, from Sendai this March, through the Financing for Development conference in Addis in July, the Sustainable Development Goals in New York in September, and the climate conference in Paris in December is particularly relevant for humanitarians especially in relation to Disaster Risk Reduction and preparedness. What role should the EU play in relation to these Summits?**

All these summits make 2015 a really crucial year. If we don't have a good result in Paris and New York we will not tackle the two main challenges that I see for mankind at this moment: the fight against poverty and the fight against climate change. If we do not finish with poverty and exclusion we will have war and displacement all over this world. If we don't stop the causes of climate change, even the existence of mankind on this planet is at risk. All four conferences are related. If we don't have a good result in Addis Ababa we will not have the means to confront the threat of disasters as discussed in Sendai and we will face harder negotiations in New York and Paris.

The EU must be at the forefront. We have the responsibility of being the most important donor. We have experience from working all over the world and have developed know-how. We must be a coordinated, common and strong voice in order to respond to the problems of almost 1.6 billion people in poverty in the world. In the European Parliament (EP) we are working and expecting the Commission and Council to have this voice. We have the will to be a strong partner in those meetings.

In 2016 the World Humanitarian Summit will take place in Istanbul. What opportunities does this present for the humanitarian sector and how will the European Parliament be involved in the process?

This is particularly important because it's the first summit on humanitarian aid. It comes at a moment when the biggest crises in the world have reached the highest levels of intensity like in Syria, Iraq, CAR, and South Sudan. But other crises are moving quickly, Yemen, Ukraine, in Africa, or in Central America and elsewhere... it seems we are in a moment when more people need the response of humanitarian aid in areas

of conflict. 200 million children lack food and education in those areas.

The risk to humanitarian workers is also an important problem. In the last year, nearly 200 aid workers lost their lives. We must honour those people who give their lives to help others, but we need to find ways to protect these people in the field.

I will be the rapporteur for an EP report that will follow the Commission Communication, which we expect in the autumn. Immediately we will present proposals to the Council in many different fields, on safeguarding a principled approach, flexibility and rapid response, resilience, capacity building, reducing vulnerabilities and funding, in order to push the Council to have a strong common position and push Member States (MS) to take responsibility in their response to humanitarian crises.

The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid is the foundation policy framework for the EU and is signed by the EP, Commission and Council. From our point of view we need a new action plan to deepen Member States and Commission implementation. What is your opinion on this?

We have actually discussed if a new framework or consensus is needed. There are many actors in humanitarian aid who fear that if we open this discussion the risks will be higher than the opportunities especially when EU MS are reducing their budgets, but in any case we agree that we need a new Action Plan. It should re-affirm the Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and should call for action, and implement in a new global scenario, what we agreed by consensus nearly a decade ago. The Parliament is in favour of this.

The Commissioners working on EU external relations are now working much more closely together. What are the opportunities and challenges of this new working method especially regarding instrumentalisation of aid?

It is good news that coordination inside the new College of Commissioners has been strengthened. We have a HR² who is really involved in the foreign policy of the European

1. Interview conducted 25 February 2015 by Celia Cranfield (VOICE Secretariat).

2. High Representative/Vice President of the European Commission.

A VIEW ON THE EU

Union, and we have three Commissioners involved in the EU's aid, Neven Mimica, Christos Stylianides and the previous Humanitarian Aid Commissioner, Kristalina Georgieva. She is well respected by humanitarians and I think she will try to help humanitarians through the budget of the EU.

On the other hand, the position of the EP is that we want EU humanitarian aid that follows the principle of 'in but out'. We aim at a humanitarian aid policy that is part of the European Union foreign relations policies, but we want to safeguard its humanitarian principles, such as neutrality and independence. This is important for delivery; it's not just a problem of principles. If we are not able to defend our autonomy, our independence and our neutrality, we will lose the legitimacy to intervene in many conflicts and we will not be accepted by governments or actors or people that need our assistance in the field.

Predictable and timely funding remains a key component of quality humanitarian aid. We want to thank the EP for its support in 2014 for the EU's humanitarian budget. The EP's powers have grown in this regard in the last years. What can the EP do to ensure the humanitarian aid budget remains predictable and timely?

Sustainability and predictability are two conditions for actors in the field of humanitarian aid. We managed to close the 2014 budget with a good outcome for humanitarian aid. The EP monitors the budget and intervenes to amend budget lines in the process to agree the EU budget. We are committed to keeping at least the same level of funding as was agreed in the MFF and are now starting to reflect on if we can gain from the revision of the MFF in 2017. Might we have the opportunity at that time to increase the support for humanitarian aid? If crises in the world continue to increase, and the needs of people in conflict areas increase, for sure the EU has to increase the budget to tackle the needs. This is what is expected of us.

The EU's multi-annual budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 is due to have a midterm review in 2016-2017.

NGOs are the major deliverers of humanitarian aid in the field. We are sure our members would welcome a visit from parliamentarians; do you have any plans to visit the field?

Of course! I think it's important because people working in the field must feel that they are supported by institutions, not by me as an individual or as an MEP, but as a representative of European society, the majority of which is concerned by humanitarian aid and shows much more solidarity than the Member States. It's important that people working in a difficult situation, to help other people, feel our support. Almost every session of the EP Development Committee involves presentations by think-tanks, NGOs, alliances of NGOs... For this committee, the push from NGOs is important. Sometimes the institutions are far from real-life and have a theoretical approach. It's important to hear first-hand from people on the ground.


Currently in the EU, the questions around migration, refugees and terrorism are a big challenge and focus of the EU. Do you think this will have an impact on how we approach humanitarian aid in the future?

Would I be naive if I said there was no impact? We must try to avoid it. We cannot ignore that in this situation, where MS are fearful of terrorist attacks, a moment of crisis and terror, policies like migration, asylum and even internal EU policies, like Schengen, can be affected. But in my speech to the Parliament in January, I expressed my conviction that we have to react to this terror, not just with a security approach, but inside the EU with education and social policies to combat exclusion and outside of the EU with cooperation, development and humanitarian assistance in areas of conflict and poverty. Instead of taking this security situation as a threat to humanitarian aid, we should be able to look at it the other way: if we do not tackle the conflicts and origins of crises, we will not be successful in the fight against terrorism. It's important to underline that the terrorist attacks in the EU, were organized and perpetrated by European citizens, born, living and educated in Belgium, Denmark and France. It puts into question our policies inside the Union, not just our policies outside the EU.

CROSSING THE UKRAINIAN DIVIDE

FIELD FOCUS

'First, aid agencies working to assist civilians on both sides of the conflict must continue to avoid taking political sides while their donor countries are choosing sides very visibly in the media.'

 When People in Need's (PIN) emergency response team arrives back in the former front line village of Nikishino, Ukraine, now controlled by pro-Russian separatists, they find villagers sweeping the street and yards of broken roof tiles, bricks, branches, as well as military detritus such as shell casings, shrapnel and, periodically, unexploded mortar shells.

Until January, Nikishino and the neighboring village of Kamyanka, hosted the south-eastern-most fighting position of Ukraine government forces. In February, while separatist forces battled Ukraine to take control of the area, hundreds of families hid in shelters, pantries, or under furniture living a nightmare of heavy artillery and freezing temperatures. Many were killed or wounded. Others emerged to find their village mostly destroyed.

International aid agencies, UN and local organisations in cooperation with the Ukraine government try to assist the most vulnerable of over one million people displaced by the conflict and two million still living in areas affected by fighting. The 15 February ceasefire, which only came fully into effect after the battle for Debaltsevo, did succeed in getting both sides to pull heavy weapons away from the front line. But shelling and shooting continue periodically, and unexploded ordinance lies all over the active and former front line areas. In this context, humanitarian aid agencies must solve three unique dilemmas which offer lessons for future humanitarian response.

First, aid agencies working to assist civilians on both sides of the conflict must continue to avoid taking political sides while their donor countries are choosing sides very visibly in the media. On the ground, most officials, soldiers, and civilians have accepted this reality, but sudden gestures by a donor could lead aid agencies with that donor's visibility labelling to be targeted or blocked. Fortunately this has not happened with much more than sharp words yet. But the conflict is far from over.

Another turning point revolves around agencies figuring out how to keep relationships inside a community even when it changes sides in the fighting. Organisations responding and building relationships in some conflict-affected communities have had to switch from cooperation through local administrations and volunteers on the government-controlled side, mid-fighting, to respond with permission of the separatist authorities. Sometimes it was hard to find impartial representatives of the community during fighting in freezing temperatures when they were living in bomb shelters and basements.

Finally, within the areas outside Kiev control, there are not one, but several authorities: the 'Donetsk

People's Republic', the 'Lugansk People's Republic', and some other 'Kossacks' groups who operate in rural areas. While most of these pro-Russian groups have mostly allowed humanitarian access, the Ukraine government has labelled them 'terrorist' organisations - which could lead aid agencies to risk being red-flagged by Ukraine.

In Nikishino, PIN coordinators find Galina*, a returnee who has volunteered to collect a list of needs from her neighbors, gathered with a small group of people discussing rebuilding their village.

Galina explains how, of all the people emerging from basement shelters or returning after the fighting, only about fifty families have enough of a home left to continue living there. Hundreds of others can only return with assistance to reconstruct their homes, restore water, and find food. With shattered livelihoods, a broken market and long bus rides to the closest functioning towns they plea for emergency food assistance, hygiene supplies, and at least roofing tiles, plywood, tarp, candles, stoves, and minimum survival goods.

Given that Ukraine has a significantly higher level of education and better functioning markets than many of the other conflict areas in the world, many international actors believed Ukrainian civilian survivors of the conflict would have better access to the basics and that recovery aid would primarily focus on restoring livelihoods. But with the extreme disparity between Ukraine's upper classes and the poor, aid agencies are barely able to fulfil the most minimum Sphere standards¹ to help people survive.

The assumption that all pensions and disability entitlements are still being paid by Ukraine and the separatist authorities to the elderly and disabled has also proven unfounded. Not only is that entitlement very little, definitely not enough to rebuild a demolished wall, but with the fighting lines moving, many survivors don't even know how to access those pensions.

'How can I survive? I don't even know how to get my pension', says Natalya, an elderly woman who survived the bombardment. She shows where the wall collapsed on her bed while she was hiding next door with a neighbour. 'The banks don't work here now, so how can I afford to travel across the front line to Ukraine to apply for my pension? Please tell us. We have nothing left here but each other.'*

March 2015

Daniel J Gerstle,

Emergency programs coordinator,
People In Need, Ukraine

<http://www.dovekvtsni.cz/en>

*Pseudonym

1. Sphere standards are a widely known and recognised set of common principles and universal minimum standards for humanitarian response.

HUMANITARIAN ISSUES AT EU LEVEL

VOICE AT WORK

★ The whole network mobilises for predictable and timely EU funding for humanitarian aid in 2015

2014 started with a difficult situation as regards cash available for humanitarian aid in the context of a lower overall EU budget. For the membership of VOICE the prospect of the EU potentially being a less reliable donor, adding to a complex picture with increasing humanitarian needs on the ground in 2014, especially in CAR, Syria and South Sudan. Following intense advocacy work from all our members at national level and with considerable support from the Commission and European Parliament, the difficult year was successfully resolved. A last hour agreement with EU Member States on the EU Budget on 17 December provided sufficient cash to cover 2014's operations and allow for a return to timely and predictable EU funding for humanitarian aid in 2015.

★ NGOs advocating for Disaster Risk Reduction

In preparation of the World Conference on DRR in Sendai in March, VOICE joined forces with other coalitions, including Interaction, to develop a statement reflecting the views of civil society on the implementation phase of the new Sendai framework for DRR. To complement this global statement, the DRR Working Group addressed an open letter to Ms. Georgieva and Mr. Stylianides, the Commissioners leading the EU delegation in Sendai, which they welcomed. The group stressed again the need for the EU to promote partnership. Lastly, representatives of the Group briefed the European Parliament delegation going to Sendai.

The new Sendai framework for DRR was adopted by 187 member states. The framework presents a step forward in terms of the inclusion of vulnerable groups, identifying actions at different scales, and international transfer of technology. However, it falls short in terms of providing measurable targets, establishing 2015 baselines, building on local level capacities, recognising conflict and climate change as underlying drivers of vulnerability, and making linkages with other critical frameworks being developed this year, including the SDGs and the UNFCCC's Climate Change Agreement.

★ World Humanitarian Summit: where are we?

The VOICE network was active in the preparations towards the regional consultation meeting for Europe in Budapest. Many VOICE members and the Secretariat participated in the online consultation for the European region. The Secretariat is proud that with InterAction we secured seats for 35 NGOs in Budapest. With the support of engaged members, we also prepared a briefing which the Latvian EU Presidency fed into the discussions with COHAFA representatives from Member States. Following this regional consultation, VOICE continues to be engaged in different fora at Member State level, including a humanitarian roundtable in Spain, to multiply members' messages about the inclusion of NGOs in the Summit and the importance of addressing conflict. VOICE will continue to work closely with other NGO networks to discuss possible next steps.

★ From our members

Humanitarian and human rights organisations (including 9 VOICE members) released a report on the consequences of the armed conflict in Syria four years after the start of the crisis. "Failing Syria" describes 2014 as the worst year of the crisis for civilians in Syria and calls for immediate action to effectively implement UN Security Council resolutions and calls on parties to the conflict in Syria to facilitate humanitarian access to all parts of the country, end attacks on humanitarian workers, and remove administrative barriers to aid.

Many VOICE members published a joint NGO briefing on Gaza "Charting a New Course: Overcoming the stalemate in Gaza" warning that further conflict is inevitable – and with it the cycle of destruction and donor-funded reconstruction – unless world leaders implement a new approach that addresses the underlying causes of the conflict.



This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Commission through its Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department.

The views expressed herein should not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of the European Commission.

VOICE out loud

Newsletter published by VOICE asbl

Editor: Kathrin Schick

Co-Editor: Celia Cranfield

VOICE wishes to thank the contributors of this Issue. Views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the VOICE network.

Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies (VOICE)

71, Rue Royale, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium

Tel: +32 (0)2 - 541.13.60 • Fax: +32 (0)2 - 534.99.53

E-mail: voice@ngovoice.org

Website: www.ngovoice.org