

Contribution to the World Humanitarian Summit

by the German Coordination Committee for Humanitarian Assistance*

Topic: Local partners and the role of local actors in humanitarian assistance.

Date / Location: 24-25 June 2015 in Berlin

Context: The Coordination Committee* discussed the role of local partners and local actors in humanitarian assistance. Several key recommendations to strengthen their role were made as a contribution to the WHS.

Participants: German NGOs working in humanitarian assistance, representatives of international organizations and local partners, Federal Foreign Office Division for Humanitarian Assistance and Humanitarian Demining.

Recommendations

1) Reduce bureaucracy for increased effectiveness, efficiency and participation:

The functionality of the humanitarian system is hampered by its bureaucratic processes. Adaptation to the increasing needs for a more dynamic and flexible response is crucial. This will not only allow for efficiency gains but will also increase the meaningful participation of local actors.

- Simplify proposal templates and harmonize reporting requirements. Focus reporting on results rather than activities and limit the number of outcome indicators that should be reported on.
- Limit technical language and reduce language barriers by accepting key languages for proposals, reports and documentation. Simplify audit procedures.

2) Provide better access to funding and funds for local actors:

Access to funds, especially for local actors, is often obstructed through the complexity of funding requirements. In order to ensure that local partners can take action in emergencies and protracted crises, funds need to be more easily accessible to them.

- Make CBPF's and other international humanitarian funds more easily accessible to local partners.
- Provide longer-term and predictable funding in protracted crisis.
- Provide fast and flexible funding for local actors as first responders in emergencies.

* *The German Coordination Committee for Humanitarian Assistance is the forum for regular dialogue between the Federal Foreign Office and the Association of German Development NGO's (VENRO) and its members on the priorities of humanitarian assistance.*

Contacts: *Eltje Aderhold, Head of the Division for Humanitarian Assistance and Humanitarian Demining, German Federal Foreign Office, Email: s05-RL@diplo.de and XXX*

3) **Redefine and recognize role of local actors:**

Local actors are often perceived as either recipients / beneficiaries or reduced to implementers. It is vital to fully recognize them as professional and effective providers of humanitarian assistance.

- Shape the partnership between local and international actors and rebalance the division of responsibilities based on considerations of subsidiarity, complementarity, and decentralization.
- Ensure meaningful participation of local actors in Humanitarian Country Teams, clusters and other coordination fora.

4) **Strengthen capacity-building of local actors to allow for sustainable and impactful partnerships:**

Local actors are a crucial part of an integrated and sustainable humanitarian response system. Working towards a future where the majority of humanitarian needs are met at the local and national level, it is imperative to strengthen the capacity and professionalization of local actors. Therefore, capacity-building has to become a built-in component of partnerships between local and international actors.

- Put a stronger focus on capacity-building to ensure appropriate quality of implementation, principled approach and risk mitigation.
- Promote knowledge exchange between local and international actors.
- Strengthen coping capacities and protection measures of local actors.