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Towards more effective global humanitarian action: How the EU can contribute

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STUDY

Towards more effective global humanitarian action: How the EU can contribute

ABSTRACT

The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in May 2016 will be the culmination of a global consultation process. The three-year initiative responds to the need to adapt the humanitarian system in order to make humanitarian action more efficient and effective in keeping pace with the rapidly changing context of emergencies. Consultations leading up to the Summit have provided the opportunity to gain perspectives from different regions of the world. As a result, three main priorities have been highlighted: the need for humanitarians to protect and preserve the dignity of people affected by conflict and disaster; a call to find innovative and sustainable ways of meeting people's needs; and a demand from the global South to 'localise' humanitarian response by strengthening local, national and regional capacities to prevent, manage and respond to crisis. There is potential for the European Union (EU) to take a leadership role in the process and influence the WHS outcome. ECHO's new need assessment tools and the Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) as well as Resilience approaches offer a framework for responding to the challenges posed by protracted crises. This study recommends that the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid should be applied as a model for a 'Global Consensus on Humanitarian Action' or a 'Global Compact' recognising the diversity of today's humanitarian response system while taking advantage of all actors' complementary role. Furthermore, the EU and member states must commit to placing protection at the centre of humanitarian action and ensure that the EU's humanitarian aid is not regarded as a crisis management tool, and allowed to become an instrument of its foreign policy.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACF *Action Contre la Faim*

ALNAP Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action

ASEAN Association of South-East Asian Nations

BRICS Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa

CARE Co-operative for American Remittances Everywhere

CHS Core Humanitarian Standards

COHAFA Council Working Party on Humanitarian and Food Aid

CSO Civil Society Organisation

DRR Disaster Risk Reduction

ECHO European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department

ECOWAS Economic Community of West African States

EOG Europe and Other Groups

ERC Enhanced Response Capacity

ESA Eastern and Southern Africa

EUPRHA European Universities on Professionalization on Humanitarian Action

FCA Forgotten Crisis Assessment

FPA Framework Partnerships Agreement

GHD Good Humanitarian Donorship

GVCA Global Vulnerability and Crisis Assessment

HAP Humanitarian Accountability Partnership

IASC Inter-Agency Standing Committee

ICL International Criminal Law

ICRC International Committee of the Red Cross

ICT Information and Communication Technologies

IDP International Development Programme

IFRC International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

IHL International Humanitarian Law

IHRC International Human Rights Law

INGO International Non-governmental Organisation

IOM International Organization for Migration

IRIN Integrated Regional Information Networks

LRRD	Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MS	Member states
MSF	<i>Médecins Sans Frontières</i>
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NESA	National Eagle Scout Association
NSEA	North and South-East Asia
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
oPt	Occupied Palestinian Territories
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECD-DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
RC/RC	Red Cross/Red Crescent
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
RSG	Regional Steering Group
UN	United Nations
UNDHA	United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNISDR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees
URD	<i>Urgence Réhabilitation Développement</i>
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
VOICE	Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies
WCA	West and Central Africa
WFP	United Nations World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit
WHSS	World Humanitarian Summit Secretariat

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) initiative of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon is a response to increasing humanitarian needs, rising costs of humanitarian assistance, and the inability to resolve protracted crises that hinder the operational and financial capacity of governments and humanitarian organisations in their efforts to react effectively. The overall objective of the WHS is to set an ambitious Post-2015 Agenda that will improve the efficacy of humanitarian action, making it more inclusive and better suited to meeting the needs of the future. Beginning in the second half of 2014 and leading up to the WHS in 2016, the preparatory process of the Summit aims at bringing together all humanitarian stakeholders and engaging them on relevant themes through their participation in a series of specialised, regional and global consultations. These consultations are based on four broad, though interlinked themes that have emerged from policy discussions in recent years. The selected themes are: humanitarian effectiveness, reducing vulnerability and managing risk, transformation through innovation, and serving the needs of people in conflict. By the end of March 2015, five of the eight consultations had been concluded, including the Europe and Others Group.

As a result of the consultations three main priorities have been highlighted: the need for humanitarians to protect and preserve the dignity of people affected by conflict and disaster; a call to find innovative and sustainable ways of meeting people needs; and a demand from the global South to 'localise' humanitarian response by strengthening local, national and regional capacities to prevent, manage and respond to crisis. In discussions amongst stakeholders, the need for giving priority to the most vulnerable people as well as empowering affected populations and local actors, has run in parallel with the need to focus on the primary role of governments as duty bearers, together with demands for adapting the humanitarian system to meet national and regional requirements. These discussions also signal the initiation of a paradigm shift to strengthen disaster risk reduction, moving humanitarian action from response to prevention and anticipation, from crisis management to risk management. Additionally, stakeholders emphasise the importance of collaboration and building stronger partnerships, respecting humanitarian principles, ensuring greater protection of people in need, and developing durable solutions for protracted displacement. Across all themes of the consultations, cross-cutting issues have been raised: needs and context based approaches; make affected people and communities the prime agents of response; recognise local actors; timely, flexible and predictable funding; the challenge of humanitarian action in urban settings; and the need to reinforce collaboration and partnerships in the humanitarian system.

To date, the consultations have highlighted concerns specific to different regions and debates, dilemmas and discussions held within the sector in recent years. This is the first time that so many relevant issues have been debated openly and among such a vast array of humanitarian stakeholders. Still, the process could further benefit from an interactive dialogue across regions, as well as engaging the private sector, academia, and above all the people affected by crisis.

While most of the attention is given to the regional consultations where most stakeholders are taking part and different positions can be found, there are other discussions led by the thematic leaders of which not much information is available besides some papers on specific issues in the WHS website. However, throughout the consultations phase, teams of experts for each theme ('Thematic Teams') work to bring the results of the Regional Consultations together with findings from global research and policy work, identifying areas of consensus and points of divergence. These teams of experts are effectively drawing up the agenda which will be tested in the Global Forum on Improving Humanitarian Action hosted by the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP), the US government, the OIC and the WHS Secretariat on 4-5 June.

The EU co-chairs the 'Europe and Other Groups' consultation, and as a member of the Regional Steering Committee it has supported the WHS Secretariat in organising the consultations, preparing meetings and background papers, and defining relevant questions to be raised. Additionally, according to different sources the EU has played a crucial role in drafting the co-chair's summary recommendations. As a leading humanitarian donor in the world, the EU faces high expectations, particularly in terms of its role within the WHS consultation process. With only one year before the Summit, the EU must now take advantage of the opportunity to assume a leadership role in the WHS process and in order to influence the outcomes all EU institutions should facilitate the development of a strong common position. Furthermore, the EU and member states should demand transparency in the decision-making process.

The study recommends that the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid should be used as the model for a WHS declaration on 'Global Consensus on Humanitarian Action' or a 'Global Compact', that includes the humanitarian principles, the legal international framework for humanitarian action and a set of common quality standards, among them the Principles of Partnerships and recognising the diversity in today's humanitarian response system and the complementary roles of all actors. The European Consensus has played a pivotal role in creating a common vision of best practice and of principled humanitarian action. At EU level it has been a primary driver of change, being a key reference in shaping humanitarian policy and promoting a more coherent and consistent approach to humanitarian aid. ECHO has been a pioneer of good practices and innovative approaches to humanitarian aid. In discussions leading to the WHS EU institutions and member states should promote the adoption of actions ensuring that affected communities, in particular women, and the most vulnerable have access to appropriate assistance and are involved in the relevant decision-making processes. A gender sensitive approach and accountability as a humanitarian principle should be included in the outcome declaration. The new need assessment tools and the Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development and Resilience approaches offer a framework to respond to the challenges posed by the new generation of crises and meet the different needs in different contexts.

The need to promote, reaffirm and disseminate the humanitarian principles and international legal framework of humanitarian action, the fight against impunity and the importance of putting protection at the centre of humanitarian action as well as adopting a human rights approach to humanitarian assistance are priorities to assist and protect people affected by conflict. For the EU a way of serving the needs of people according to the humanitarian principles is to avoid the instrumentalisation of humanitarian action. ECHO should make as a priority of its communication policy its 'in-but-out' formula and the insistence that humanitarian aid is not a crisis management tool and does not pretend to address the root causes of crisis and conflict. The WHS should be also seen as an opportunity to continue the UN-led efforts to strengthen the multilateral humanitarian architecture through the IASC and the Transformative Agenda.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objective

The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) will set the agenda for work beyond 2016 to make humanitarian action more effective, inclusive, global, and better suited to meet the needs of the future. This study first of all aims to provide a brief overview of the WHS, the origins of the initiative, its objectives and the overall process. It also explains how this Summit is interlinked with, and could capitalise on, the outcomes of other major global consultation processes. It subsequently gives an overview of the four thematic areas selected for the Summit and of the Regional Consultations, in particular the consultation process for the Europe and Others Group (EOG). In a third step, the study provides an analysis of the key challenges identified within the thematic areas and of cross-cutting issues, including some questions that are so far not sufficiently well addressed within these themes and/or in the process. With regard to the challenges identified, the study provides an assessment of the current contribution of EU humanitarian assistance in the current four thematic areas and issues emerging from the Summit. The purpose of this assessment is twofold: to develop concrete recommendations on how to improve the EU humanitarian system and provide a basis for understanding the political role the EU can play within the Summit.

1.2 Methodology

This study's research draws mainly on a literature review that was undertaken in February-April 2015. In addition, first-hand input has been collected from the World Humanitarian Summit website and online consultations. The author has reached out to strategic EU institutions and civil society actors. Consultations and interviews have been conducted with different stakeholders involved in the consultation process within the EOG who gave their opinions on a personal basis which, therefore, do not necessarily represent the official position of their organisations. I am grateful for the support and advice provided by reviewers and advisers, including Sophie Borel, Enrique Eguren, Pat Gibbons, Marika Lerch and Sulagna Maitra.

2 THE WHS INITIATIVE

This chapter provides an overview of the WHS, its origins and objectives, as well as the overall process. It also addresses the WHS links with other major global consultation processes.

2.1 The WHS: Background

The three-year WHS initiative is a response to growing pressure and concern over increasing humanitarian caseloads, rising costs of humanitarian assistance, the inability to resolve protracted crises, and the convergence of global trends which are exacerbating people's vulnerability.

Despite significant progress on humanitarian reform since 2005, stakeholders broadly agree that action must become more efficient if it is to keep pace with the rapidly changing context of emergencies.¹ The limits of the international response system became evident after the 2010 Haiti earthquake and the 2010 Pakistan floods. The need to improve and change the way in which the

¹ Following the Humanitarian Response Review, reforms to improve the effectiveness were launched in 2005.

humanitarian sector responds to the needs of people in crises led the UN Secretary General (UNSG) Ban Ki-Moon to convene the first ever WHS for May 2016 in Istanbul.

2.2 Origins of the WHS initiative

Many reports have acknowledged the currents of change that are transforming the foundations of the humanitarian domain and the world in unprecedented ways. Humanitarian stakeholders are greatly concerned and increasingly aware of how global trends impact on the caseloads of humanitarian agencies and their operational environments (Borton, 2012; Geldof, 2012; CALPS, 2013; European Universities on Professionalisation on Humanitarian Action, 2013).²

UNSG Ban Ki-Moon took stock of these changes in his address to the 66th United Nations' General Assembly (UNGA), 'We the Peoples' on 21 September 2011. In order to address the challenges and opportunities posed by this changing reality, he mentioned five imperatives for his second term. They were laid out in his 2012-2017 action agenda 'The Future We Want', introduced to the UNGA in New York on 25 January 2012: sustainable development; prevention; building a safer and more secure world; supporting nations in transition; and working with and for women as well as young people (UNSG, 2012: 3-11). One of the actions foreseen to create a safer and more secure world was to build a more global, accountable and robust humanitarian system by, among other measures, 'convening a world humanitarian summit to help share knowledge and establish common best practices among the wide spectrum of organisations involved in humanitarian action' (UNSG, 2012: 8).

2.3 Objectives of the WHS

The overall objective of the WHS is to set an agenda for humanitarian action beyond 2016 in order to make it more effective, inclusive, global and overall fit for the future. Brought together for the first time in a structured dialogue that will culminate in the WHS scheduled for May 2016 in Istanbul will be the four major humanitarian stakeholders: member states (affected countries, donors and new or potential partners); the global network of humanitarian organisations and experts; associated partners (private companies, faith groups and others); and affected people.

According to the WHS three-year project plan, the goal is to achieve two main outcomes: firstly to build consensus and ownership of the process and establish or reinforce networks that will develop the Summit outcomes; secondly, to articulate a future agenda for humanitarian action and the modalities to implement Summit outcomes (OCHA, 2013:2). Underlying the WHS there is a clear call not only to promote collaboration between the humanitarian and development communities, but also to bring about a profound change in how humanitarians work: shifting the focus from response to prevention and anticipation, as well as from managing crisis to managing risk.

² Global trends include climate change, migration and population growth, urbanisation, growing inequalities and resource scarcity. For a summary of different reports see: EUPRHA, *State of the Art in Humanitarian Action*, EUPRHA Report, 2013 at <http://www.euprha.org/library>

2.4 An inclusive world-wide process

The preparatory process for the Summit aims at bringing together all humanitarian action stakeholders to work together in creating an inclusive system. It has been built on four axes of consultation: firstly, eight regional and one global consultation; secondly, thematic consultations and a global thematic consultation; thirdly, a process of online consultations, starting in May 2014; and fourthly, the linkages to related global processes on Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Four broad categories of thematic priorities have been identified: humanitarian effectiveness; reducing vulnerability and managing risk; transformation through innovation; and serving the needs of people in conflict.

A series of specialised, regional and global consultations starting in the second half of 2014 until May 2016 form the backbone of the process, engaging all stakeholders on the four priority issues identified. At the same time, online tools have been developed through a website as a global forum to engage the widest possible spectrum of contributors.³ Issue-specific discussions and debates are moderated online in different languages to activate broader participation in setting the agenda for each theme. On the web platform, stakeholders can share their studies and participate virtually in real-time moderated debates or presentations. Throughout the consultation phase, teams of experts for each theme ('Thematic Teams') work to bring the results of the Regional Consultations together with findings from global research and policy work, identifying areas of consensus and points of divergence. The teams also support online and face-to-face Regional Consultations with local experts and practitioners. They have been asked to make a special effort to capture and reflect the views of affected communities in the process (WHS, 2014a; and WHS, 2014b: 3). The consultation scheme is reflected in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: WHS Consultation Scheme (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs)

To organise the Regional Consultations, Regional Steering Groups (RSG) are being formed to guide the conceptual and logistical planning. The RSG consist of approximately 12 members chosen to ensure an appropriate mix of skills and backgrounds (WHS, 2014:3). The RSG members will set the agenda, determine criteria for the selection of participants, identify key issues of relevance in the region under each of the four WHS themes, and endorse the outcome of the Regional Consultation.

³ The website is www.worldhumanitariansummit.org.

In addition, four 'specialised' themes for consultation have been added that were not foreseen at the outset: dialogue on humanitarian civil-military coordination; improving humanitarian action; the power of business in emergencies; and urban dialogue. These themes are the focus of the Regional Consultations and three Global Forums: a Global Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination Forum, held on 13-15 April 2015 in Singapore; a Global Forum for Improving Humanitarian Action, to be held in New York on 4-5 June 2015; and a Global Urban Consultation, to be held in Barcelona in June 2015.

2.5 The WHS: the right time for progress

The WHS is part of a number of global initiatives aimed at responding to global challenges and reforming the aid architecture in order to increase its efficiency and set the agenda for the future. In this regard the timing for the WHS debate allows for an opportunity to link its priorities and the actions required with other global political processes on Disaster Risk Reduction (March 2015), Financing for Development (July 2015), Sustainable Development Goals (September 2015) and Climate Change (December 2015) that are taking place this year. All these processes aim to respond to key challenges facing vulnerable communities across the globe. Strengthening the links between all these processes is critical to set in motion a more coherent approach to humanitarian crises. There is also a need to learn from and build on other initiatives, such as the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (December 2015); the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (September 2015); and the UN peace-building review (December 2015). Each will provide an important contribution to addressing the scourge of war, poverty and vulnerability to climate change and other shocks. Together they will have a profound impact on future humanitarian risk by preventing conflict, building durable peace and helping people to withstand natural and man-made shocks in a better way. Managing risk is a core thread that weaves through all the initiatives.

Coinciding timetables provide strategic opportunities for coherence and synergy to encourage increased political and economic investment in reducing risks and strengthening resilience (Mitchell, 2012: 1). A key way of aligning the Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Framework on DRR lies in establishing common global goals, targets and indicators in relation to reducing disaster risks and losses, as well as establishing national and global monitoring systems to track progress (Mitchet *et al.*, 2014). A single set of targets and indicators spanning the Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Framework on DRR would clarify priorities, increase logic and coherence as well as minimise the amount of work required to develop monitoring and reporting capacity. In addition, to ensure that both frameworks are linked, other key actions have been identified: to share financing mechanisms; to share science, data and information; and to ensure that each framework connects to the other through appropriate textual references (Kellet, 2014:5).

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 replaces the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, and was adopted at the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015. Building on the Hyogo Framework for Action, the Sendai Framework aims to achieve: 'The substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries' (art.16). The Framework focuses on a better understanding of risk, strengthened disaster risk governance and more investment. The new Framework acknowledges the contribution of 'effective' disaster risk management to sustainable development (par.3). Moreover, it stresses that ensuring credible links 'as appropriate' between intergovernmental negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, financing for development, climate change and disaster risk reduction processes 'will contribute to building resilience and achieving the global goal to eradicate poverty'

(par.11). It also recalls that the outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development 2012, 'The Future We Want', called for disaster risk reduction and the building of disaster resilience to be addressed 'in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication and, as appropriate, to be integrated at all levels' (par.12). Furthermore, climate change is recognised as one of the drivers of disaster risk (par.13), and to reduce it there is a need to address existing challenges and prepare for future challenges by focusing on 'monitoring, assessing and understanding disaster risk and sharing such information and how it is created' (par.14).

Although the Framework does not mention the WHS, it notes: 'Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to 'Build Back Better' in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction' of the need to 'Promote the incorporation of disaster risk management into post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes, facilitate the link between relief, rehabilitation and development' (par. 33 j). Unfortunately the Framework does not include specific and measurable indicators with emphasis on reducing the need for humanitarian response and assistance resulting from natural disasters. Neither does it cover concrete funding mechanisms' goals to boost funding for developing countries to strengthen their disaster prevention and response nor the establishment of national and global monitoring systems to track progress. It includes a vague target to 'substantially enhance international cooperation to developing countries through adequate and sustainable support' (par.18 f) and it states the importance in 'strengthening of, as appropriate, international voluntary mechanisms for monitoring and assessment of disaster risks, including relevant data and information' (par. 28 f). The conference leaves the UNGA at its 70th session to consider the possibility of 'including the review of the global progress in the implementation of this framework for disaster risk reduction as part of its integrated and coordinated follow-up processes to UN conferences and summits' (art.49). It also leaves the UNGA the possibility to establish an open-ended intergovernmental working group 'for the development of a set of possible indicators to measure global progress in the implementation of this framework in conjunction with the work of the inter-agency expert group on sustainable development indicators'(art.50). The UNGA meeting will be crucial in ensuring the integration of the Post-2015 Framework on DRR within the Post-2015 Development Framework.

With regard to the respect of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), the protection of civilians and addressing the roots causes of conflict, contributions from the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, the UN peace-building review (December 2015) and the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross/Crescent Movement will provide important inputs for the WHS. In particular the initiative on IHL compliance, that will be discussed at the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross/Crescent Movement in December 2015, is expected to provide new venues to confront IHL violations and to protect and assist people in conflict.

3 THEMATIC OVERVIEW

The four broad themes that guide discussions leading up to the Summit have emerged from the findings and priorities stemming from a range of regions, forums and policy discussions.

3.1 Theme One: Humanitarian Effectiveness

The theme explores the overall effectiveness of humanitarian action and focuses on what it means to be effective in different contexts (natural disasters, conflicts, chronic vulnerability settings) and which actors may be the most effective at delivering assistance or building capacity to respond (WHS, 2014a). Key aspects of humanitarian effectiveness include acknowledging, supporting and

building upon national and local responses as well as building and strengthening appropriate platforms for better cooperation among stakeholders (Oglesby, Rosie and Burke, 2012). Effectiveness also involves acknowledgement of new actors that have become engaged in humanitarian action, including military organisations, national and international businesses, 'digital humanitarians' and diaspora groups (Al-Mannan Bakhit, 2014). Other contributions to improving humanitarian effectiveness include: appropriate accountability mechanisms for all stakeholders involved; a common understanding of effectiveness and a common framework of accountability, quality, and standards, inter-operability; cost-effectiveness and the professionalisation of humanitarian action.⁴

3.2 Theme Two: Reducing Vulnerability and Managing Risk

The second theme focuses on the need for a paradigm shift from a crisis management to a risk-management approach in order to reduce or even prevent the impact of disasters. The consultation process aims at identifying areas where new approaches are starting to demonstrate impact and can be scaled, as well as other areas where limited progress has been made and further thinking is required (WHS, 2014). Key aspects of addressing chronic vulnerability and preventing slow-onset emergencies include identifying ways to improve collaboration between humanitarian and development actors (Rubin, 2006). It also requires collaboration with partners beyond the humanitarian sector in order to identify new strategies for preventing or protecting against predictable emergencies and improving the resilience of countries and communities. Within this theme a key aspect to consider is increased risk in urban areas (Grünwald, 2014).

3.3 Theme Three: Transformation through Innovation

Innovation is defined in this theme as 'a process of adaptation, change and improvement that can help individuals, communities, actors, and organisations find solutions to operational and strategic problem' (WHS, 2014c). The theme looks at ways of solving problems and adapting to opportunities through new technologies, new partners, as well as new tools, processes and wider business models that can be used in response to more complex humanitarian needs (Betts and Bloom, 2014). An important element of successful innovation is having a strong evidence base to demonstrate the improvement in humanitarian action and finding out why good ideas are not scaled up (McClure and Gray, 2014). It also involves mapping actors in humanitarian innovation and capturing recent activities and developments that have the potential to offer solutions that will transform how humanitarian action is undertaken (*Médecins du Monde*, 2014). An incentive structure for humanitarian organisations to embrace innovation will also need to be addressed.

3.4 Theme Four: Serving the Needs of People in Conflict

The fourth theme analyses trends and challenges facing civilians in current conflicts. The scoping paper underlines that consultations in this thematic area should always 'keep the needs of affected people, as well as the risks they face, at the centre of discussions' (WHS, 2014d: 1). Key aspects of this theme are questions on how to strengthen capacity in providing humanitarian assistance and protection in conflict; how to improve humanitarian access as well as the safety and security of humanitarian personnel; how to prevent and respond to displacement, including finding durable solutions; and how to meet specific needs created by violence in urban environments (UN, 2014).

⁴ For more information, see these various contributions: ACT Alliance, 2014; Save the Children, 2014; (Group URD & ALNAP, 2014; HAP, 2014; Scott, 2014; and EUPHRA, 2014.

Other key issues within this theme are: how to improve the involvement of established and new partners in delivering principled humanitarian action in conflict; how to incorporate different models of partnerships that have arisen involving local and international actors; and how to address rising concerns about the negative implications of counter-terrorism legislation and related measures on humanitarian operations (Pantuliano and Metcalfe, 2012).

4 OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS

In line with the Summit's multi-stakeholder approach, the five Regional Consultations held by April 2015 have brought together participants from national and local governments; national and international non-governmental organisations; affected communities; local, regional and international civil society organisations; the private sector, academia; the media; regional organisations; UN agencies; together with the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. The WHS Secretariat provided administrative and logistical support for the regional processes. Regional consultations are hosted by governments in the region and chaired by government ministers. Extensive stakeholder consultations organised across the regions have taken place in the months leading up to the meetings on the Summit's four themes. The online consultations have been publicised through a number of channels.⁵ The active participation of all stakeholders has been encouraged. The results of online and stakeholder dialogue in the five Regional Consultations to date show an inconsistent participation that reflects the diversity of stakeholders and their engagement in the respective regions.⁶ These preparatory consultations have generated key regional issues and recommendations that have helped the Regional Steering Groups focus discussions on the WHS's four themes. It is within these consultations that the voice of affected populations can be heard (see section 4.7). However in some regions the views of affected people are scarcely expressed.⁷

On average, the majority of participants in the Regional Summits represent governments, intergovernmental organisations and UN agencies. There is also a considerable representation of NGOs, with more national NGOs in recipient regions and international NGOs in the EOG region. But the participation of affected communities, academia and the private sector has been limited. The main conclusions and recommendations articulated by participants in the Regional Consultation meetings are compiled in the Final Report of each Regional Consultation and summarised in the Co-Chairs' Summary Report. The overwhelming presence of governmental and intergovernmental organisations has certainly influenced the Co-Chairs' recommendations.

⁵ Channels such as humanitarian and development media together with online networks ReliefWeb, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), UN agencies and NGOs, social media. IRIN is a news agency focusing on humanitarian issues.

⁶ Comparison is difficult because of the different ways in which data is presented. In the MENA, UN agencies and NGOs are grouped together and in the others there is no differentiation between participants. Some consultations give numbers of participants in the stakeholders analysis before the summit, others do not provide this data. The online consultation in the EOG differentiates individuals who viewed the discussions (4,000) and the comments received (over 350). The final ESA report states that 3,200 people from 25 countries were consulted.

⁷ Such as North and South-East-Africa, West and Central Africa, and East and Southern Africa.

4.1 West and Central Africa

The Regional Consultation for West and Central Africa (WCA) was held in Abidjan, Ivory Coast on 19-20 June 2014. This regional meeting brought together 195 participants from 24 countries. The meeting proposed that WCA should be recognised as the first region in the world to identify priorities for a forward-looking agenda and make recommendations to shape the WHS' outcomes.

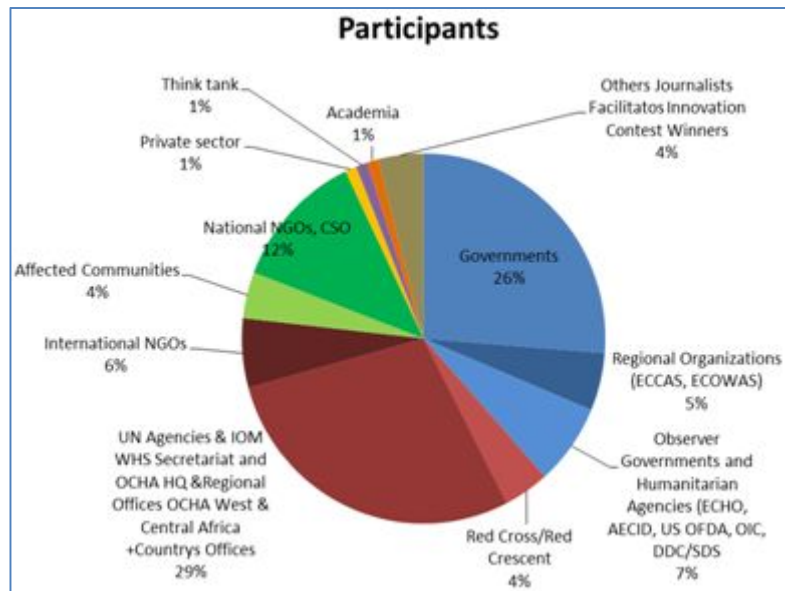


Figure 2: Participants to the regional consultation meetings per stakeholder group (Author's own elaboration based on participants' lists, WHS WCA, 2015:36-45)

Throughout the discussions and recommendations there were several recurring threads: the need for the current humanitarian system to enhance its capacity so as to access people who are most in need and take their opinions on board; inclusivity of all actors; the importance of local actors and their existing organisations and social networks; the pivotal role of governments; accountability to affected people; the challenge of coordination; and making the necessary connections between humanitarian, development and climate change action (WHS-WCA 2014a, 2014b and 2014c).

4.2 North and South-East Asia

The Regional Consultation for North and South-East Asia (NESA) was held in Tokyo, Japan on 23 and 24 July 2014. It was co-hosted by Japan, Indonesia and OCHA. The consultation brought together some 140 participants from 16 countries of North and South-East Asia.

The NESA consultations highlighted the importance of international coordination mechanisms to be subordinate to those that are national and sub-national government-led. Another recurrent question was the need to develop comprehensive legal frameworks for humanitarian action that are more systematic at integrating DRR, preparedness, response and recovery. Specific recommendations from the region are: to consider the inclusion of accountability as a core humanitarian principle; to give renewed commitment to the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD); and to ensure that specific and measurable indicators are included in the Post-2015 DRR and development processes, with the emphasis on reducing the need for humanitarian response and assistance resulting from natural disasters (WHS-NSEA 2014a, 2014b and 2014c).

4.3 Eastern and Southern Africa

The World Humanitarian Summit Regional Consultation for Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) was held in Pretoria, South Africa, from 27-29 October 2014. The convention brought together more than 200 participants from 23 countries in the two sub-regions.

Some recurring issues were identified in the regional discussions: needs-based and context-specific humanitarian action; strengthening local capacities and structures; bridging the divide between development and humanitarian communities; improving financing; reviewing legal frameworks, policies and guidelines; ensuring accountability at all levels; adopting appropriate technologies; strengthening partnerships and collaboration; involving youth in humanitarian action; and the role of women in humanitarian action (WHS-ESA 2014a, 2014b and 2014c).

4.4 Middle East and North Africa

The WHS Regional Consultation for Middle East and North Africa (MENA) was held at the Dead Sea, Jordan, on 3-5 March 2015. The meeting brought together 180 participants from 16 countries.

Particularly relevant from this consultation are the criticisms of aid agencies emerging from stakeholder consultations. Some of the comments emphasised that aid agencies are partial, unaccountable as well as potentially corrupt, and fail to meet refugees' most pressing needs. Concerns included a lack of consultation about people's needs, a failure to protect the most vulnerable, confusion over which agency was responsible for what, duplicated aid, as well as instances where help was perceived to be withheld or prioritised due to political or religious affiliation (WHS-MENA, 2015b: 14-17). A widespread outrage and frustration at the level of human suffering and the lack of accountability in the region for violations of the legal frameworks that protect civilians was evidenced in the consultation. In addition to the protection of civilians, other recurring threads were: humanitarian access; protracted crises and displacement; localising humanitarian response; emergency preparedness; humanitarian financing; and ensuring that humanitarian aid is not used as a substitute for political action. A request coming out of the region is the need for burden sharing of hosting refugees by the international community.

4.5 Europe and Others Group

The consultation for the Europe and Others Group (EOG) of countries including Canada, the USA, Australia and New Zealand marks the halfway point of the Regional Consultations leading up to the WHS in 2016.

4.5.1 Specificity of the EOG region

The EOG consultation occupies a unique place in the WHS process due in part to its varied experience (lessons-learned and best practice) on which it can reflect and share, but also because it is being used to address areas needing improvement. Most governments in the region and their regional organisations have well-established legislation, strong government structures, and profit from a variety of well-resourced non-governmental actors experienced in disaster risk reduction, preparedness, civil protection and domestic humanitarian response, including civil-military coordination. Particularly in regard to humanitarian donors, it is a critical consultation for contributing recommendations which can be taken forward to Istanbul.

Humanitarian crises within the EOG Region have included large-scale natural disasters, conflict related crises and a range of other hazards (ODI, 2015). The region is affected by most types of natural hazards, most of which are managed by well-founded national capacity. Major conflicts have

occurred in the region over the past decades, although there are also more recent and current conflicts. Displacement and migration patterns have changed significantly in recent years and have become part of the leading humanitarian issues within the region.

The region possesses relevant capacities and experience on which to build its contribution to WHS discussions and the future humanitarian agenda:

- Development of national risk frameworks, early warning systems, national disaster insurance schemes, and/or centralised risk management set-ups connected to municipalities and local government;
- A variety of well-resourced and capable non-governmental actors involved in civil protection, humanitarian preparedness and response;
- The region's military' and civil protection actors provide major logistical and other assets for large-scale humanitarian response;
- The region's private sector fosters business engagement with the humanitarian sector, through businesses and their forums, plus private foundations;
- Major advances in science, risk modelling, technologies and data in supporting risk management within the region;
- Regional capacity to address and resolve conflict and its root causes politically (EU, Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe);
- A concentration of major humanitarian and development aid donors, including international organisations, national governments, businesses, private organisations, and individuals;
- The multilateral humanitarian system is highly dependent on funding from this region, especially from the foreign aid budgets of national governments and ECHO;
- Strong support for principled humanitarian aid on the part of the general public, both for governmental aid and individual contributions. Local NGOs and international NGOs based in the region have been instrumental in stimulating this support;
- Participation of diasporas in the mobilisation of resources.

4.5.2 Key issues and points emerging from the EOG consultation

Following the model of earlier Regional Consultations, the EOG meeting was preceded by an extensive process of preliminary consultations within the region led by the Regional Steering Committee. The composition of the EOG Regional Steering Committee reflects the broad humanitarian landscape in the group.⁸ The Regional Consultation for the EOG group held in Budapest, Hungary on 3-4 February 2015 has been the largest and most inclusive Regional Consultation to date. The key issues emerging from the consultations in the EOG, which have formed the basis for the Co-Chairs' Summary Report, are summarised below:

- Humanitarian Effectiveness: Some key concepts and recommendations shared by other consultations emerged in the discussions: the need to make affected people the prime agents of humanitarian response; the importance of creating an enabling environment for humanitarian action reinforcing the responsibility of governments; the establishment of a more predictable

⁸ For the list of RSG members, see in Annex 1.

engagement among the many actors in humanitarian response; the adaptation of humanitarian action models so that responses meet needs appropriately in different contexts; and the ensuring of longer-term, flexible funding that supports appropriate responses in different contexts. Participants also emphasised the need to draw up a common framework for effective humanitarian action (such as a mechanism for measuring the impacts of preparedness and response focusing on most vulnerable and gender-sensitive programming).

- **Reducing Vulnerability and Managing Risk:** Discussions revealed four key recommendations that seemed to be consensual: reinforcing government commitment to investing in disaster risk management and humanitarian response; promoting the role of regional organisations in crisis preparedness, response and resilience; recognising the key role of civil society organisations and local actors in preparedness and response; and committing to shared, multi-hazard analysis of risk amongst all actors to support the prioritisation of action as well as development of long-term strategies.
- **Serving the Needs of People in Conflict:** The EOG consultation has reaffirmed many of the points made in previous Regional Consultations, notably: the overarching role of humanitarian principles; the centrality of protection; the need for humanitarians to be in dialogue with all parties in conflicts; the importance of access; and the need for political solutions/prevention of conflicts. The latter shares the point made in the MENA consultation, such as the need to de-politicise humanitarian action and the negative impact of counter-terrorism legislations.
- **Transformation through Innovation:** Participants in the consultations noted how innovation should be seen as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself, highlighting the requirement for demand-driven solutions to context-specific needs. It was acknowledged that innovation should be driven by the needs of affected people. From this perspective, the potential for establishing private sector partnerships to amplify people's voices should be explored. Some recommendations emerging from discussions are: ensuring innovation is carried out in an ethical and principled way; creating opportunities for cross-fertilisation and dialogue across sectors and policy fields; localising innovation; augmenting evidence-based learning and knowledge management; prioritising areas for innovation; and scaling up promising innovation.
- **Specific Risks and Vulnerabilities:** Immigration is a key challenge for the EOG region, in particular maritime migration and its humanitarian implications.

The full consultation report with a comprehensive list of observations and recommendations had not been published by the end of April 2015. NGOs that attended the meeting expressed via the news agency IRIN worries that the meaningful debate would be diluted and there could be premature application of a 'political filter' (Redvers, 2015). Despite consensus on many key issues, there remain concerns that the Summary Report overlooks several important elements and questions raised within the discussions, for instance:

- The humanitarian system has moved towards focusing on natural disasters, rather than towards areas in conflict, where 80% of humanitarian action takes place.
- Many of the issues discussed have been discussed already in political circles. What is needed now is for the whole system to be revised.
- What are the humanitarian dimensions linked to migration and how can they be addressed?
- Cash-based systems have distinct benefits, but hurdles are introduced as a result of anti-terrorist safeguards, controls and legislation put in place by donor parliaments.

4.6 Conclusions from the Regional Consultations

The sections above present the priorities identified in each of the four thematic areas within the different regions, including specific issues emerging from each region.⁹ In the consultations a strong emphasis has been placed on putting empowerment of affected populations, particularly women, at the core of all stages in humanitarian response by prioritising the most vulnerable people, understanding their needs and recognising their capacities. Consultations also acknowledged the primary responsibility of governments in meeting the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable and demands to adapt the humanitarian system to local, national and regional requirements. There is also a consensus on the importance of ensuring commitment and adherence to humanitarian principles; enhancing collaboration between all actors engaged in humanitarian action; and creating the right conditions for innovation.

Discussions confirm the need to strengthen disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness, address the vulnerability of communities and build resilience by fostering collaboration between humanitarian and development actors. Additionally, due to the increasing scale and severity of human suffering in some regions and the insufficient funds available,¹⁰ there is a strong call to give protection a higher priority in humanitarian action.

Cross-cutting issues emerging from all themes in the consultations are: needs- and context-based approaches and the importance of using different tools for sudden disaster and protracted crisis and for rural and urban settings; the acknowledgement of agency and accountability to affected people and communities; to give a stronger voice and recognition to local actors' role (only 3% of funding goes directly to them);¹¹ timely, flexible and predictable funding tailored to different contexts; the need for involvement of new partners who can help prepare for future risks and propose ideas on how to meet these challenges; and to reinforce coordination and collaboration between humanitarian actors.

After humanitarian reform, gender should be a general issue of concern for all sectors involved in humanitarian assistance. However, the request for implementing a gender approach has been suggested only in the EOG consultations. Another important issue of particular significance to the EOG region is the impact of counter-terrorism policies and legislation on humanitarian operations. Here the key challenge for EOG humanitarian actors is how to respond appropriately to national counter-terrorism legislation and related risk management policies.

Finally, as the United Nations is the promoter of humanitarian system reforms and the WHS initiative, discussions could have provided the opportunity to address the leadership and efficiency of OCHA and other UN agencies in responding to recent crises such as the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

⁹ Key recommendations synthesised from the consultations are outlined in Annex 2.

¹⁰ Funds available for protection are 6% (including relief coordination and support services as the OECD DAC categorisation combines protection with relief coordination and support services). The level of underfunding in protection is staggering considering that in the period from 2009-2013, protection requirements in UN-coordinated appeals received one third of the requests, while coordination and support services received 73% of the funds (Development Initiatives, 2014:74).

¹¹ DRR is often delivered as a component of other programmes making expenditure hard to track within both humanitarian assistance and overall official development assistance (ODA). There is also an increasing amount of domestic funding in this area (Development Initiatives, 2014:77).

4.7 Main requests and policy demands emerging from the WHS

None of the key issues mentioned above are new or unknown to the humanitarian community. They reflect debates, dilemmas and discussions held within the sector in recent years. However, as a new feature, this is the first time that all these issues are being debated openly by so many stakeholders.¹² Three main humanitarian requests were made from the WHS consultations. Firstly to protect and preserve the dignity of people affected by conflict and disaster. Secondly to find innovative and sustainable ways of meeting people's needs. And thirdly to 'localise' humanitarian response in the 'Global South' by strengthening local, national and regional capacities to prevent, manage and respond to crisis.

These requests must be understood within a context which poses increasing policy demands to humanitarian actors. The combination of global trends, a changing humanitarian landscape and a demand from developing countries to make the humanitarian system complementary to local and national efforts is creating the impetus for new thinking about humanitarian action and a clarification of its limits. Humanitarians are faced with three distinct policy demands. Firstly, to put protection at the centre of humanitarian action to address the needs of people in conflict situations. Secondly, to make a policy shift from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention through disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management building resilience to recurrent and protracted crisis. And thirdly to include humanitarian action as part of integrated and comprehensive approaches to address the root causes of crises.

4.8 Underlying tensions in the process

There is some underlying tension and points of friction during discussions in the WHS consultations. First of all there are different understandings of what humanitarian action comprises. Humanitarian aid is by definition a response to man-made crises and natural disasters, a fundamental expression of the universal value of solidarity between people. What differentiates humanitarian aid from any other type of aid is that it is provided according to the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. But organisations understand their mission differently depending on their mandate and the context in which they operate.¹³

There are also concerns that humanitarian aid is used to address gaps where political and development solutions have failed. This causes the humanitarian system to overstretch and to no longer meet increasing needs. Finding solutions to protracted crises is fundamentally a political issue that requires the full extent of political will together with the capacity and resources of donor governments as well as affected states.

There are also tensions between a 'state avoiding model' of international humanitarian aid and a 'renewed assertiveness of host states' (Harvey, 2009). Host states are becoming increasingly reluctant to what they perceive as 'humanitarian interventionism' at the expense of their national prerogatives. There are two different types of this host state's assertiveness. There are host states

¹² A comment raised in the EOG consultation was that some points needed further exploration in order to understand why they have not been previously addressed.

¹³ There are for instance great differences between the mandate of the International Committee of the Red Cross (focusing on victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence) and the Save the Children (seeking opportunities to transform and rebuild communities). With the exception of MSF and a couple of small NGOs, the overwhelming majority of NGOs are multi-mandated covering activities from emergency aid deliveries to long-term, anti-poverty activities throughout the developing world (Stoddard, 2003:26).

which are developing their disaster management systems and are both willing and able to act as 'host coordinators' as well as 'implementers' during a crisis. There are, on the other hand, also authoritarian states prepared to control humanitarian interventions, hindering access to people in need. However, without some kind of state consent, humanitarian assistance cannot be provided. A more strategic and constructive dialogue between donor governments and host countries is, therefore, necessary.

There are also tensions between the western humanitarian agencies and emerging humanitarian institutions from other regions and Islamic countries with other codes of conduct working outside the multilateral frameworks. For example, the humanitarian role of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is based on the Islamic principles of charity ('zakat') and a shared religious community among Muslims ('ummah'), which conflicts with traditional humanitarian principles of universality and neutrality (Svoboda *et al.*, 2015:9). This raises concerns but also makes clear the need to include other actors in the current humanitarian system.

Another tension lies between on the one hand the need to respond to the demands of developing countries in seeking the support of local and national capacities to find sustainable solutions to the underlying conditions that create humanitarian crises (Bakhit, 2014:5-6), and on the other hand the demands of western agencies for their acceptance of the humanitarian principles as well as greater accountability and transparency. In some contexts the local-level response is not the most effective and there can be mixed results working with local actors.¹⁴ Host governments do not always possess the capacity or the willingness to respond to the needs of affected people. The call for more localised response encounters several challenges as shown by the discussions and the research undertaken on the issue of localising humanitarian financing in the Thematic Consultations.¹⁵

While not directly addressed within discussions, there is also an underlying tension between a needs-based and a rights-based approach to humanitarian action. Although the incorporation of protection to humanitarian action conveys a human rights approach to humanitarian action, some humanitarians still consider this a political issue. Yet more and more affected populations are seeking the implementation of human rights and international humanitarian law as well as the end of impunity.

Finally, tensions exist between growing humanitarian caseloads, reduced humanitarian funds and growing demands for accountability which underscore the need to respond to humanitarian crises in a more effective, efficient and responsible way.

¹⁴ Illustrated by the case of 'aid keepers' and the internally displaced people (IDPs) in Mogadishu (Drultra, 2014; Refugees International, 2012).

¹⁵ Challenges such as fiduciary risks, aid diversion and corruption, the effects of counter-terrorism legislation and other measures, and the resistance of international NGOs that are increasingly competing for funds in a humanitarian landscape dominated by five international 'mega' NGOs (*Médecins Sans Frontières*, Catholic Relief Services, Oxfam International, the International Save the Children alliance, and World Vision International (ALNAP, 2013:29)).

5 KEY CHALLENGES

This section addresses key challenges identified in the different thematic areas during the consultations. It will also discuss issues that have not been sufficiently approached such as the leadership and coordination roles of the UN which are included as part of the challenges on humanitarian effectiveness. The issue of gender sensitive approaches and gender equality is embedded in the discussion on accountability to affected people. The four thematic areas of discussion remain, but the discussions have evolved and priorities have changed. The MENA and EOG consultations have placed 'Serving the needs of people in conflict' and 'Protection' on the top of the agenda, hence the change in the order of discussing the key challenges in this chapter. The section starts with a reflection of the challenges emerging about the WHS process itself, the way it is conducted and its decision-making procedures.

5.1 The WHS: An inclusive open ended process?

Participants in the WHS process say that the consultations are succeeding in engaging an unprecedented spectrum of voices, but many fear the process still lacks any clear framework for turning talk into action.¹⁶ Another challenge for the WHS Secretariat is to ensure adequate representation of the different organisations, stakeholders and actors involved in the sector.¹⁷ Without it building consensus and ownership of the results or recommendations that may emerge from the Summit would be difficult.

The Summit organisers insist that aid donors, aid givers and aid recipients can collectively decide what needs to be talked about. However the agenda will partly be determined based on the regional consultations and partly through global research.¹⁸ While the bulk of attention is given to the regional consultations, there are other discussions led by the thematic leaders, from which not much information is available besides some papers on specific issues. Thematic teams of experts are working to bring the results of the Regional Consultations together with findings from global research and policy work, identifying areas of consensus and points of divergence. They are drawing up the agenda which will be tested in the Global Forum on Improving Humanitarian Action hosted by ALNAP, the US government, the OIC and the WHS Secretariat on 4-5 June. The overrepresentation of American and British actors in the highly relevant thematic team on Humanitarian Effectiveness, raises concerns that there is an American and British predominance in the process.¹⁹

The first face-to-face meeting of the thematic teams during November in Lausanne identified six emerging issues from both the three completed regional consultations (WCA, NESA and ESA) and from the work of the thematic teams. These were: prioritising people most vulnerable to or suffering from acute humanitarian distress; localising preparedness and response; building resilience to protracted crises in fragile and conflict-affected environments; reinforcing humanitarian action in situations of conflict; being financially fit and agile; and making the international humanitarian system more adaptable and better-suited for the new generation of crises (WHS Thematic Teams, 2014).

¹⁶ See for instance the remarks of Alexander Betts (director of the Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford) to IRIN.

¹⁷ Looking at the current participation, a greater involvement from academics, the private sector and above all the affected population in the remainder of the process is needed.

¹⁸ See the statement of Breanna Ridsel (WHS spokesperson) to IRIN (IRIN, 2015).

¹⁹ From the 15 members, 5 are from the US and 3 are from the UK, in addition to OCHA and the WFP. Other organisations represented are ALNAP, Save the Children, Development Initiatives and World Vision.

The second face-to-face meeting in Bonn during April this year, after the MENA and EOG consultations had taken place, identified seven emerging issues: ensuring affected people, particularly women, have a stronger voice and greater role in humanitarian action; confronting IHL violations and finding new ways to protect and assist people in conflict; developing new approaches for managing recurrent and protracted crises; taking global action to address the funding gap; adapting the humanitarian system to new contexts, actors and challenges; localising preparedness and response; and creating an enabling environment and investment in innovation to better deal with current and future humanitarian challenges. It is not clear how they have been selected. For instance, confronting IHL violations is at least as recurrent and important as upholding the humanitarian principles which are considered first priority in all regional consultations; the participation of women in humanitarian response is indeed crucial but it is underscored only in the NESAs and EOG consultations not in the rest. Further, this prioritisation of issues has so far not been discussed with all members of the RSCs at least in the EOG.

Finally, if one of the main objectives is to increase collaboration between the humanitarian and development sectors, the question is whether or not development actors should at a certain point be invited to the discussions. This question is not as straightforward as it might look. The overwhelming majority of NGOs are multi-mandated; representatives of governments are coming from humanitarian units within development departments or agencies or directly from development departments; and there is also representation from the World Bank Group and the OECD in the EOG RSG. As mentioned in the first section, the WHS is a project shared between OCHA and the UNDP. A concern of humanitarians is that the WHS process veers too much to the development side of the agenda, instead of concentrating on the 'core humanitarian' work which is assistance and protection. This is one of the tensions mentioned in part 4.8.

5.2 Serving the needs of people in conflict

This is the central and core challenge of humanitarian action now and in the years to come. 80% of people affected by humanitarian crises are in conflict zones. The current four level 3 (L3) disasters, the highest UN categorisation of crises are all conflict situations. At the end of 2013, each of the 10 largest consolidated humanitarian appeals involved situations of armed conflict.

With regard to the consultations in the EOG region, the main challenges raised are the importance of strengthening the humanitarian principles and international legal framework for humanitarian action; the centrality of protection; the need to increase access by engaging in a dialogue with all actors; the need to de-politicise humanitarian action; and of reducing the impact of counter-terrorist policies and counter-terrorist legislation in humanitarian operations and increasing proximity to affected people.

5.2.1 Upholding the humanitarian principles

Abiding by humanitarian principles enables NGOs to provide assistance and protection in sensitive operating environments as well as conflict situations. They guarantee an efficient and effective humanitarian response that aims at distributing aid only as needed, regardless of all other considerations. In doing so, humanitarian principles should allow safe access to those in need and are critical in maintaining acceptance, safety and protection of humanitarian workers. However, humanitarian principles have been undermined and curtailed in current armed conflicts. In this context the Summit should provide the opportunity to reaffirm humanitarian principles as the basis of humanitarian aid and recognise their centrality in policy and on the ground. As new actors engage in humanitarian action, a shared understanding of the principles is essential. Obstacles to upholding the humanitarian principles identified in the consultations include a lack of knowledge of what is

implied and these principles of action should, therefore, be made more widely known among armed forces, police and public workers, as well as community leaders, through education and training.

5.2.2 Reaffirm and strengthen the international legal framework for humanitarian action

Nowadays the increasing scale and severity of attacks against civilians, the impossibility or the restriction on access to people in need of assistance and protection, and the growing insecurity of humanitarian workers, all go to make imperative the reaffirmation and strengthening of international legal framework for humanitarian action. Consultations underscore the need to emphasise the primary responsibility of states and make strong calls for accountability and the implementation of IHL and International Refugee Law, International Human Rights Law as well as International Criminal Law, including relevant UN Security Council resolutions, in particular on protection of civilians and children in armed conflicts. The issue at present is that IHL lacks effective means of identifying, preventing and halting violations while they are occurring. The mechanisms within IHL that do exist are rarely, if ever used. Moreover, they are only applicable in international armed conflict, whereas the majority of current conflicts is non-international. The initiative on IHL compliance that will be discussed at the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross/Crescent Movement in December 2015 will provide potential avenues to be explored (ICRC, 2015).

5.2.3 Protection should be at the heart of humanitarian action

There is a growing awareness of the centrality of protection if humanitarian action is to save lives, alleviate suffering and promote dignity. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) principals adopted a statement on 17 December 2013, which affirms that 'protection of all persons affected and at risk must inform humanitarian decision-making and response, including engagement with states and non-state parties to conflict. It must be central to our preparedness efforts, as part of immediate and life-saving activities, and throughout the duration humanitarian response and beyond' (IASC, 2013:1). The statement complements and reinforces the 'Rights Up Front' initiative which aims to strengthen UN action in protecting people from serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. Humanitarian actors should accept that they have to apply not only 'a framework of context and risk analysis, needs assessments' but also 'a rights-based approach that helps to identify threats and vulnerabilities and their causes as well as violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, and to establish appropriate responses' (ONCHR, UNHCR IASC Principles, 2013:5). Yet reports suggest that protection issues are still not systematically identified and addressed in humanitarian response and advocacy (Churrua and Eguren, 2014; Reichold and Binder, 2013). The Summit is an opportunity to have key players commit to making change happen.

A central component of protection is the understanding of different rights and needs of specific vulnerable groups.²⁰ These groups are often neglected in the assessment, preparedness, design and delivery of humanitarian relief, making them 'invisible' to relief operations. IDP's protection and assistance is a matter of growing concern. The consultations suggest the adoption of instruments building on the model of the Kampala Convention of the African Union (ODI, 2015:15).

Since humanitarian workers have become targets in most conflict situations their protection is a priority. ACF-International has proposed the development and presentation of an appeal to create a special protocol on the Protection of Humanitarian Personnel and the systematic inclusion of

²⁰ Specific vulnerable groups include women, children, displaced persons, migrants, refugees and those with disabilities.

specific clauses strengthening accountability for the protection of humanitarian workers into the Humanitarian Plans of donors for all countries (ACF-International, 2015).

5.2.4 Enhance humanitarian access by engaging all actors

Access plays a key role in the protection of civilians and is a test for effective humanitarian operations. Recent UN Security Resolutions to facilitate cross-border operations (UNSC Res. 2139, 2165 and 2191) have had some positive effects, but the overall results have been mixed. Consultations in the WHS suggest that humanitarian actors need to engage in a dialogue with all actors involved in a conflict (including non-state parties) in order to negotiate access and to highlight their responsibilities. Recent experiences need to be evaluated to find the most creative ways of working in states 'where humanitarian action is firmly nationalised and leaves little room for a diverse array' (Slim, 2014: 61). 'Humanitarian nationalism' is likely to be an increasingly common feature of strong state emergencies, such as those in Sri Lanka, Sudan and Myanmar.

Humanitarian access should be enhanced by allowing a greater diversity of actors to assist people in need. In each situation the space for action and the potential 'game changers' should be identified. New actors and new donors have an added-value in delivering aid to hard-to reach communities (*Secours Islamique*, 2015:1). In some regions, countries such as Turkey, Saudi Arabia and China are in a better position to exert pressure on another state that is withholding access. The comparative advantages of regional and sub-regional organisations in facilitating humanitarian access and the delivery of humanitarian assistance need to be further explored. WHS regional consultations have suggested also the need to promote pragmatic mechanisms for civil-military coordination.

5.2.5 Avoid the instrumentalisation of humanitarian action

The need to make sure that humanitarian action is not politicised and draw a clear distinction between political and humanitarian objectives has been pointed out in the consultations. The last decade has witnessed the emergence of new practices that seek to enable international aid policies and programmes better to prevent, respond to, and even transform the occurrence of man-made, armed conflict, and natural disasters (O'Gorman, 2011). Whilst there was no consensus on the ideal relationship between humanitarian action and other policy spheres, a general acceptance has emerged that complex emergencies require more comprehensive (and ultimately political) solutions than the simple provision of relief. As a consequence, humanitarian assistance is now embedded in a political, state-building and development agenda. The UN integration policy,²¹ the EU comprehensive approach and many governments' approaches aim collectively at maximising impact on the ground by drawing on the full range of its instruments and resources at their disposal in a holistic way. These approaches should be based on full recognition of humanitarian aid's specific 'modus operandi' in respecting the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, in meeting the needs of affected populations. The perception of humanitarian assistance being used for political, economic or commercial advantages may increase risks to the safety of both staff and recipients.

5.2.6 Reduce the negative impact of counter-terrorist policies and counter-terrorist legislation to enable access

Humanitarian NGOs are concerned that they could incur criminal liability by coming into contact or engaging with non-state armed actors listed as terrorist entities. In order to negotiate access to

²¹ The 'UN integration policy' refers to efforts to 'maximise the individual and collective impact of the UN's response'.

populations in need of assistance and protection, and to maintain the acceptance of local actors and the population, contact with non-state armed actors is crucial in facilitating safe and effective humanitarian responses (WHS EOG, 2015a; WHS EOG, 2015b). However counter-terrorism measures are having a negative impact and hampering humanitarian operations in Somalia, Occupied Palestinian Territories and Afghanistan (Mackintosh, 2013; Modirzadeh, 2011). Sustained dialogue around the implications of counterterrorism measures is required, not only between humanitarian actors and donors, but also more broadly across the humanitarian, security and political sectors.

5.3 Humanitarian Effectiveness

The WHS process aims at ensuring the effectiveness of the humanitarian system. From discussions in the consultations there is consensus on what is required to ensure an effective response. The response should be tailored to the local context and consistent with the real needs of affected people. Also, it should have the engagement of all actors in place, in a collaborative and sustainable manner, by those best placed to meet those needs. This implies recognising and supporting local and national capacities, enhancing coordination and acknowledging the important role of new donors.

5.3.1 Ensure agency to and engagement of crisis-affected people

There is a strong demand from crises prone regions for the voice of affected communities to be heard and for the people to be engaged in each stage of humanitarian preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation ensuring them access and participation in the relevant decision-making processes (ALNAP, 2014:8-9). Many NGOs are focusing their positions in the WHS on the need to engage affected communities and local actors. Accountability to affected populations is now widely accepted as the 'bedrock upon which all notions of (humanitarian) effectiveness are built' (OCHA, 2013: 3). The WHS NESAs Regional Consultation has proposed that the WHS 'should consider accountability as a humanitarian principle' (WHS NESAs, 2014: 2). In this context there is an increased focus on the economic empowerment of people. For instance, in the consultations there is a request for an assistance framework that can provide people with greater choice such as cash transfers (WHS EOG, 2015b:16; WHS-MENA, 2015c:4) and for including temporary employment opportunities as part of response programming (WHS-MENA, 2015c:4).

Many assessments and reports demonstrate the gap between what the humanitarian system provides and what local people need, and this is particularly startling in relation to gender. Humanitarian action's failing to engage all the people consistently continues to exacerbate gender inequality, which should be an issue of concern for all sectors of humanitarian assistance. However, the need to implement a gender-sensitive approach appears strongly only in the EOG consultations.

5.3.2 Adapt humanitarian action models according to needs and contexts

Discussions from the WHS consultations to date have pointed out the importance of ensuring that the international humanitarian system is flexible and agile in adapting to the new generation of crises and meeting different needs in different contexts. The humanitarian sector applies a similar response approach in different contexts that require a different mix of humanitarian, development, peace and security functions to address humanitarian needs holistically. Humanitarians at times take on roles that should be taken on by other sectors.

Much of the policy and practice of modern humanitarian action has grown from its long engagement with emergencies in Africa and Asia. Humanitarian actors are prepared to work in low income, fragile state and mainly rural contexts. If predictions are correct, during the next ten years the focus will be on the Middle East. UN humanitarian action needs to re-orientate itself towards

operations in middle-income contexts that are dominated by strong states, sophisticated weapons, urban populations and intense geopolitical interests (Slim, 2014). Operating in urban conflict settings requires specific skills and sensitivities as well as the ability to build trust and acceptance with local communities as well as other parties to a conflict (Savage and Muggah 2012; Hasow 2013).

In the lead-up to the Summit, different contributions have been made to the debate on classifying the work humanitarians do in accordance with their operating contexts (Ramalingam and Mitchell, 2014: 26).²² Five different contexts have been identified: recurrent rapid and slow-onset disasters; protracted crises in fragile and conflict-affected states; conflict/high-risk environments; rapid onset, short-term overwhelming for the country or region (primarily natural hazard); and new and emerging large-scale global crises and threats. These contexts may require a more tailored and adapted 'business model' at different levels in order to meet the needs of affected people in a better way.

5.3.3 Establish cooperation, coordination mechanisms and new partnerships

All consultations have stressed the importance of supporting cooperation mechanisms at the international, national and local level wherever possible. The international humanitarian system has to acknowledge better support and build upon national as well as local responses. Local partners are not only first responders, but also form a bridge between international response agencies and the local populations. The call to support local needs and actors comes with a demand for proximity and on-the-ground management and planning of response. Remote management is criticised for impeding the comprehensive understanding of a community's needs (WHS EOG, 2015:24). The WHS process can provide an opportunity to build trust among international and local NGOs and to analyse the advantages and disadvantages of this model of partnerships (Howe *et al.*, 2015:28).

Humanitarian coordination mechanisms should be made more inclusive, complementary and accessible to local organisations. Until now international coordination systems have not been respectful of host governments' primary role in responding to emergencies. Government officials are not systematically invited to coordination meetings, and insufficient effort has been made to ensure that they can actively participate. Countries of the G77 are reluctant to engage in initiatives developed outside the UNGA.²³ Partly for this reason, host governments have been wary of the cluster approach to coordination (Harvey, 2009:12).

An array of non-core humanitarian actors work in parallel and often in coordination with the rest of the humanitarian system, but with different goals and approaches (ALNAP; 2013:16).²⁴ It is less important who is delivering the assistance, than how well the needs of people are met.

5.3.4 Timely, flexible and predictable funding

Humanitarian response is becoming increasingly stretched by the number, scale and severity of emergencies. In 2013, the international community responded to humanitarian need on a dramatic level, with a record USD 22 billion in funding. Yet only 59 % of the UN's stated requirements were met. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has suggested the idea of a Super Central Emergency

²² A wide range of factors shape each context, including the role, capacity and willingness of governments, scope and longevity of the crises, the roots of the crises and vulnerability of the affected population, as well as rapid urbanisation.

²³ Countries such as Egypt and India have rejected the Oslo Guidelines for the use of military assets in disaster response for similar reasons. In contrast, the G77 gave unprecedented support to the CERF which was approved in the General Assembly.

²⁴ Including militaries, commercial contractors, religious institutions, diaspora as well as formal and informal private givers.

Response Fund supported by mandatory contributions from UN member countries, which would be activated in the case of L3 emergencies.

Most international humanitarian assistance (66% in 2012) goes to long-term recipient countries and for populations who are marginalised and vulnerable in countries with poor governance, it is one of the few resources available. These needs cannot be met by humanitarian budgets alone. Nor is the provision of short-term and unpredictable assistance to meet acute humanitarian needs necessarily a good investment in terms of longer-term efficiency and effectiveness (Development Initiatives, 2015: 2-4).

The consultations underscore the need to ensure that the policies, tools and level of funding seek greater efficiencies and optimise value. There is at present a 'one size fits all' approach to humanitarian financing, which is primarily internationally led. Funding mechanisms should be more flexible to allow for multi-annual planning, especially in the context of protracted emergencies and/or strengthening resilience and disaster risk reduction strategies. Longer-term, flexible funding should be ensured that supports appropriate responses in different contexts. Funding for DRR and resilience should also be increased and incorporated into development portfolios. A key question is how to make better use of the funds available, how to use them more effectively and how to develop better understanding of funding available (Development Initiatives, 2015). There is also demand for a more flexible approach to financing and investment structures, allowing testing, and potential failure, of innovations. Trust funds have emerged as an innovative way to combine different funds from donors to prepare transition from emergency response, such as humanitarian aid, towards longer-term development assistance in countries. Although not new, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was launched in 2006,²⁵ and new initiatives such as the EU multi-donor development trust fund, in support of the Central African Republic allow more direct funding and greater ability to target funds to the most critical humanitarian needs, encourage early donor contributions and enable a rapid response to unforeseen circumstances.

Elimination of the 'middle man' by direct funding to local actors is a strong plea emerging from consultations. The challenge is to develop better compliance frameworks and risk management that allow funding to flow to local actors, whilst also taking into consideration accountability requirements in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity (Gibbons, 2014) and with reference to international commitments. These should include the Principles of Partnership as well as relevant sections of donor, NGO and Red Cross/Red Crescent principles and codes of conduct (VOICE, 2015, ICVA, 2015).

5.3.5 The role of the private sector

As humanitarian needs are increasing and donor support is reducing, humanitarian response agencies are looking to the private sector to fill the funding gap. Private funding as a share of the total humanitarian response grew.²⁶ Data suggests that an average of 58 % of NGO income comes from private donors, the highest share of all aid organisations (Stoianova, 2013: 4).²⁷ Although private funds may amount to less in monetary terms than institutional funds, they are extremely valuable to agencies delivering life-saving work in crisis situations bringing particular benefits of

²⁵ The CERF is un-earmarked and does not directly fund NGOs, instead UN agencies and the IOM channel funds to organisations that they use as implementing partners.

²⁶ Private funding grew from 16 % in 2006 to 31 % in 2010 and 29 % in 2011 (Stoianova, 2013: 4).

²⁷ In comparison: only 8 % of UN income and 18% of income for the Red Cross Movement came from private voluntary contributions during the same period.

reliability, durability and flexibility (Stirk, 2014). Private funding has remained consistent and appears to be defying the economic crisis. Yet, the study commissioned by 'Global Humanitarian Assistance' on private funding states that it would be premature to conclude that private money can directly replace the shortage of institutional funding. It is unclear how private giving will fare in the near future, particularly if there are no large-scale humanitarian crises to spur people into donating (Stoianova, 2013: 3). Furthermore, there is the issue of government donors' commitment to international aid financing, which they have a responsibility to uphold despite the current economic downturn.

There is evidence also of considerable growth in donor-government contracting of commercial entities for development assistance and, increasingly, for reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts (Stoddard, 2008). This can be seen in specific cases: large scale and sudden onset natural disasters lacking prior operational presence of aid organisations and high profile post-conflict situations where political objectives demanded quick and highly visible measures of aid efforts and results (Stoddard, 2008). As a consequence, a recommendation from ALNAP is to 'support partnerships with private sector, but highlight (humanitarian) agencies' competitive advantage' (ALNAP, 2013:34).

5.3.6 Engaging new and emerging donors

Recent crises have seen a growing number of states entering the humanitarian field, showing more concern towards their own population. States that are newcomers in humanitarian action, such as Brazil, China and India, are beginning to integrate international solidarity as part of their foreign policy. The contributions of 'non-traditional' state donors grew considerably after 2005 and continue to grow (ALNAP, 2012:38). In a world that has become multipolar, this change in the structure of the humanitarian sector presents both challenges and opportunities for the traditional Western actors (EUPRHA, 2013: 34).

There is a gradual but steadily increasing engagement of Islamic countries like Qatar, Turkey and Saudi Arabia in international humanitarian action, both as donors and as policy supporters. They define the humanitarian response in their own terms, challenging the de facto monopoly of Western organisations. Many of the crises of recent years have affected Muslim people,²⁸ and in all of these crises Muslim and Arab donors contributed significantly, but contributions to the multilateral system have been limited.

Recent studies point out that coordination has not always been a priority for new donors. For example, Islamic organisations consider their work as charitable giving which is a requirement in Islam, and often people want to give their 'zakat' to something tangible like the construction of a hospital or the delivery of medicine, without coordination or looking at the implications of these charitable acts (Svodoba, 2015). Their support, therefore, does not benefit the formal humanitarian system and creates risks of duplicating efforts and creating gaps in service. There is an urgent call for coordination and application of internationally established humanitarian standards by all actors (Bakhit, 2014:7). The challenge remains to convince new donors that fully joining the existing coordination and funding mechanisms is in their interest.

²⁸ Including the Bam earthquake in Iran in 2003, the Southeast Asian tsunami of 2004, the Pakistan earthquake of 2005, the attack on Gaza in late 2008, and the flooding in Pakistan in 2010.

5.3.7 Leadership and coordination: the role of the United Nations

Although there have been improvements in UN's leadership, significant gaps still appear in coordination, information sharing, interagency relationships, strategic leadership, and cross-sectoral issues such as livelihoods, gender, and protection. Coordination seems to work better when UN agencies share the responsibility together with an NGO than when they act alone (ICVA, 2014).

The on-going Transformative Agenda (TA) launched by the IASC in December 2011 intended to fix the remaining challenges of the 2005 humanitarian reform which became apparent after some of the failures in collective response to the 2010 Pakistani floods and the Haiti earthquake. The TA covers issues which fall under three pillars: coordination, leadership and accountability. Its roll-out in the field has been taken up slowly and has influenced inconsistently across different geographic areas. TA's main focus will now be on the effective delivery to affected populations, especially in the most difficult contexts, particularly in L3 crises.

The TA's content and scope have not been defined with precision. Unless the IASC makes the TA more clear, coherent and inclusive, it risks not being supported by a wider humanitarian community which would undermine the TA's very objective. Besides not having addressed some major structural problems of humanitarian coordination, the TA has left untouched two pillars of the humanitarian reform, namely Humanitarian Financing and the Principles of Partnership (ACF, 2014).

5.4 Reducing vulnerability and managing risk

5.4.1 Mainstreaming and localising disaster risk reduction and preparedness

In recent years some important steps have been taken to implement a coherent international framework for disaster risk reduction including preparedness: the Hyogo Framework for Action; the mechanism for implementation of the UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience (2013); the UNDG Strategic Priorities 2013-2016; the IASC, UNDG, and UNISDR Common Framework for Capacity Development for Preparedness (2013); and global frameworks on resilience (Political Champions Group, Global Alliance for Drought Resilience, AGIR). The challenge in this area is to make disaster risk reduction for resilience, including preparedness, both a humanitarian and a development priority with appropriate tasks allocated and coordinated accordingly.

Consultations have made clear that local actors, governments and civil society have strengthened their disaster preparedness as well as response capacity and are now seeking to play a more prominent role. Humanitarian response has tended to exclude local resources, systems and institutions, sometimes duplicating or bypassing local and national mechanisms. Donors should offer support to build the institutional capacity of relevant agencies and civil society actors and national-led coordination mechanisms. Stronger local engagement can provide increased contextual knowledge and access to existing resources for more tailored, nationally owned humanitarian response.

5.4.2 Developing new approaches for managing recurrent and protracted crises

Humanitarian crises will continue to pose complex, costly and persistent problems that will not be solved through short-term or incremental approaches that fail to question the structures, sectors and silos in place in donor aid agencies. All actors should commit to shared, multi-hazard analysis of risk to support the prioritisation of action and development of long-term strategies. The consultation with and participation of affected and at-risk communities in disaster preparedness and response should be ensured (EOG; 2015c). During the last decade, there have been strenuous efforts to improve the response to crises through linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD),

building resilience and stabilising fragile states (Collison *et al.*, 2010). The link between crises and development cannot be ignored if all countries are to have equal chances in progressing towards sustainable development goals. Despite decades of reflection, increasing financial pressure and a near-universal awareness of the need to change, donors still face considerable obstacles in trying to link different forms of assistance whilst realising the efficiency and effectiveness these links would bring.²⁹

5.5 Transformation through innovation

Innovation requires drawing resources from multiple sources, including the scientific community, the private sector and others. Innovation is possible only if there is funding available with tolerance for high-risk and high-impact projects. With the limited funding available for humanitarian action, it would be necessary to develop new funding modalities for local innovations, such as saving schemes and corporate social responsibility-driven funds (WHS-EOG, 2015c).

Innovation in the humanitarian sector will require the development of ethical standards in line with humanitarian principles and guarantees that all investment in humanitarian innovation is designed to improve outcomes for affected people. Indeed so much humanitarian innovation is being used by affected communities to address local humanitarian challenges, to the extent that the humanitarian community should draw on the experience and knowledge of affected people and communities (Betts and Bloom, 2014). There are many examples where humanitarian response systems have been innovative, the time has come for the humanitarian system to work collectively on sustaining innovation and change. An effective innovation ecosystem for humanitarian response is not going to emerge spontaneously; humanitarian actors will have to come together in providing management, structures and resources to ensure that the humanitarian community can adapt with the required speed (WHS; 2015d). The humanitarian system also needs to seek external support by bringing together increasingly important groups, from social entrepreneurs, military and private sector actors, to diaspora communities that are often at the front line of response 'leveraging their unique capabilities and capacities through partnerships' (WHS, 2015 d). Discussions in this area are still vague.

6 THE EU HUMANITARIAN SYSTEM: FIT FOR PURPOSE?

The aim of this chapter is to provide an analysis of the EU humanitarian system's strengths and weaknesses in meeting the challenges identified in the previous chapter, focusing on the work of the European Commission, both as donor and coordinator of the member states' humanitarian assistance policies. A starting point for this analysis is the role and influence of the EU and its member states in the process and their recognised commitment to safeguarding principled humanitarian assistance as well as improving its effectiveness, accountability and transparency. Being the world's leading humanitarian donor in the world places particular responsibility and expectations on the EU. Accordingly, the value of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid

²⁹ Such obstacles include: enduring conceptual divides; bifurcated architecture across structures, strategies, decision-making and budgets that limits coherent visioning, planning and action; misaligned policy and practice; low risk tolerance for the types of innovative and often immeasurable approaches in linking short- and long-term initiatives requires; lack of career incentives and human resource practices that encourage coordination and working across functions and departments; and political pressure to do what is politically necessary and feasible, rather than what is required by needs, or to use humanitarian relief as a means of avoiding more substantial engagement in difficult contexts (Bennet, 2015).

(hereafter called 'the Consensus') should be especially highlighted as a common humanitarian framework to deliver aid based on coordination, coherence and complementarity within the EU, as well as with other humanitarian actors. The EU carries a commitment from the Consensus to 'contribute to shaping the international humanitarian agenda, and work together in international fora' (art.29).

6.1 Involvement of EU and MS in the WHS process

The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) is actively involved in preparations for the Summit. Having co-chaired the European consultation, the Commission also follows all other Regional Consultations as well as relevant discussions in Geneva and New York. Additionally, ECHO contributes to OCHA-led studies and supports the work of the WHS Secretariat. As Co-Chair and part of the Regional Steering Committee, the EU has supported the WHS Secretariat in organising the consultations, preparing meetings and background papers, as well as in defining pertinent questions to be raised. It has had a crucial role in drafting the Co-Chairs Summary Recommendations and the Regional Consultation's Final Report.

The EU considers it 'a responsibility to seize every opportunity to make humanitarian assistance more effective and humanitarian work less dangerous' (ECHO: 2014). Indeed ECHO's current strategic priorities are in line with the WHS process objectives: supporting the development and implementation of national resilience; promoting innovation, learning and advocacy; and improving methodologies and tools (EC- ECHO, 2014:3). However, there is no official EU position yet. The Commission has formally announced a communication for early autumn, presumably before the Global Consultation in Geneva. So far only two member states, France and Spain, have submitted their views about the WHS to the on-line consultations. The paper of Spain focused on the content of the Summit, but France's paper made some remarks on the process itself. Given the multiplicity and diversity of humanitarian actors, it requests the WHS Secretariat to ensure an adequate representation of the organisations involved in the sector and define how the different categories of humanitarian actors will be associated with the preparation process.

In summary, although participating actively in the regional consultations and the organisation, the EU and its member states are maintaining a low profile in the WHS. The attitude of listening, not wanting to lecture the rest of the world and letting the process take its course could be defended up to this point. Yet with only one year remaining before the Summit, there is an urgent need for the EU to take a leadership role in the light of concerns about governance of the process, its transparency and inclusiveness (VOICE, 2014:2).

6.2 Serving the needs of people in conflict

6.2.1 EU's promotion of the humanitarian principles and international law

ECHO manages humanitarian aid to the victims of conflicts or disasters, both natural and man-made, in non-EU countries. The mandate of ECHO in this area is to save and preserve life, to reduce or prevent suffering and to safeguard the integrity and dignity of people affected by humanitarian crises by providing relief and protection.

The Consensus provides a common vision that guides the action of the EU, both at its member states and Community levels, in humanitarian aid in third countries and is supported by the main European humanitarian NGOs. It defines the aim of humanitarian aid as:

'to provide a needs-based emergency response aimed at preserving life, preventing and alleviating human suffering and maintaining human dignity wherever the need arises if governments and local actors are overwhelmed, unable or unwilling to act' (art. 8).

ECHO provides humanitarian aid respecting the principles of international law and the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence (art. 10). This principled approach is essential to the acceptance and ability of humanitarian actors in general, 'to operate on the ground in often complex political and security contexts' (art.10). The Consensus commits the EU to advocate 'strongly and consistently for the respect of International Law, including International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights Law and Refugee Law' (art. 14). The importance of upholding the principles and legal framework for humanitarian action is recognised by all stakeholders. In particular the French non-paper and the opinion of the French Human Rights Council consider it the most important topic to be addressed by the WHS. According to VOICE, they should be central to funding and programming discussions (VOICE, 2015:2). Moreover, 38 humanitarian NGOs of the EOG region have contributed to the WHS process with a common joint statement on the necessity of reaffirming the shared value of humanitarian principles (Joint Statement of 38 NGOs, 2014).

6.2.2 Protection at the centre of EU humanitarian action

The EU has already made significant progress on incorporating protection within its policies and operational guidelines as evidenced in a number of key documents including: the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid; ECHO Protection Funding Guidelines; its Annual Operational Strategy Documents; Global Needs Assessment; and Forgotten Crisis Assessment. The Action Plan for the Consensus in particular includes an important reference to protection under Action 7: one of the sectoral priorities is an 'overview of protection strategies (including protection against sexual and gender based violence) and funding protection'. The 2009 funding guidelines for humanitarian protection activities allude to the centrality of protection in humanitarian action.

ECHO should follow the advice from the OHCHR, UNHCR and IASC Principals and adopt a specific definition of protection which is now missing. The Joint Background Paper on the Protection of Human Rights in Humanitarian Crises warns that when the notion of protection loses its specificity and it is used to refer to a broad range of humanitarian activities, there is a risk of overlooking or underreporting violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, as happened in Sri Lanka during 2009, (OHCHR, OCHA, UNHCR Principals, 2013:3). The Joint Background paper puts forward a rights-based IASC definition of protection:

'all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law (i.e. human rights law, humanitarian law and refugee law).'

6.2.3 To avoid the instrumentalisation of humanitarian action: ECHO's in but out formula

The problem of humanitarian aid's instrumentalisation, specifically its relationship with stabilisation and counter-terrorism agendas has been raised during the Africa and the MENA regional consultations. So far ECHO has been successful in upholding principled humanitarian action, but both the adoption of the EU and member states' Comprehensive Approach to external conflict and crises as well as the Resilience Strategy in 2013 have raised fears about what is perceived as a growing politicisation of humanitarian aid (Dany, 2014). The Comprehensive Approach considers humanitarian aid as one of the EU's wide array of policies, tools and instruments for use in response to foreign conflicts and crises. It assures that it will be provided in accordance with its specific modus

operandi, 'respectful of the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, solely on the basis of the needs of affected populations, in line with the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid' (EC - HRVP, 2013).

The commitment of the new High Representative for External Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission to make the EU 'a stronger global actor' and also the Commissioner of Humanitarian Aid now being in charge of Crisis Management might influence the perception that EU's humanitarian aid is becoming a crisis management instrument. The adoption of the Joint Communication of the European Commission and High Representative on the 'Elements for an EU regional strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the Da'esh threat' is an example of a Joint Communication that raised concerns about the instrumentalisation of humanitarian assistance and protection. There is also a tendency to issue joint press releases from the High Representative and the Commissioner of Humanitarian Aid about conflicts which have humanitarian consequences, giving the impression of an overlap in EU's political and humanitarian objectives. ECHO might want to be 'out', but it is 'in' the European Commission and falls within the coordination realm of the High Representative and Vice-President of the Commission.

6.2.4 Communication and awareness raising of the effects of conflict on affected people

ECHO's actions and policy priorities are supported by a proactive information and communication strategy. ECHO advocates in each humanitarian crisis for opening up humanitarian space, together with the protection and humanitarian access to all populations affected by the crisis in accordance with humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law. Raising awareness about humanitarian principles and protection of humanitarian space are at the core of ECHO's communication plan (ECHO, 2014:38), and to this aim ECHO has developed an array of instruments for communication and advocacy that enhance understanding and support of humanitarian aid values.³⁰ These instruments can be used more systematically to contribute to the improvement of humanitarian access and protection of affected populations, as well as humanitarian workers and to speak out systematically against violations of IHL. In the domain of awareness-raising, ECHO regularly cooperates with humanitarian partners to alert them of pressing needs and of actions taken to meet them. While many of these information and awareness-raising actions take place in a number of EU member states, they spread beyond borders and go global thanks to ECHO's social media outreach strategy on Facebook and Twitter.³¹

6.3 Humanitarian Effectiveness: fit for purpose

According to ECHO's operational priorities for 2015, the overall priority is 'to ensure that the aid is managed in the most effective and efficient way possible so that the help Europe delivers to people in need has the maximum effect' (EC, 2014:4).

6.3.1 The European Consensus: a joint declaration of common vision, principles and good practice

The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid has played a pivotal role in creating a common vision of best practice for principled humanitarian action. At EU level the European Consensus has been a

³⁰ Instruments include: public communication policy, dissemination and training in IHL, awareness raising campaigns, newsletters and publications.

³¹ See <https://www.facebook.com/ec.humanitarian.aid> and https://twitter.com/eu_echo.

primary driver of change, being a key reference in shaping humanitarian policy and promoting a more coherent and consistent approach to humanitarian aid. The evaluation commissioned by ECHO acknowledged that the European Consensus 'establishes a common framework to deliver humanitarian aid based on coordination, coherence and complementarity within the EU' (ADE & King's College London, 2014:7). The Consensus has on the one hand helped EU institutions and member states to agree and communicate their objectives. On the other hand, NGOs and other stakeholders have used the European Consensus as a tool to hold EU institutions and member states accountable.

6.3.2 Making affected population the prime target of response.

As underscored in the previous sections, accountability to affected populations is a core demand of developing countries. The Action Plan of the Consensus commits the EU to achieve improved accountability to aid recipients. The Consensus recognises the different needs, capacities and contributions of women, girls, boys and men and 'highlights the importance of integrating gender considerations into humanitarian aid' (art. 23). In particular, it recognises that 'the active participation of women in humanitarian aid is essential, and commits to promoting that involvement' (art.24).

An important element of improving aid effectiveness is ensuring that assistance reaches the most vulnerable population groups. The Consensus commits the EU to pay special attention in responding to humanitarian needs of 'women, children, the elderly, sick and disabled people, and to addressing their specific needs' (art. 39). This is one of ECHO's priorities as expressed in its operational guidelines for 2015 (ECHO, 2014: 12,37), and one of the main points put forward by VOICE to the EU member states for inclusion in the WHS agenda (VOICE, 2015:6).

ECHO has a clear policy link between humanitarian intervention and accountability to affected populations. It has established conditions that NGOs must meet in order to receive funding. All potential partners have to sign a Framework Partnership Agreement, which commits them to meeting minimum standards in their internal procedures and programming before they can apply for funding (HAP, 2014:32). A stakeholder analysis needs to be carried out and requires the contracted organisation to describe to what extent and how the direct beneficiaries are involved in the design of the project. The Consensus contains various references to the principle of needs-based humanitarian aid, with a core commitment that 'aid recipients should be identified based on objectively verifiable criteria and that aid should be delivered in such a way that defined priority needs are matched by adequate funds' (art. 31). Moreover, as a necessary precondition for needs-based assistance, the European Consensus commits to 'working with partners to improve needs assessments at both global and local levels' (art. 32).

Following the adoption of the Commission's Staff Working Document on 'Gender in Humanitarian Aid: Different Needs, Adapted Assistance' (EC, 2013:290), which outlines the Commission services' approach to gender and gender-based violence in humanitarian aid, ECHO will pursue its efforts to strengthen gender- and age-sensitive programming. In order to foster and track assistance that is adequately adapted to gender and age needs, ECHO has introduced a Gender-Age Marker for humanitarian aid operations in January 2014. Throughout 2015, gender guidance and the gender marker will continue to be disseminated among staff and partners, through appropriate capacity building measures. The marker will allow ECHO to monitor its own performance by tracking gender and age sensitive actions and financial allocations (EC, 2014: 12). In 2015, a Resilience Marker will be also introduced with the purpose of 'bringing sustainable benefits to the most vulnerable populations and households, taking into account the diversity of needs of women, children, men

and the elderly, who may suffer from multiple factors of vulnerability, including those coming from the climate change' (ECHO, 2015: 8).

6.3.3 Establishing adequate response based on context and risk analysis

In the last years ECHO has maintained an increased focus on aid effectiveness to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable crisis-affected populations are addressed efficiently and effectively, particularly in times of stagnating budgets (ECHO, 2015: 9-10). As mentioned above with the new Gender-Age Marker for humanitarian aid operations, it will foster and track assistance that is adequately adapted to gender and age needs. The new Resilience Marker will act as a driver for quality and aid effectiveness of its humanitarian response also in relation to development assistance (ECHO, 2015: 8), and resilience will be systematically included as an element in the Humanitarian Implementation Plans. This is part of the EU commitment to identify weaknesses and gaps in the system. For this reason a characteristic of ECHO's work over the years has been his support of affected people in forgotten crises.

Emerging from all themes in the consultations has been the requirement for needs- and context-based approaches together with the importance of using different tools or instruments depending on the types of crises. EU Humanitarian Aid focuses on supporting those in most need within three types of contexts: sudden onset, protracted and forgotten crises (EC, 2015: 7).

ECHO has invested in filling the gaps to strengthen the evidence behind prioritisation, operational strategies and funding decisions for humanitarian aid. It has pushed the humanitarian community to develop joint and coordinated needs assessments to serve as a solid basis for appeals and needs-based decision-making regarding the required response. Over recent years, the Commission has funded OCHA's efforts on coordinated needs assessments with the IASC Needs Assessment Task Force and the NGO Consortium Assessment Capacity Project, which is tasked to provide operational support to OCHA/NAT (EC, 2013: 24).

ECHO has also worked internally on improving EU humanitarian aid needs and context analysis. It has developed the Integrated Analysis Framework (IAF), a new tool for humanitarian need and situation assessment to identify allocations per individual country and region, also to serve as the foundation of the Humanitarian Implementation Plans. IAF country analyses are conducted by ECHO field experts.³² ECHO carries out an annual global evaluation at central level, which has two dimensions that are key support tools for ECHO's needs-based decision-making process bringing sub-national data (where available) and in-depth desk/field analysis into an integrated analysis. On the one hand the Global Vulnerability and Crisis Assessment (GVCA), which categorises 140 developing countries where there having been a recent crisis (man-made or natural disaster) and the extent to which the country's population is vulnerable. On the other hand the Forgotten Crisis Assessment (FCA) which identifies crises that have been overlooked or neglected by the international humanitarian community and/or the global media. To improve the coordination between development and humanitarian objectives and interventions based on a common analysis of risks and vulnerabilities, closer co-operation within Commission services and with the EEAS is being promoted.

The EU has a comparative advantage to be able to address the different types of crises. Crises management and crisis prevention require a comprehensive and multidimensional approach that

³² Accordingly it has relied on an extensive network of field experts with some 140 expatriate and 330 local staff based in 44 offices/38 countries world-wide. In 2014 51 country analyses were carried out.

combines emergency aid with long-term strategies that address the underlying causes taking humanitarian needs in consideration. In this context, the add-value of the EU is twofold: on the one hand it disposes of a whole range of policy instruments,³³ which can be better targeted with the Comprehensive Approach, on the other hand it could guarantee linking relief-rehabilitation, development and building resilience. It is the only organisation with the necessary structure, mandate, decision-making capacity and financial funding. At world level, there is no organ comparable to the European Commission with the financial resources, mix of expertise and actors and field presence (Churruca, 2008:14).

6.3.4 Promoter of good practices

Within the aid effectiveness discussion an important element has been the need to adopt common standards. Since coming into force in 2008, the European Consensus has made the EU a promoter of good practices. A number of established initiatives which aim at improvements to the quality of humanitarian aid, such as the Good Humanitarian Donorship,³⁴ are included in the Consensus. It commits EU donors to seeking application of best practice (art. 18). The EU participates actively through ECHO in the GHD Initiative. Given that all 28 EU member states are part of the GHD group, ECHO uses GHD principles as an effective tool for reaching out to newer humanitarian donors.

6.3.5 ECHO's unique position as a regional humanitarian and civil protection donor

Given the changing humanitarian landscape and the increasing difficulties in securing access to people in need, engaging in dialogue with all actors has been considered a priority in the regional consultations. As a leading humanitarian donor, ECHO is in a privileged position to engage in dialogue with other regional organisations that are looking for its expertise in developing their own capacities. The comparative advantages of regional and sub-regional organisations in facilitating humanitarian access and the delivery of humanitarian assistance can be explored. So far ECHO has debated with the OIC on humanitarian principles and has started a dialogue with ASEAN around civil protection (ECHO, 2014).

The trend of all governments to become actors in humanitarian cooperation has led to a growing and active membership of these countries in humanitarian cooperation networks such as the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination system, the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group together with the Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System (GDACS) which are in the realm of civil protection. Although they are directed for preparedness and response to natural disasters and do not uphold humanitarian principles, the trust and good will generated through a mutual affinity for civil protection in 'peace time' regarding to natural disasters, might make the authorities more willing to work with the international humanitarian community during times of conflict.

6.3.6 Improving the international humanitarian system

In spite of the different reforms undertaken in the international humanitarian system, there are still weaknesses and gaps which ECHO will continually address (EC-ECHO, 2014: 5). ECHO is committed to supporting consolidation of UN-led efforts to strengthen the multilateral humanitarian

³³ Policy instruments like diplomatic activity, external assistance, humanitarian aid as well as human rights policy, trade policy, social and environmental policies etc.

³⁴ The Principles and Good practice of Humanitarian Donorship, Stockholm, 17 June 2003; endorsed by the OECD-DAC in April 2006.

architecture through the IASC and the Transformative Agenda. As a main donor, ECHO engages closely with the IASC Emergency Director Group, other main humanitarian donors and individual partners on TA implementation, in particular in L3 crises. ECHO supports the objectives of the TA and is actively involved in its development. It further encourages its humanitarian partners to ensure they contribute to a coordinated humanitarian response by: engaging in discussions of coordination mechanisms such as humanitarian country teams, clusters or other dedicated coordination efforts; participating in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle; contributing to the monitoring and evaluation of the collective action; and ensuring that the funding received from ECHO is employed to the maximum extent possible in fostering such coordinated response.

6.3.7 Timely and predictable funding

The EU budget for humanitarian aid/food assistance and disaster preparedness (DIPECHO) for 2015 is EUR 909 million, representing less than 1% of the EU's total budget. 16.7% of the planned EU geographical humanitarian aid budget allocation is earmarked for forgotten crises. EU's budget authorities have recognised the exceptional life-saving nature of humanitarian aid, and therefore, the need for cash to follow commitments once after contracts are signed (EC, 2015: 15). Since 2012 ECHO has drawn up annual World-Wide Decisions, which cover anticipated humanitarian needs and Humanitarian Implementation Plans, which outline detailed responses within individual countries and crises and thus guide the funding allocations. Due to the nature of emergency funding, demands for humanitarian activities have in some years grossly exceed budgetary allocations. Compared with the increasing humanitarian caseloads humanitarian funding is insufficient.³⁵ In recent years, ECHO has used its full allocation of resources to meet its share of global needs, regularly exhausting the emergency aid reserve set aside annually for unforeseen emergencies that cannot be pulled from regular budget lines. Despite significant needs, an increase in the humanitarian budget beyond the present annual level of around EUR 1 billion has not been possible given current budgetary constraints. However, in order to be predictable in meeting its share of the global humanitarian burden, the multiannual framework has ensured that ECHO maintains at least a steady base budget. In the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework overall EU funding will remain stable (EC, 2015: 6).

In 2010 ECHO set up the new Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC) funding mechanism, which aimed at increasing global impact, facilitating a joint donor approach, providing a longer-term framework for strengthening systems and overall response capacity of international humanitarian agencies and NGOs. Stakeholders generally regard ERC as an effective and beneficial financial tool for humanitarian aid. Key humanitarian tools have been put in use, and ERC has significantly supported ITA and the cluster system: eight clusters, OCHA's role, coordinated needs assessment tools, and surge capacity in large emergencies. The added value of ERC is its ability to support valuable projects that have no other donor. However, the main challenges seems to be how to link realistic exit strategies as well as LRRD with other donors after the end of ERC funding (Vanbruaene *et al.*, 2014:7).

6.3.8 EU contributions to pooled third-party funds

In line with the Consensus, the EU supports the aim of enhancing predictability and flexibility in humanitarian financing through a range of multinational and general financing mechanisms. The particular aim is to ensure that such funding is allocated according to transparent criteria and implemented in line with the 'Principles of Partnership'. Currently, the Commission contributes only

³⁵ In August 2014, the UN's inter-agency strategic response plans amounted to USD 17.3 billion of help.

to the Disaster Response Fund of the IFRC (DREF), where funding can be directly linked to specific humanitarian actions and their results. Commission funding has so far excluded contributions to stand-by third party pooled funds, such as the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), which are less specific in terms of actions covered. The Commission has consistently prioritised forgotten crises in deciding on operational priorities. It is worth mentioning that the newly adopted Financial Regulation foresees the possibility of creating EU trust funds and accordingly allows the EU and member states to pool funds as an innovative way to combine different funds address development and/ or humanitarian challenges (EC, 2013:18). The EU launched in July 2014 its first ever multi-donor development trust fund linking, relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD).

6.3.9 LRRD: avoiding funding gaps

At EU level, Communications in 1996 and 2001 underlined the importance of addressing LRRD at EU level, as did the Consensus in 2007. LRRD was reconfirmed as a priority by EU institutions and member states in the mid-term review of the Consensus Action Plan of 2010. The debate on LRRD gained new attention with the 2011 crisis in the Horn of Africa, which despite early warnings, resulted in famine due to late response and lack of an LRRD approach. The 2012 OECD-DAC peer review of EU's cooperation assistance (OECD-DAC, 2012:90-91) concluded that despite these communications there were no tangible results.

The mid-term review of the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid called for greater synergy and timeliness between interventions in the area of LRRD. In the context of designing new EU development instruments for the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), changes covering both the programming and operational aspects have been introduced in the new Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) with the aim of enhancing LRRD and linking the various EU funding envelopes and operations in a better way. Concerning the DCI, in article 2.5 on objectives special consideration is given 'to ensuring that humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development assistance are effectively linked'. Explicit emphasis on LRRD is placed in article 5 and article 12 which include support for the transition from emergency situations to the development phase. Moreover article 3.5 promotes 'better donor coordination and complementarity by working towards joint multiannual programming based on partner countries' poverty reduction or equivalent development strategies. They may undertake (...) joint action, including joint analysis of and joint response to those strategies identifying priority sectors of intervention and in-country division of labour, by means of joint donor-wide missions and by the use of co-financing and delegated cooperation arrangements'. The European Development Fund (EDF) also states the 'continuity of cooperation from crisis to stable conditions for development. In those cases, special consideration shall be given to ensuring that humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development assistance are effectively linked and contribute to disaster risk reduction and resilience.'

6.3.10 Engaging with partners

Partnerships are crucial for the delivery of EU's humanitarian aid. The Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) govern relations between the Commission and implementing partners. These are concluded with NGOs, international organisations and bodies with humanitarian mandates.³⁶ Relations with the UN programmes, funds and agencies are organised by the EU/EC Financial Administrative Framework Agreement. The FPA functions as a quality charter ensuring that EU-

³⁶ Such as the ICRC, the IFRC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

funded operations meet the highest standards.³⁷ An independent evaluation of ECHO's Legal Framework for Funding of Humanitarian Actions (FPA, 2008) found diversity to be one of FPA's key positive aspects. In this regard ECHO has managed to integrate a variety of partners reflecting the EU civil society's components.

NGOs both in the EOG group and from the Global South see the WHS as an opportunity to promote and support revival of the Principles of Partnership, which were developed by the Global Humanitarian Platform in 2007 to guide UN and non-UN actors' relations.³⁸ These principles have the potential to improve the effectiveness and quality of humanitarian action substantially, and could, therefore, be considered to guide other partnerships, including those with local and national actors.

6.4 Reducing vulnerability and managing risks

6.4.1 The EU's approach for building resilience

'Resilience' offers a framework that represents the growing convergence between the two fields of development policy and humanitarian action. As with its approach to LRRD, the EU has been the first donor to build policy around this concept. It appeared initially in the European Report on Development of 2009 (ERD, 2009). In October 2012, the Commission published a Communication on resilience in the context of humanitarian aid and civilian protection (EC,2012). EU's Foreign Affairs Council interprets resilience as 'an opportunity to bring together political dialogue, humanitarian and development work and priorities in a comprehensive, coherent and effective approach to achieve better results on the ground' (Council of the EU, 2013: 1). An EU Action Plan (EC, 2013b) thus develops a concrete roadmap for its application in a range of foreign affairs activities. Building resilience has become the overarching aim of the EU in crisis prone countries. In this context resilience has become the EU's framework for guiding aid strategies in order to increase aid effectiveness and deliver maximum results with limited resources. The Commission proposes measures to increase resilience, including systematic analysis of risks and vulnerabilities, joint frameworks of action between humanitarian and development actors and greater flexibility in funding for transition situations.

As mentioned above, supporting the development and implementation of national resilience capacities is one of ECHO's current strategic priorities (EC - ECHO, 2014:3). The approach incorporates a number of components which can be addressed by humanitarian aid, for example the need to anticipate crises by assessing risks; a greater focus on risk reduction, prevention, mitigation and preparedness; and further efforts to enhance swift response to and recovery from crises.

6.4.2 DRR and resilience as a central component of EU's humanitarian strategy

ECHO's 2015 operational guidelines recognise that while the importance of an effective response will always be crucial, there has to be more focus on prevention and preparedness. This policy shift is built into the policy framework set out in the Consensus, the EU Strategy for Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction in Developing Countries, and the EU Approach to Resilience: Learning from food security crises. One of the action points from the Resilience Communication is to include resilience systematically as an element in ECHO's Humanitarian Implementation Plans.

³⁷ See FPA, ANNEX II: General Conditions applicable to Humanitarian Aid Actions financed by the EU, – 01/01/2014.

³⁸ The Principles of Partnership are: equality, transparency, results-oriented approach, responsibility and complementarity.

Over the years, ECHO has made substantive and pioneering efforts in DRR, particularly with the flagship Disaster Preparedness programme. ECHO's investment in DRR has increased significantly during the last decade, both in funding and related activities (DG ECHO, 2013). According to OCHA, DRR funding comprised less than 0.5% of all international aid over the past 20 years, most coming from humanitarian budgets (OCHA, 2014:8). In contrast ECHO is committed to strengthening resilience through DRR worldwide and in 2013 over 20% of ECHO's humanitarian funding went to DRR activities compared with 16% in 2012. More than 60% of all ECHO funded projects include DRR activities. In 2013, EU funding for DRR activities reduced disaster risks for approximately 18 million people worldwide (ECHO, 2014:1). The EU has already decided for the period 2014-2020 to dedicate 20% of its budget to climate-related projects and policies (EC, 2015:8).

Building on the EU position for the post-2015 Hyogo Framework for Action,³⁹ the Commission has worked with EU member states and other stakeholders to promote a resilience and disaster risk management approach in revision of the UN Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015. The Sendai Framework includes two action targets that the EU has fought hard for: to increase substantially the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020; and to increase substantially the availability and access to multi-hazard early warning systems. As part of its approach to resilience, the EU launched two flagship initiatives, the Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience (SHARE), and *Alliance Globale pour l'Initiative Résilience - Sahel et Afrique de l'Ouest* (AGIR). The EU-led Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR) is an example of a successful partnership between the public and private sector in developing countries (EC, 2013; ECHO, 2014).

6.5 Transformation through innovation

Cash programming is one way the EU is producing innovation in the field of humanitarian action. The Commission has been at the forefront in pioneering the move from in-kind food aid to cash-based assistance. There is evidence that cash programming empowers recipients and enables them to make their own choices; supports restoration of the local economy as people use purchasing power to buy locally; is a cost effective way to deliver aid to beneficiaries; involves low-cost research, development and advocacy and addresses recent major humanitarian shortcomings (Betts and Bloom, 2014:9).

³⁹ The Commission Communication adopted in April 2014 and the Council Conclusions adopted in June 2014.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 On the process and agenda

A EU position towards the WHS process does not yet exist, but the process towards this position has been initiated, aiming at completion by early autumn in view of the Global Consultation in October 2015. The EU as the largest donor, is particularly well positioned to make a crucial contribution to the Summit:

- All EU institutions should aim at facilitating the development of a strong common position in the WHS process and seeking to ensure that the agenda and outcome to be adopted in Istanbul are driven by the humanitarian principles and the needs of the beneficiaries.
- The key policy document should be Council Conclusions and the Commission Communication, to be published early in the autumn. In parallel, the European Parliament (EP) should use the own-initiative report in order to feed into the EU debate. These documents will serve as a basis for discussions during the global consultation in Geneva.
- The EU common position should use the Consensus to guide their input as a model for the adoption of a WHS declaration (a 'Global Consensus on Humanitarian Action' or a 'Global Compact') that includes the humanitarian principles, the legal international framework for humanitarian action, a set of common quality standards and recognising the diversity in today's humanitarian response system and the complementary roles of all actors.
- The key emerging issues and potential recommendations on how these could be addressed, are already being set out by the Thematic Teams and will be tested in the consultation taking place at the beginning of June in New York and with the objective to have a draft for early September. Therefore, it will be important that the EU participates actively and requests transparency in the decision-making process.
- ECHO should request that the RSCs are fully involved in developing of the draft, mindful of emerging issues and recommendations in accordance with the Summit's inclusive character.
- The development of a common EU position should be accompanied by a major diplomatic effort to promote a joint understanding of humanitarian principles, good humanitarian practices and the complementary role of all actors according to expertise.
- EU institutions should cooperate in accordance with their executive or legislative functions to support the adoption of a common set of targets, priorities and indicators to link the Post-2015 Development and the Sendai Framework on DRR, in order to enhance coherence across policies and institutions for building disaster resilience and request a more active role of development actors in building resilience.
- EU institutions and member states should also commit to working inclusively with all partners and stakeholders in building consensus to include at the 70th session of the UNGA, the review of the global progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR and include its targets in the outcomes of the Post-2015 Development Framework and the WHS.

Concerning the process and agenda of the WHS, the European Parliament is recommended to:

- Request the Commission and Council to build their position using the Consensus as a model for the WHS declaration.

- Demand ECHO to take a strong leadership role in the setting out of the priority areas for action leading up to the summit.
- Encourage the member states to participate actively in the WHS process and summit.
- Support the adoption at the WHS of the above mentioned 'Global Consensus' or 'Global Compact'.
- Support the adoption of a common set of targets, priorities and indicators linking the Post-2015 Development and the Sendai Framework on DRR and the WHS for building disaster resilience.
- Support the proposal for the UNGA to include the review of the global progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR as part of its integrated and coordinated follow-up processes to UN conferences and summits, and to develop of a set of indicators to measure the progress.
- Support the inclusion of the Sendai targets in the outcomes of the Post-2015 Development Framework and the WHS.
- Engage actively in the remaining consultations of the WHS process taking into account the European civil society which strongly supports a principled humanitarian aid.

7.2 Serving the Needs of People in Conflict

- All EU institutions and member states should whenever possible promote and reaffirm the humanitarian principles and international legal framework of humanitarian action including international humanitarian law, human rights law and international criminal law.
- The respect for IHL and the fight against impunity should constitute a priority on the EU and member states' agendas. In this regard EU institutions should speak out systematically against violations of IHL. EU's High Representative should, remind parties, other states and actors of what he/she expects of them from the outset of a conflict. The European Parliament could issue a specific resolution on violations of IHL. ECHO could develop a global advocacy campaign dealing with the effects of conflicts on affected people and societies.
- ECHO should promote the dissemination of the humanitarian principles and a shared understanding of them through the rest of the consultation process and promote their translation into different languages.
- Human rights are not only an entry point into humanitarian action but also a fundamental EU value which should underpin all aspects of its internal and external policies.
- The EU and member states should make sure that protection is put at the centre of humanitarian action as necessitated by the reality of today's human suffering.
- ECHO should revise its current definition of protection in line with that of the IASC and determine better ways to achieve protection in the field; mainstream protection in programming including the needs and rights of specific vulnerable groups as an integral part of overall humanitarian assessments; all to be covered by provision of adequate funding.
- The European Parliament should demand that ECHO is more strongly committed to a human rights-based approach regarding humanitarian action according to the Union's objectives and values.

A way of serving the needs of people according to humanitarian principles is to avoid the instrumentalisation of humanitarian action, by implementing the following recommendations:

- The European Parliament should insist and make sure that EU humanitarian aid is not used as a crisis management tool. It should advocate coordination and coherence of the Union's wide array of policies, tools and instruments in responding to foreign conflicts and crises according to its comprehensive approach, whilst at the same time making clear to the Commission and the Council that the objectives, approaches and tools of humanitarian aid are different. Humanitarian aid should be clearly differentiated from security, stabilisation and other agendas.
- It is recommended to consider a proposal put forward by the next Luxembourg presidency of the EU, to create a specific Council formation for humanitarian affairs to differentiate between humanitarian action and EU foreign policy.
- ECHO should insist
- that humanitarian aid is not a crisis management tool and does not pretend to address the root causes of crisis and conflict, and make this a priority in its communication policy.
- ECHO should also promote an EU level dialogue to analyse the negative impact of counter-terrorist measures and the possibility of removing barriers for the receipt of funds by particularly faith-based organisations and the transfer of remittances to specific countries.

7.3 Humanitarian Effectiveness

- In the discussions leading to the WHS, the EU should promote the adoption of actions which ensure that affected communities, in particular women and the most vulnerable, have access to appropriate assistance and are involved in the relevant decision-making processes. This could include a mechanism to monitor and report the engagement of most vulnerable groups and the participation of women. It could also include a gender sensitive approach and promote gender equality in field work and among local staff.
- ECHO and member states should further support the use of cash programming to empower affected people in an innovative way which enables them to make their own choices.
- The EU should also support the demand coming from other regions and the Spanish position paper to include in the WHS declaration accountability as a humanitarian principle, with the aim to develop accountability frameworks to measure progress in meeting minimum targets and with an emphasis on accountability towards citizens in donor and recipient countries.
- ECHO should use the opportunity of the WHS to share and disseminate the new joint and coordinated needs assessments tools to serve as a solid basis for appeals and needs-based decision-making.
- ECHO could promote a set of indicators to evaluate impact. It would shift the focus from evaluating delivery performance to tracking and understanding the outcomes for affected people.
- In order to respond to the different types of crises in a comprehensive and coherent way, using its expertise and the array of instruments at its disposal, the High Representative could propose to set up three inter-service crisis management and crisis prevention groups, with the relevant European Commission services (DG ECHO, DEVCO), EEAS and Council (such as COHAFA, CODEV, PSC): one concentrating on managing the response to protracted crises; the second focused on conflict settings; and a third group for sudden-onset, slow onset and recurring crises (more

disaster management). As these groups will allow the adoption of comprehensive approaches that require a different mix of humanitarian, development, peace and security functions to address humanitarian needs holistically. These groups could do joint analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring. This would ensure that LRRD, disaster risk reduction and risk management are integrated within development programming in disaster prone countries and protracted crises.

- ECHO should use its comparative advantage and reach out to other regional actors such as the ASEAN, ECOWAS and the OIC to facilitate humanitarian access and the delivery of humanitarian assistance as well coordination improvement. In the context of states' growing assertiveness, ECHO could also use the opportunity to have the networks created in the civil protection spheres responsible for promoting humanitarian advocacy and building trust within the membership as well as partners in an international and multilateral forum.
- The WHS process should be seen by ECHO as an opportunity to enhance collaboration between different stakeholders as well as building partnerships and strengthening appropriate platforms at different levels to create better all round cooperation. ECHO can build on its existing partnerships to create networks of academic and training institutes as well as practitioners for knowledge-sharing on innovation, whilst transferring expertise in the different regions networks.
- EU institutions and member states should support continuation of UN-led efforts to strengthen multilateral humanitarian architecture through the IASC and the TA. Furthermore, the occasion of the WHS can be used to push for a broader UN reform agenda aiming to end with the organisational and functional fragmentation of the different agencies so as to develop an inclusive and effective UN coordination system.
- EU institutions and member states should also support the explicit inclusion of Good Donorship Principles in the WHS declaration.
- EU institutions and member states should promote the directing of more funding to reinforce the centrality of protection in humanitarian response.
- EU institutions and member states should also support development in better understanding of alternative funding sources to bring about more comprehensive of financial tracking.

7.4 Reducing Vulnerability and Managing Risk

- In the WHS, ECHO should promote its systematic approach to building resilience, as a way of overcoming the division between the humanitarian and development communities around three interlinked approaches: firstly DRR as a central component of its humanitarian strategy; secondly a disaster risk management and building resilience approach (of which DRR is a crucial component); and finally by linking relief, rehabilitation and development approaches as these remain integral of such activities. A starting point could be the development of joint risk analysis, planning and monitoring in selected countries.
- ECHO should promote resilience and LRRD as the aid paradigm in which the different aid communities can converge to provide a more effective aid.
- The example of EU's multi-partner initiatives for building resilience (SHARE and AGIR) should be promoted as a model for new partnerships in this field.

- ECHO should ensure that there is a clear differentiation between its contribution to building resilience and resiliency as the aim of the EU foreign assistance in general in order to clarify of type of action of the different actors.

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Annex 1 MEMBERSHIP OF THE EOG REGIONAL STEERING GROUP

	Category	Department / Organisation	Name	Title
1	Member state (co-host)	Department for International Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary	Ms. Timea Huber	Head of Department
2	Member state (co-host)	Unit for Humanitarian Assistance, Department for Development Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland	Ms. Anna Gebremedhin	Director
3	Regional organisation (co-chair)	Directorate A (Strategy, Policy and International Co-operation), DG ECHO, European Commission	Ms. Florika Fink-Hooijer	Director
4	UN agency (co-chair)	OCHA Geneva	Mr. Robert Smith	Head of WHSS Geneva office
5	Member state	Permanent Mission of Turkey to UNOG	Mr. Berk Baran	Deputy Permanent Representative
6	Member state	Development Cooperation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland	Ms. Olga Piaskowska	Senior Expert
7	Member state	United Nations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia	Ms. Mira Nikolić	Head of Department
8	Member state	Humanitarian Organisations and Food Assistance, Department for Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, Canada	Ms. Christina Buchan	Director
9	UN agency	UNHCR	Ms. Montserrat Feixas Vihé	Regional Representative, for Central Europe
10	Intergovernmental organisation	IOM	Ms. Vera Goldschmidt	Senior Emergency & Post-Crisis Specialist
11	Intergovernmental	OECD	Ms. Rachel Scott	Senior Advisor

	organisation			
12	International financial institution	World Bank Group	Mr. Daniel Kull	Humanitarian-Development Attaché
13	INGO consortium	VOICE	Ms. Kathrin Schick	Director
14	INGO consortium	InterAction	Ms. Patricia McIlreavy	Senior Director, Humanitarian Policy
15	Civil protection organisation	Technisches Hilfswerk (THW)	Mr. Peter Goxharaj	Senior Programme Officer for Rapid Deployment Units and Foreign Operations
16	Red Cross / Red Crescent Movement	ICRC	Mr. Paul Castella	Head of Delegation, London
17	Diaspora organisation	Diaspora African Women's Network	Ms. Semhar Araia	Executive Director
18	Red Cross / Red Crescent Movement	IFRC/Red Cross Red Crescent Movement	Ms. Yulia Gusynina Paroz	Special Advisor to the Director of the Europe Zone
19	Private sector	Linklaters LLB	Mr. Lance Croffoot-Suede	Partner
20	Academia	King's College, London	Mr. Randolph Kent	Visiting Senior Research Fellow

Annex 2 CO-CHAIRS RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Co-Chairs recommendations West and Central Africa (WCA)

Humanitarian Effectiveness

- HA needs to be made more flexible in order to adapt to different types of crises.
- States should establish or strengthen legal frameworks that support HA.
- HA should be specific to the local context and local humanitarian needs.
- Strengthen the harmonisation of donor requirements.
- Regional mechanism for timely and flexible funding.

Managing Risk and Reducing Vulnerability

- Governments to develop national risk management agencies and take responsibility for preparedness and response to seasonal and recurrent shocks.
- Increase the contribution of national budgets and development aid to building resilience.
- Map and review existing early warning systems in the region to improve effectiveness and linkages.
- Build the capacity of municipal and local authorities to identify, prevent and respond to humanitarian risks in urban areas.
- Improve communication of early warning information to at-risk populations.

Transformation through Innovation

- Map and strengthen regional centres of excellence.
- Build a network for learning and exchange on preparedness & response among regional organisations.
- Create a regional innovation fund to help link local innovators with private sector.
- Map and strengthen public-private partnerships.
- Build a network for learning and exchange on preparedness and response between regional organisations.
- Create a permanent platform for partnerships in the region.
- Investigate the use of innovative methods for gaining access to affected populations.

Serving the Needs of People in Conflict

- Priority needs according include security, shelter and upholding dignity.
- Interact with all parties in a conflict, transparently.
- Access of people to humanitarian goods and services.
- Investigate and use innovative methods of gaining access or of compensating for limited access.
- Adapt action to local conditions, through participation of the population.
- Strengthening of national institutions and preventative measures.
- Gaining trust of parties to a conflict and also of the population is key to gaining access.
- Make better use CIMIC mechanism.
- Avoid displaced people to congregate in camps by offering alternate aid.

Summary of Co-Chairs recommendations North and South-East Asia NSEA

Humanitarian Effectiveness

- National and International Legal Frameworks:
 - Develop comprehensive legal framework at integrating disaster risk reduction (DRR), preparedness, response and recovery.
 - All humanitarian actors should work together with governments.
 - Donors should respect the ways of disaster-affected countries.
 - International organisations need to re-examine their roles recognising the leading roles of national and local actors.
 - Considerer accountability as a humanitarian principle.
- Reporting:
 - Improved reporting by all stakeholders to capture a more accurate picture of humanitarian funding assistance.
- Founding and Accountability:
 - Accountability of humanitarian actors to measure donor performance against the Good Humanitarian Donorship principles.

Reducing Vulnerability and Managing Risk

- Support the establishment of a common position on the relationship between the various intergovernmental processes taking place between now and 2016, and the WHS process.
- Ensure that specific and measurable indicators are included in the Post-2015 DDR and development processes.
- Ensure the compilation of stronger evidence on future risks and the economic impact of these risks in order to build a better case for more investment in and prioritisation of DRR.
- Joint risk analysis, planning, financing and advocacy by humanitarian, development and climate change adaptation actors.
- Develop stronger collaboration and partnerships, including with the private sector.

Transformation through Innovation

- Establish Forums, create a regional network for knowledge sharing and expertise on innovation; and create a regional humanitarian journal on innovation.
- Establish Framework that addresses the principles and ethics of innovation.
- Establish humanitarian innovation Funds.
- Partnerships. Proactively foster innovation through steps such as supporting humanitarian research and development.

Serving the Needs of People in Conflict

- Develop regional guidelines on civil-military coordination.
- Made related investments in training and capacity building of humanitarian and military actors.
- Development of regional conventions related to internally displaced persons and migrants.
- Strengthening institutional capacity through networks for conflict prevention, mediation and peace-building.
- Interaction between military and humanitarian organisations.

Summary of Co-Chairs recommendations Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

- Protection of civilians:
 - Ratify international instruments.
 - Establish national committees on International Humanitarian Law (IHL).
 - Provide training in IHL for armed forces and police.
 - Monitor the application of IHL.
 - Regional organisations should strengthen their role in the protection of civilians.
 - International donor community was requested to ensure sufficient funding.
 - All parties in conflicts should meet their obligations in the respect of IHL.
 - Protection should be at the centre of humanitarian action.
- Humanitarian access:
 - All parties to conflicts should facilitate unimpeded access of humanitarian assistance.
 - Humanitarian organisations should negotiate with concerned parties.
 - De-politicise humanitarian action and assistance with transparency.
 - Install a mechanism to hold actors accountable and financially-liable if they deliberately cause unjustified economic loss to the humanitarian sector.
- Protracted Crises and Displacement:
 - Increased burden sharing of hosting refugees, and ensure a holistic approach to the management of crises.
 - Efficient and coordinated cash-based programming and including temporary employment opportunities at response programs.
 - Establish a network of academic institutes to develop management expertise in crisis management.
 - Integrated in the humanitarian response the support for the psychosocial impact of violent conflict and protracted displacement.
- Localising Humanitarian Response:
 - Include in humanitarian actors a local capacity building measures as an integral part of their programming.
 - Local organisations should receive a greater portion of humanitarian funding and be able to access these directly.
 - More inclusivity at the humanitarian coordination mechanisms.
- Emergency Preparedness:
 - Emergency preparedness and understanding of risk should be prioritised in the region.
 - Governments should develop national legislation on emergency preparedness.
 - Governments should commit a certain percentage of their budgets to emergency preparedness.
 - Strengthened the capacity of civil society organisations.
- Humanitarian Financing:
 - Address the funding gap between increasing humanitarian needs and available resources.
 - Improve the efficiency of humanitarian organisations.
 - Sustainable interventions that focus on building resilience and development objectives.
 - More predictable and longer-term humanitarian financing.
 - Ensure that humanitarian aid is not used as substitute for political action.

Summary of Co-Chairs recommendations Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA)

- Reinforcing states' duty to address urgent humanitarian needs and to protect, as well as be accountable, to affected communities:
 - Strengthening government with appropriate legal frameworks.
 - Increasing the level of government investment in building resilience to disasters.
- Strengthening the role of regional organisations:
 - Promoting national-level disaster risk management.
- Empowering affected communities by strengthening their resilience to withstand shocks:
 - Amplifying and listening to the voice of affected communities.
- Harnessing the comparative advantage of the private sector for humanitarian innovation:
 - Building partnerships with the private sector.
 - Establishing an Africa innovation fund.
- Building a coherent approach to risk management, accelerating investment by development and climate change communities, and allowing the international humanitarian community to adopt exit strategies:
 - Promoting joint risk assessment, planning and financing between humanitarian, development and climate change communities.
 - Allocating budget to build local preparedness capacities.
- Making finance fit for purpose:
 - Build a global rapid response mechanism.
- Pushing urban risk up everyone's agenda:
 - Strengthening analytical capacities.
 - Increasing commitment by national and local governments.
 - Adapting the humanitarian system and tools to better fit local urban preparedness and response.
 - Enhance the exchange of knowledge.
- Building the resilience of communities caught in protracted crises:
 - Undertaking joint context analysis by humanitarian, development and peace-building actors.
 - Developing an integrated strategy to meeting the needs of affected communities.
- Reforming coordination structures, including the cluster system:
 - Adjusting coordination mechanisms in different contexts to better address multifaceted short and longer term needs of affected communities.
- Strengthening the resilience of pastoralists:
 - Partnerships with the private sector.
 - Strengthening the role of regional bodies.
- Reducing the negative impact of counter-terrorism legislation on humanitarian action:
 - Convening an international dialogue to remove barriers.
 - Establish and accreditation system for NGOs to allow the flow of funds.
- Promoting the role of youth in humanitarian affairs:
 - Supporting youth in education and sensitising.
 - Encouraging youth to advocate using social media.
 - Building linkages between governments, humanitarian agencies, and youth networks.

Summary of Co-Chairs recommendations Eastern and Southern Africa (continued)

- Ratifying and implementing conventions protecting people in conflict and other situations, notably the Kampala Convention on internally displaced persons:
 - Getting governments to disseminate the provisions of these treaties to their security agencies.
 - Getting civil society to do the same for other stakeholders.
- Putting protection at the forefront of humanitarian response in conflicts:
 - Respecting IHL by all parties.
 - Systematically including protection concerns in all assessments and programming by humanitarian organisations.
 - Strengthening affected communities' capacities for self-protection.
- Putting an end to conflicts:
 - Facilitating the speedy conflict resolution.
 - Emphasising the role of women.
 - Increasing mediators' engagement with humanitarian organisations.
- Enhancing access of affected people to humanitarian assistance and protection:
 - Enhancing dialogue between humanitarian organisations and governments.
 - Keeping the safety and security of humanitarian workers.
- Ensuring humanitarian principles are respected and understood by everyone:
 - Promoting humanitarian principles, and ensuring that decisions are made according to existing needs.

Summary of Co-Chairs recommendations Europe and Other Group (EOG)

Serving the Needs of People in Conflict

- Confront the radically changing humanitarian environment:
 - Reaffirm international humanitarian law. Recognise space for collaboration amongst actors. Pursue dialogue on engagement and boundaries to define roles and responsibilities between all actors. And identify potential game changers.
- Put protection at the centre of humanitarian action:
 - Reinforce the reach of humanitarian action to forcibly displaced people.
 - Consider a global mechanism to monitor the ability of humanitarian actors to deliver response to affected populations.
 - Ensure that migrants caught in conflict are afforded adequate protection.
- Increase access and proximity:
 - Recall to actors in a conflict to respect impartial humanitarian action and ensure safety of humanitarian staff. Facilitate access of affected people to humanitarian assistance.
- Address the deficit of political solutions:
 - Highlight the importance of acting urgently upon early warning and conflict prevention.
 - Greater political commitment in the resolution of conflict.
 - Depoliticise humanitarian action.
- Communicate the challenges:
 - Strong communication campaign over the challenges in providing humanitarian assistance.

Summary of Co-Chairs recommendations Europe and Other Group (continued)

Humanitarian Effectiveness

- Make affected people and communities the prime agents of humanitarian response:
 - Map out and strive to resolve the barriers that impede accountability of humanitarian actors.
 - Explore the use of innovations to help people hold humanitarian response.
- Create an enabling environment for humanitarian action:
 - Reinforce the primary responsibility of governments in meeting the humanitarian needs of affected people.
 - Stronger government commitment to international obligations.
 - Reaffirm the humanitarian principles.
- Establish more predictable engagement among the many actors in humanitarian response:
 - Support cooperation mechanisms at all levels wherever possible.
 - Create platforms for cooperation among the actors involved in humanitarian response.
- Adapt humanitarian action models so that response appropriately meets the needs in different contexts:
 - Make analytical capacity and context analysis appropriate to inform of international response.
 - Prioritise participation of local organisations.
 - International humanitarian action should be needs-based.
 - Map the typology of response that encompasses emergency and longer-term phases.
- Ensure longer-term, flexible funding that supports appropriate responses in different contexts:
 - Promote mechanisms to increase donor risk tolerance.
 - Direct more funding to reinforce the centrality of protection.
 - Opportunities for direct funding to local actors.
 - Invest in transparent, comprehensive and open data on financing flows.
- Explore developing a common framework for effective humanitarian action:
 - Promote common standards for humanitarian action.
 - Invest in generation of evidence to inform appropriate humanitarian response.
 - Mechanism for measuring the impact of preparedness and response.

Managing Risk and Reducing Vulnerability

- Reinforce government commitment to and investment in disaster risk management and humanitarian response:
 - Promote impartial provision assistance.
 - Strengthen legal frameworks for disaster risk management.
 - Make adequate domestic budget allocations.
 - Devolve responsibility.
- Promote the role of regional organisations in crisis preparedness, response and resilience:
 - Create linkages for exchanging best practice.
 - Set and monitor standards on DRM.
 - Explore opportunities for dedicate funding mechanisms for investing national capacity.
- Recognise the key role of civil society organisations and local actors in preparedness and response:
 - Develop better compliance frameworks that allow funding to flow to local actors and invest in their capacities.
 - Mechanisms to reinforce the quality assurance of local responders.

Summary of Co-Chairs recommendations Europe and Other Group (continued)

- Commit to shared, multi-hazard analysis of risk amongst all actors to support the prioritisation of action and development of long-term strategies:
 - Include affected and at-risk communities.
 - Integrate political economy analysis and shared data.
- Develop an agreement between humanitarian and development communities to enable more effective cooperation in recurrent and protracted crises:
 - Promote integrated programme planning.
 - Complete common risk analysis and planning by 2016.
 - Introduce incentives to reinforce co-operation.
- Maximise coherence on risk management and resilience with relevant Post-2015 processes:
 - Promote potential for indicators for risk resilience across disaster risk, development and climate change frameworks and agreements.
- Enhance the financing of resilience and preparedness:
 - Develop longer-term programming tools and innovative finance mechanisms.
- Reduce divisions between humanitarian and development finance.
- Strengthen engagement with the private sector on resilience:
 - Provide incentives for engaging the private sector.
 - Stimulate the rapid restoration of local markets post-disaster.
 - Reduce or suspend the transaction costs of remittances in the immediate post-crisis period.
 - Examine opportunities to look more towards the insurance industry.
- Find solutions to protracted displacement:
 - Early and increased development investment.
- Determine and acknowledge the humanitarian dimension of mixed migration.

Transformation through Innovation

- Innovation should be driven by the needs of affected people and seen as a key contribution to improving humanitarian effectiveness.
- Invest human capital and money in humanitarian innovation:
 - Invest in humanitarian innovation.
 - Generate funding that is responsive to local context.
- Ensure innovation is done in an ethical and principled way:
 - Develop a set of ethical standards to guide development of new products and processes.
- Create opportunities for cross-fertilisation and dialogue across sectors and policy fields:
 - Develop mechanisms to openly share new ideas and approaches.
 - Expand humanitarian research and innovation hubs.
- Localise innovation:
 - Empower local actors.
 - Stimulate funds to drive innovation at the local level.
 - Spur inclusivity of innovation for the benefit of vulnerable populations.
- Augment evidence-based learning and knowledge-management:
 - Build and sustain an evidence base of good practice, to support and inventive innovation.
 - Ensure shared responsibility and strategic approach to learning.

Summary of Co-Chairs recommendations Europe and Other Group (continued)

- Prioritise areas for innovation:
 - Identify a number of priority areas for accelerated innovation.
- Scale up promising innovation:
 - Realign organisational incentives to enable scale-up.
 - Bring the use of multi-purpose cash up to scale.

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