

Workshop no. and title: 2: Linking humanitarian access and actors

Main points of discussion:

- Principles of main drivers for shrinking humanitarian space,
- The resulting constraints on access and impact on service delivery,
- The importance of partnerships,
- Key questions and challenges and recommended action for improving hum access,

Main challenges identified:

- The food crisis has not created a different situation when it comes to access, but is most affected by access problems,
- Will continue to deliver food even in difficult situations,
- Have to look at new partnerships in order to be able to deliver effectively,
- Trends towards less humanitarian space, and more difficult to exercise humanitarian principles,
- Humanitarian aid has been instrumentalised, politised and privatised, and this contributes to erode humanitarian action,
- Operations are larger now with the involvement of more actors,
- Security measures have increased, leading to proxy delivery in to protect lives of humanitarian actors,
- Aid is sometimes delivered for political gain, not only in the country of reception, but also by donor countries,
- UN promoting integrated missions, with inclusion of e.g. military forces that are all operating under one and same strategy,
- Contradictions in donor policy on humanitarian principles,
- The behaviour and conduct of humanitarian workers sometimes poses risks to humanitarian staff,
- Increasing administrative constraints imposed on humanitarian organisations by host countries, causing serious delays in the humanitarian assistance,
- Five worst constraints on access are 1) violence against humanitarian workers, 2) bureaucratic constraints, 3) physical constraints (e.g. checkpoints), 4) diversion of humanitarian assistance for political gain, 5) denial of existence of humanitarian needs,
- Partnerships: have been increasingly partnering up with ‘suspicious’ partners of necessity, e.g. military, private companies, police, posing a great to their own humanitarian integrity, but this can maintain safety for staff,
- Partnering with communities (clans, village leaders), can we do this by proxy, and what are the implications?
- Principles vs. pragmatism has to be balanced, how do we operationalise our humanitarian principles and ensure effective delivery? Good behaviour, donor policy, separation from development agenda need to be looked at.
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Suggested actions:

- Hum org should reflect on their own actions conducts incl the blurring of hum developmental and human rights agenda incl., the conduct of hum staff and the way programs are implemented.
- Reinforcing good behaviour among humanitarian actors and donors, incl. further develop (independent) pooled funding concept,
- Recognising that partnerships are necessary, develop criteria for identification, develop schemes, policies to ensure that we all operate according to humanitarian principles,
- Broadening the ownerships of hum principles into those countries most affected by emergencies by mobilising affected governments, local authorities communities and local institutions, NGOS, CBOs etc. in humanitarian action and monitoring,
- Re-thinking /Re- presenting the concept of responsibility to protect, as distinct from hum protection of civilians in armed conflict and other hum crises,
- Promote understanding and coherence of existing guidelines on civil-military cooperation, particularly at political/parliamentary level and among military and hum actors on the ground,
- Develop normative and policy tools to safeguard hum principles and space in situations of no armed conflict,