



Optional template for inputs from stakeholder consultation¹

Please send to: EOG@whsummit.org

Practical information

Name of meeting: <i>National consultation regarding the WHS: Strengthening the participation of local partners and actors – a contribution by German humanitarian actors</i>	Date(s) and location: Berlin (Germany) VENRO Offices Stresemannstr. 72 10963 Berlin, Germany
Countries represented: Germany	Number and types of participants: 29 representatives of civil society (International Operative NGOs), 4 representatives of governmental implementing agencies 1 representative of Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Contact details of meeting organizer: Dr. Inez Kipfer Didavi: inez.kipfer-didavi@johanniter.de Tel. +49 30 26997 244 Bodo von Borries: b.borries@venro.org Tel. +49 30 263929913 Contact details of sender of this input: Bodo von Borries	WHS themes discussed: [X] Humanitarian effectiveness [X] Reducing vulnerability and managing risk [X] Transformation through innovation [X] Serving the needs of people in conflict Other themes discussed (please specify): - Partner cooperation and participation - Most vulnerable groups, inclusive approaches

1. Background to the consultation

- What were the objectives of this consultation? →

To obtain joint input for the Europe and Others WHS-consultation from German humanitarian actors with a strong focus on the strengthening of local actors including local non-governmental organisations (LNGOs=understood as NGOs based in the country of operation) and local governments, alongside national academia and the private sector.

- Why are the stakeholders consulted important to the overall regional consultation process? →

The participants represented major German humanitarian NGOs, German members of international NGO families and two government agencies, all with long-standing field experience and strong focus on engagement with local partners such as local NGOs.

¹ This template is designed for stakeholders familiar with the humanitarian field, e.g. civil society, humanitarian organizations and donors. Not designed for discussions with affected communities. Stakeholders are of course welcome to send inputs in any format.



- What was the methodology of the consultation? (Please attach list of discussion questions, background documents and/or surveys used.) →

Input presentations on the WHS-process and current state of play, plenary discussions, ad-hoc “world café sessions” and working groups for general brainstorming and discussion of the 4 WHS themes with a particular focus on partnerships with local actors; Furthermore, among these stakeholders 22 best practices of partner cooperation have been collected and analysed (see annex 1).

2. Summary and main outcomes (across themes)

- What were the highlights, key messages and specific proposals from this stakeholder consultation that the regional consultation should consider? →

Our vision is a bottom-up approach in the “humanitarian system”, so that

- the humanitarian system works along priorities, capacities and needs of local civil society and local governments and is coordinated by these in a transparent way
- local actors including NGOs are the primary responders in sudden onset natural disasters while INGOs, international red cross and red crescent and UN-agencies support local actors in protracted crisis and where local actors lack technical capacities, are overstrained, affected themselves or absent
- both local civil society and INGOs work on an equal footing and in long term partnerships, but initiatives should come from local civil society
- UN-agencies, international, national and local humanitarian actors must apply the “Principles of Partnership” (GHP, 2007) in their humanitarian response, building preparedness and resilience. This should be achieved by interpreting the “Principles of Partnership” jointly and including affected population/beneficiaries in each specific disaster/crisis context
- all actors build upon and strengthen locally available expertise, coping capacities, self-help/organizational traditions and structures, where ever possible, esp. as providers of relief at the last mile and as first responders
- reducing vulnerability and managing risk needs to be a joint effort of the humanitarian, development and climate change communities;

3. Outcomes and recommendations specific to the WHS themes

HUMANITARIAN EFFECTIVENESS

Humanitarian effectiveness needs to be improved through a strong focus on preparedness and response at the local level.

This requires...

1. National governments:



to give space and a voice to civil society and local government structures in the development, and operationalization of national disaster risk reduction and response mechanisms

2. Local actors (civil society):

- to have a strong base in civil society (e.g. evidenced by large membership) ensuring that stakeholder is not acting for private or governments' interests)
- to take ownership and responsibility, flag gaps and build capacity
- to build local networks and coordinate within those
- to coordinate well with the international system, in line with the "Principles of Partnership"
- to ensure agreed humanitarian and accountability laws, principles, standards and procedures are adhered to-

3. INGOs:

- to build training capacities including conflict and context analysis capacities within the own organisation
- to strengthen their cross-cultural awareness as well as to improve the organisations' accountability mechanisms to affected populations
- to provide capacity building to local partners such as local NGOs and local government when requested and not to substitute initiatives from local actors
- to lobby donors to adapt, harmonize and simplify standards and procedures
- to provide response capacities where national systems/actors are overstrained or not functional or affected themselves (esp. in protracted crisis and/or after 'mega-disasters')
- to carefully assess local partners' capacities before starting a cooperation, in order to ensure accountability and the respect of international humanitarian standards

4. Donors and UN:

- to provide transparent and non-discriminatory funding:
 - a) for the setting-up of national disaster risk reduction and emergency response systems and structures
 - b) for humanitarian action by LNGOs and INGOs with separate funding facilities
 - c) for longer project durations to allow for technical capacity building and strengthening of resilience
 - d) including overhead costs for both LNGOs and INGOs
 - e) for capacity building as well as organisational development costs, especially for local actors
- to adapt, simplify and harmonize standards and procedures for local actors.

The private sector in humanitarian response was not the main focus of the German consultation. The role of the private sector as an actor in humanitarian assistance or as provider of security (e.g. military contractors) is observed with scepticism. Private actors are increasingly contributing in humanitarian response. Private actors' engagement needs to be monitored as their interest in profit not necessarily matches with the "Humanitarian Principles" and the commitment towards coordination.

REDUCING VULNERABILITY AND MANAGING RISK

Joint efforts of humanitarian, development and climate change communities are essential



in order to effectively link preparedness for response with longer-term reduction of risk and resilience building. Each state has the primary responsibility for disaster risk management on its territory. International cooperation contributes to develop the knowledge, capacities and motivation needed for integrated disaster risk management.

This requires ...

1. Donors, UN, national governments and INGOs:

- to recognize, explore and strengthen existing knowledge and coping strategies as well as existing and potential capacities of local actors/stakeholders
- to make information on risks, hazards, disasters as well as early warning systems available to all stakeholders in a simple, easy-to-understand and accessible manner
- to establish appropriate information dissemination channels vertically (e.g. province/district/community level in both directions) as well as horizontally (e.g. among government departments, clusters/sectors, I/LNGOs)
- to establish effective linkages between humanitarian and development oriented tools and approaches

2. Donors, UN and national governments:

- to effectively include local and national actors and stakeholders in coordination mechanisms at all levels
- to allow coordination of humanitarian actions to the lowest possible level of local stakeholders
- to ensure that local stakeholders have access to stable and predictable funding sources including for setting-up and maintaining of response structures and capacity building

3. Donors and UN:

- to establish effective and flexible linkages between humanitarian and development oriented funding mechanisms, being available for disaster risk management activities at local level-

4. INGOs (& LNGOs):

- to strengthen the mutual/bidirectional knowledge transfers within partnerships with local partners

TRANSFORMATION THROUGH INNOVATION

When looking for innovative approaches the humanitarian community is asked to strengthen locally available knowledge and coping strategies.

This requires...

1. Donors and UN:

- to allow for “failure tolerance” and overcome funding restrictions with regard to “unestablished” approaches to provide for relief services
- to call for context specific assessments of local knowledge and capacities
- to support innovative “tools”/approaches that allow local actors to exercise their rights to needs based relief services, improved living conditions and strengthened resilience-
- “tools” and approaches include modular/mobile IT and social media for addressing



needs, “governing risks” and accountability feedback to INGOs, governments and donors

2. INGOs and LNGOs:

- support the piloting of local actors' innovative approaches and more intensively to provide lessons learned and evidence for further adaptation and scaling up, esp. south-south cooperation
- to check the feasibility and appropriateness of any new and/or externally introduced approaches to ensure acceptance and adoption within the recipient cultural context in line with the “do no harm principle”
- to be ready to re-assess the institution's own role within the humanitarian community as well as to re-assess the institution's internal procedures of taking decisions

SERVING THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE IN CONFLICT

Local NGOs know conflict lines and parties and may have access to areas where international actors can't operate. They have direct contact to affected populations and receive the latest information about the security situation. They usually have legitimacy and are accepted. However some conflict parties may consider local NGOs as not neutral. To make use of the full potential of local NGOs in conflicts ...

1. INGOs and LNGOs

- should build long-term partnerships based on mutual trust. Partnerships should be identified and built up before a conflict arises. In case of starting a partnership during a conflict, it should be maintained during the whole conflict period as well as in a post-conflict scenario
- should give more priority to security related issues and needs for protection in partner dialogues. INGOs should routinely check how to strengthen the protection measures of local partner organisations and local personnel
- must consider conflict assessments, peace building capacities as well as organisational development as part of their conflict related capacity-building for local partners

2. Donors and UN

- should finance long-term partnerships in protracted crisis, including costs for capacity building, security related costs as well as overhead costs
- should recognize and respond to local organisations' need for technical and financial support in order to design context specific security plans and risk management systems

3. All humanitarian actors

- need to apply conflict sensitive instruments during assessment, planning and monitoring as well as during the implementation of all activities
- must connect the “Humanitarian Principles” to corresponding local cultural values and advocate jointly for the implementation of humanitarian law in the specific conflict context
- must maintain a clear identity as humanitarian actors, e.g. in civil-military relations and with private actors



WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT

REGIONAL CONSULTATION • Europe and Others • Budapest, 3-4 February 2015

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

- Humanitarian action requires an all-of-society engagement and empowerment, and inclusive accessible and non-discriminatory participation, paying special attention to at-risk groups in line with internationally agreed human rights.
- For transparent risk-informed decision-making in humanitarian action gender-specific/sex/age/disability-disaggregated data needs to be made available

5. Any other recommendations, key facts, inputs, further consultations planned

Currently we plan for an additional retreat among the German Federal Foreign Office and the German implementing actors to further reflect strengthening the capacities of local actors and partners and of improving the accountability to beneficiaries. This meeting is foreseen in spring 2015 after the Europe and Others Consultation.

6. Direct quotes from participants²

7. Suggested attachments

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> List of participants	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meeting agenda
<input type="checkbox"/> List of facilitators, speakers, support staff	<input type="checkbox"/> List of background documents
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion questions, surveys used see Annex 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Full post-meeting report

Please e-mail this doc to: EOG@whsummit.org (by **10 Jan. 2015** if possible, to assimilate it in the background analysis for Budapest)

and thank you for cooperating in making humanitarian action better!

² To be used in reports and WHS communication. Please ensure participant agreement for using their quotes.