



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

IOM-NGO Humanitarian Consultations: In Brief

Context

With an unprecedented number of people on the move, the growing number and complexity of crises, and diminishing humanitarian space, the need for context-specific, flexible humanitarian response is more pressing than ever. Effective responses depend largely on collaborative efforts as well as the combined and complementary approaches of diverse humanitarian actors. Recent global landmark initiatives have highlighted the importance of addressing crises jointly.

Humanitarian NGOs are key actors in saving and protecting lives in an efficient, accountable and principled manner and bring a unique perspective and expertise to humanitarian preparedness and response. IOM's humanitarian partnership and cooperation with NGOs has been expanding steadily as IOM's crisis response has grown, both in the scope of services provided and in the breadth of geographical coverage. NGOs provide IOM with invaluable knowledge and information, operational capacity, and assistance in essential advocacy functions. Conversely, IOM contributes to the strengthening of local NGOs by opening up access to joint activities, including capacity strengthening and access to financial resources. IOM-NGO partnerships are broad, deep and dynamic, and numerous NGOs have become trusted and long-term partners, highlighting a strong level of mutual respect and fruitful complementarity.

IOM Commitment to Humanitarian Partnership

[IOM's Humanitarian Policy](#) formally recognizes that strategic and successful humanitarian partnerships must draw on the strengths of each party, in order to ensure responses effectively assist and protect those in need. As a founding member of the Global Humanitarian Platform, IOM has endorsed the [Principles of Partnership \(PoP\)](#) that aim to ensure equality, transparency, result-oriented approaches, responsibility and complementarity across humanitarian partnerships.

Rationale for IOM-NGO Humanitarian Consultations

Stronger partnerships lead to better protection and assistance of crisis affected people including displaced populations. To this end, IOM seeks to engage in effective policy, programme and coordination consultations with partners and strengthen cooperation between IOM and its present and prospective NGO partners, through open, action-orientated discussions.

[IOM-NGO Humanitarian Consultations](#) started in 2015 as part of IOM's efforts to engage NGO partners in the elaboration of its institutional humanitarian policy, creating the precedence for more systematic and sustainable consultations in the years to come.

- In 2016, the consultation examined humanitarian partnerships, which had become a key element of IOM's humanitarian policy.



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- In 2017, consultation focused on complementarity, coherence, and collaboration in the region of the East and Horn of Africa.
- In 2018, the consultation explored strategic IOM-NGO complementarities in preventing, responding to, and progressively resolving internal displacement.
- In 2019, the consultation centered on humanitarian access in emergencies and protracted crises.

IOM-NGO Humanitarian Consultations have now grown into a regular (annual) format and complement IOM's thematically wider annual consultations with the broader civil society.

Format of IOM's Humanitarian Consultations

IOM alternates the locations of its Humanitarian Consultations between HQs in Geneva and the regions. That way, consultations can periodically bring the dialogue closer to field realities and policy-to-practice initiatives, and enhance the inclusion and accessibility for representatives of local and national NGOs.

The consultations at the HQ level, held biennially, focus on globally relevant policy, programme and coordination developments.

Objectives of the Consultations

IOM-NGO Humanitarian Consultations are dedicated to the goal of strengthening effective and principled crisis response. They serve as a platform for IOM and NGOs to engage in dialogue, discuss shared values and unity of purpose, identify respective strengths and limitations, reflect on current challenges facing the humanitarian sector, exchange best practices, develop key recommendations to further joint engagement, and examine the realities of the implementation of principles of partnership to better foster their application. The consultations are meant as a two-way discussion, beneficial to IOM, the NGO partners, and their joint work.

The consultations maintain a focus on the Principles of Partnership that are foundational in all humanitarian partnerships, and help leverage the value of diversity and complementarity in advocacy, policy development, and emergency response. The regional consultations seek to usefully gauge emerging trends within a particular region, discussing regionally relevant issues and challenges, and basing the consultations on contextually relevant operational expertise. IOM will continue to partner with local frontline responders and invest in capacity strengthening.