# WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT 2016

## Issue Paper **May 2016**

The **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** is committed to supporting the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) and its outcomes at the country, regional and global levels with the overall objective of a more effective and efficient humanitarian system, while at the same time advocating for humanitarian responses that meet the needs of migrants and other mobile populations. Over the past two and half years multiple WHS consultations have taken place, allowing a variety of opportunities for many stakeholders to engage in the process.

IOM has contributed substantively to these consultations to highlight the needs of vulnerable mobile populations such as IDPs and migrants in crisis, while also advocating for a stronger and more inclusive humanitarian system and response, which continues to be strained by protracted crises. IOM has helped bring in a variety of voices to these consultations, from migrants caught in crises around the world, to IDPs living within their own borders, to front line responders, both national and international.  Many of the WHS consultations did reflect a marked focus on the mobility and displacement aspects of crises.

IOM supports the Secretary General's Report for the WHS, entitled *One Humanity: Shared Responsibility,* including the Agenda for Humanity, which correctly highlights the continued strain on the humanitarian system. IOM urges all those stakeholders that intend to take part in the World Humanitarian Summit to focus on an improved humanitarian system that is more efficient and effective to save lives and allow those affected a life in safety and dignity.

In order to do so, political commitment and change are required. All States have a responsibility to provide residents, nationals and foreigners alike, the conditions to live in safety and security.

The humanitarian imperative must remain at the core of our approach.  Relatively new phenomena such as climate change, the increased strength of natural disasters and public health emergencies of international concern, environmental degradation, rapid population growth, as well as numerous, longer-lasting, simultaneous internal conflicts with regional impacts have increased the need for humanitarian response. At the same time, the increasing complexity and frequency of humanitarian crises have also tested the limits of the global humanitarian system. As it stands, it is increasingly unable to respond to a multitude of concurrent humanitarian emergencies and operates in an environment marked by diminishing respect for humanitarian principles, severe funding shortages and lack of political commitment to resolve protracted crises. In addition, the number and variety of humanitarian actors has grown, making coordinated and coherent responses more challenging and, oftentimes, cumbersome, at the expense of operational effectiveness.

## IOM Engagement in the WHS

Over the past decade, IOM has emerged as one of the world's largest humanitarian actors with significant relief operations carried out in virtually every major humanitarian setting. As set out in IOM's initial position paper on the WHS in January 2015 IOM has actively contributed to the WHS in a variety of ways at national, regional and global levels. For a full overview of IOM's engagement please see http://unobserver.iom.int/world-humanitarian-summit-0

## IOM Position on the WHS

The extensive consultation process leading up to the WHS has served to highlight important areas as well as to launch many initiatives. Subsequently, it has provided a platform for previously underrepresented subjects.

The overall objective of the WHS is to better provide assistance and protection to those in need – and in the end leave no one behind. To achieve this outcome, discussions around the WHS must remain anchored on the need to ensure greater operational effectiveness: how to deliver better targeted aid in a manner that is fair and equitable. IOM calls on those in Istanbul to make bold commitments, turning rhetoric into action.

IOM would like to highlight the following six (6) key policy recommendations for the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul.

# 1. Assisting Vulnerable Mobile Populations

Affected populations, which include vulnerable mobile populations, must be at the heart of the humanitarian response system. IOM is pleased that the Secretary-General's Report recognizes vulnerable mobile populations including internally displaced persons (IDPs) and migrants in crisis. IOM calls for a rights-based approach to humanitarian action and to build on the IASC Centrality of Protection Statement[1] placing affected populations at the centre of humanitarian action.

However, the humanitarian system should not overly categorize populations of concern but focus on the needs and rights of all affected populations – refugees, IDPs, migrants and host communities. All vulnerable groups, regardless of sex, age, social, religious or political affiliation, must have access to humanitarian assistance.

During crises - political or environmental - human rights violations increase and mobile populations are particularly vulnerable. IDPs remain relatively neglected by the international community because they have remained within their own country and it is therefore national authorities who have the primary responsibility for providing them with assistance and protection. IDPs must benefit from equitable access to assistance delivered by aid providers.

Migrants, who may experience heightened vulnerability to begin with, increasingly find themselves caught in crisis situations without adequate protection, or forced into dangerous and unpredictable journeys without safe and legal options. Largely unaccounted for under the current humanitarian architecture, migrants face an array of adverse circumstances, as they may become trapped or unable to leave a crisis area; unable to access humanitarian assistance; or stranded while seeking refuge and/or international protection across borders. Migrants may also experience heightened exposure to discrimination, violence and exploitation; susceptibility to human traffickers and smugglers; language and communication barriers; a low level of health care and social protection; exclusion from formal justice systems; a shortage of personal means; or a lack of access to travel or other form of identification documents. Despite obvious linkages between poverty, crises, and human mobility, migrants routinely fit the description of a population "left behind".

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[1] https://www.interaction.org/document/centrality-protection-humanitarian-action-statement-iasc

IOM calls on the international community, including countries of origin, transit and destination, and in particular countries in crisis situations, to recognize vulnerabilities of migrants in mixed migration flows and to put into place measures and practices developed in the fields of humanitarian aid and post-conflict stabilization to protect and assist all mobile populations. IOM also welcomes ongoing efforts to highlight the humanitarian dimensions of large scale movements of refugees and migrants to be addressed at the UN General Assembly's High Level Summit on 19 September 2016.

## 2. Humanitarian Financing

The humanitarian community has been placed under considerable strain in recent years. Humanitarian financial requirements have reached unprecedented levels while funding levels have failed to keep pace. In addition, humanitarian funding tends to be skewed towards the more immediately visible humanitarian settings, with many of the protracted crises suffering from severe under-funding as a result. IOM is committed to flexibility and results oriented approaches requiring agile funding approaches.

In this respect, IOM welcomes the recently launched Report of the Secretary General's High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing and its follow-up process, which centers on the adoption of specific commitments by both the donor community and humanitarian organizations. This entails true partnership between agencies and donors and requires renewed commitment to transparency and accountability at all levels.

Humanitarian financing must be seen as an investment, shifting away from short-term, fragmented funding to more predictable financing solutions in support of longer-term collective outcomes. Furthermore, IOM is a strong proponent of greater coherence between humanitarian action and development planning, including crisis prevention and building community resilience.

In this regard, IOM is committed to playing its part towards greater efficiencies in the delivery of humanitarian aid. This includes a reaffirmed commitment on the part of the Organization towards tangible accountability to those it aims to serve, fuller transparency towards all stakeholders, continued focus on integrating innovative, people-centered and cost effective approaches to aid delivery, and efforts to retain the ability to respond directly to the humanitarian needs of its populations of concern, wherever they may arise, and in a manner that is not risk averse while adhering to humanitarian principles[2].

## 3. Preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction

Over the past decade the number and scale of natural disasters has increased substantially. Humanitarian responses take place over the long term and countries often face disasters repeatedly. Governments and local organizations are often first responders while resources from international organizations are limited. In order to reduce the risk of forced migration induced by disasters, increased focus on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience strengthening is critical. Displacement due to natural disasters and environmental degradation leaves mobile populations

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[2] IOM will be publishing its institutional commitments to the Grand Bargain in a separate document.

increasingly vulnerable, and both the risks associated with unmanaged population movements[3] and their role in strengthening the resilience of people and communities are recognized principles in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

In addition, IOM calls for its partners and the participants of the WHS to recognize the need to include migrants in DRR activities, through (1) reducing vulnerable groups' exposure to hazards and lessen the impact of crises on development, including by facilitating mobility that enhances resilience, and (2) investing in capacity-building for a quick and efficient response to disaster-induced displacement, in order to reduce risks for people on the move. As people who leave their areas of origin (whether forcibly or not) tend to have reduced access to essential material assets, social networks and knowledge, investment in disaster risk management is essential.

In this regard, much more engagement with first responders and host communities at the national and local levels is required for humanitarian action to be more effective; this includes efforts to develop cooperation with civil protection entities. Over the past few years, IOM in its capacity as Global Cluster Lead for Camp Coordination/Management (CCCM) in natural disasters, has established numerous partnerships with these essential actors with an aim to improve resilience resulting in better mitigation of the impact of natural disasters. In addition, migrants and displacement have been included in the UN Framework on the Convention on Climate Change. In following the UNFCCC COP21 Decision, IOM is providing expertise and guidance in support of the establishment of a displacement taskforce, as referred to in the global Climate Agreement. Policy recommendations for "integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change"[4] should also contribute to commitments formulated at the WHS.

## 4. Humanitarian – Development Nexus

To more effectively confront the scale and protracted nature of global forced migration there is a growing consensus on the need for long-term development approaches to be undertaken concurrently with humanitarian response. Development and humanitarian actors must work together much more concertedly in creating integrated multi-year response plans that focus on promoting self-reliance and coping mechanisms of vulnerable communities to reduce and mitigate the long-term impacts of displacement, and to create the conditions needed for stability and recovery.

It is not only desirable but necessary for the WHS to explore tangible and practical measures that can help bridge the oft-mentioned "humanitarian-development gap," and to ensure that more effective humanitarian action contributes directly to transition and recovery, as well as positive development outcomes, primarily those spelled out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. IOM's Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF) is key to the Organization's strategy to achieve this. It mandates the Organization to work holistically in its crisis response and ensure strategic planning across sectors (humanitarian, recovery, transition and development) and in the various crisis phases, with a focus on prevention and solutions.

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[3] As shown during the Ebola crisis
[4] https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/l09.pdf, Paragraph 50

Looking ahead, it will be important to identify thematic areas of programming that could serve as a point of convergence for the different cultures, frameworks, funding streams and operational modalities of the humanitarian and development communities.

More can be done to draw attention to migrants and migration at the convergence of relief and development. Migration as a thematic area and migrants as a target population can serve as models for the interconnectedness between relief and development and can provide an avenue for new, innovative, and synergistic programming.

It will be equally important to recognize the contributions that migrants can make to relief and development efforts, if properly included and supported. Migrants are not always perceived as agents of development, and their contributions, from filling labor gaps to sending remittances home, tend to go unnoticed or be under-estimated. Similarly, the knowledge and resourcefulness of migrants and diaspora communities themselves have yet to be incorporated into humanitarian planning and response. Therefore, it is important to meaningfully partner with migrants as the international community endeavors to "leave no one behind".

# 5. Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) committed by aid workers, those charged with protecting and assisting the world's most vulnerable, is one of the worst forms of accountability failure and jeopardizes the credibility of the entire humanitarian system. It is an accountability and protection issue that impacts all parts of the humanitarian system. While commendable progress has been made at the individual agency and collective levels on PSEA, incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse are still occurring. Strengthening the humanitarian community's fight against SEA in order to achieve a true system of collective accountability requires a fundamental shift in the way in which the management and field staff of aid organizations approach sexual exploitation and abuse. PSEA activities and systems cannot be viewed through a project-based lens, dependent on external funds and carried out during a specified timeframes. Rather, they must represent an ongoing effort that commences at the start of a response and continues throughout all phases of a humanitarian operation. Sexual exploitation and abuse is a protection violation committed by members of the humanitarian community, and the impetus falls upon us to develop the systems to prevent and respond to such cases in every environment where we provide assistance. This is not only an ethical responsibility, but a key principle to which all members of the humanitarian community must abide.

The WHS must capitalize on the current high-levels of commitment on PSEA to improve its collective response and ensure that adequate safeguards are in place in all emergency response operations to prevent and address SEA. At a minimum, this should include ensuring that members of affected populations have access to safe reporting mechanisms, victims are assisted, and allegations are forwarded to the appropriate authority for follow-up and investigation. The humanitarian community has a responsibility to address its own shortcomings.

IOM calls on all humanitarian agencies to implement global commitments such as the IASC Principals Statement on PSEA (Dec 2015) and calls on donor and host countries to uphold strong accountability measures in this regard.

# 6. Coordination and operational effectiveness

National governments have the primary obligation to protect and assist those residing on their territory. However, with more frequent, complex and concurrent crises, or the inability to carry out this obligation, more diverse partnerships with affected populations, civil society organizations and the private sector, amongst others, are required. IOM recognizes that the global humanitarian system has changed over the course of the past several decades and must engage with innovative and practical thinking with all actors. Utilizing organizations' comparative advantages and respecting differences is key to ensuring that partnerships are a catalyst for results, as outlined in the *Principles of Partnership.*[5]

IOM also welcomes a stronger and more invigorated Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which remains the only forum where UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red crescent Movement, NGOs and international organizations such as IOM come together to address collective issues and coordinate operations. In the past ten years the IASC has collectively changed the humanitarian system through the Humanitarian Reform, the advent of the cluster approach and more recently the introduction of the Transformative Agenda. Furthermore, collective advocacy on various collective issues has been key to effecting change.

However, in this regard, IOM will continue to advocate for the IASC to retain an operational focus. Too often the humanitarian community has addressed collective humanitarian failures and gaps, with solutions centered on coordination and processes, all of which are essential to humanitarian effectiveness but not sufficient to ensure that adequate assistance reaches those in need of it within the required timeframe. It is essential that in introducing further reform initiatives, the international community avoid creating bureaucratic mechanisms and ensure that the IASC keep effective and efficient humanitarian response as the basis for its deliberations.

Operational effectiveness may only be achieved if humanitarian space is assured and the humanitarian principles of independence, neutrality, humanity and impartiality are adhered to. The international community must ensure that humanitarian space is protected and not utilize the humanitarian system as a substitute for a lack of political and security results. Humanitarian access needs to be a tangible outcome which can be achieved by better communication and dialogue with and between those stakeholders who can provide such access to the humanitarian community. The humanitarian community must also redefine its security management approach in a manner that is not overly risk averse. Every humanitarian intervention carries risks, which needs to be better analyzed and weighed against the humanitarian imperative.

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[5] https://icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/Principles%20of%20Parnership%20English.pdf