



Stakeholder¹ Consultation World Humanitarian Summit

Name of meeting: National Consultation for NGOs	Date(s): 11 June 2015
Host/coordinating organization(s): OCHA, Civil Society Disaster Platform (SITAP), Doctors Worldwide, IBC (International Blue Crescent Solidarity and Development Foundation), IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation, Mavi Kalem Social Solidarity Association, MAG (Neighbourhood Disaster Volunteers Foundation), Support to Life (STL)	Location: Istanbul, Taxim Hill Hotel
Focal Point (name & contact details): Sema Genel Karaosmanoglu, sgenel@supporttolife.org	Language(s): English, Turkish
Countries represented: Turkey	Number of participants: 52 NGO Members
Stakeholder group consulted: Turkey-based NGOs	Themes discussed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian effectiveness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reducing vulnerability and managing risk <input type="checkbox"/> Transformation through innovation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Serving the needs of people in conflict <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving affected people greater voice and choice • Localising preparedness and response • Serving the needs of affected populations in conflict settings • New models for protracted crises • Adapting the humanitarian system and financing for the future

¹ Specifically designed for stakeholders familiar with the humanitarian field, i.e. civil society, humanitarian organizations etc. Not relevant to affected communities.

**Regional Consultation for South and Central Asia
11 June 2015 in Istanbul, Turkey
Summary Report**

1. Background to the consultation (1-2 paragraphs)

- What were the objectives/expectations for this consultation?

The main objective of the National Consultation of NGOs in Turkey was to provide input from Turkey and the region. The expectation was to discuss and seek solutions for the identified priorities, which overlapped with the themes identified for the region of Central and South Asia. The event organization and identification of themes was conducted in a participatory manner with SITAP taking the lead in calling relevant NGOs to be active both in the organization and in attendance to the event. Given the background of limited communication and coordination among Turkey-based aid agencies, this can be regarded as a significant move in terms of improved dialogue and joint action.

- Why the stakeholder groups are important to the overall Regional Consultation process?

The National Consultation event brought together both faith-based and secular NGOs from Turkey, which are actively working directly with crisis-affected populations on a daily basis, both in Turkey and in the region. They made their recommendations based on their experiences, best practices and lessons learned.

- What was the methodology of the stakeholder consultation?

Participants discussed the thematic topics in 5 break-out groups with the moderation of relevant facilitators. Probing questions were used.

2. Summary (1-2 paragraphs)

1. What were the highlights and key messages from the stakeholder consultations?

- In Turkey and in this part of the World, there is limited humanitarian space in which non-state actors can operate in. Cooperation between public authorities and civil

actors should be strengthened and accepted as a core principle.

- Local/national NGOs, working as implementing partners of INGOs brings with it persistent inequality problems. There has been talk of capacity building for decades but we see the danger of being caught in a vicious cycle of capacity building which does not necessarily empower the partner. New ideas are needed for truly equal partnerships.
- Since humanitarian crises are more complicated and long-lasting today, sustainable development programs should accompany humanitarian action and localize the efforts in the long run.
- International partnerships should be strategic and long-lasting; non-financial gains and modes of collaboration should be prioritized.
- A collaborative initiative among NGOs in Turkey should be developed to change the legislation regarding fundraising, and to facilitate other funding mechanisms. Such changes will provide aid agencies and other civil society actors in Turkey to become self-sufficient and rise up to an equal footage with INGOs and other international humanitarian actors.
- UN Agencies use 65% of their budget for operational costs and only spend only the 35% of their budgets for civil action programs. This is a considerable challenge for humanitarian action.

2. What were the main recommendations?

- A well-established coordination between NGOs and UNHCR is needed for an advocacy campaign on the need of precise refugee legislation before Turkish official authorities. It is suggested that Turkey-based NGOs should sign for a Partnership for Principles document unilaterally as a commitment for impartiality, accountability and independence principles. In addition, an NGO coordination mechanism for humanitarian diplomacy should be developed with a regular, full-time secretariat which would work for expanding partnerships and conducting advocacy on the protection of NGOs within the scope of humanitarian diplomacy during conflicts at a global level.
- Know-how and specific experiences could be transferred to local NGOs by INGOs and UN Agencies through training programs especially for psychosocial protection programs and in training of local doctors in the crisis-affected regions and their

neighbour countries hosting crisis-affected people. An empowered understanding and practice of capacity building would help develop more equal partnerships between INGOs and NGOs and giving stronger voice to crisis-affected people through local civil initiatives and NGOs.

- In order to operate well-planned and achievable development programs local, regional and cultural motives should be well assessed and understood. When addressing vulnerable groups, especially gender-based cultural differences should be taken into account. Gender sensitivity issue must be in the centre of protection program designing processes, i.e when establishing refugee camps, hospitals for crisis-affected people. Unfortunately, there is a dominance of the Western and Scandinavian cultures in the UN Clusters. For being able to address the specific risks, MENA motives and values should also be covered for a more balanced system based on diversity.
- A well-established coordination between NGOs and UNHCR is needed for an advocacy campaign on the need of precise refugee legislation before Turkish official authorities.
- New models for financing humanitarian action should be discussed by global stakeholders at the World Humanitarian Summit '16, Istanbul.

3. Discussion Questions (List or Annex)

- Please see Annex II for the discussion questions.

4. Outcomes and Recommendations

HUMANITARIAN EFFECTIVENESS

On context-specificity of humanitarian action

- Humanitarian action has been discussed mostly by taking into consideration the current Syrian crisis and Syrian refugees settled in Turkey since it is now the fourth year of the conflict. The number of Syrian refugees in Turkey is calculated at more than 2 million, making the country the biggest refugee hosting state. Other countries



in the region, where humanitarian operation is being conducted, are equally affected by natural disasters, protracted crises and persisting poverty have been taken into account during the group work discussions.

On complementing and strengthening national and local efforts

- Capacity building should be one of the priorities of all stakeholders in humanitarian action during long crisis. Lack of capacities in local NGOs, that might be working as implementing partners of INGOs at local scales bring along a potential and persistent inequality problems. However, we need to find renewed ways of building capacity, as we are confronted with the situation of never reaching that end. Local and national aid agencies are oftentimes strong in their operational abilities but are in need of technical capabilities to increase quality and effectiveness. This should be the main focus of capacity building, which will also help ensure more equal partnerships.
- Governmental institutions in Turkey and the region have the tendency to restrict NGOs and UN agencies to become fully operational entities at times of crisis. Cooperation between public authorities and civil actors should be strengthened and accepted as core principle.
- For a long term response, humanitarians need to specialize in their field of work and include universities, diaspora groups and others in the process at critical points of planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating humanitarian interventions and programs. There should be partnership agreements for humanitarian education programs in academic institutions in Turkey.
- Awareness raising should be fostered on the fact that governments change, but civil action is ever lasting.

On better cooperation between stakeholders

- A dynamic, sound and sustainable civil society platform for humanitarian aid should be developed for information sharing and coordination. Prime Ministry Disaster & Emergency Management Authority, Turkey (AFAD) should enable national and local representation of NGOs rather than inviting only its own contact list.
- INGO and NGO partnerships should not be limited by the duration of humanitarian aid projects, but should extend to cover technical support and longer term building of capacities in Turkey and the region. Otherwise local NGOs would have



sustainability problems that might end up in disappearing from the humanitarian fora. NGOs should also develop alternative mechanisms for their sustainability.

- A collaborative initiative among NGOs in Turkey should be developed to change the legislation regarding fundraising, and to facilitate other funding mechanisms.
- There is a rising trend in numbers of international students worldwide who could also receive humanitarian action trainings by INGOs so as to transfer and disseminate the know-how among civil actors when they are back in their home countries.
- International partnerships should be strategic and long-lasting; non-financial gains and modes of collaboration should be prioritized.
- There should be an NGO accreditation system in Turkey for coordination to avoid duplication of aid interventions and assistance programs during crisis response.
- A sound and solid communication line should be developed by AFAD in order to encourage the trust of NGOs and to maintain a general consensus.
- AFAD should respect the independency principle of each NGO.

On principles and standards

- Transparency and accountability principles should be accepted and put into practice both by AFAD and NGOs. A code of conduct or a 'principles of partnership' document should be signed unilaterally by NGOs. The Code of Conduct for humanitarian principles document should be promoted among NGOs in Turkey; their feedback taken, revised according to their inputs, and published. It is suggested that Turkey-based NGOs accept and implement the core humanitarian standards that are internationally accepted.
- AFAD should be impartial to all NGOs. A sound and solid communication line should be developed by AFAD in order to encourage the trust of NGOs and to maintain a general consensus. AFAD should respect the independency principle of each NGO.
- There are perception management errors and biases of civil actors when they are establishing NGOs; violation of the impartiality principle in humanitarian action; political engagement in NGOs. NGOs should declare their impartiality.

- NGOs should operate independently.

On accountability mechanisms

- Technology and innovative means to humanitarian action can better serve the needs and priorities of the affected population, including cash assistance for protection, sms systems and digital communication tools can be used as feedback and complaint mechanisms for the crisis-affected groups. Academia should also get involved in assessment, evaluation and quality management processes.
- A community-based approach and the accountability principle should also be targeted and implemented in advocacy activities and thus outreach to decision-makers should be conducted by taking into account voices of the crisis-affected people, thus finding innovative ways of linking the affected population with the decision makers.
- All programs regarding crisis-affected groups should be on community-based-approach, integrating the crisis-affected people in protection and livelihoods programs. Local resources should be utilized. A transparency and accountability framework should be put in place and put into practice both by AFAD and NGOs.
- There should be an impartial and independent umbrella organization that would evaluate and follow the needs, complaints and suggestions of NGOs.
- Internal and external monitoring should be strengthened by Turkish NGOs and impact evaluation should become standard practice in order to improve the understanding of what is provided to crisis-affected populations.

On humanitarian financing

- There are obstacles faced by NGOs in Turkey in accessing national and international funding. A collaborative initiative among NGOs should be developed to change the Turkish legislation regarding fundraising and to facilitate other funding mechanisms. Turkey-based NGOs do not apply for OCHA funds very often. OCHA should foster awareness among NGOs. NGOs that are aware of funding opportunities should facilitate the information sharing among other NGOs.
- Majority of the public in Turkey is biased against NGOs. NGOs should work on overcoming the bias issues stemming from their own weak practice of donation/



fundraising and volunteering in Turkey. A sustainable fundraising system should be maintained. Legal framework for volunteering should be revised. A specific social insurance program for risk coverage should be developed for volunteering.

- It is suggested that Turkey-based NGOs accept and implement the core humanitarian standards that are internationally accepted, including accountability.
- All financial installments of donations should be made through banking systems. However this system might get blocked in crisis-affected regions. There should be an alternative financial transaction system during crises.
- There are some concerns that international organisations are not very capable of meeting the needs of crisis-affected people and that donations are not used efficiently. Fundings should be donated directly to local and regional NGOs more often. This means finding ways of shortening the layers between funding sources and affected populations.
- There should be a follow-up mechanism that could monitor whether governments keep their humanitarian funding commitments.

REDUCING VULNERABILITY AND MANAGING RISK

On understanding risk, vulnerability and future threats

- Formal education programs should be developed by adopting the national curriculums of the countries that are the origin of refuge; especially for children between 0-7 ages in order to prevent lost generations during long term crisis.
- Community centers are needed for refugees settled in urban settings. NGOs should own and operate this process by the support of national authorities of the countries hosting refugees. National authorities should ease the permission processes and bureaucracy for needs assessment surveys and protection/psychosocial support programs that would be managed by NGOs.
- Turkish language courses should be given to refugees to make their daily lives comfortable and safer whilst they access social, legal and health services, among others.
- The Government of Turkey implements the legislation of “Temporary Protection” for the Syrians having found refuge in Turkey. The above-mentioned law keeps being

updated for further clarification. It is very important that there should be awareness raising programs for both refugees, NGOs and local public authorities and personnel in hospitals, schools and bar associations to keep them updated on new implementation procedures.

- Media could use its power with a much more positive perspective for integration process of refugees in Turkey.
- Syrian “refugees” cannot be mentioned literally as refugees in Turkey according to the “Temporary Protection Law” which has been developed and implemented specifically for Syrians fleeing to Turkey. The geographical limitation that the Turkish government continues to assign to the Geneva Convention results in displaced populations in Turkey to not access international refugee rights, preventing civil and public institutions from developing comprehensive social and development programs. A well-established coordination between NGOs and UNHCR is needed for an advocacy campaign on the need of precise refugee legislation before Turkish official authorities.

On managing recurrent and predictable shocks

- As a result of protracted crises in various parts of the world, there is high mobility of refugee populations and IDPs worldwide. As the issue is getting more and more international, a pertinent need for a revision in both international framework and national legislations regarding the legal status of refugees and IDPs in each and every country where those populations are settled. The topic has been discussed in depth in the break-out groups on “Serving the needs of affected populations in conflict settings” and “New models for protracted crises”. It was recommended that an international proclamation should be prepared and regulations should be set up concisely for the protection of refugees and IDPs. A humanitarian force should be initiated by the collaboration of NGOs if need be.
- Processes of refugee integration depend basically on social, economic and political infrastructures in each country hosting refugees. Development programs and integration strategies should be developed considering those national and regional differences; and governments should give and get support on multilateral basis in terms of developing integration and development programs on refugees.

On preparedness and resilience in conflict

- Various development programs should be constituted prior to conflicts for capacity



building in countries that are prone to severe crises. International information sharing programs should be facilitated for global information transfer.

- All programs regarding crisis-affected populations should be built on community resources with priority given to protection and development programs.
- In order to overcome cultural and language barriers, it is important to include Syrian refugees and their NGOs in programming processes, from the identification of needs and priorities to the evaluation of intervention impacts.
- More advocacy actions should be initiated targeting decision-makers. Consensus should be facilitated although there are different opinions and approaches.
- Communication among NGOs should be facilitated; there should be common platforms.
- Partnerships between national authorities and NGOs should be enhanced.

On rising risk in urban areas

- New job opportunities should be developed for refugees without provoking any tension in host communities. NGOs could take initiative by encouraging private sector and giving guidance to them to revise their corporate social responsibility programs with a more refugee protection-oriented perspective. For a more sustainable livelihoods program an international campaign could be developed by NGOs by the support of INGOs and international agencies aiming at governments and international corporations.

TRANSFORMATION IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION THROUGH HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY PROTECTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

- An NGO coordination mechanism for humanitarian diplomacy should be developed with a regular, full-time secretariat that would work for expanding partnerships and conducting advocacy on the protection of NGOs within the scope of humanitarian diplomacy during conflicts. The international humanitarian system should act independently of international institutions and sovereign governments in order to stay neutral during conflicts. Unfortunately, UN Agencies are not at the point of meeting the needs of refugees most of the time depending on their internal



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regulation-constraints; especially regarding their bilateral relationships with only sovereign governments. However, many humanitarian actors have to communicate with ISIS, Al Qaeda groups in order not to be forced to stop their humanitarian operation for the crisis-affected people in Syria. Following the independency principle in humanitarian action, humanitarian issues should be excluded from the framework of the Security Council; and an independent humanitarian council should be constituted. In humanitarian conflicts, some regulations should be established within international disaster intervention law, in case of political issues' prevention to humanitarian action.

- To address the humanitarian needs of IDPs, national Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies and the Federation should have special legal authority and responsibilities. Rather than being mostly European-centered as it is now, the Federation as a union of the Red Crescent, the Red Cross and the Red Star of David should operate like a global actor.
- Legal concessions that the staff of some organizations benefit such as the ICRC, should also cover other accredited humanitarian organizations in order to provide their staff and stakeholders with more security without changing direction of the risk and losing contact with crisis-affected communities. Within this scope a module should be constituted such as an anti-corruption system and there should be an international accreditation system, which should be reconstructed as an accreditation center of networks such as ECOSOC and humanitarian NGOs should have special legal protection status.
- Legal status of IDPs and refugees should be more humanitarian and people-centric.
- All governments should admit their own responsibilities in implementing the requirements of the international agreements regarding the clauses of international transits and human trafficking. An international NGO campaign and an advocacy initiative could be organized by NGOs around worldwide.
- The fact that UN agencies use 65% of their budget for operational costs is a considerable challenge for humanitarian action. Sanction mechanisms should be implemented for the UN. UN agencies should be the voice of civil actors rather than working against them.

SERVING THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE IN CONFLICT

On addressing specific risks people face in conflict situations

- Women's involvement should be dominant in protection programs, especially at local and regional levels. Women's platforms should encourage the presence of women in humanitarian action and increase women's involvement at all levels. When addressing vulnerable groups, especially gender-based cultural differences should be taken into account. Gender sensitivity must be in the centre of protection program designing processes, such as when establishing refugee camps and hospitals for crisis-affected populations. Unfortunately, there is a dominance of Western values in the UN Clusters.
- In order to give affected people greater voice and choice, it is essential to overcome cultural and language barriers between NGOs and the affected population. For instance, including diaspora groups and their NGOs in the planning and implementation processes of protection programs will help developing more comprehensive and detail-oriented activities with a community-based approach.
- Although the refugee camps in Turkey are well equipped with complete facilities, there are still some negative features far from ensuring the dignity of displaced people, which might sometimes give the impression of open prisons with their chain-link fences and observing towers with armed security officers. Psychosocial aspects should also be taken into account when developing living areas, shelters and facilities in the camps. Security and protection of women and young girls is particularly important.

On principles and standards

- Oftentimes, there is a gap between rhetoric and reality regarding the implementation of principles. Although the actions of disaster preparedness, risk reduction, human rights, development programs target always the crisis-affected or at-risk communities, an objective self reflection would serve to understand clearly where the humanitarian action is exactly when it comes to giving voice to those people, prioritizing their needs, asking for their opinion on whether the dignity principle is being respected by civil actors; developing resilient communities and on security issues.
- Many topics should be discussed in details and in diversity during the World Humanitarian Summit. The ones that are particularly relevant in relation to Turkey

are: To what extent can the current humanitarian action reach crisis-affected people; Can humanitarian action provide an added value during its mission, how to measure the vulnerabilities of the women in male-headed households when the aid is given directly to men, Is humanitarian action accountable enough; How legitimate are the humanitarian organizations within in the scope of the community-based approaches, among other issues.

- A community-based approach and the accountability principle should also be targeted and implemented in advocacy activities and thus outreach to decision-makers should be conducted by taking into account voices of crisis-affected peoples.

On what humanitarian action should be like in conflict situations

- Development programs along with social and economic infrastructure should be prioritized instead of humanitarian aid targeting only emergent humanitarian needs of crisis-affected populations. Within this scope the content and methods of quick interventions and long term programs should be different and evaluated from various points of view. Instead of kit distribution; it is necessary to improve long term programs with a holistic approach such as capacity building, conducting long-term complementary projects, giving support for infrastructure and technical and vocational education. For a long term response, humanitarians need to specialize in their field of work and include affected populations and universities in the process at critical points. More advocacy actions should be initiated targeting decision-makers. Community-based humanitarian action should be operated by integrating the crisis-affected people in protection programs, which would help awareness raising and integration/harmonization. Consensus should be facilitated although there are different opinions and approaches.
- UN agencies should develop reconciliatory attitudes, and work closer with national and local NGOs. Local NGOs should not be defined and perceived as subcontractors; and the conceptual and terminological references such as implementing body or subgrantee should be avoided. Means that enable the transfer of local knowledge to higher decision levels should be developed.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

- Coordination issues between public authorities and NGOs as well as among NGOs must be reinforced. This has been put forward by all of the working groups, as a persistent mutual trust issue in Turkey towards NGOs.



- Capacity building for local NGOs should be one of the priorities of all stakeholders in humanitarian action during long crisis.
- Community-based approaches and accountability principles should be taken as reference point when serving the needs of people in conflict.
- Since humanitarian crisis are more complicated and long-lasting today, sustainable development programs should accompany the humanitarian action and localize the efforts in the long run.

GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

(List project, country name, organisation and contact details)

IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation

Hasan Aynacı / hasanaynaci@ihh.org.tr

Technical School of Agriculture in Somalia: Considering the strong agricultural potential in Somalia, 15 Somali students were trained in Turkey in the field of agriculture. When they were back in their country they worked in the Technical School of Agriculture which was also established and funded by IHH and they have had 450 graduates up to now.

Association For Solidarity With Asylum Seekers and Migrants

Dilsah Saylan / dilsahsaylan.as@gmail.com

The Multi-Service Support Center for Syrian refugees in Tarlabasi region of Istanbul has been operating since January 2014 in partnership with International Medical Corps (IMC). The main goal of the Project is to improve the lives of Syrian refugees by facilitating their access to various services. This center has been providing services to Syrian refugees coming from different districts of Istanbul since its inauguration. Activities such as social and legal counselling mainly on registration procedure, legal issues, social rights, access to education and primary health care counselling to access health services properly and mental health and psychosocial support are provided in the MSC-Istanbul. In addition to these services, in the MSC there are courses, trainings and social activities to assist them in adapting to social life. Syrian refugees have been included in the project cycle management in order to overcome cultural and language barriers.



Doctors Worldwide

Selvanur Yazıcı Sezgin/ selvanursezgin@yyd.org.tr

Şifa Hospital was established in Mogadisu, Somalia in 2012 and has been providing Somalians with medical services that are free of charge. Local doctors are trained by Turkish doctors on voluntary-basis.

Support to Life

Sema Genel Karaosmanoglu / sgenel@supporttolife.org

In 2014 STL reinforced and expanded its protection program for urban Syrian refugees by launching two community centers in Hatay and Sanliurfa. Placing emphasis on community participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of projects, STL works at the grassroots level to improve the quality of lives of those in need. A Community Action Team is put together who are given participatory tools (community mapping, daily activities, seasonal calendar, venn diagrams, etc.) to assess needs and identify priorities. From assessment to project implementation and evaluation, STL is sensitive to issues of gender, age, and diversity. Livelihoods support is becoming a major component of the protection program of STL for Syrian refugees.

TOPICS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

- How will the NGO participation be assured in the National Declaration Document of Turkey that will be presented to the WHS '16?
- There is a need for an NGO Platform in the preparation phase of the WHS 2016.

QUOTES FROM PARTICIPANTS

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

- “The Palestinian refugee population around the world is larger than the Palestinian population in Palestine” Dr. Kerem Kınık, Doctors Worldwide, Turkey
- “Today we cannot call the Syrian “refugees” as refugees literally because of the legislation in Turkey. The Government calls them “guests” in official statements!”

SITAP

hayata destek
İNSANI YARDIM DERNEĞİ

IHH

ULUSLARARASI İZMİR BİLİMSEL VE
TEKNOLOJİK İNŞAAT SİSTEMİ
İBC

YERLİ GİZLİ
DOKTORLARI
DERNEĞİ

maavi halem
Sosyal Yardımlarına & Dayanışma Derneği

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5. Attachments/Annexes

[1] List of Participants	[4] Meeting agenda/programme
[2] Discussion questions /surveys used	[] List of background documents shared
[3] List of Facilitators/speakers/panellists	[]



Bu belge Avrupa Birliği Sivil Düşün Programı kapsamında desteklenen Sivil Toplum Afet Platformu tarafından hazırlanmıştır; hiç bir şekilde Avrupa Birliği'nin görüşlerini yansıtmamaktadır.”