

**INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP
58th MEETING**

**22-23 September 2004
UNICEF New York**

**Good Humanitarian Donorship: Preparations for the Second International Meeting,
Ottawa, 21 and 22 October 2004**

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Good Humanitarian Donorship – Ottawa Meeting Preparations

A. Context

In Stockholm, the DERC who spoke on behalf of the IASC stated that

“Most donor behaviour is rational from a donor point of view. However, the sum total of all donor behaviour does not produce a rational whole”.

This statement was frequently repeated during the meeting at which donors committed themselves: to improve the equity, effectiveness, coherence and accountability of their responses, needs based programming and harmonization of procedures and reporting requirements. Donors were to select one CAP country where they would apply these principles and try to meet the humanitarian needs.

Donors established an implementation plan and agreed to meet again to review progress made against the “principles and good practice of humanitarian donorship”.

The Ottawa meeting has three main objectives:

- To reinforce the principles adopted at Stockholm and sustain the momentum created there;
- To reflect upon what has been accomplished since and to agree on the way forward;
- To expand and secure the commitment of new donors/new partners to the GHD initiative.

B. Purpose of the IASC WG discussion: for the IASC to reach a common position on the main points for discussion:

B1. Do Agencies feel that progress has been made on the Stockholm Implementation Plan in general?

- Closer interaction among and with donors in the field
- Funding according to the priorities identified through the improved needs assessments – the Common Needs Assessment Framework (which was already being developed by IASC-members at time of Stockholm and not a result of the GHD initiative)

- Funding and other forms of support for transition needs
- Increased unearmarked funding
- Harmonised reporting requirements and management demands
- Policy dialogue on humanitarian principles

B2. What aspects or challenges do need to be better addressed?

The Conference organisers have selected a number of key challenges. However, it is important that the IASC feels that these indeed represent the core of the contributions that the GHD initiative can deliver. It is suggested that IASC members review a number of specific principles for this purpose.

- Humanitarian action according to need:
- Principle 2 challenged agencies to ensure that implementation of humanitarian action be guided solely on the basis of need.....; Principle 6 aimed for donors to “Allocate humanitarian funding in proportion to needs and on the basis of needs assessments.” The issue of funding according to need (for both protection and assistance) is at the heart of the GHD agenda and is integral to the humanitarian principle of impartiality. It is also one of the most challenging issues on which to make progress.

Question: agencies may be accountable to principle 2 and donors to principle 6, both of which are key challenges. Do Agencies feel that there is a better performance on both sides? Have recent crises shown any examples of good practice? Are the CAP pilots contributing to better donor behaviour?

- Principle 7 requested implementing humanitarian organisations to ensure, to the greatest possible extent, adequate involvement of beneficiaries in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian response.

Question: what is the progress that could be reported back to the Conference?

- Principle 9 addressed the issue of Transition. Donors set out to “Provide humanitarian assistance in ways that are supportive of recovery and long-term development, striving to ensure support, where appropriate, to the maintenance and return of sustainable livelihoods and transitions from humanitarian relief to recovery and development activities.”

Question: Transition is a separate agenda-item in which several IASC members will address the Conference and are expected to make suggestions how the “gap” can be overcome, *inter alia*, by reviewing several existing modules. Will the speakers present one common IASC-view and what will the focus be? Is there one single preferred module that could be applied to all contexts? How could the ECHA/UNDG recommendations be translated in more adequate donor support?

- Funding behaviour:
- Principle 11, 12 and 13 stated that donors will strive to ensure that funding of humanitarian action in new crises does not adversely affect the meeting of needs in ongoing crises, ensure predictable and flexible funding, exploring possibility of introducing longer-term funding arrangements, and to support the CHAP as the main instrument for strategic planning, prioritisation and co-ordination in complex emergencies.

Question: while closely related to the question on principle 6, do agencies feel that despite the Iraq crisis donors have adequately supported ongoing and less publicised crises? Has unearmarked funding enabled Agencies to make provide more needs-based assistance? What suggestions should be made to donors in the debate?

- Principle 8 committed donors to strengthen the capacity of countries and local communities to prevent, prepare for, mitigate and respond to humanitarian crises, with the goal of ensuring that governments and local communities are better able to meet their responsibilities and co-ordinate effectively with humanitarian partners.

Question: analysis of CAP response shows that initiatives to strengthen local capacity receive limited response, both for Natural Disaster and complex emergency contexts. Do Agencies feel that this is an issue which the GHD should address in the next phase?

- Principle 16 proposed that donors support mechanisms for contingency planning by humanitarian organisations, including, as appropriate, allocation of funding, to strengthen capacities for response.

Question: from IASC side considerable work has been undertaken in the area of contingency planning. Is there agreement that donors have taken adequate steps to give Agencies the confidence that their recommendations for urgent action in a very early stage of a crisis will be adequately supported?

B3. What new issues should the GHD Initiative address in next phase?

With the arrival of the new Emergency Relief Coordinator, efforts have been renewed to raise awareness of humanitarian concerns as well as to enlarge the participation from new actors. The Bam earthquake has reconfirmed the value of partners which whom IASC members have in the past not worked closely together. Various initiatives are being developed, in particular in Africa, and central Asia. But much more can and must be done to make optimal use of local and regional expertise and resources.

Suggestion: to encourage donors to examine what they can do to help the financial or other support base from emerging donors and local partners.

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