

Title of Side Event: Accountability to Affected People and Donor Responsibility – Building a Shared Agenda

Sponsors and Organizers: IASC Task Force on Accountability to Affected People, CHS Alliance, IFRC, WFP and OCHA.

Date and Time: 21 June, 13:15-14:45 (GVA) at the Palais des Nations in Geneva in Conference Room XXIII.

This event will be in hybrid format and is one of the side events to be convened on the margins of the 2023 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (HAS), which builds on this year's HAS theme: *“Strengthening humanitarian assistance at a time of unprecedented global humanitarian needs: driving transformation and solutions to address the urgent challenges of rising food insecurity and the risk of famine, protection risks and climate change.”*

For those joining the event remotely, please use the following link: <https://ungeneva-vc.webex.com/ungeneva-vc/j.php?MTID=m0e126f7267f8ddf6579a864740096487>.

Background and objectives of event:

Humanitarians are accountable to people affected by crisis. For a humanitarian response to be both effective and efficient, accountability to affected people is a prerequisite.

Numerous commitments to Accountability to Affected People (AAP) have been made, yet the fundamental elements of accountability, which should inform and guide the relationship between crisis-affected people and individuals and organizations providing aid are in many cases lacking.

With performance lagging, the sector needs to learn and adapt. This means listening to affected people about how they experience and influence humanitarian work. It also requires a system-wide approach, where humanitarian leadership, aid structures, and key enablers converge both in principle and action to turn the dominant model of humanitarian action around—making it more engaging, inclusive, responsive and respectful of the needs and agency of affected people.

Donors represent a critical enabler to influence this shift. Donors have a unique role to align their policies and financing guidance around putting people first, to help overcome identified barriers, silos between development and humanitarian financing and between sectors, and a lack of inter-agency and inter-sector cooperation. The donor community can use their power to drive and support best practice, hold humanitarians to account, and create further incentives for adaptation and collective efforts towards change.



Some of the dilemmas encountered when seeking to strengthen collective AAP are rooted in characteristics of the current system, including a competitive model of developing appeals and response plans that can be seen to work against collective action, the need to ringfence AAP financing vis-à-vis Grand Bargain commitments, the replication of power dynamics through the partnership chain, already burdensome reporting practices, and contradictions between additional AAP requirements and the impact on efforts to strengthen the role of local actors.

However, some donor practices demonstrate that it is possible to address these factors and that opportunities exist to promote the implementation of a collaborative agenda to ensure greater accountability to people in crisis. The session will focus on some of these practices and on specific areas of quality resourcing that foster stronger AAP and can constitute the foundations for a forward, collaborative agenda to turn shared ambitions into reality.

The event is held under the umbrella of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Force 2 on Accountability to Affected People, co-chaired by CHS Alliance, IFRC and WFP, in close collaboration with the Grand Bargain (GB) Participation Revolution, the IASC Secretariat, and OCHA. Chaired by Ms. Mervat Shelbaya, Head of the IASC Secretariat in Geneva, the presentations and discussions of the event will place emphasis on:

- The practical meaning and implications of truly putting people first;
- Lessons from existing examples of good practices driven or supported by donors;
- Galvanizing a shared understanding of practical approaches to holding humanitarians to account; and
- Framing a shared agenda for donors and organizations on progressing collective AAP in humanitarian action.

Discussion points or guiding questions:

- How can donors contribute to collective AAP?
- What evidence exists around donor flexibility and which among existing practices around quality funding and AAP are well placed to drive systemic change?
- What is the role local actors should play in leading and informing collective AAP?
- What do different actors in the system require to scale up these practices for impact and a systemic shift?



Key concrete action points and recommendations/takeaway messages:

While it is important to acknowledge past failures and challenges to success, future action can already build around existing frameworks and best practice.

A defined and shared agenda provides the direction of travel among different actors, enabling investment, including in collective action.

The event will feed into a dedicated donor roundtable, tentatively scheduled for Q4 2023, where specific challenges to scaling up donor support for collective AAP will be discussed.

Chair and moderator:

Ms. Mervat Shelbaya, Head IASC Secretariat

Panel composition:

Ms. Marian Casey-Maslen, Executive Director, CDAC Network

Mr. Andri van Mens, Counsellor, Counselor, Permanent Representation of the Netherlands to the UN

Mr. Cosmos Sakala, Deputy Secretary-General, Zambia Red Cross Society

Ms. Marcia Wong, Deputy Assistant to the Administrator, USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance

Background Material (feel free to share links to relevant documents):

<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2023-04/Supporting%20donors%E2%80%99%20responsibility%20for%20greater%20accountability%20to%20people%20in%20crisis%2C%20IASC%20Task%20Force%202.pdf>

Contact(s):

Please list focal point(s) in the below table (maximum 2):

	<i>Focal Point 1</i>	<i>Focal Point 2</i>
Name:	Trude Strand	Alexandra Sicotte-Levesque
Email:	tstrand@chsalliance.org	Alexandra.sicottelevesque@ifrc.org
Phone:	N/A	N/A
Mobile:	+41782342774	+41797242046
Mission or Organization:	CHS Alliance	IFRC



Please indicate the technical focal point(s) (for technical assistance participants may require before/during the side event) in the table below (maximum 1):

	<i>Technical Focal Point 1</i>	<i>Technical Focal Point 2</i>
Name:	Alexandra Sicotte-Levesque	
Email:	<u>Alexandra.sicottelevesque@ifrc.org</u>	
Phone:	N/A	
Mobile:	+41797242046	
Mission or Organization:	IFRC	

