



**GHD High Level Meeting  
New York  
Friday 22 June 2018**

**Co-Chair's Summary**

Co-chairs Germany and Australia hosted the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative (GHD) annual High Level Meeting on 22 June 2018 in the premises of the German Permanent Mission in New York. Senior representatives from the GHD membership participated in the day-long event, which was moderated by Ms Ming Thu Pham, Executive Director for Policy at the UN Foundation.

The meeting was a starting point to an ongoing structured dialogue between GHD and IASC members. It was shaped around three issues of system-wide relevance at a strategic level: Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse; Internal Displacement; and Strategic Funds Allocation. Executive level members of the humanitarian Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) were represented on each of the panels. GHD and IASC representatives reaffirmed their joint commitment to system-wide collaboration, accountability and transparency. The incoming co-chairs EU/ECHO and Switzerland confirmed their intention to continue the GHD-IASC dialogue, to strengthen the impact and relevance of the GHD platform.

***Panel 1: System-wide Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA): How can humanitarian donors support a collective and sustainable approach?***

**Panellists:**

Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock  
Jane Connors – UNSG appointed Victims' Rights Advocate (by video)  
Alexandra MacKenzie, Director, Global Affairs, Canada  
Judith Greenwood, Executive Director, CHS Alliance  
Fatoumata Ndiaye, Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF  
Elie Gasagara, Vice President, World Vision

The UN's Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock presented collective actions agreed by the IASC to Prevent Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). Principals of all the major humanitarian agencies have committed to measures including sharing good practices; preventing perpetrators from moving through the sector; strengthening the investigation capacity of agencies through collaboration among investigators; and establishing an OCHA-managed US\$1 million fund to surge investigative capacity.

Donors outlined their expectations of IASC partners, and their internal measures to strengthen PSEA. Donors emphasised their commitment to supportive, sustained and collective action where feasible, being pursued through forums such as the G7, Tidewater and the UK-led safeguarding forum.

The ERC was candid about SEA in humanitarian settings. The operating environment is often higher risk (“last mile most difficult”), presenting unique challenges. The ERC and IASC representatives urged donors not to focus just on SEA numbers and caseloads, but on the overall accountability framework. Punitive funding measures against transparent organisations could be counterproductive, and risked overlooking agencies lacking transparency on poor performance. Donors should use holistic, sustained and qualitative measures to assess systems and responses to PSEA. Discussion also included the importance of culture change; the need for greater emphasis on victims and community-based mechanisms; aligning with broader efforts beyond the humanitarian system; and using existing standards such as IASC minimum operating standards and the CHS to strengthen safeguards.

GHD and IASC members identified a range of areas for possible GHD/IASC dialogue and collaboration. These include how we ensure sustained effort to incentivize change; alignment with standards; whether there is need for new mechanisms such as an independent Ombudsman; implications of greater localisation in context of due diligence; and progressing work on harmonised donor compliance/reporting requirements.

### ***Panel 2: The Humanitarian Dimension of Internal Displacement***

Panellists:

Eva Svoboda, Deputy Director of International Law and Policy, ICRC

Peter De Clercq, RC/HC Somalia

Ursula Müller, ASG, OCHA

Mohammed Abdiker, Director, Department of Operations and Emergencies, IOM

Volker Türk, Assistant High Commissioner (Protection), UNHCR

IASC and donors acknowledged that the needs of record numbers of internally displaced people (IDPs) were not being met. The international community has pledged to 'leave no-one behind', yet IDPs were largely excluded from current major processes (the Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, including the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework); the humanitarian response was insufficient (“systematically lowest indicators among all beneficiaries”), often due to a lack of clarity about competencies and accountability within the response architecture. IASC seniors highlighted the lack of political will of affected governments as the primary challenge to meeting IDP needs.

IASC and donors agreed that the humanitarian system needs to adapt to a changing IDP context. ICRC presented research which found the system is over-reliant on blanket responses. It needed more granular, fit for context needs assessments and programming models in IDP settings that are increasingly urban and non-camp. OCHA’s data showed 19 of the 20 humanitarian response plans that include IDPs have been operational for over five years. This underlined the need for longer-term approaches informed by municipal/local authorities and communities as appropriate, and development practices.

Donors asked IASC agencies to better demonstrate effective system coordination in a landscape of mixed refugee and IDP populations; limited access; and grey areas regarding

mandates. ASG Müller assured GHD members that IASC principals were prioritising IDP response coordination, including stronger data collaboration. ASG Müller and UNHCR AHC Türk confirmed [the 2014 'Joint Note'](#) on mixed situations was still relevant and guiding operations, but that it needed to be updated, including the cluster activation mechanism. Müller urged donors to support coherence between the cluster system led by OCHA and CRRF implementation led by UNHCR. Norway advised it would write to the UNSG to ask that a high-level panel on IDPs be convened at UNGA 2019.

***Panel 3: Humanitarian Financing – How is the evidence base improving and how can donors support prioritized and balanced funding?***

Panellists:

Monique Pariat, DG ECHO

ASG Ursula Müller, OCHA

Jae So, Senior Adviser to Mahmoud Mohieldin, Senior Vice President, World Bank

Ignacio Packer, Executive Director, ICVA

Lars Peter Nissen, Director, ACAPS

Discussion of funds allocation is important in the context of the global humanitarian financing gap (USD10 billion in 2017 and growing). ECHO Director-General Monique Pariat gave a frank donor perspective. Transparency was key. Donors needed to be more transparent about their funding intentions and criteria for decision making. Agencies needed to better demonstrate how much funding was needed; what it was used for; and whether it was reaching beneficiaries. This had to be underpinned by reliable, realistic and independent needs assessment and indicator-based evaluation.

OCHA's Ursula Mueller said the scope and quality of Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) had improved, with well targeted populations and clarity on what can and can't be achieved. Many donors endorsed this favourable assessment of HRPs, while underlining that the HRPs should be used more consistently across the system as the primary strategic and operational planning tool.

OCHA cautioned against comparative analysis of needs between different contexts: lower profile crisis would worsen without donor support. OCHA urged donors to put greater weight on data rather than size of appeals and media attention. OCHA is considering providing more regular strategic updates for annual HRPs which would show how needs and priorities were changing.

The World Bank urged donors and IASC members alike to unlock the potential of private partners (“a cold coke in every village – why not cooled medicine?”). More and better data would lower costs and the entrance barrier for the private sector.

IASC and donors agreed to take forward joint work on strengthened data collection (including independent voices), more and better analytical and anticipatory capability and full transparency in decision making methodology in order to improve evidence-based allocation of available funds.

## ***A new GHD principle on cash***

Norway and the UK, as co-chairs of the GHD cash workstream, proposed a new GHD principle on cash. Since the GHD principles were adopted in 2003, cash transfer programming has emerged as an important tool of humanitarian aid. The proposed principle consolidates the results of the GHD Cash workstream. It recognises the added value of cash as a flexible and cost-efficient tool, while placing people in need at the centre of humanitarian efforts by GHD members. It aligns with the purpose of GHD principles and good practices, and reflects important developments and innovations in the humanitarian sector.

GHD members agreed to adopt this 24<sup>th</sup> principle, which is to “Systematically consider the use of cash transfers alongside other modalities according to context, in order to meet the humanitarian needs of people in the most effective and efficient manner”.

The explanatory note for the cash principle is at Annex 1.

### ***Key messages***

Some key messages and a range of possible areas for ongoing GHD and IASC joint work, and commitments which IASC and GHD members may choose to pursue, were identified:

1. In order to better prevent and respond to **Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)** in humanitarian settings, GHD and IASC committed to collaborative and sustained effort. GHD members will explore harmonized donor approaches to compliance and reporting where possible and engage with agencies in ways that incentivize transparency and action. Some donors may conduct self-assessments of internal rules and regulations. Donors and Agencies underlined the importance of prevention and response, including investigations, and agreed to consider allocating resources. IASC partners declared their collective commitment to strengthen the humanitarian sector’s approach to SEA by addressing root causes, eradicating impunity and sharing best practices. IASC partners are improving sector-wide referencing system and strengthening investigation capacity. The IASC and the GHD recognized that SEA and sexual harassment are a symptom of power imbalances and are committed to ensuring a victim-centered approach.
2. On humanitarian response to **Internal Displacement**, GHD and IASC affirmed their commitment to the “GP20 Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People 2018-2020” and to engage in collective action, as referenced in GHD principle No. 16. GHD and IASC agreed to greater efforts to ensure participation of IDPs, to place protection at the centre of response, to focus on solutions in situations of protracted displacement, and to improve data and analysis. This includes complementarity of agency action, in close cooperation with national governments, civil society and development actors where feasible, under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinators, and under the global leadership of the Emergency

Relief Coordinator. GHD donors affirmed their full support to IASC members in their advocacy and protection work on behalf of internally displaced people.

3. GHD and IASC reaffirmed their collective commitment to the humanitarian principles, which ensures that those who are **most vulnerable and in need of humanitarian assistance are prioritized**. More comprehensive and accurate data is creating opportunities to progress on commitments to humanitarian principles, including through GHD principle No. 6. IASC partners committed to sharing relevant data among implementing agencies and NGOs, to increase the use of joint needs assessments and analysis and to make strategic and operational use of the jointly developed Humanitarian Needs Overviews and Response Plans. GHD and IASC see value in donors sharing good practice on evidence-based methodologies for funding allocations based on need; and IASC members sharing internal methodologies for allocating un-earmarked funding, with the ultimate aim of increasing the volume, predictability and flexibility of humanitarian financing and ensuring its alignment with more longer term programming as well as multilateral/bilateral aid flows. GHD and IASC agreed on promoting collective action toward a more anticipatory humanitarian financing system, including greater use of contingency, early action, and forecast-based financing.

## **Explanatory Note on the Proposal of a 24<sup>th</sup> GHD Principle on Cash (from GHD Cash Workstream co-leads Norway and the United Kingdom)**

At the GHD workshop on cash held in Geneva on May 4<sup>th</sup>, the co-leads of the work stream, Norway and the United Kingdom, proposed a new GHD principle on cash to fellow members. In consideration of the fact that GHD principles were adopted in 2003, and that since then cash has emerged as an important tool of humanitarian aid, it would be appropriate to formulate a new principle recognizing the value of cash transfer programming and to consolidate the results of the workstream on cash.

The suggestion is to discuss the adoption of a new principle on cash at the GHD High-Level Meeting to be held in New York on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. At the Geneva workshop, the co-leads presented a tentative draft with the following wording:

***“Systematically consider the use of cash transfers to meet humanitarian needs”***

A new principle on cash, as formulated, would recognize the added value of cash as a flexible and cost-efficient tool, while placing people in need at the centre of humanitarian efforts by GHD members. It would fit with the purpose of GHD principles and good practices, and reflect important developments and innovations in the humanitarian sector.

While the benefits of cash are clear, its potential is still not fully exploited. Cash remains underutilized and it is not yet systematically considered in humanitarian programming. This also came out as a result of the survey amongst GHD donors last year.

Such a principle would not be prescriptive, but it would simply suggest the systematic consideration of using cash transfers based on evidence and on context-specific analysis.

While recognizing that around half of the GHD members have already made commitments under the framework of the Grand Bargain, to scale up cash, it would seem beneficial and relevant to include such a new and strategic principle to be endorsed by the broader GHD membership, to have further effect on humanitarian action. The co-leads of the workstream do not believe that adding a principle on cash would lead to a flourishing of new GHD principles in the future. We would propose adding it as a 24<sup>th</sup> principle in order not to necessitate a re-ordering of the existing principles.

Following the feedback received at the GHD plenary meeting held in Geneva on May 18<sup>th</sup>, the co-leads would be open to suggestions to reformulate the wording of the proposed principle, in order to address the nature of cash as a modality rather than a principle or an objective informing humanitarian action. Such a revised version of the draft principle, which would be open to further discussion until the High-Level Meeting, could for example be along the following lines:

*“Systematically consider the use of cash transfers alongside other modalities according to context, in order to meet the humanitarian needs of people in the most effective and efficient manner”<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> This revised formulation of the principle was endorsed and adopted by members at the GHD High Level Meeting on 22 June 2018.