



*Estonia – UK co-chair of the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative*

*2023-2025*

## **GHD High Level Meeting, 14 June**

### **CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY**

The High-Level meeting (HLM) of the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative was held in Geneva on 14 June. It was the second HLM held under the Estonia-UK co-chair. The thematic focus of the HLM was digital technologies in humanitarian aid, building on discussions that took place at the Expert-Level meeting in April. The external speakers for the agenda item on global risks and coordination were **Denise Brown**, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Ukraine and **Ciaran Donnelly**, Senior Vice President for Crisis Response, Recovery and Development, International Rescue Committee - both offering their perspective on how current and future geopolitical challenges are impacting global humanitarian needs.

**GHD Attendees:** Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, EU, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jersey, Luxembourg, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States of America.

#### **1. Global risks and coordination**

The global risks and coordination discussion was framed by two external interventions – the first from Denise Brown, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Ukraine; the second from Ciaran Donnelly, Senior Vice President for Crisis Response, Recovery and Development, International Rescue Committee – both offering their perspective on how current and future geopolitical challenges are impacting global humanitarian needs.

**In the plenary** there was a discussion around partnerships, acknowledging that there will not be a one size fits all approach. The key will be thinking creatively and expansively, creating the space to test new ideas and learn from them. Myths and processes will also need to be challenged. There was reflection on the intersection of ethics and politics. Funding instruments and/or mechanisms that can operate with less political influence could be one way to ensure impartiality. There was also a discussion around duty of care and mental health.

**In the donor only discussion**, participants noted Gaza, Sudan and Ukraine as current crises of major concern. It was widely acknowledged that greater attention should be directed to the forgotten crises of eastern DRC, Myanmar, the Sahel and Yemen. Participants were coalesced around similar thematic priorities, including localisation, protection, normative backsliding, and prevention/early action. The 34<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent was identified as a key international moment later in the year. A new incoming Emergency Relief Coordinator and new priorities for the IASC was also acknowledged as an opportunity to reflect on considerations relating to coordination and prioritisation. Participants also shared their expectations regarding 2024 humanitarian funding, including the pledges compiled at the 2024 European Humanitarian Forum.

## 2. Thematic Discussion: Digital Technologies in Humanitarian Aid: the role of donors

There was a brief recap of the key messages and outcomes of the Expert Level meeting (ELM) in April. The shared messages document, which was an agreed action arising from the ELM, was introduced. It was noted that the purpose of the document was to support coherent donor messaging but also help plan donors' work on this thematic issue.

Participants welcomed the draft messages, noting the usefulness of developing this type of a tool. Participants also welcomed the focus on the topic of digital technologies, with a suggestion to also make use of GHD in the future as a platform for donor discussions on digital technologies. It was acknowledged that donors' engagement with digital technologies in humanitarian aid varied widely and compiling shared principles, practices and objectives would be useful. The document is also helpful for donors developing their own policies. While associated both to benefits and risks, digital technologies can provide an opportunity to make important advances in humanitarian assistance.

In the comments, additional elements regarding the benefits of a system-wide investment in digital technologies, potential actions to combat and prevent misinformation, disinformation and hate speech, inclusion, the gender perspective, the ICRC34 resolution and data sovereignty were mentioned. The co-chairs took on the action of revising the document based on the suggestions that were made and invited GHD membership to provide any additional comments in writing by 24 June. A final version would be shared with the GHD membership. Donors were encouraged to use the document in their own messaging on the topic.

The co-chairs also proposed to hold a webinar to increase knowledge of the topic among the GHD membership and humanitarian partners. A mapping of donor activities on the issue is also foreseen.

- **Action:** GHD co-chairs to circulate a revised shared messages document.

## 3. Upcoming meetings

The co-chairs updated on GHD-IASC engagement. They thanked the membership for their feedback on the options paper that was presented at the ELM and subsequently circulated under a red lines procedure. They noted that there is broad consensus among the membership for option 3 – full GHD participation (in-person and online). They noted that a proposition has been made to the IASC Secretariat, including a suggestion that the first meeting could take place in the margins of the IASC Deputies meeting on 30 September. Once feedback from the IASC is received, the co-chairs will update the membership. Should a meeting be confirmed, there will be a consultative process with the GHD membership and the IASC to agree agenda topics.

## 4. AOB

The co-chairs raised two AOBs:

- (i) **Jersey Overseas Aid (JOA):** The co-chairs formally welcomed JOA as the 43<sup>rd</sup> member of the GHD. They noted that JOA expressed an interest in joining the GHD earlier this year, which was put to membership under a red lines procedure. It was noted that JOA will take up co-chair of the Country Based Pooled Funds working group with Italy and welcomes ongoing engagement through this forum.

- (ii) **Co-chair letter to incoming ERC:** The co-chairs noted their intention to send a congratulatory letter to the incoming ERC. They noted that they will use the letter to outline their co-chair priorities and update on the work of the GHD. The letter will also update the new ERC on plans for GHD-IASC engagement.

## 5. Next Steps

The co-chairs noted that the GHD will return to the first overarching theme – Coordination of the Humanitarian System – for the remainder of 2024. More details on the chosen thematic topic will be shared in due course. The next GHD expert-level meeting will be held in Geneva, in October (exact date to be confirmed). The next high-level meeting will be held in December, date and location to be confirmed. The co-chairs will look to align dates for the latter with the ODSG high-level meeting and the CERF Advisory Group meeting so that senior level participation can be maximised.

GHD co-chairs  
June 2024