



Deliver Collective Outcomes: Transcend Humanitarian-Development Divides

Analytical Paper on WHS Self-Reporting on Agenda for Humanity Transformation 4C

Executive Summary:

*"We commit to implementing a 'new way of working' that meets people's immediate humanitarian needs while at the same time reducing risk and vulnerability."*²

This paper was prepared by:¹



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The commitment to transcending the humanitarian-development divide articulates a desire to change operations and integrate aid delivery with the wider goals of ending need worldwide. One year after the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), this paper looks back at the commitment that was made and assesses the progress and challenges reported by more than 85 diverse stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs), governments, interagency groups, and United Nations agencies. What is evident from these responses is that the humanitarian-development divide is indeed very real. Getting the two sides to work together from the beginning of a crisis towards specific collective outcomes that reduce need and vulnerability and increase resilience of the affected populations over multiple years will be fundamental to the evolution of both sectors in years to come.

The self-reporting of stakeholders demonstrates how some institutions and organisations are embracing change by integrating more flexibility and longer time frames; by combining short- and long-term programming and goals in operations; and by utilising innovative financing. These pioneering initiatives need to be supported and replicated to ensure that what we do works now, but also that it continues to serve affected populations in the future.

Despite the progress of some stakeholders, there are still a number of challenges that need to be addressed. Funding mechanisms need to be reformed and restructured to enable actors from across the divide to work better together both in situations of crises and afterwards, during the rebuilding process. Collaboration – which has often been raised as an issue on both sides of the divide – will need to be committed to, not only on paper but also in practice. True collaboration, rather than cooperation, is needed around integrated ways of working, data sharing, project implementation, and monitoring and evaluation from the design phase of interventions to long-lasting impact.

¹ This paper was authored by FAO (Indira Joshi, Emergency and Rehabilitation Officer, and Elena de Giovanni, Humanitarian Policy and Partnerships Officer) and Action Contre la Faim (Eilidh Kennedy, Chief Analyst of the Interagency Regional Analysts Network). The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Secretariat.

² "[Commitment to Action](#)" document, which was signed at the World Humanitarian Summit by former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the heads of seven UN agencies (WHO, UNDP, WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA, OCHA), and endorsed by the World Bank and IOM.



This will be helped in the coming months and years through the greater definition of collective outcomes for both humanitarian and development actors to aim towards, as a stepping stone towards achieving the Agenda 2030.

Most significant progress made across reporting on transformation 4C – Deliver collective outcomes: transcend humanitarian-development divides

With regard to this transformation, partners reported progress in a number of different ways. UN agencies and NGOs are progressing in moving towards multi-year planning to enable humanitarian-development collaboration. Country level initiatives dedicated to support the transition and recovery needs of crisis-affected populations were also pursued. This has been labelled as the New Way of Working (NWOW) and is looking to have joint analysis, joined-up planning, better coordination and leadership, and smarter financing – all towards the pursuit of collective outcomes.

“A flexible, predictable and transparent donor is a great partner both to development and humanitarian actors and to affected people.”

Lithuania

The NWOW has been manifested in a number of interconnected initiatives looking to boost joint humanitarian-development approaches in protracted crises – both at the field level and at headquarters. United Nations Secretary-General Guterres has tasked the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) with establishing a steering committee that will link the UN Development Group (UNDG) agencies with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) for humanitarian assistance, a membership coalition of leading UN and other organizations tasked with responding to emergencies. This is being undertaken at the normative level through a series of global and regional workshops which resulted in a joint *Roadmap for Action Towards Collective Response*. This has been operationalized further in Secretary-General Guterres’ call for a joint UNDG-IASC Steering Committee in response to the famine situations. A UN-World Bank initiative has also been launched, which supports UN-World Bank collaboration in the pursuit of collective outcomes across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus, in crisis-affected countries through technical support and seed-funding.

New tools developed by the UNDG, such as the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) guidelines, incorporate the thinking around the NWOW and working towards collective outcomes. Implementation has commenced in various countries including Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Mauritania, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda and Yemen.

Partners also reported that various projects were developed around both short-term and longer-term support to build up resilient livelihoods, food production and access to water and services. Such projects ensure that people become self-reliant and are able to sustain their own needs adopting both a humanitarian response and a development approach.

Donors converged around developing humanitarian strategies and multilateral aid policies which commit to further supporting the transition from humanitarian relief to longer-term recovery and development. This has also been spurred forward thanks to the commitments under the Grand Bargain.

As a result of the Grand Bargain discussions, the European Union launched exploratory work to expand its multi-year planning and funding strategies. This work has large potential for efficiency and effectiveness gains in terms of enabling reduced costs of implementation, preparedness and early-warning and linking humanitarian and development programming through innovative ways of working.

In line with its WHS commitments, Norway committed to providing a record high NOK 10 billion over a 4-year period as a response to the protracted displacement crisis in Syria and neighbouring countries. The funding will go towards humanitarian assistance and long-term development aid.

The main barriers/ challenges to progress

Changing the way that humanitarian and development actors work – planning and coordination tools - and ensuring that rolling out the New Way of Working is context specific will take some time to see results. However, it is clear from stakeholders' self-reports that stakeholders continue to express strong calls for a shift toward this way of working.

Shift from funding to financing

Funding was the most significant challenge reported on by stakeholders as inhibiting progress to transcend the humanitarian-development divide. Stakeholders reported that funding still too often inflexible, earmarked, unpredictable, and too short-term. The lack of multi-year funding and the inflexibility of current funding mechanisms impede long-term vision, strategic planning, preparedness and resilience building, the implementation and achievement of theories of change, sustainable reconstruction after disasters/conflict, and most importantly, bridging the gap between response, recovery, rehabilitation and long-term development.

The current funding model is also said to hinder localisation efforts -- a true shift of power, capacity, knowledge and resources to local/national organisations. Actors reporting on this commitment repeatedly highlight the need for more staffing resources and capacity at national level, less turnover, and more long-term investment at country level. Embodying this argument is France, who reported that: "Reinforcing national and local systems rather than replacing them is ... key to transcend[ing] humanitarian-development divides and ensur[ing] that humanitarian response helps solve crisis on the long term."

Analysis, joint-planning, coordination and leadership

Stakeholders noted that data availability, collection, maintenance, and sharing remains a significant challenge for actors. Similarly, while there have some important steps towards greater coherence between different planning instruments (especially UN Development Assistance Frameworks and Humanitarian Response Plans), this is yet to be translated into proper joined up planning in the field. This is in part due to the need to better define collective outcomes between the humanitarian and development stakeholders. This requires an alignment of planning cycles, as well as a coherent approach to joint analysis.

Currently the coordination and leadership functions differ between the humanitarian and development side in terms of both tools and services, and scope of action. More importantly, the Resident Coordinator / Humanitarian Coordinator in their coordinating role are not in a position to fully manage the overall programme towards collective outcomes, as these are more often determined by mandate and/or other funding considerations. This results in a lack of

coherence that has also been identified by United Nations Secretary-General Guterres as a priority to resolve.

Other notable challenges

There were a number of other notable challenges cited by multiple respondents, including: 1) the urban environment as a challenging arena where humanitarian and development actors operate; 2) insufficient innovation and collaboration, both of which require time, resources and dedicated effort from organisations which claim to already be stretched in these domains; 3) the erosion of humanitarian principles in volatile contexts; and 4) securing the level of political will, policy change, and government action to bridge the gap between humanitarian and development work.

Measuring progress

There were varying degrees of efforts reported by stakeholders towards creating or adopting work-plans, benchmarks and indicators to measure progress. Several informed that progress is assessed through regular project monitoring and reporting mechanisms. Other stakeholders reported that progress is tracked against set targets and indicators. Through these mechanisms the information that is captured and the assessed progress will serve to support transition and recovery objectives towards strengthening resilience to crises.

A common analysis based on risk and resilience is the point of departure for strengthening synergies between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation. Sweden (through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida) has therefore integrated a perspective on synergies in its humanitarian crises analyses for large on-going crises. This common analysis then leads to a number of concrete programmes that create concrete synergies between humanitarian and development cooperation. In 2017, ten such programmes have been approved and will be evaluated.

Gaps between the actions of stakeholders and advancing the transformation

In terms of **analysis**, there is a need to align short-term programs with long-term goals through strategic thinking and foresight/early warning initiatives. Actors from across the nexus should promote and support the development of such projects that combine long-term vision with short-term operations (and therefore tackle the divide between humanitarian and development sectors).

To move from cooperation to **joint planning** and financing, organisations will need support in shifting towards integrated partnership building, rather than alliance forming, which is currently the modus operandi of NGOs. Having collective outcomes to aspire towards will also help in this regard.

Strengthened coordination and leadership will be required to set up partnerships that push actors across the continuum to go “beyond the comfort of traditional silos”³ and develop a culture of

“Overcoming the cultural divide between humanitarian and development actors takes time and investment in capacity building and bringing the different stakeholders (humanitarian and development actors) together to support identification of risks and joint analysis and strategic articulation of what needs to be in place to transcend the humanitarian and development nexus.”

UNFPA

³ Portugal, member state

working together.

Finally in terms of **funding, donors need to coordinate in order to offer** “a holistic system of support, allowing structured investments in national capacity building.”⁴ Organisations are encouraged to invest in innovation, including innovative financing and prevention/anticipatory initiatives, and as the self-report submitted by Spain argues, focus not on “who provides money, but [whether] the kind of aid provided makes people able to resist and recover as soon as possible from a critical situation.”

Highlights of good practice

- In 2017, France will adopt its fragility-related strategy, designed by humanitarian and development institutional actors. Within this strategy, a Vulnerability Fund was created to fund multi-year programmes focusing on protracted crises. Implementation of projects funded by this will begin at the end of 2017. It will be an occasion to test and improve coordination between humanitarian and development actors.
- The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have jointly developed a multi-year resilience programme in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger and Somalia to address the root causes of vulnerability related to food insecurity and malnutrition in three different contexts of protracted fragility and crisis. The specific resilience tools and approaches of FAO, IFAD and WFP will be aligned and integrated to maximize the synergies and eventually the impacts of the programme on nutrition, responsible governance of natural resources, food supply and sustainable agricultural production.
- In South Sudan, UNDP, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), FAO and WFP are launching a joint community-based programme to support recovery and resilience in parts of the country that are sufficiently stable, yet at risk of further deterioration.
- Inter-agency groups have also been set up, such as the START Network and the Inter-agency Regional Analyst Network (IARAN), to use foresight to transcend the humanitarian-development divide. For example, IARAN informs Action Against Hunger staff working in emergencies as well as in development contexts about the likely national/regional changes that are likely to occur in a 1-15 year outlook, which would impact operations both now and in the future. Country, regional and global strategies are then built on this analysis, making these more robust, flexible to change and most importantly, allowing for the integration of long and short term objectives across the organisation. In the spirit of collaborative working (apparent in the Agenda for Humanity and long-term goals like the Sustainable Development Goals), IARAN is looking to expand the network to include other NGOs and UN agencies with the ultimate aim of transcending the humanitarian-development divide.
- MERCY Malaysia launched a Humanitarian Development Centre (HDC). Among the objectives of the HDC is to focus on knowledge creation and conduct research on key humanitarian issues and their interlinkage with disaster risk reduction and management, reconstruction, rehabilitation and sustainable development. The HDC will also identify,

⁴ Saba Al Mubaslat, CEO, Humanitarian Leadership Academy

capture and publish good practices and lessons learned on building resilient communities, disaster risk reduction and humanitarian work.

Recommendations

The recommendations below are proposed, bearing in mind that it will take 3-5 years for the impact of such changes to be evident. It is hoped that by the same time development investments in protracted crises will have an opportunity to bear fruit and reduce the needs, risks and vulnerabilities that humanitarians are addressing. Within this time period it is essential for actors to commit to initiatives like the Grand Bargain and the New Way of Working, and constantly monitor and evaluate on progress and adjusting interventions as needed, in order to effectively transcend the divide between humanitarian and development work.

The analysis revealed a few key recommendations for strengthening progress, some of which are quoted below:

1. Continue, encourage and develop efforts that are being made to change the funding system from short-term to long-term. Flexible, multi-year funding needs to be made more commonplace and more accessible.
2. Innovation is key: initiatives that combine short-term life-saving with long-term goals of human development should be supported, whilst promoting innovative financing methods. It is essential that organisations are given the space and flexibility to try new methods, and at times, fail in order to draw lessons and produce better results in the future.
3. Collaboration - true partnership at all levels and across sectors - needs to be incentivised. Data and knowledge sharing and greater trust, communication and transparency will be required within the humanitarian and development sectors.

About this paper

All stakeholders who made commitments at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in support of advancing the Agenda for Humanity were invited to self-report on their progress in 2016 through the Platform for Action, Commitments and Transformation (PACT) (agendaforhumanity.org). The information provided through the self-reporting is publicly available and forms the basis, along with other relevant analysis, of the annual synthesis report. The annual synthesis report will be prepared by OCHA and will highlight trends in progress, achievements and gaps that need more attention as stakeholders collectively work toward advancing the 24 transformations in the Agenda for Humanity. In keeping with the multi-stakeholder spirit of the WHS, OCHA invited partners to prepare short analytical papers that analyze and assess self-reporting in the PACT, or provide an update on progress on initiatives launched at the World Humanitarian Summit. The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Secretariat.

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