World Humanitarian Summit 2016

IOM Position Paper

Executive Summary

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is committed to supporting the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) at the country, regional and global levels with the overall objective of a more effective and efficient humanitarian system. In order to substantively contribute to the 2016 WHS and the consultations preceding the Summit, this paper defines IOM’s engagement in the WHS; IOM’s institutional position on possible outcomes of the WHS; and IOM’s five policy recommendations for the WHS. The points outlined in this paper are in line with IOM’s Constitution and policies, and in particular IOM’s Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF) and IOM’s positions on the 2013 UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and UN post-2015 Development Agenda.

Introduction

Humanitarian action continues to evolve. Developments like climate change, the increased strength of natural disasters, environmental degradation, rapid population growth, as well as numerous, longer-lasting, simultaneous internal conflicts with regional impacts have increased the need for humanitarian response. At the same time, the increasing complexity and frequency of humanitarian crises have also tested the limits of the global humanitarian system. As it stands, it is at full capacity to respond to a multitude of parallel humanitarian emergencies and operates in an environment marked by funding shortages. In addition, the number and variety of humanitarian actors has grown, making coordinated and coherent responses more challenging. Moreover, threats and attacks on humanitarian personnel have increased, particularly in conflict settings.

With this in mind, as part of his Five Year Action Agenda\(^1\), the UN Secretary General has called for the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit in early 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey. The WHS will bring people and groups\(^2\) together to address future humanitarian challenges related to natural hazards and conflicts. Extensive preparations and consultations will be taking place over the next two years, which aim to develop stronger partnerships and seek innovative solutions to persistent and new challenges in humanitarian response.\(^3\)

Eight regional consultations (see annex) and multiple thematic consultations will be held. Each regional consultation will focus on the four thematic areas identified for the WHS: (1) Humanitarian Effectiveness; (2) Reducing Vulnerability, Managing Risk; (3) Transformation through Innovation; and (4)

---


\(^2\) WHS encourages a variety of stakeholders to engage such as UN agencies, international organizations, NGOs, civil society, governments, private sector, academics, affected populations, etc.

\(^3\) [http://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/whs_about](http://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/whs_about)
Serving the needs of people in conflict. Humanitarian actors are encouraged to set up their own complementary consultations and link existing initiatives as relevant to the WHS.

**IOM Engagement in the WHS**

Over the past decade, IOM has emerged as one of the world’s largest humanitarian actors, with a standing presence in over 150 countries, and large-scale relief operations under way in virtually every major humanitarian setting. The prominent role of IOM within the WHS reaffirms IOM’s role as a leading humanitarian actor, demonstrating its commitment to humanitarian principles, developing stronger partnerships, and linking the humanitarian and development agendas, an approach to crisis response strongly supported by IOM membership as set out in IOM’s Migration Crisis Operational Framework.\(^4\)

With a global footprint encompassing 481 field locations in over 150 countries, IOM has established valuable relationships with local communities and governments to an extent unmatched by other humanitarian organizations. Because IOM works directly with the affected populations and other stakeholders who often do not have a voice within the humanitarian response, the Organization is in a unique position to foster real dialogue with them.

IOM is taking the following approach to engage in the WHS initiative leading up the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul:

1. IOM will engage in all eight regional consultations. IOM’s engagement may differ in its nature and scope depending largely upon the regional contexts. IOM Regional Offices are reaching out to the respective OCHA focal points to express support and to join the regional steering committees being established to coordinate those processes.

2. In line with the initiatives developed by IOM in recent years, including the Migration Crisis Operational Framework and innovative ways to track and map displaced persons needs through partnership with governments, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) agencies and the private sector, IOM has identified the third thematic group, Transformation through Innovation, as key point of relevance/interest. Subsequently, IOM has been selected by the WHS Secretariat to be part of this thematic group.  

3. In linking the WHS with on-going initiatives, IOM has worked with the Governments of the United States and the Philippines to explore ways to include the Migrants in Countries of Crisis initiative\(^5\) (which both governments co-lead) in the WHS. This will allow for inclusion of these affected groups that are often neglected in the humanitarian debate. Additionally, IOM will explore organizing a global meeting to feed into the WHS likely building upon the 2013 IOM

---

\(^4\) The Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF), approved by IOM Council of Member States in November 2012 is IOM’s strategic tool to frame its response to the mobility dimensions on crisis situations within the existing systems and to support States in their preparedness and response efforts. More information on the MCOF available at [http://www.iom.int/cms/mcof](http://www.iom.int/cms/mcof)

\(^5\) This initiative was created after the 2013 UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development during which the plight of migrants caught in crisis situations was raised, including in the Secretary-General’s Eight Point Agenda: [http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2013/sgsm15367.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2013/sgsm15367.doc.htm).
Diaspora Ministerial Conference which, amongst others, highlighted diaspora engagement in humanitarian crises. Other humanitarian considerations identified in the Migration Crisis Operational Framework include humanitarian border management, combating trafficking in persons in humanitarian crises, fostering mobility and livelihoods approaches for displaced persons. Additionally, the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse of beneficiaries (PSEA) by staff is a cross cutting priority to be considered during WHS.

4. Country level activity is also vital to IOM’s engagement with the WHS. As IOM works directly with affected populations, government officials – both national and local, civil society and other stakeholders - IOM sees added value bringing these voices into the process. This can be done through linking with the regional consultations but, more importantly, through the online consultations established by the WHS Secretariat with a specific view towards ensuring all stakeholders are given a chance to contribute to the WHS process.

IOM Position on the WHS

IOM is committed to supporting the World Humanitarian Summit initiative at the country, regional and global levels with the overall objective of a more effective and efficient humanitarian system.

1. In order to make fundamental change, IOM will include the views of multiple stakeholders with a special emphasis on the affected populations, particularly those forcibly displaced and diaspora populations. This will highlight IOM’s already advanced approach in its humanitarian response which provides these populations a voice.

2. IOM recognizes that the global humanitarian system has changed over the course of several decades and must engage with innovative and practical thinking in which all actors, including governments from rapidly developing countries with growing country and regional humanitarian capacity, local organizations, and non-traditional actors such as the private sector, form part of a system.

3. The humanitarian system is based on core principles that must not be utilized or hijacked for political gain and agendas. The humanitarian imperative must remain at the core of the system. The global humanitarian system should be inclusive and not reflect any political or religious ideology. Politicizing humanitarian action cannot be accepted.

Currently there is no intention to change the existing humanitarian architecture and principles. As the initiative progresses there must be a consistent reflection that the WHS does not intentionally create barriers to impartial humanitarian assistance. The work that has been undertaken over the last several decades should be seen as a foundation to be built upon rather than considering the WHS an opportunity to rebuild an entirely new humanitarian architecture. The IASC, as mandated by the General
Assembly,\(^6\) is the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance involving the key UN and non-UN humanitarian partners and has been instrumental in this regard.

Humanitarian action and any structural discussion that derives from the WHS must improve operational effectiveness and have efficient response at its heart rather than coordination as the focus.

**IOM’s Five Policy Recommendations for the WHS**

IOM views the WHS as an opportunity to improve humanitarian action while keeping affected populations at the centre of the process. IOM’s policy recommendations are captured in the following five points.

1. **Protect the human rights of all migrants**\(^7\)

During crises, either political or environmental, human rights violations increase and mobile populations are particularly vulnerable. IOM is committed to improving migrants’ ability to enjoy their human rights and increasing their well-being, including those affected by crisis situations. IOM’s Constitution mandates IOM’s role in promoting human rights-based migration governance by “facilitating the emigration of persons who desire to migrate to countries where they may achieve self-dependence […] and live with their families in dignity and self-respect”\(^8\). Respecting and upholding, in accordance with international law, the rights of migrants is essential in promoting their dignity throughout the migration cycle.

- Migrants— including victims of trafficking, internally displaced persons, migrants caught in crisis, unaccompanied minors – must be afforded the same protection of their human rights as all other affected groups in times of crisis.
- Displacement due to natural disasters and environmental degradation leaves mobile populations increasingly vulnerable. In these contexts, like those created by conflict, persons displaced, particularly across borders, must also be afforded their human rights.
- The human rights and protection needs of migrant populations must be held during any crisis, particularly in those that results in cross-border movements.
- IOM calls for a rights-based approach to humanitarian action and to build on the IASC Centrality of Protection Statement placing the affected populations at the centre of humanitarian action.

---

\(^6\) A/RES/46/128

\(^7\) “Ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of all migrants” was one of the policy recommendations in the IOM position paper on the 2013 UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (HLD), available at [http://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/What-We-Do/docs/IOM-Position-Paper-HLD-en.pdf](http://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/What-We-Do/docs/IOM-Position-Paper-HLD-en.pdf). The need to protect the human rights of all migrants was one of the outcomes of the HLD, as it was included in the Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (A/68/L.5) and the Eight Point Action Plan of the Secretary-General. Promoting the human rights of migrants, including refugees and IDPs, is one of IOM’s objectives towards the establishment of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

\(^8\) Preamble to IOM’s Constitution.
2. **Ensure all migrants in a situation of vulnerability have access to humanitarian assistance**

All vulnerable groups, regardless of gender, age, social, religious or political affiliation, etc. must have access to humanitarian assistance. While humanitarian action is expected to be based on assistance and protection needs of all affected people, many vulnerable groups tend to remain invisible and cannot access assistance.

- Victims of trafficking and migrants/third country nationals living in countries of crisis, who are often overlooked as they fall out of the purview of the humanitarian community’s established assistance categories, such as IDPs or refugees must have equal access to humanitarian assistance.

- Source and host countries should put in place adequate measures to more effectively protect and assist vulnerable migrants stranded in countries in crisis situations, and migrants in mixed migration flows. These measures, as well as practices developed in the fields of humanitarian aid, transitional justice and post-conflict stabilization and recovery, should be brought to bear on situations involving crisis-affected migrants, and taken into account in development planning.

3. **Strengthen partnerships within the humanitarian response to include affected populations, national civil society, and the private sector**

National governments have the primary obligation to protect and assist their own populations. However, with more frequent, complex and concurrent crises, the need for more diverse partnerships with affected populations, national civil society and the private sector is important. With increased partnerships may come increased resources available to respond more efficiently and effectively.

- Include the local authorities, civil society, private sector and affected populations into the planning process of humanitarian response and contingency plans.

- International response should build on existing local/national structures and partnerships rather than creating parallel efforts. Including, for example, when there is a need for international response, make all efforts to work in the national language to ensure a common response rather than parallel efforts.

---


10 Strengthening partnerships is also a key priority for IOM in the context of the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda. This includes partnerships between humanitarian and development actors.
4. **Increase focus on disaster risk reduction for resilience**

Over the past decade the number and scale of natural disasters has increased substantially. Often humanitarian responses are long term and many countries face disasters repeatedly. Local organizations are often first responders and resources from international organizations are limited. In order to reduce the risk of forced migration induced by disasters, increased focus on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience strengthening is critical.

- Advocate for the more systematic inclusion of migration into disaster risk reduction strategies, disaster preparedness and national climate change adaptation strategies.

- Ensure that urban planning for disaster risk reduction also includes migrants and takes into account the potentially adverse impact of incoming migration to urban areas which may compound the effects of climate change and food insecurity on already inadequate housing, water and sanitation services.

5. **Promote coherence between humanitarian action and development planning**

In more and more crises we are seeing development work being carried out concurrently with humanitarian response. Where feasible, such synergies should be encouraged to bring stability back to crisis areas. IOM has consolidated its approach around the phases of a crisis (before, during and after) as a pillar of the MCOF in order to seek synergies between the humanitarian response and other systems, in particular regarding peace and security and development issues. Development, socio-economic and political failures are increasingly turning into humanitarian crises which result in greater loss of life, abuses of human rights and protracted (often expensive) responses.

- Development and humanitarian actors must work together in creating common response plans, including strengthening the joint work in disaster preparedness and strengthening resilience to reduce forced migration. Governments and policy partners need to become less siloed in their structures, planning and funding.

- Pay particular attention to fragile states so as to prevent their sliding into political crisis requiring humanitarian action.

- As diaspora groups can be reliable partners during humanitarian response, explore ways in which they can also assist in post crisis recovery.

---

11 More information about IOM’s work on migration, disaster risk reduction and resilience is available at [http://www.iom.int/cms/drr](http://www.iom.int/cms/drr).
Regional Consultations

The objective of the regional consultations is for regional actors to work together to identify key recommendations to address humanitarian needs in the region. The consultations will also be an opportunity to build the networks necessary to coordinate important work after the World Humanitarian Summit culminates in Istanbul in 2016.

1. **West and Central Africa**
   **Côte d’Ivoire**, 19–20 June 2014
   Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Republic of), Côte d’Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo

2. **North and South-East Asia**
   **Japan**, 23–24 July 2014
   Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Japan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, Viet Nam

3. **South and East Africa**
   **October 2014**
   Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

4. **Eastern Europe, Western Europe and Others**
   **Hungary, February 2015**
   Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ukraine, United States of America

5. **Middle East and North Africa**
   **March 2015**
   Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, State of Palestine, Qatar, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

6. **Latin America and the Caribbean**
   **Guatemala, April 2015**
   Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela

7. **Pacific Region**
   (2nd or 3rd Quarter 2015)
   Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

8. **South and Central Asia**
   (2nd Quarter 2015)
   Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

9. **Global Consultation**
   **Switzerland, (4th Quarter 2015)**