Part 3: Annexes

1 Glossary of Key Terms

The glossary defines key terms in the context of the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response.

Accountability

The responsibility to demonstrate to stakeholders, foremost of whom are disasteraffected people, that humanitarian assistance complies with agreed standards.

Disaster

A situation where people's normal means of support for life with dignity have failed as a result of natural or human-made catastrophe.

Disaster affected people/population

All people whose life or health are threatened by disaster, whether displaced or in their home area.

Gender

Gender encompasses the socially defined sex roles, attitudes and values which communities and societies ascribe as appropriate for one sex or the other. Gender does not describe the biological sexual characteristics by which identify females and males are identified.

Groups at risk

People considered to be exceptionally vulnerable.

Host government

Government of the country in which humanitarian assistance takes place.

Humanitarian actor

An organisation that supports the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian agency

A local or international non-governmental organisation, UN body or donor institution whose activities support the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian assistance

The provision of basic requirements which meet people's needs for adequate water, sanitation, nutrition, food, shelter and health care.

Impartial assistance

Assistance is that given on the basis of need alone and makes no distinction as to race, creed, nationality, sex, age, physical or mental disability.

Indicator

'Signals' that show whether a standard has been attained. They provide a way of measuring and communicating both the impact, or result, of programmes as well as the process, or methods, used. The indicators may be qualitative or quantitative.

Local authorities

Government or leaders recognised to be in control in the country or region in which the disaster-affected population is located.

Minimum standard

The minimum level (of service) to be attained in humanitarian assistance.

Sexual violence

All forms of sexual threat, assault, domestic violence, interference and exploitation including involuntary prostitution, statutory rape and molestation without physical harm or penetration.

Staff

Employees of humanitarian agencies.

Stakeholder

Anybody affected by, or who can affect, humanitarian assistance.

The humanitarian principle

Prevention and alleviation of suffering, protection of life and health and respect for human dignity.

Transparency

Openness and accessibility of humanitarian agencies, their systems and information.

2 Acronyms

ACC/SCN: United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination/Subcommittee on

Nutrition

ACT: Action by Churches Together

ALNAP: Active Learning Network for Accountability in Practice

CDC: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

DAC: Development Assistance Committee (OECD)

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization

IAPSO: Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office (UNDP)

ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross

INFCD: International Nutrition Foundation for Developing Countries

LWF: The Lutheran World Federation

MISP: Minimum Initial Service Package

MSF: Médecins Sans Frontières

NCHS: National Centre for Health Statistics

NGO: Non-governmental organisation

OCHA: UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OFDA: Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID)

PTSS: Programme and Technical Support Section (UNHCR)

SCHR: Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNDRO: United Nations Disaster Relief Organization

UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

WCRWC: Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children

WFP: World Food Programme

WHO: World Health Organization

WMO: World Meteorological Organization

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CARE International (CARE Australia, CARE Austria, CARE Canada, CARE Denmark, CARE France, CARE Germany, CARE Italy, CARE Japan, CARE Norway, CARE UK, CARE USA) * Caritas Internationalis * International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies * International Save the Children Alliance * Médecins Sans Frontières International (MSF Belgium, MSF France, MSF Holland, MSF Spain, MSF UK, MSF USA) * Oxfam * The Lutheran World Federation (ACT) * Save the Children Alliance * World Council of Churches (ACT)

InterAction members

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International Committee of the Red Cross

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Armado Interno * Danish Refugee Council * Diakonia (ACT) * EMO-BARAKA, Union Pour la Promotion du Paysan * Encuentro de Entidades no Gubernamentales para el Desarrollo * Episcopal Church Center of the USA (ACT) * Equilibre Suisse * European Association of Non Governmental Organisations for Food Aid and Emergency Aid * Federacion de Organismos no Gubernamentales de Nicaragua * Feed the Children International * Forum of African Voluntary Development Organizations * Fundacion Augusto Cesar Sandino * General Union of Voluntary Societies * Gonoshahajjo Sangstha * Handicap International * Human Appeal International * Indian Institute of Youth and Development * Individuell Manniskohjalp * InterAction * Inter-Africa Group * InterAid International * International Catholic Migration Commission * International Islamic Relief Organisation * International Rescue Committee * International Social Service * Islamic Relief Agency * Jesuit Refugee Service * Lebanese NGO Forum * LINK-NGO Forum * Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service * The Lutheran World Federation (ACT) * Mauritius Council of Social Service * National NGO Council of Sri Lanka * Netherlands Organisation for International Development Cooperation * Non-Governmental Organisation Coordinating Committee * Norwegian Refugee Council * Organisation for Industrial Spiritual and Cultural Advancement-International * PACS/PRIES/Instituto Politicas Alternativas para o Cone Sul * Philippine Development NGOs for International Concerns * Queen Alia Fund for Social Development * Réseau Africain Pour le Developpement Intègre * Rural Development Foundation of Pakistan * Lanka Jathika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya Inc * Secours Populaire Français * Sudanese Women General Union * Voluntary Health Association of India * World Council of Churches (ACT) * World University Service/Servicio Universitario Mundial * World Vision International * Yayasan Indonesia Sejahtera

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4 Summary of the Minimum Standards

This section provides an overview of the minimum standards for each of the five sectors described in chapters 1-5: water supply and sanitation, nutrition, food aid, shelter and site planning, and health services. Each chapter provides indicators, guidance notes and contextual information, all of which are essential to the interpretation and application of the standards.

Minimum Standards in Water Supply and Sanitation

1 Analysis

Analysis standard 1: initial assessment

Programme decisions are based on a demonstrated understanding of the emergency situation and on a clear analysis of the health risks and needs relating to water supply and sanitation.

Analysis standard 2: monitoring and evaluation

The performance of the water supply and sanitation programme, its effectiveness in responding to health problems related to water and sanitation, and changes in the context are monitored and evaluated.

Analysis standard 3: participation

The disaster-affected population has the opportunity to participate in the design and implementation of the assistance programme.

2 Water Supply

Water supply standard 1: access and water quantity

All people have safe access to a sufficient quantity of water for drinking, cooking and personal and domestic hygiene. Public water points are sufficiently close to shelters to allow use of the minimum water requirement.

Water supply standard 2: water quality

Water at the point of collection is palatable, and of sufficient quality to be drunk and used for personal and domestic hygiene without causing significant risk to health due to water-borne diseases, or to chemical or radiological contamination from short term use.

Water supply standard 3: water use facilities and goods

People have adequate facilities and supplies to collect, store and use sufficient quantities of water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene, and to ensure that drinking water remains sufficiently safe until it is consumed.

3 Excreta Disposal

Excreta disposal standard 1: access to, and numbers of toilets

People have sufficient numbers of toilets, sufficiently close to their dwellings to allow them rapid, safe and acceptable access at all times of the day and night.

Excreta disposal standard 2: design and construction

People have access to toilets which are designed, constructed and maintained in such a way as to be comfortable, hygienic and safe to use.

4 Vector Control

Vector control standard 1: individual and family protection

People have the means to protect themselves from disease vectors and nuisance pests when they are estimated to be a significant risk to health or well-being.

<u>Vector control standard 2: physical, environmental and chemical protection</u> measures

The number of disease-bearing vectors and nuisance animals that pose a risk to people's health and well-being are kept to an acceptable level.

<u>Vector control standard 3: good practice in the use of chemical vector control methods</u>

Vector control measures that make use of pesticides are carried out in accordance with agreed international norms to ensure that staff, the people affected by the disaster and the local environment are adequately protected, and to avoid creating resistance to pesticides.

5 Solid Waste Management

Solid waste management standard 1: solid waste collection and disposal

People have an environment that is acceptably free of solid waste contamination, including medical wastes.

Solid waste disposal management 2: solid waste containers/pits

People have the means to dispose of their domestic waste conveniently and effectively.

6 Drainage

Drainage standard 1: drainage works

People have an environment that is acceptably free from risk of water erosion and from standing water, including storm water, flood water, domestic wastewater and wastewater from medical facilities.

Drainage standard 2: installations and tools

People have the means (installations, tools etc) to dispose of domestic wastewater and water point wastewater conveniently and effectively, and to protect their shelters and other family or communal facilities from flooding and erosion.

7 Hygiene Promotion

Hygiene promotion standard 1: hygiene behaviour and use of facilities

All sections of the affected population are aware of priority hygiene practices that create the greatest risk to health and are able to change them. They have adequate information and resources for the use of water and sanitation facilities to protect their health and dignity.

Hygiene promotion standard 2: programme implementation

All facilities and resources provided reflect the vulnerabilities, needs and preferences of all sections of the affected population. Users are involved in the management and maintenance of hygiene facilities where appropriate.

8 Human Resource Capacity and Training

Capacity standard 1: competence

Water supply and sanitation programmes are implemented by staff who have appropriate qualifications and experience for the duties involved, and who are adequately managed and supported.

Minimum Standards in Nutrition

1 Analysis

Analysis standard 1: initial assessment

Before any programme decisions are made, there is a demonstrated understanding of the basic nutritional situation and conditions which may create risk of malnutrition.

Analysis standard 2: response

If a nutrition intervention is required, there is a clear description of the problem(s) and a documented strategy for the response.

Analysis standard 3: monitoring and evaluation

The performance and effectiveness of the nutrition programme and changes in the context are monitored and evaluated.

Analysis standard 4: participation

The disaster-affected population has the opportunity to participate in the design and implementation of the assistance programme.

2 General Nutritional Support to the Population

General nutritional support standard 1: nutrient supply

The nutritional needs of the population are met.

General nutritional support standard 2: food quality and safety

Food that is distributed is of sufficient quality and is safely handled so as to be fit for human consumption.

General nutritional support standard 3: food acceptability

Foods that are provided are appropriate and acceptable to the entire population.

General nutritional support standard 4: food handling and safety

Food is stored, prepared and consumed in a safe and appropriate manner, both at household and community level.

3 Nutritional Support to Those Suffering From Malnutrition

Targeted nutritional support standard 1: moderate malnutrition

The public health risks associated with moderate malnutrition are reduced.

Targeted nutritional support standard 2: severe malnutrition

Mortality, morbidity and suffering associated with severe malnutrition are reduced.

Targeted nutritional support standard 3: micronutrient deficiencies

Micronutrient deficiencies are corrected.

4 Human Resource Capacity and Training

Capacity standard 1: competence

Nutrition interventions are implemented by staff who have appropriate qualifications and experience for the duties involved, and who are adequately managed and supported.

Capacity standard 2: support

Members of the disaster-affected population receive support to enable them to adjust to their new environment and to make optimal use of the assistance provided to them.

Capacity standard 3: local capacity

Local capacity and skills are used and enhanced by emergency nutrition programmes.

Minimum Standards in Food Aid

1 Analysis

Analysis standard 1: initial assessment

Before any programme decisions are made, there is a demonstrated understanding of the basic conditions that create risk of food insecurity and the need for food aid.

Analysis standard 2: monitoring and evaluation

The performance and effectiveness of the food aid programme and changes in the context are monitored and evaluated.

Analysis standard 3: participation

The disaster-affected population has the opportunity to participate in the design and implementation of the assistance programme

2 Requirements

Requirements standard

The food basket and rations are designed to bridge the gap between the affected population's requirements and their own food sources.

3 Targeting

Targeting standard

Recipients of food aid are selected on the basis of food need and/or vulnerability to food insecurity.

4 Resource Management

Resource management standard

Food aid commodities and programme funds are managed, tracked, and accounted for using a transparent and auditable system.

5 Logistics

Logistics standard

Agencies have the necessary organisational and technical capacity to manage the procurement, receipt, transport, storage and distribution of food commodities safely, efficiently and effectively.

6 Distribution

Distribution standard

The method of food distribution is equitable, and appropriate to local conditions. Recipients are informed of their ration entitlement its rationale.

7 Human Resource Capacity and Training

Capacity standard 1: competence

Food aid programmes are implemented by staff who have appropriate qualifications and experience for the duties involved, and who are adequately managed and supported.

Capacity standard 2: local capacity

Local capacity and skills are used and enhanced by food aid programme

Minimum Standards in Shelter and Site Planning

1 Analysis

Analysis standard 1: initial assessment

Programme decisions are based on a demonstrated understanding of the emergency situation and on a clear analysis of people's needs for shelter, clothing and household items.

Analysis standard 2: monitoring and evaluation

The performance and effectiveness of the shelter and site programme and changes in the context are monitored and evaluated.

Analysis standard 3: participation

The disaster-affected population has the opportunity to participate in the design and implementation of the assistance programme.

2 Housing (shelter)

Housing standard 1: living quarters

People have sufficient covered space to provide protection from adverse effects of the climate. They have sufficient warmth, fresh air, security and privacy to ensure their dignity, health and well-being.

3 Clothing

Clothing standard

The people affected by the disaster have sufficient blankets and clothing to provide protection from the climate and to ensure their dignity, safety and well-being.

4 Household Items

Household items standard 1: items for households and livelihood support

Families have access to household utensils, soap for personal hygiene and tools for their dignity and well-being.

Household items standard 2: environmental concerns

Fuel economic cooking implements and stoves are made available, and their use is promoted.

5 Site Selection

Site standard 1: site selection

The site is suitable to host the number of people involved.

Site standard 2: site planning

Site planning ensures sufficient space for household areas and supports people's security and well-being. It provides for effective and efficient provision of services and internal access.

Site standard 3: security

Site selection and planning ensures sufficient personal liberty and security for the entire affected population. .

Site standard 4: environmental concerns

The site is planned and managed in such as way as to minimise damage to the environment.

6 Human Resource Capacity and Training

Capacity standard 1: competence

Shelter and site interventions are implemented by staff who have appropriate qualifications and experience for the duties involved, and who are adequately managed and supported.

Capacity standard 2: local capacity

Local skills and capacity are used and enhanced by shelter and site programmes.

Minimum Standards in Health Services

1 Analysis

Analysis standard 1: initial assessment

The initial assessment determines as accurately as possible the health effects of a disaster, identifies the health needs and establishes priorities for health programming.

Analysis standard 2: health information system - data collection

The health information system regularly collects relevant data on population, diseases, injuries, environmental conditions and health services in a standardised format data in order to detect major health problems.

Analysis standard 3: health information system - data review

Health information system data and changes in the disaster-affected population are regularly reviewed and analysed for decision-making and appropriate response.

Analysis standard 4: health information system - monitoring and evaluation

Data collected is used to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions in controlling disease and in preserving health.

Analysis standard 5: participation

The disaster-affected population has the opportunity to participate in the design and implementation of the assistance programme.

2 Measles Control

Measles control standard 1: vaccination

In disaster-affected populations, all children 6 months to 12 years old receive a dose of measles vaccine and an appropriate dose of vitamin A as soon as possible.

Measles control standard 2: vaccination of newcomers

Newcomers to displaced settlements are vaccinated systematically. All children 6 months to 12 years old receive a dose of measles vaccine and an appropriate dose of vitamin A.

Measles control standard 3: outbreak control

A systematic response is mounted for each outbreak of measles within the disaster-affected population and the host community population.

Measles control standard 4: case management

All children who contract measles receive adequate care in order to avoid serious sequellae or death.

3 Control of Communicable Diseases

Control of communicable diseases standard 1: monitoring

The occurrence of communicable diseases is monitored.

Control of communicable diseases standard 2: investigation and control

Diseases of epidemic potential are investigated and controlled according to internationally accepted norms and standards.

4 Health Care Services

Health care services standard 1: appropriate medical care

Emergency health care for disaster-affected populations is based on an initial assessment and data from an ongoing health information system, and serves to reduce excess mortality and morbidity through appropriate medical care.

Health care services standard 2: reduction of morbidity and mortality

Health care in emergencies follows primary health care (PHC) principles and targets health problems that cause excess morbidity and mortality.

5 Human Resource Capacity and Training

Capacity standard 1: competence

Health interventions are implemented by staff who have appropriate qualifications and experience for the duties involved, and who are adequately managed and supported.

Capacity standard 2: support

Members of the disaster-affected population receive support to enable them to adjust to their new environment and to make optimal use of the assistance provided to them.

Capacity standard 3: local capacity

Local capacity and skills are used and enhanced by emergency health interventions.

5 The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief

Prepared jointly by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the ICRC 1

Purpose

This Code of Conduct seeks to guard our standards of behaviour. It is not about operational details, such as how one should calculate food rations or set up a refugee camp. Rather, it seeks to maintain the high standards of independence, effectiveness and impact to which disaster response NGOs and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement aspires. It is a voluntary code, enforced by the will of the organisation accepting it to maintain the standards laid down in the Code.

In the event of armed conflict, the present Code of Conduct will be interpreted and applied in conformity with international humanitarian law.

The Code of Conduct is presented first. Attached to it are three annexes, describing the working environment that we would like to see created by Host Governments, Donor Governments and Inter-governmental Organisations in order to facilitate the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Definitions

NGOs: NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) refers here to organisations, both national and international, which are constituted separately from the government of the country in which they are founded.

NGHAs: For the purposes of this text, the term Non-Governmental Humanitarian Agencies (NGHAs) has been coined to encompass the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement - The International Committee of the Red Cross, The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and its member National Societies - and the NGOs as defined above. This code refers specifically to those NGHAs who are involved in disaster response.

IGOs: IGOs (Inter-Governmental Organisations) refers to organisations constituted by two or more governments. It thus includes all United Nations Agencies and regional organisations.

Disasters: A disaster is a calamitous event resulting in loss of life, great human suffering and distress, and large scale material damage.

The Code of Conduct

Principles of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes

1 The Humanitarian imperative comes first

The right to receive humanitarian assistance, and to offer it, is a fundamental humanitarian principle which should be enjoyed by all citizens of all countries. As members of the international community, we recognise our obligation to provide humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed. Hence the need for unimpeded access to affected populations is of fundamental importance in exercising that responsibility. The prime motivation of our response to disaster is to alleviate human suffering amongst those least able to withstand the stress caused by disaster. When we give humanitarian aid it is not a partisan or political act and should not be viewed as such.

2 Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone

Wherever possible, we will base the provision of relief aid upon a thorough assessment of the needs of the disaster victims and the local capacities already in place to meet those needs. Within the entirety of our programmes, we will reflect considerations of proportionality. Human suffering must be alleviated whenever it is found; life is as precious in one part of a country as another. Thus, our provision of aid will reflect the degree of suffering it seeks to alleviate. In implementing this approach, we recognise the crucial role played by women in disaster-prone communities and will ensure that this role is supported, not diminished, by our aid programmes. The implementation of such a universal, impartial and independent policy, can only be effective if we and our partners have access to the necessary resources to provide for such equitable relief, and have equal access to all disaster victims.

3 Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint

Humanitarian aid will be given according to the need of individuals, families and communities. Not withstanding the right of NGHAs to espouse particular political or religious opinions, we affirm that assistance will not be dependent on the adherence of the recipients to those opinions. We will not tie the promise, delivery or distribution of assistance to the embracing or acceptance of a particular political or religious creed.

4 We shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy

NGHAs are agencies which act independently from governments. We therefore formulate our own policies and implementation strategies and do not seek to implement the policy of any government, except in so far as it coincides with our own independent policy. We will never knowingly - or through negligence - allow ourselves, or our employees, to be used to gather information of a political, military or economically sensitive nature for governments or other bodies that may serve purposes other than those which are strictly humanitarian, nor will we act as instruments of foreign policy of donor governments. We will use the assistance we receive to respond to needs and this assistance should not be driven by the need to dispose of donor commodity surpluses, nor by the political interest of any particular donor. We value and promote the voluntary giving of labour and finances by concerned individuals to support our work and recognise the independence of action promoted by such voluntary motivation. In order to protect our independence we will seek to avoid dependence upon a single funding source.

5 We shall respect culture and custom

We will endeavour to respect the culture, structures and customs of the communities and countries we are working in.

6 We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities

All people and communities - even in disaster - possess capacities as well as vulnerabilities. Where possible, we will strengthen these capacities by employing local staff, purchasing local materials and trading with local companies. Where possible, we will work through local NGHAs as partners in planning and implementation, and co-operate with local government structures where appropriate. We will place a high priority on the proper co-ordination of our emergency responses. This is best done within the countries concerned by those most directly involved in the relief operations, and should include representatives of the relevant UN bodies.

7 Ways shall be found to involve programme beneficiaries in the management of relief aid

Disaster response assistance should never be imposed upon the beneficiaries. Effective relief and lasting rehabilitation can best be achieved where the intended beneficiaries are involved in the design, management and implementation of the assistance programme. We will strive to achieve full community participation in our relief and rehabilitation programmes.

8 Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs

All relief actions affect the prospects for long-term development, either in a positive or a negative fashion. Recognising this, we will strive to implement relief programmes which actively reduce the beneficiaries' vulnerability to future disasters and help create sustainable lifestyles. We will pay particular attention to environmental concerns in the design and management of relief programmes. We will also endeavour to minimise the negative impact of humanitarian assistance, seeking to avoid long-term beneficiary dependence upon external aid.

9 We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources

We often act as an institutional link in the partnership between those who wish to assist and those who need assistance during disasters. We therefore hold ourselves accountable to both constituencies. All our dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency. We recognise the need to report on our activities, both from a financial perspective and the perspective of effectiveness. We recognise the obligation to ensure appropriate monitoring of aid distributions and to carry out regular assessments of the impact of disaster assistance. We will also seek to report, in an open fashion, upon the impact of our work, and the factors limiting or enhancing that impact. Our programmes will be based upon high standards of professionalism and expertise in order to minimise the wasting of valuable resources.

10 In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognise disaster victims as dignified humans, not hopeless objects

Respect for the disaster victim as an equal partner in action should never be lost. In our public information we shall portray an objective image of the disaster situation where the capacities and aspirations of disaster victims are highlighted, and not just their vulnerabilities and fears. While we will cooperate with the media in order to enhance

public response, we will not allow external or internal demands for publicity to take precedence over the principle of maximising overall relief assistance. We will avoid competing with other disaster response agencies for media coverage in situations where such coverage may be to the detriment of the service provided to the beneficiaries or to the security of our staff or the beneficiaries.

The Working Environment

Having agreed unilaterally to strive to abide by the Code laid out above, we present below some indicative guidelines which describe the working environment we would like to see created by donor governments, host governments and the inter-governmental organisations - principally the agencies of the United Nations - in order to facilitate the effective participation of NGHAs in disaster response.

These guidelines are presented for guidance. They are not legally binding, nor do we expect governments and IGOs to indicate their acceptance of the guidelines through the signature of any document, although this may be a goal to work to in the future. They are presented in a spirit of openness and cooperation so that our partners will become aware of the ideal relationship we would seek with them.

Annex I: Recommendations to the governments of disaster affected countries

1 Governments should recognise and respect the independent, humanitarian and impartial actions of NGHAs

NGHAs are independent bodies. This independence and impartiality should be respected by host governments.

2 Host governments should facilitate rapid access to disaster victims for NGHAs If NGHAs are to act in full compliance with their humanitarian principles, they should be granted rapid and impartial access to disaster victims, for the purpose of delivering humanitarian assistance. It is the duty of the host government, as part of the exercising of sovereign responsibility, not to block such assistance, and to accept the impartial and apolitical action of NGHAs. Host governments should facilitate the rapid entry of relief staff, particularly by waiving requirements for transit, entry and exit visas, or arranging that these are rapidly granted. Governments should grant over-flight permission and landing rights for aircraft transporting international relief supplies and personnel, for the duration of the emergency relief phase.

3 Governments should facilitate the timely flow of relief goods and information during disasters

Relief supplies and equipment are brought into a country solely for the purpose of alleviating human suffering, not for commercial benefit or gain. Such supplies should normally be allowed free and unrestricted passage and should not be subject to requirements for consular certificates of origin or invoices, import and/or export licences or other restrictions, or to importation taxation, landing fees or port charges.

The temporary importation of necessary relief equipment, including vehicles, light aircraft and telecommunications equipment, should be facilitated by the receiving host government through the temporary waving of licence or registration restrictions. Equally, governments should not restrict the re-exportation of relief equipment at the end of a relief operation.

To facilitate disaster communications, host governments are encouraged to designate certain radio frequencies, which relief organisations may use in-country and for international communications for the purpose of disaster communications, and to make such frequencies known to the disaster response community prior to the disaster. They should authorise relief personnel to utilise all means of communication required for their relief operations.

4 Governments should seek to provide a coordinated disaster information and planning service

The overall planning and coordination of relief efforts is ultimately the responsibility of the host government. Planning and coordination can be greatly enhanced if NGHAs are provided with information on relief needs and government systems for planning and implementing relief efforts as well as information on potential security risks they may encounter. Governments are urged to provide such information to NGHAs.

To facilitate effective coordination and the efficient utilisation of relief efforts, host governments are urged to designate, prior to disaster, a single point-of-contact for incoming NGHAs to liaise with the national authorities.

5 Disaster relief in the event of armed conflict

In the event of armed conflict, relief actions are governed by the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law.

Annex II: Recommendations to donor governments

1 Donor governments should recognise and respect the independent, humanitarian and impartial actions of NGHAs

NGHAs are independent bodies whose independence and impartiality should be respected by donor governments. Donor governments should not use NGHAs to further any political or ideological aim.

2 Donor governments should provide funding with a guarantee of operational independence

NGHAs accept funding and material assistance from donor governments in the same spirit as they render it to disaster victims; one of humanity and independence of action. The implementation of relief actions is ultimately the responsibility of the NGHA and will be carried out according to the policies of that NGHA.

3 Donor governments should use their good offices to assist NGHAs in obtaining access to disaster victims

Donor governments should recognise the importance of accepting a level of responsibility for the security and freedom of access of NGHA staff to disaster sites. They should be prepared to exercise diplomacy with host governments on such issues if necessary.

Annex III: Recommendations to inter-governmental organisations

1 IGOs should recognise NGHAs, local and foreign, as valuable partners

NGHAs are willing to work with UN and other inter-governmental agencies to effect better disaster response. They do so in a spirit of partnership which respects the integrity and independence of all partners. Inter-governmental agencies must respect the independence and impartiality of the NGHAs. NGHAs should be consulted by UN agencies in the preparation of relief plans.

2 IGOs should assist host governments in providing an overall coordinating framework for international and local disaster relief

NGHAs do not usually have the mandate to provide the overall coordinating framework for disasters which require an international response. This responsibility falls to the host government and the relevant United Nations authorities. They are urged to provide this service in a timely and effective manner to serve the affected state and the national and international disaster response community. In any case, NGHAs should make all efforts to ensure the effective co-ordination of their own services.

In the event of armed conflict, relief actions are governed by the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law.

3 IGOs should extend security protection provided for UN organisations, to NGHAs Where security services are provided for inter-governmental organisations, this service should be extended to their operational NGHA partners where it is so requested.

4 IGOs should provide NGHAs with the same access to relevant information as is granted to UN organisations

IGOs are urged to share all information, pertinent to the implementation of effective disaster response, with their operational NGHA partners.

Note

1. Sponsored by: Caritas Internationalis*, Catholic Relief Services*, The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*, International Save the Children Alliance*, Lutheran World Federation*, Oxfam*, The World Council of Churches*, The International Committee of the Red Cross. (* members of the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response)

Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response

Natural disasters and armed conflicts leave millions of people in need of aid every year. To meet this challenge, the humanitarian system must be committed more than ever to serve the rights of disaster-affected people.

In a remarkable international initiative aimed at improving the effectiveness and accountability of disaster response, the Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response sets out for the first time what people affected by disasters have a right to expect from humanitarian assistance. The cornerstone of this book is the Humanitarian Charter, which is based on the principles and provisions of international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law, and on the principles of the Red Cross and NGO Code of Conduct. It describes the core principles that govern humanitarian action and asserts the right of populations to protection and assistance. The Charter is followed by minimum standards in five core sectors - water supply and sanitation, nutrition, food aid, shelter and site planning, and health services.

The second, revised edition incorporates feedback from field offices and from technical and gender reviews.

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