ONE HUMANITY:
Shared Responsibility
A European Perspective

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This report is a product of the European Humanitarian Roundtables,
a series of consultations co-organised by the Network on Humanitarian Action (NOHA) and
the European Commission Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
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PREFACE

Ahead of the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), due to take place in May 2016, the Network on Humanitarian Action (NOHA) and the European Commission organised a series of roundtables. The aim of these events was to present and discuss the core themes and priorities of the WHS process and the European Union's policy position towards the WHS. The events provided an opportunity for those affected by conflict or natural disaster, academics, practitioners, and youth involved in humanitarian action, as well as the broader humanitarian community and general public, to make substantive contributions to the European Union's humanitarian policy and practice.

Each event spanned two days. On the first day, experts were divided into working groups to discuss specific themes from the perspective of the WHS reports and the European Commission's Communication, "Towards the World Humanitarian Summit". On the second day, after a series of short presentations from NOHA, the European Commission (Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, hereinafter DG ECHO) and the WHS Secretariat, representatives from the first day presented the results and recommendations from the previous day's discussions.

At the end of each event, a document reflecting the views of the participants was published. Its aim was to provide concrete recommendations to the European Union and to the broader humanitarian community.

- 106 experts from 26 countries
- 54 women & 52 men
- NGOs, IGOs, Academia, governments, diaspora organisations, independent consultants and students represented
- 148 recommendations drafted

The European Humanitarian Roundtables gathered a group of 106 experts representing 26 countries as follows:

- Aix-en-Provence, France, 3-4 February including experts from Cyprus, Bulgaria, France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg and Malta.

- Uppsala, Sweden, 16-17 February, including experts from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden and Syria.

- Warsaw, Poland, 1-2 March, including experts from Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Syria and Ukraine.

- Dublin, Ireland, 30-31 March, including experts from Belgium, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

The present document summarises the recommendations and findings of these experts along the lines of the core responsibilities of the Agenda for Humanity[1]. The recommendations in sections 1 through 5 are based on the recommendations made during the roundtables, which are printed in full at the end of the document in the original wording agreed upon by the experts during the discussions.

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1   One Humanity: Shared Responsibility. U.N. 2016

EUROPEAN HUMANITARIAN ROUNDTABLES: FINDINGS

1. Global leadership to prevent and end conflicts

The working groups highlighted time and again the need for States to step up in their role as the primary bodies responsible for protection. Current humanitarian needs must be met by further state commitment to norms and laws, emphasising adherence to and compliance with existing mechanisms over the adoption of new ones. The need for this political action far exceeds the need for reform by humanitarian actors, not just in preventing and ending conflicts but in all humanitarian contexts.

Likewise, the working groups emphasised that protection in humanitarian action, which has been emphasised by the European Commission's Communication, is highly contingent on the prosecution of international crimes as defined by the Rome statutes. It was deemed crucial that the EU member states, and all states and warring parties must investigate, prosecute or cooperate with such prosecution and investigation processes to support protection and more specifically, end impunity on sexual and gender-based violence (S/GBV) in conflicts.

As the events were focused on European humanitarian policy, at the final roundtable in Dublin there was a condemnation of the agreement between the EU and Turkey, regarding migration and refugees[2]. This agreement was seen as a step away from humanitarian laws and norms by states and served as a dangerous precedent in the months prior to the WHS.

Recommendations cited: E.2.1, E.2.2, E.3.1, E.3.2, E.3.5, W.2.1, W.4.P

a.   Demonstrate timely, coherent and decisive political leadership

States must accept their central role in preserving humanity and humanitarian action in both conflict and other humanitarian disasters. It is on states to respect and ensure respect of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), build regional frameworks that focus on displaced people, not borders, and strengthen regional peace and stability to end root causes of needs. There is a necessity for state and non-state actors alike to realise and face the humanitarian consequences of their policies and actions. It is also on states to proactively lead the push for greater compliance with IHL and loosen counter-terrorism laws which restrict humanitarian actions.

During hostilities, humanitarian consequences should balance military necessities. All actors should uphold IHL principles and thus ensure sieges do not deprive civilians from basic services, including humanitarian aid. Armed actors should refrain from the use of weapons that are inconsistent, by nature or use, with the principle of distinction, especially in urban areas. Also, armed actors should constantly review their military practice to ensure further respect of IHL. Outside hostilities, economic exploitation and arms proliferation should be tackled to avoid the slide into further violence and increased needs and displacement.

Specifically in Europe, it is crucial that the EU and its member states use the expertise of their humanitarian organisations inside Europe to address current issues and open up Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and DG ECHO funding to ensure a more holistic approach to tackling the needs of people on the move, at every stage, from their homes to their final destinations.

Recommendations cited: S.4.5, N.2.2, N.2.2, N.4.5, E.4.3, W.1.11, W.1.13, W.3.12, W.4.7

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2   Statement of the EU Heads of State or Government 07/03/2016.

b. Act Early

Early political action can reduce future needs and suffering. Thus, it is paramount that states and international organisations use their development funding for disaster risk reduction, peacebuilding, reconciliation, and other prevention and preparedness activities to reduce the impact of and need from conflicts and disasters in the future. Regional and local strategies should link development and humanitarian funds and allow early, flexible funding when crisis breaks out. Furthermore, it should be the responsibility of donora to support and ensure proper context analysis to allow for adequate response in conflict and non-conflict scenarios.

Recommendations cited: S.2.1.a, S.2.2a, S.2.2.b, S.3.6, S.4.4, N.2.2, N.3.6, N.3.8, N.4.2, W.4.5

c. Stay engaged and invest in stability

To ensure stability and engagement, as mentioned in point **b.** above, leaders must ensure that development fits into a context with humanitarian aid and works to reduce vulnerabilities from conflict and disasters. This must be a long term commitment with strong donor support. Leaders should see advantages for themselves and the people they serve in investing in preparedness and prevention and pushing for greater respect for International law standards and in reducing displacement and need.

Recommendations cited: S.2.1.a, S.4.5, N.3.7, E.1.2, E.3.P, W.3.12

d. Develop solutions with and for people

To best address needs in humanitarian sector, leaders of states and organisations must come to terms with a new reality: the numbers, scale, spread and length of humanitarian crises requires a paradigm change in humanitarian action. Reality reflects a much more globalised and integrated world where refugees and IDPs are now no longer massed in camps. Leaders from politics, civil society, academia, and private sector must begin to think of humanitarian action affecting the global "we", and plan and act accordingly.

As highlighted in many recommendations leading to the WHS, there is a clear need for increased subsidiarity. Solutions must now be developed with affected communities but also with diaspora groups, so that actions on the ground have better access and greater effectiveness. These actions must be context specific both to ensure that local actors can act within the framework of the humanitarian principles and to best utilise local connections. This is achieved not only through action, but also through giving local actors more access to international financing and coordination mechanisms.

Specifically in Europe, the EU and member states should include humanitarian actors in their own crisis management discussions, while continuing to shield humanitarian aid from EU or member state political agendas by ensuring it remains needs driven. Likewise, the EU and its members should support regional frameworks on IDPs and refugees to ensure that political solutions are being made at regional levels. Furthermore, the EU should continue to uphold its proclaimed stand that "humanitarian action is not a crisis management tool". The best way to protect the neutrality of humanitarian action is to channel it through agencies, local, regional or international, that are solely driven by needs, enjoy the trust of the people from different sides and have a track record of neutrality.

Recommendations cited: N.3.3, N.4.6, E.1.4, E.2.4, W.1.4.c, W.1.5, W.1.9, W.1.16, W.3.2, W.4.5

2. Uphold the norms that safeguard humanity

The working groups stressed the opportunity which the WHS provided for organisations and states alike to recommit to the humanitarian principles. Along these lines, it was emphasised that protection should be integrated in all humanitarian activities and states should have their role as primary protectors underscored and reinforced, meaning that state must simultaneously ensure safe environments for the provision of aid, adhere to existing humanitarian norms, and proactively push to end impunity for those guilty of international crimes and S/GBV.

Humanitarian action must be seen in its specific contexts, along the lines of Provision 22 of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (hereinafter Consensus), and should be seen through its different modalities and contexts, with the needs of vulnerable groups taken into account. It was highlighted through discussions that the results of the WHS should feed into future planning for specific actions.

For the EU specifically, it was stated that the EU should reconfirm its commitments to combat S/GBV. Likewise, the groups stated the EU and its member states must both encourage the adoption of regional frameworks on IDPs and refugees and apply refugee law impartially within Europe, without looking at age, sex, religion, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

Recommendations cited: N.3.9, E.2.1, E.3.2, E.3.5, W.1.P, W.1.10, W.1.12, W.1.16, W.2.2, W.4.2, W.4.3

a. Respect and protect civilians and civilian objects in the conduct of hostilities

The working groups, especially those discussing protection in urban settings, highlighted the need for warring parties to respect and protect infrastructure and refrain from using explosive weapons in urban areas. Political actors must seek better compliance with IHL from their side and ensure the same from warring parties. No one should be allowed to target civilian or carry out attacks which would adversely affect civilian populations, such as sieges or use of explosive weapons in urban areas.

Recommendations cited: N.3.6, N.3.10, E.3.1, W.3.12

b. Ensure full access to and protection of the humanitarian and medical mission

While the rising number of attacks on humanitarian personnel points to the need for more protection and safer access of humanitarians, it is necessary to stress the responsibilities of states to provide such environments. Furthermore, the participants emphasised that the access of humanitarians to affected populations should be second only to the right of affected populations to access aid. This was seen not only as tangible aid but also as resources and services, including health, shelter, education, and work, and encompasses both displaced and host communities, as both are affected by crises. This right to access aid should be made applicable to all, regardless of sex, age, education, ethnicity, religion, and other dividing demographics.

The EU must, first and foremost, pressure warring parties to respect IHL and, beyond this, loosen counter-terrorism legislation to allow humanitarians to engage with more actors on the ground and allow humanitarian actors to be more agile in the field. Likewise, the WHS should be an opportunity for all stakeholders to provide humanitarian aid without involving politics, to ensure that humanitarians remain impartial and neutral, and enjoy greater protection in the field.

The working groups underscored the need for increased research into protection, including on the applicability of IHL in situations of urban violence and on possible violations of IHL through the arbitrary denial of access.

Recommendations cited: S.1.2, S.1.3, S.1.5, S.3.4, N.1.4, N.3.2, N.3.7, N.3.8, N.4.1, E.1.1, E.1.2, E.2.3, E.3.P, E.3.3, W.1.11, W.1.13, W.2.6, W.3.6, W.3.12

c. Speak out on violations

It is paramount for the results of the WHS to ensure that existing humanitarian and evaluation mechanisms focus on international compliance with IHL. This goes along with the need for the EU, large organisations, and other stakeholders, to work together to document, research, and develop lessons learned on the arbitrary deprivation of aid. Similarly, it was recommended that humanitarian stakeholders in Europe should look into potential breaches of IHL by the EU and its member states.

The working groups highlighted that to ensure protection of civilians, it is crucial for stakeholders in Europe to pressure warring parties to respect IHL and push for further prosecution of international crimes as defined by the Rome statute.

Recommendations cited: S.4.2, W.1.8.a, W.3.12, W.4.1

d. Take concrete steps to improve compliance and accountability

In order to take concrete steps to improve compliance and accountability, an emphasis must be placed on greater commitment from warring parties and political actors. This extends to situations of urban violence and may require a recommitment to the humanitarian principles. It is also paramount for states and all humanitarian stakeholders to proactively push for greater compliance and broaden protection mechanisms to ensure that infrastructure and resources enjoy greater protection. With the changing nature of humanitarian crises, it is important, now more than ever, to re-examine, rework, and strengthen current frameworks to fit current crises. States must also re-examine their own actions and refrain from politicising the work of humanitarians.

Furthermore, accountability can only be achieved through good subsidiarity, with local organisations included in assessment, planning, and coordination mechanisms. However, this inclusion needs to be done on a case by case basis, to ensure, especially in conflict situations, that the actors can adhere to the humanitarian principles. This goes hand in hand with improving humanitarians' understanding of urban societies and the varied and complex actors and power relationships that exist in urban settings.

To ensure compliance with IHL and accountability to civilians in conflict, it is crucial that all stakeholders push for greater enforcement and prosecution of international crimes and push to end impunity for those guilty of S/GBV. This in mind, it is also important for all actions to be gender sensitive and aware of the special needs of vulnerable groups in different situations.

The working groups also called upon the EU and its member states to apply the Good Humanitarian Donor Standards and, as mentioned before, support the documentation and research upon the arbitrary withholding of aid.

Recommendations cited: S.1.3, S.3.4, S.4.2, N.3.6, N.3.8, N.4.1, N.4.8, E.1.1, E.2.3, E.2.6, E.3.5, E.4.1, W.1.7.b, W.1.8.a, W.2.1, W.3.1, W.3.10, W.3.12, W.4.1, W.4.11

e. Uphold the rules: global campaign to affirm the norms that safeguard humanity

In order to reinforce and support existing humanitarian norms, the working groups highlighted the need for any campaign for humanitarian norms to also advocate that political leaders look at consequences of their own actions, both directly and indirectly, on displacement and humanitarian situations world-wide. Likewise, any campaign would need to include ways to ensure inclusive programmes. Vulnerable groups are often hard to identify and access, and therefore more expensive to serve.

In attempting to raise awareness on humanitarianism and humanitarian action, it is crucial to include journalists, academics, diaspora, and other non-traditional humanitarian stakeholders to increase understanding, acceptance, and support of humanitarian action globally. It is important for states, international organisations, and the private sector to support those raising awareness.

To safeguard humanity, it is also important for increased awareness raising on the ground in humanitarian settings. This must include engaging those involved in violence on applicable humanitarian norms regulating the conduct of hostilities and the protection of civilians and supporting local organisations to include local voices, strengthened by external expertise where necessary. Furthermore, it is important for humanitarian actors to improve their ability to communicate with and reach out to host and affected communities in order to ensure that locals understand the rationale of humanitarian presence and programmes. This will increase the protection of humanitarians in the field.

Humanitarians must also speak out on potential violations of international laws and standards, including when assessing the legality and humanitarian consequences of the EU-Turkey deal on migration. It is crucial for states to support humanitarian organisations in this process while also committing to increase compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the de-politicisation of aid.

Recommendations cited: S.3.4, S.4.2, S.4.5, N.1.5, N.2.1, N.2.3, N.2.4, N.3.1, N.3.8, N.4.1, E.3.7, W.1.4.b, W.1.8.a, W.1.14, W.3.10, W.4.P, W.4.11

3. Leave no one behind

In contexts of humanitarian crises, it is extremely important to plan to include all those affected, including host communities and marginalised groups. The inclusion of marginalised groups ought to begin with needs assessments and inclusion of diaspora and local organisations at all stages, from the early planning to implementation. Above all, it is crucial for the future of humanitarian action to plan and act with a meaningful consideration of S/GBV and gender mainstreaming throughout the project cycle.

Finally, to ensure that no one is left behind, it is important again to focus on and improve affected populations' access to aid and assistance, not only humanitarians' access to affected populations.

Recommendations cited: S.1.1, S.2.5.b, N.3.4, E.1.3, E.1.4, W.2.4, W.2.5, W.2.6

a. Reduce and address displacement

Given current levels of displacement globally, it is paramount that humanitarians and politicians act to reduce and address displacement issues. This can be done first and foremost by addressing root causes of displacement and understanding that displacement is not only from the "global south" to the "global north".

As displacement is often a long-term situation, humanitarians cannot single-handedly work with displaced people. Especially in cases of displacement across generations and in the absence of active conflict, development agencies must step in to help increase the economic and technical capacities of displaced peoples.

Supporting host communities is necessary for sustainable and effective action and actors must ensure that both communities have fair access to the labour market, resources and land tenure. Development actors should also work to help develop short and long term projects and strategies to ensure integration whereas other stakeholders should work to research good practice and strategies in building social cohesion.

Finally, it was underlined that the EU, along with other international actors should work to increase legal pathways for the migration of displaced people for their safety. Likewise, in Europe, AMIF and ECHO funding should be opened and European humanitarian expertise and experience utilised to ensure holistic integration. The EU must also work to treat displaced people with dignity, paying special attention to those most vulnerable, ensuring documentation is timely, that those waiting have access to medical, educational, and other resources, and that refugee law is implemented impartially across sex, age, religious, ethnic, and other lines. In this context, the agreement between the EU and Turkey was heavily criticised.

Recommendations cited: S.2.5.a, S.3.3, S.3.8, S.4.3, S.4.4, N.3.5, N.4.2, N.4.5, N.4.6, E.2.2, E.2.5, E.3.3, E.3.4, E.4.1, E.4.3, E.4.4, E.4.5, W.1.16, W.2.3, W.4.P, W.4.3, W.4.7, W.4.8, W.4.9,

b. Address migrants' vulnerabilities and provide more regular and lawful opportunities for migration

As root causes for displacement and migration can vary across contexts, humanitarians and political actors must act towards displaced people, regardless of their legal status and demographics. Any action must also ensure a principled, holistic approach that safeguards the dignity of those displaced.

Beyond this, regional frameworks should be reinforced to support funding and projects assisting displaced people by following them across borders instead of within borders. These frameworks can also help ensure uniform and principled approaches to assisting IDPs and refugees. States must above all ensure protection while both states and development actors must support integration where possible.

Recommendations cited: S.4.1, S.4.3, S.4.4, S.4.5, N.4.5, E.4.3, E.4.4, E.4.5

c. End statelessness in the next decade

As stated throughout the recommendations, marginalised groups, including the stateless, must be included more actively in humanitarian activities where possible. Furthermore, humanitarians, as well as political actors, must carry out humanitarian action impartially, regardless of the political or legal status of the affected population.

Recommendations cited: N.1.5, N.4.5, W.1.12, W.4.3

d. Empower and protect women and girls

Humanitarian actors, as well as development and other actors, must recognise the important role that women have in crisis situations and crisis response. It is vital that the programmes remain accountable to the entire affected population, and that women are included in all parts of humanitarian action, from planning to evaluation. Gender must be seen as a cross-cutting issue that is considered especially in discussing access and subsidiarity, in which the needs and capacities of women in a certain context should be reflected and utilised.

The EU must reconfirm its commitments made on gender and S/GBV in aid, support community based organisations working with S/GBV survivors, and should ensure that all humanitarian actors from Europe work with DG ECHO's Gender-Age Marker. Likewise, the EU must apply refugee law regardless of gender.

Humanitarians and development actors alike should utilise the central role of women in disaster risk reduction, resilience, conflict prevention, and should use technology and innovations to more actively include women and girls in humanitarian action.

Recommendations cited: N.1.1, N.4.7, N.4.8, W.2.2, W.2.3, W.2.4, W.2.5, W.2.6, W.2.7, W.2.8, W.2.9, W.2.10, W.3.7, W.4.7, W.4.9

e. Eliminate gaps in education for children, adolescents and youth

Humanitarian, development, and political actors must all work together to ensure that youth, especially displaced, do not suffer from gaps in education. To this end, it is crucial that displaced children and youth have timely access to education, according to local standards of quality and availability.

Recommendation cited: N.4.5

f. Enable adolescents and youth to be agents of positive transformation

Youth in affected populations must be supported to participate in DRR and resilience programmes. This will ensure engagement with the next generation and long-term prevention and preparedness in crisis situations. Both humanitarian and development actors should work with youth on conflict prevention and resolution in fragile situations and operationalise technology and innovation to improve protection and participation of adolescents and youth. Finally, it is important that the needs and capacities of youth are considered throughout the project cycle to ensure age appropriate programming.

Recommendations cited: N.4.7, N.4.8, W.3.7, W.4.7, W.4.9

g. Address other groups or minorities in crisis settings

It is crucial that both humanitarians and donors understand the higher implicit costs for identifying and working with marginalised groups in different contexts, where these groups may not have the same presence in society as others. Despite these costs, all humanitarian stakeholders must deliver on their responsibility to be inclusive in their actions. Humanitarians should seek to use new technologies and innovations in their programmes to improve assistance for these marginalised groups. These groups must be key beneficiaries of capacity building to ensure that they can meaningfully participate in humanitarian action and development.

In all scenarios it is important for humanitarian actors to protect the data of those seeking or accepting assistance or protection. This is especially important in situations where affected populations seek anonymity out of fear for any reason. This can be understood as an extension of the need for humanitarian action to be accountable to the most vulnerable in crisis situations.

Currently, European actors must implement refugee law impartially without considering politics, religion, or legal status while administering aid. This is especially true with the growing need to give legal status to migrants caused by global climate change.

Recommendations cited: N.1.5, N.3.3, N.3.12, N.4.7, N.4.8, E.4.1, W.2.3, W.2.5, W.2.6, W.3.6, W.3.7, W.4.3, W.4.7, W.4.9

4. Change people's lives – from delivering aid to ending need

European and global political actors must commit to holistically addressing the root causes behind humanitarian crises. This includes identifying vulnerability not just as a phenomenon of the global south but as a global issue in need of global solutions. Universities and research institutions should support humanitarian action by accumulating and sharing knowledge on vulnerabilities and needs.

Recommendations cited: S.3.1, S.3.3

a.   Reinforce, do not replace, national and local systems

Many of the working groups underlined that the Grand Bargain must not come at the expense of diversity of actors in the humanitarian sectors. While the diversity of actors is problematic at times, many feared that the Grand Bargain would diminish the competitive advantage of some organisations and concentrate funds in the largest organisations. It was emphasised that the effectiveness of humanitarian action often comes through differences and niches between actors covering the sector.

Secondly, it is necessary to increase support for local actors. The discussions on subsidiarity emphasised the need for local organisations and stakeholders to be the main beneficiaries of capacity building in both humanitarian and development activities. There is also a need to empower local organisations and give them voices in needs and risk assessments, crafting strategies on when and how to transition between humanitarian and development assistance, and programme evaluation. Furthermore, it was deemed necessary for local organisations to have greater access to multi-annual funding and increased funding from non-UN pooled funds and from donors within the framework of the Principles of Partnership. Local actors must also have greater opportunities in action by opening up IASC and UN country teams and giving organisations greater access to coordination mechanisms like the cluster system.

However, local organisations working to respond to crises should not be the only groups receiving more attention. Local universities should be supported to increase lessons learned and community based organisations which assist women and survivors of S/GBV should be supported to empower women and girls. Marginalised groups in humanitarian contexts may not have organisations or leaders to speak for them and must be supported to reinforce local systems. This includes assisting host communities when faced with an influx of displaced people, especially in support systems, infrastructure, and resources, to ensure that both host and displaced communities have a sufficient access.

In urban areas, humanitarians must engage with all actors and utilise existing formal and informal protection, health, and the economy systems to create more effective humanitarian response. To do this, it is important that humanitarian actors consult or include experts on different aspects of urbanisation when planning programmes in urban environments.

All of these aspects of subsidiarity can help increase direct and indirect access and enhance effectiveness, when actions are context specific and local actors receive the right amount of technical and financial support. In situations of conflict and violence, it is important to use local actors that can adhere to the humanitarian principles and give a local voice to external expertise on IHL.

Recommendations cited: S.1.6, S.1.7, S.2.2.c, S.2.3.a-b, S.2.4.c, S.2.5.b, N.1.3, E.1.P, E.1.3, E.1.4, E.2.4, E.2.5, E.3.4, E.3.7, E.4.5, W.1.1, W.1.3, W.1.4.a-c, W.2.8, W.2.9, W.3.1, W.3.2, W.3.5, W.3.8, W.3.11, W.4.6, W.4.8, W.4.11

b. Anticipate, do not wait, for crises

The participants of the European Humanitarian Roundtables supported the idea that there is a greater necessity for disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and conflict prevention to reduce the future need in humanitarian crises. However, given current strains on the humanitarian system, it is important that development actors increase their work on preventative programmes to allow humanitarians to focus on relief and response to current crises. This must also include both humanitarian and development actors working to ensure that critical infrastructure, especially in urban settings, is properly engineered, repaired, and maintained to be disaster resistant.

It is also important for prevention and preparation programmes to be inclusive and use subsidiarity, e.g. by including local organisations in planning and risk assessments, building social cohesion across communities in contexts of long-term displacement, and, for European organisations, making use of DG ECHO's Gender-Age Marker in all stages of programming. Local actors, development workers, and humanitarian actors must all have access to sustainable, multi-annual funding to ensure that long-term preparedness projects can be finished and implemented.

Likewise, universities around the world, including in crises situations, should be used to look into current needs and trends to predict better future needs and improve lessons learned from situations. Academic and research institutions should also work to make new tools, technologies, and innovations to help humanitarian action become more efficient, effective, and inclusive.

Recommendations cited: S.2.2.a & b, S.2.3.b, S.2.4.a & c, S.3.9, N.3.2, E.2.5, E.3.6, W.2.7, W.3.7, W.3.8, W.3.9, W.4.6, W.4.8

c. Deliver collective outcomes: transcend humanitarian-development divides

There are clear needs for creating and strengthening links between humanitarian and development actors. Organisationally, administratively, and financially, there are clear steps to be taken. First, development funding should become more flexible to be ready when development contexts turn into crisis contexts. Sharing resources, research, lessons learned and databases can come from an organisational level. This cooperation needs to come from the state and international level involving donors re-examining their funding mechanisms for development and humanitarian actors, and humanitarian and development organisations both taking steps to build greater links.

In the field, there is also room for increased cooperation and collaboration, although it has to be context specific and appropriate. In many cases, development actors should begin to build DRR, conflict prevention, and preparedness into their current activities, strengthen infrastructure to be disaster proof and support social cohesion between displaced and host communities to avoid future building up of tensions. This is especially true in situations of long term displacement, where development actors should build capacities for sustainability. Development actors should also look to include local actors in their programmes as much as possible and integrate protection and a people-centred approach where applicable. Both humanitarian and development actors should ensure that their actions are inclusive towards marginalised groups and strengthen land-tenure systems through their programmes.

Donors, development actors and humanitarian actors should work together in planning to ensure gender and age appropriate interventions and to ensure proper context analysis that can help determine long-term strategies of continuum style transitions.

Recommendations cited: S.2.2.a-c, S.2.3.c, S.2.4.a & d, S.2.5.a, S.3.7, S.3.9, S.4.4, N.3.2, N.3.5, N.3.11, N.4.3, N.4.4, N.4.7, E.2.6, E.3.4, E.4.2, E.4.4, E.4.5, W.1.7.a, W.2.7, W.4.4, W.4.5, W.4.7

5. Invest in humanity

As underfunding of international humanitarian action is becoming more severe with the number and intensity of crises rising, there is a clear need to re-examine current funding and financial mechanisms. It is important to remove financial and political obstacles for humanitarian aid and increase direct access to funding for international and local organisations. This includes the development of flexible tools and funds to bridge the humanitarian-development divide and requires simplification, standardisation, and harmonisation across the donor spectrum.

For the EU and its member states, it is vital to lead the way on simplification and standardisation of donor reporting, accountability, and transparency mechanisms. This would allow smaller organisations to have greater access to funding. Likewise, the EU and its member states should aim to apply the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles, and consider DG ECHO's Gender-Age Marker in planning. Furthermore, European actors should seek to reach their commitments on gender and S/GBV in humanitarian action and increase investments to combat S/GBV.

Recommendations cited: S.1.4, N.4.3, W.1.7.b-c, W.2.10, W. 2.11, W.2.12, W.4.10

a. Invest in local capacities

Funding for humanitarian action needs to more actively support the capacity building of local organisations and first responders. However, this support should be context specific and apply when local actors can uphold humanitarian principles, codes of conduct, and standards. Funding these actors effectively must mean that they can also participate meaningfully in humanitarian action and DRR, preparedness, and conflict prevention. For this, it is necessary to have stable, multi-annual financing and greater access to donors. Funding local organisations could also be supported through the creation of non-UN pooled funding mechanisms, greater commitment to the Principles of Partnership, and critically looking at inequalities between local implementing and larger donor organisations. Funding of local actors must also include funding local universities that can both build capacities and develop useful analysis of practices such as lessons learned and action oriented research programmes on relevant topics.

Recommendations cited: S.2.2.c, N.1.3, N.4.6, N.4.8, E.1.P, E.2.4, W.1.4.b-c, W.1.5, W.2.11, W.3.8, W.3.11

b. Invest according to risk

Increasing investment in contexts according to risks and vulnerabilities should be a key outcome of the WHS. Such investment according to risks should not be restricted to humanitarian funds. States must ensure that development programmes increase their work on disaster risk reduction, preparation, and conflict prevention, taking into account coming environmental and societal changes due to global climate change. It must also support the engineering, construction, maintenance, and repair of infrastructure, especially in urban settings.

This should include supporting national disaster management agencies to develop and strengthen mechanisms for implementing of humanitarian programmes and removing bureaucratic impediments. States should also adopt and support other states adopt international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance (IDRL) guidelines, especially in countries that suffer from frequent natural disasters. Banks and the private sector must also play a role in investing according to existing risk and should work to ensure fund transfers mechanisms sustain crisis.

Recommendations cited: N.4.7, E.1.2, W.1.8.b, W.1.15, W.3.9, W.4.7

c. Invest in stability

To invest in stability, traditional and new donors must find ways to invest in ending and alleviating long-term displacement. This should be done by involving development actors more in education, prevention, and DRR programmes and improving conditions for long-term displaced populations. Furthermore, investing in better infrastructure, repair and maintenance in areas with frequent disasters can help stabilise fragile contexts.

Stability can also come from investing in vulnerable groups by donors considering the DG ECHO Gender-Age Marker, investing in S/GBV programmes and organisations working with S/GBV survivors. Smart, flexible tools to increase predictable and multi-annual funding are needed for local actors to ensure stability in the long term. This also means that the private sector must be active in providing affected populations educational and training opportunities to build their capacities.

Recommendations cited: N.4.2, W.2.11, W.2.12, W.3.9, W.4.6,

d. Finance outcomes, not fragmentation: shift from funding to financing

Financing the outcomes of humanitarian action requires re-examining current models of funding and financing humanitarian organisations and programmes. Donors should work to make funding flexible between humanitarian and development actors by developing links between the two. This requires making development funding more agile. Donors should work to embrace joint needs assessments from humanitarian actors and should aim to fund and finance cooperation, moving away from current competitive funding mechanisms.

New tools and more predictable financing must be created to ensure multi-annual programming for DRR, conflict prevention, preparedness, and social cohesion, especially in situations of long-term displacement. This funding, together with smarter funding for programmes working to combat S/GBV, can build capacities, increase knowledge through research and innovation and improve effectiveness of humanitarian programming. This must also go hand-in-hand with more accessible funding for local stakeholders, depending on the context.

Recommendations cited: S.2.1.a-c, S.4.6, N.1.3, E.2.6, E.3.6, W.2.11, W.2.12, W.3.7, W.4.4, W.4.6

e. Diversify the resource base and increase cost-efficiency

There is a clear need for more diverse financing opportunities in humanitarian action. To this end, it is necessary to pursue the Grand Bargain, though it must not come at the cost of diversity of implementing organisations. Furthermore, while cost-efficiency and transparency are important, they cannot be equated to effectiveness in humanitarian action. To ensure effectiveness, local organisations must be included and given greater access to more diversified funding and financing mechanisms. These should include new non-UN led pooled funding mechanisms and meaningful inclusion of the private sector, including in training and capacity building.

Recommendations cited: S.3.5, S.3.7, S.3.8, N.1.3, W.1.6, W.1.7.a

EUROPEAN HUMANITARIAN ROUNDTABLES RECOMMENDATIONS

European Humanitarian Roundtable – South Aix-en-Provence, 3-4 February, 2016

S.1. Working group on access and subsidiarity

The working group highlighted the importance of the European Union's principled approach and the up-keeping of such an approach throughout its policy document. The following recommendations were made:

S.1.1: Ensure that crisis affected people have access to humanitarian aid rather than focus only on access of humanitarian actors.

S.1.2: Emphasise the link between protection and access to make sure humanitarian assistance is effective.

S.1.3: Ensure that the security and protection of both crisis-affected people and humanitarian organisations are a priority, over and above the presence of organisations in "dangerous" areas. Donors should be ready to provide support to make sure that the actors working in dangerous areas have adequate expertise and means. In this regard, the European Union should advocate more for states to fulfil their obligations to ensure a safe environment.

S.1.4: Remove bureaucratic obstacles to enable humanitarian organisations to work more effectively, including through accessing funds.

S.1.5: Regarding counter-terrorism, the European Union's position should be more explicit concerning how to deal with this issue. This affects humanitarian aid and especially local actors. In line with the UN Secretary General, states should "ensure that counter-terrorism or counter-insurgency measures do not inhibit humanitarian action and provide for necessary exemptions."

S.1.6: Local actors play a crucial role in a fast, cost-effective and culturally appropriate response; but diversity and complementarity of all actors (international, national and local) should be acknowledged, as should be the importance of partnerships and the expression of solidarity.

S.1.7: In order to operationalise subsidiarity and provide local actors with the means and capacity they require, concrete steps must be taken to facilitate their inclusion in the humanitarian system. This implies establishing mechanisms that are accessible to them and providing specific funding mechanisms. It also implies ensuring they can meaningfully participate in coordination mechanisms, including the coordination cluster system.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Sophie Borel, NOHA, Facilitator
Véronique de Geoffroy, Groupe URD
John Gera, SOS Malta
Anne Héry, Handicap International
Takis Neophytou, Red Cross Cyprus
Alain Robyns, Caritas Luxembourg
Dina Vardaramatou, Praksis

S.2. Working group on humanitarian action and development

S.2.1. Rules and procedures:

S.2.1.a: Donors should approach a country with one common strategy including humanitarian and development funding when required.

S.2.1.b: To address a lack of flexibility, there is a need for simplification of bureaucracy, financial requirements, and donor conditionality.

S.2.1.c: In specific regard to the European Commission, development funding should become as flexible as humanitarian funding, in order to better cover gaps between humanitarian and development projects.

S.2.2. Prevention and preparedness:

S.2.2.a: In the build up to the World Humanitarian Summit, it is necessary to place a stronger emphasis on the role of disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and conflict prevention through joint processes between humanitarian and development actors.

S.2.2.b: Development actors should take a more proactive role in the above stated joint process.

S.2.2.c: Local actors should be the main beneficiaries of capacity building activities undertaken by the humanitarian and development communities.

S.2.3. People-centred approach and community involvement:

S.2.3.a: There is a need for empowerment of local governments and civil societies and, where possible, their inclusion in determining the process and transition of humanitarian and development activities.

S.2.3.b: Local associations and institutions should be promoted to participate in risk assessments and in drafting joint short-, medium-, and long-term strategies.

S.2.3.c: Both humanitarian and development actors should involve local communities in mid-term and final evaluations of processes.

S.2.4. Knowledge management and sharing:

S.2.4.a: Instead of building new joint platforms between humanitarian and development actors, there is a need for investment in combining and coordinating platforms on risk assessment to ensure better and more uniform understandings of current information and tools.

S.2.4.b: The European Commission should promote the use of common standards at a global level.

S.2.4.c: There is a need for the promotion of further involvement of a broader number of actors, especially local academic institutions, in risk assessment and analysis.

S.2.4.d: There is a need for easier and more streamlined procedures to research, access, share, and integrate lessons learned in both humanitarian and development activities.

S.2.5. Challenges in protracted conflict situations:

S.2.5.a: There is a clear need for greater involvement of development actors in protracted crises, especially in situations in which generations are displaced or at risk and need access to education and capacity building services better provided by development actors.

S.2.5.b: Development and humanitarian action should be people-centred and more focus should be given to protection.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Khelil Aitout, Fondation Mérieux
Maria Cavatore, Prospective Cooperation
Erika Conti, Italian National Civil Protection Service
Paolo Dieci, International Committee for the Development of Peoples (CISP)
Laurence Lochu-Louineau, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development (MAEDI)
Nicole Sarsero, Maltese Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Kathrin Schick, VOICE
George-André Simon, Roma Tre University
Will Wright, NOHA, Facilitator

S.3. Working group on protection in urban settings

S.3.1: The European Commission's position should reflect more on the root causes of humanitarian emergencies, which in the case of urban settings is a lost opportunity. Building upon accumulated knowledge is vital.

S.3.2: Even the suggestion of top-down reasoning is to be avoided. Although stressing the necessity of local capacity and highlighting the principle of subsidiarity, wordings the Commission chose under the heading 'A global partnership on the basis of humanitarian effectiveness' (Action Area 4 in the full document [COM (2015) 419] final where it is stated that 'Effective humanitarian action requires reliable disaggregated information on needs and available capacities, including non-traditional actors if they make a relevant contribution' could be avoided).

S.3.3: Addressing vulnerabilities in urban settings and ensuring humanitarian action is not (as the document seems to suggest) a phenomenon of the global south only; the global north undergoes levels of vulnerability that need to be responded to, both in urban settings and impoverished regions bearing the brunt of changing climate patterns, land degradation and economic deprivation as a result of ongoing economic and financial globalisation.

S.3.4: Humanitarian action in urban settings often materialises in circumstances of violence not addressed properly by the sovereign authorities (or denied). The international community of states should investigate whether an extension of IHL to be applicable in situations of endemic structural urban violence is possible.

S.3.5: A re-assessment of capacity of the stakeholders in humanitarianism in urban settings is crucial to delivering the necessary tools and capacities. A critical assessment of existing mechanisms, which in the recommendations are mentioned for 'simple' implementation, is needed: the transformative agenda for improved collective action (Action Area 4); the underlying mechanisms of donors demanding transparency and accountability to a level that hinders humanitarian effectiveness; what has been the added benefit of the merger between DG ECHO and Civil Protection into DG Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection and what is the extent to which urban humanitarianism has benefitted from the capacity influx of civil protection in terms of response patterns?

S.3.6: Ultimately, effective urban humanitarianism hinges upon governments and their subsidiaries to take contingency planning seriously.

S.3.7: Ultimately, urban humanitarianism requires out of the box thinking for getting to grips with the highly diverse and continuously changing social power settings in urban areas. The inclusion of urban planning specialist and social geographers, but also the for-profit sector is mandatory; for their inclusion a win-win situation needs to be created (research benefits; tax exemption).

S.3.8: Aid in urban settings is both a short and longer term complex process of beginning to create dignity and livelihoods for people. It must be communicated much more clearly to the donors that 100% of monies provided cannot go (as many donors nowadays seem to demand) directly to humanitarian aid; the donors need to realise that strict earmarking of donations for humanitarian purposes in urban settings tends to discriminate against the people already living for long periods in slum areas; it needs to be clear that donations are for improving subhuman urban situations, not for a specific group in those circumstances; donors need to accept that their funding can or should be intertwined with input from for-profit organisations that out of business interest are willing to invest in vocational training in urbanised areas to create opportunities for economic activity and thus livelihoods.

S.3.9: The role of academia/research networks should be highlighted more, especially in view of the call and need for more reliable, disaggregated data. Academia/research networks can deliver this input through research that should be conducted on the basis of a meaningful participation that puts people at the heart of humanitarian action.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Joost Herman, NOHA and University of Groningen, Facilitator
Snezhana Ilieva, Sofia University
Antoine Peigney, Red Cross France
Maria Pisani, University of Malta
Svoboda Tosheva, South Western University Blagoevgrad

S.4. Working group on forced and protracted displacement

S.4.1: With regard to challenges to the definitions and categorisation of displaced peoples, it is paramount for humanitarians to continue activities based upon need and the principle of impartiality. While the sheer number of cases makes action difficult, assistance and operational protection must be provided based upon needs rather than on the basis of the legal status of displaced people. This should be reaffirmed as the ethical base of humanitarian actions and not exclusively as an operational tool. While doing that, specific rights to protection must be guaranteed.

S.4.2: The working group highlighted the need to ensure fundamental rights of concerned peoples by advocating for stricter adherence to international humanitarian, human rights, maritime, and refugee law. Furthermore, it was stated that existing mechanisms should work towards better compliance with international law, as States and other actors are too often in breach of international or regional bodies of law.

S.4.3: Despite challenges in countries hosting large refugee populations, the group stressed the need for continued action. More practical measures should be taken in order to ensure safe trips to boat people on their way to Europe. Furthermore, all actors should work to raise awareness on the importance of hosting forcibly and protractedly displaced people and support hosting communities. This should be emphasised, as was stated in the debate, by pushing not for burden sharing but responsibility sharing.

S.4.4: As crises of displacement are on the rise and are likely to be protracted, there is a further need for long-term solutions and for actors to address root causes. Poverty, climate change, war, violent extremism and demography issues are among the root causes of forced and protracted displacement. This means that humanitarian actors should be more engaged in advocacy with peace-building, development, private and political actors. Furthermore, political coordination and coherence amongst humanitarian stakeholders should be improved.

S.4.5: The working group highlighted the global impact of mixed migration flows and displacement on international stability and the response capacity of both, governments and the international community, and called for all actors to broaden their approach to migration issues with a global landscape in mind. This was underlined by calling for understanding that political decisions in today's globalised world can induce massive flows of migration and therefore responsibility to ensure safety and security for those in migration falls on everyone's shoulders (citizens and their representatives). A further need to sensitise populations and political actors to the impact of crises on global stability and to promote the principles of humanity and solidarity was identified.

S.4.6: To address protracted crises, the working group recommended the need for a set of tools to be developed to serve as long term solutions in protracted crises and stressed the importance of predictability of funding and multi-annual frameworks in achieving this. Finding durable solutions (that is, return, integration, resettlement) was also highlighted.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Alexander Chuplygin, OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina
Marta Collu, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
Marie-José Domestici-Met, NOHA and Aix-Marseille University, Facilitator
Patrick Mifsud, Maltese Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Marco Rotelli, Intersos
Ghazal Sotoudeh, Humanitarian Action Consultant

European Humanitarian Roundtable – North Uppsala, 16-17 February, 2016

N.1. Working group on access and subsidiarity

The group reiterated its support for the EHR South working group's findings and the focus on and support for people-centred aid and local humanitarian actors. The EHR North working group added the following:

N.1.1. Gender as a cross-cutting issue: Gender as a cross-cutting issue should be given meaningful attention in all discussions on humanitarian access and subsidiarity. Women, men, girls and boys should have equal access to humanitarian aid as well as equal protection and participation in all humanitarian response.

N.1.2. For European Union actors: The working group reiterated the need for political commitment from the EC/EU and for accountability on EU-post-WHS-Action-Plan and endorsed recommendations S.1.3 and S.1.4, while emphasising the need for streamlining and simplifying administrative requirements.

N.1.3. Increased support for local and/or national actors: The working group supported recommendation S.1.7 and added that there is a need to track the level of funding to local and national partners through the implementing organisations in accordance with IATI standards. Furthermore, increasing the support for local and national actors should come through a commitment to a measurable and proportional increase in funding for local actors. Examples of measures to ensure such increases were provided as follows:

- Exploring further expansion of pooled funding outside the UN as a mean to ensure that funding reaches a more diverse set of actors.
- Reiterating the Commission's push for opening up IASC and UN country teams for further diversification and to ensure UN leadership accountability to this.
- Re/Committing to the Principles of Partnership (POP) and investing in local capacity in preparation and response.
- Exploring implementing similar agreement models between local partners and aid organisations as between aid organisations and donors, with an emphasis on overheads and business models.
- Highlighting that the development of the 'Grand Bargain' should not come at the cost of diversity in the humanitarian system.
- Reiterating that accountability is broader than effectiveness, referring to relevant quality and accountability standards.

N.1.4. Ensuring access and protection for aid workers, especially local and national actors: It was underscored that there should be equal political and diplomatic attention given to targeted attacks against all aid workers, be they local, national or international. Beyond this, the working group supported recommendation S.1.5 and added that donors and member states should review their counter terrorism provisions and legal political frameworks so that humanitarian efforts of impartial, local, national and international NGOs are supported. It was also emphasised that donors need to prioritise their commitment to the humanitarian imperative, support and encourage local actors' action in hard to reach areas, including when that might conflict with national sovereignty. In line with recommendation 4, the working group suggested that there is a need for decreased bureaucratic obstacles in having access, i.e. visa regulations, customs.

N.1.5 Ensuring impartial and needs-based aid: The working group expanded upon recommendation S.1.1 by adding that donors need to accept that there can be higher implicit costs in ensuring marginalised populations access to aid. Likewise, actors should reaffirm their commitment to impartial and needs-based aid in the face of higher costs.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Celia Cranfield, VOICE
Kristin Bergtora Sandvik, Norwegian Centre for Humanitarian Studies
Nils Carstensen, DanChurchAid & Local to Global Protection
Arne Naess-Holm, Norwegian Church Aid
Will Wright, NOHA, Facilitator

N.2. Working group on maintaining public support for humanitarian action

The working group considered ways to maintain or strengthen public support for humanitarian action in a time of retrenchment, "compassion fatigue," and hardened attitudes toward refugees in many parts of Europe by pondering the possible contributions of NGOs, churches, activist groups, state agencies and media organisations.

N.2.1: Transformative and inspired leadership by individuals and social movements can create, strengthen or crystalise public sentiments of empathy and generosity. Journalists, including photographers, may sometimes achieve the same effect. EU leaders at all levels should be ready to recognise and support such humanising leadership where it appears.

N.2.2: Several enduring issues undermine the EU's credibility as a humanitarian actor: arms sales, the militarisation of external European borders, unethical profit-seeking, and the attempt to get Turkey and North African countries to do the dirty work of stopping potential asylum-claimants before they come anywhere near Europe's borders. EU leaders at all levels should openly acknowledge these ethical contradictions.

N.2.3: Governments should realise and proactively commit to supporting humanitarian ideals and humanitarian actors. Beyond the cross-cutting issue of committing their political will to help alleviate suffering, governments have a crucial role to play in supporting continued dialogue on humanitarian issues inside Europe. Awareness raising of what humanitarian action is and the importance of humanitarian principles, should be supported through government action.

N.2.4: Non-traditional humanitarian stakeholders, like European civil society organisations, especially Diaspora organisations and academic institutions, should be supported in their role in maintaining public awareness and support for humanitarian actors and action. These actors on the margin of what is traditionally considered the humanitarian sector have an important role to play in fundraising, public support, public awareness of humanitarianism and its ideals as well as combatting misinformation around humanitarian action abroad and in Europe. Such actors should be encouraged to continue their work and be financially supported, especially in the region of Central and Eastern Europe where humanitarian action is not broadly supported or well known.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Zaida Catalan, Gender Expert
Caroline Edelstam, Harald Edelstam Foundation
Maria Gabrielsen-Jumbert, Peace Research Institute Oslo
Joost Herman, NOHA and University of Groningen
Brian Palmer, University of Uppsala, Facilitator
Jwa Said, Syrian Diaspora Member and Student
Andreas Zetterlund, International Aid Services
Karolis Žibas, Diversity Development Group

N.3. Working group on protection in urban settings

N.3.1. Sustainable development goals: Link the Communication to the SDGs that provide an already agreed upon and solid framework. This is of additional relevance for indicators and targets. Specifically, SDG 11 is relevant for the issue of protection in urban settings.

N.3.2. Research: There is a need to establish an applied research programme and define research priorities to address issues specific to protection in urban settings, e.g. the issue of vulnerability dynamics and fragility in urban settings. Humanitarian stakeholders across sectors should develop quantitative and qualitative methodologies as well as conceptual frameworks with the purpose of documenting and gaining experience and knowledge to create new solutions and to strengthen mechanisms of protection in urban settings. This can be strengthened in Action area 4 Recommendation 1.

N.3.3. The camp mind-set/paradigm: As many stakeholders are interspersed among host communities, humanitarian actors should recognise the complexities of urban settings and move beyond the camp mind-set. Conventional knowledge and working assumptions that are based on decades of camp work in rural areas cannot be applied as such in urban settings.

N.3.4. Reaching target demographics: The humanitarian community should follow a holistic approach in delivery of humanitarian aid in urban settings. Focusing on specific populations while excluding others can exacerbate existing tensions and undermine social cohesion. The humanitarian sector should move away from a narrow classification of beneficiaries and towards a needs based approach regardless of status.

N.3.5. Land tenure: Humanitarian crises in urban settings often add to the burden of an already fragile and conflict-prone land tenure system. This puts the most vulnerable such as refugees, IDPs or inhabitants of informal settlements at risk of forced eviction and other human rights violations. Humanitarian and development actors should work with local and national governments to improve tenure security by ensuring their programmes, including temporary shelter response, strengthens the recognition of informal land tenure and provides security and predictability to both dwellers and owners.

N.3.6. Infrastructure: In urban settings essential services such as water, sanitation, and power are often provided by plants that are big in size and technically complex. Such plants, often old, require high-levels of maintenance and their break-down would have large-scale humanitarian consequences. Thus, humanitarian and development actors should work with local and national governments to focus on maintaining and strengthening existing infrastructure. Protection and securitisation of infrastructure such as water, electricity and sewage plants should be paramount, especially in urban settings.

N.3.7. Access: Humanitarian and development actors should work with local and national governments to systematically develop guidelines to facilitate safe access to the labour market in order to protect refugees/IDPs from exploitation. Furthermore, they should work with local and national governments to improve equal-to-all access to social services such as education and health care. Discriminatory access to essential services is likely to heighten tensions in inflammable urban settings.

N.3.8. Urban violence: Fire-arms violence represents a large-scale humanitarian crisis that is largely neglected. The international community needs to pay much more attention to effective arms control in order to prevent and alleviate the human suffering that is caused by Small Arms and Light Weapons. There is a need for better coordination with the 2001 UN Program of Action on Small Arms. Beyond this, the newly adopted Arms Trade Treaty represents an opportunity for better arms control for the international community with regards to humanitarian action. This coordination means enhancing capacity at local level regarding arms control for the prevention of armed violence in the urban context. National legislation, customs, stockpile management and other mechanisms must be taken into account. The role of civil society in the urban context for the prevention of armed violence needs to be highlighted as well as violence against exposed groups.

N.3.9. Integration of protection: The humanitarian community should endeavour to include livelihood and social and cultural integrations into protection strategies and strengthen the integration of protection as highlighted in Action Area 3, Recommendation 1, especially in contexts of urban settings.

N.3.10. Use of explosives in populated areas: The use of explosive weapons in urban areas cause significant civilian casualties and damage to civilian objects, as well as long-term harm to the civilian population, even when the target is a military objective. The significant likelihood of indiscriminate effects makes the use of explosive weapons in urban settings very likely to be illegal under IHL and exposes the civilian population to harmful consequences. In their dialogue with parties to conflicts, governments and humanitarian actors should advocate for refrained use of explosive weapons in urban settings. They should also support the effort led by the ICRC to document the legality of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

N.3.11. Divisions within humanitarian aid and development: In urban settings especially, actors should move away from exit strategy mentality and rather pursue a continuum approach, recognising that seamless transitions between short-term humanitarian response and development is in the best interest of the beneficiaries. This should be strengthened in Action Area 7 Recommendation 1 in the Communication.

N.3.12. Data access and integrity: Humanitarian and development actors must be aware of the sensitivity of confidential and anonymised data of the urban populations it serves. The potential for data leaks and misuse is high in these settings, with the potential for severe consequences. When promoting or implementing "broad IT platform" as mentioned in the Communication, special attention should be given to ensure data security, integrity and possible misuse, wrongful or not, and consider the ethical challenges that can arise with its creation.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Houria Bounouch, Belgian Red Cross
Peter Brune, IM Swedish Development Partner
Tania Dræbel, University of Copenhagen
Robert Ghosn, Belgian Red Cross, Facilitator
Keith Mattingly, Church of Sweden

N.4. Working group on forced and protracted displacement

N.4.1: We acknowledge that over the past decades, humanitarian principles and international law (IHL, IHRL, Refugee Law) have been compromised. On multiple occasions humanitarian aid has been instrumentalised and politicised, neglecting the needs of the most vulnerable. All humanitarian stakeholders have to be made accountable in adhering to their own commitments. A new accountability mechanism has to be developed and universally recognised in order to ensure compliance with humanitarian principles and international law. In doing so, we should emphasise the fact that saving lives is more important than political agendas.

N.4.2: Protracted displacement has to become part of the national development plans. The gap between Humanitarian Action and Development is a systematic issue that does not stem from the situation or people on the ground. As the nature of displacement in practice is a long-term problem, it requires engagement of international donors; this entails coordination mechanisms between and beyond clusters.

N.4.3: It is necessary to break down the silos between humanitarian and development funding, and to develop long term instruments in order to respond to the needs of beneficiaries in protracted crises. To achieve sustainable solutions, we have to develop smarter and more flexible tools that can be adjusted to the changing contexts and needs.

N.4.4: Joint needs assessment is desirable in order to save resources and enable efficient and adequate response to humanitarian needs. However, confidentiality of data and protection issues need to be addressed; likewise, the needs assessments should not be the basis for competitive processes applied by donors.

N.4.5: Right to dignity should be a guiding principle of the European policy towards the refugee and IDP phenomena. It is the states' responsibility to offer protection and effective integration mechanisms (e.g. access to education and the job market). Moreover, states have to ensure that the potential, capacity and experience of the displaced population are utilised. The women, men and children who face persecution and flee their homes should not be forced to risk their lives doing so; neither they should be seen as a burden. We urge the international community to develop safe ways and alternative pathways for refugees, allowing them to reach safety without unnecessary danger.

N.4.6: The inclusion of local actors in humanitarian action should be encouraged. However, conflict-related displacement poses particular demands on neutrality, or perceived neutrality, and requires a clear case by case assessment. Constantly increasing demands of administrative compliance and risk aversion are detrimental to the inclusion of local actors and prevent the use of their assets, for instance in increased outreach and access. Capacity-building of national actors must become a commitment of international players, and should be properly resourced. The dialogue with national actors needs to go beyond verbal assurances and praise, and requires above all honesty from all actors.

N.4.7: We acknowledge that the displacement of vulnerable populations can be caused by both violent conflicts and natural hazards. Development and humanitarian stakeholders have to increase investment in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation to mitigate and prepare for these risks. By ensuring equal participation of children, youth and women in all activities, it will reduce their vulnerabilities and enhance their capacities, thus leading to a resilient society. In result, lives of many will be saved and the investments made in development will be secured.

N.4.8: Humanitarian actors should be held accountable to ensure that all humanitarian interventions are gender, age and culturally appropriate. Meaningful participation of women, men, girls and boys will safeguard their rights. Vulnerable groups' needs and capacities should be identified and acknowledged to secure their resilience, safety and dignity. It is of particular importance in the context of forced and protracted displacements.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
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Evita Čikute, Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Olivia Forseberg, Plan Sweden
Artur Malantowicz, NOHA, Facilitator
Stephan Maurer, Danish Refugee Council
Mona Strindberg, Uppsala United Nations Association

European Humanitarian Roundtable – East Warsaw 1-2 March 2016

E.1. Working group on access and subsidiarity

E.1.P: In the context of access with reference to humanitarian principles, the working group expects that EU and national level funds shall not be conditional or restricted on the grounds of political or security considerations. The group reiterates recommendations N.1.3 and S.1.7 in relation to support for local actors. Predictable multi-annual funding could support subsidiarity and foster development by empowering local actors and supporting a smooth transition to the development phase, as seen in Action Area 7. Building on Action Area 5, 'Subsidiarity', the group specified that access should be through local market structures or channels where possible.

E.1.1. Access and legal framework: The working group reiterates the need for strengthening legal frameworks in accordance with Action Area 2 of the Communication. In addition to recommendations N.1.4 and S.1.3 attention should also be given to relevance of the international legal frameworks in order to facilitate humanitarian access. Specifically, the international community could consider: ensuring that all actors comply with applicable laws; revising international law with regards to humanitarian access by taking into account the changing nature of humanitarian crises; and reinforcing the mechanisms for international law enforcement.

E.1.2. Security and counterterrorism issues: Donors should give more support to NGOs that can gain access in dangerous areas. This can include covering the extra costs such as security officers, appropriate security training, and monitoring and evaluation for the security of aid workers. In relation to difficulties in transferring funds, the group identified that there is a potential for reinforced dialogue and partnership with the private and banking sectors while still utilising donors or external facilitators. The group also observed several issues around counterterrorism, highlighting the importance for humanitarian actors to negotiate access on a case by case basis but with overarching donor acceptance. This went in line with the need to accept the codes and guidelines for engagement by humanitarian actors and the need to have separate rules for local actors. The group further acknowledged the difficulty in balancing transparency and confidentiality.

E.1.3. Gender and other cross-cutting issues: In reference to recommendation N.1.1 the group specified that "meaningful attention" should mean translating gender into concrete action in the field. Innovative approaches to gender inclusion can be necessary. Furthermore, it was noted that needs assessment and humanitarian action should be inclusive, incorporating all of the relevant stakeholders, in order to identify marginalised and vulnerable groups. This includes but is not limited to people with disabilities, women, children, the elderly, the sick, socially marginalised, ethnic minorities, indigenous people, and people in remote areas. Humanitarian action also should be context-informed on its potential impact on local economy, national and local politics, and know what vulnerability means in a local context.

E.1.4. What is missing from the key documents towards the WHS: The working group found that a more set and comprehensive role of diaspora needs to be underlined in the build-up to the WHS, as diaspora plays a bigger role than just in advocacy and remittances. It was observed that there can be limitations to them being principled humanitarian actors. Nevertheless, this is often an assumption and leads to them facing difficulty in interacting with the conventional humanitarian system. Furthermore, in building on recommendation S.1.7, the group identified that at least national and local platforms of NGOs and CBOs should have access to coordination mechanisms.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Elmi Abdi, Foundation for Somalia
Sylvie Cambou Prokopowicz, Polish Humanitarian Action and NOHA student
Celia Cranfield, VOICE, Facilitator
Erik Mohns, Berghof Foundation
Jürgen Clemens, Malteser International
Jan Ríkovský, Caritas – College of Social Work Olomouc
Roman Wieruszewski, PoznaÐ Human Rights Centre

E.2. Working group on current humanitarian challenges in Ukraine

E.2.1. Protracted crisis: We call upon the international community to intensify efforts to put an end to the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, to fulfil the Minsk Agreements, and to make sure that this protracted crisis does not become a forgotten one. The specificity of the crisis requires cooperation of humanitarian and development actors in order to fully respond to the complexity of the affected population's needs, both IDPs and host communities.

E.2.2. Humanitarian principles & IHL: Taking into consideration the continuous violations of humanitarian principles and international law (e.g. IHL, IHRL, Refugee Law), we urge all parties to the conflict to respect and fulfil their obligations and commitments. The international community should increase its support to the dissemination of the principles of IHL among all parties, both inside government and non-government controlled areas. It should be emphasised that civilians and civilian objects must not be targeted or used for military purposes, detainees should be treated humanely, humanitarian personnel have to be protected, and protective emblems should be respected.

E.2.3. Access: The delivery of humanitarian assistance, especially in non-government controlled and grey zone areas, continues to be a major challenge. The responsibility of providing impartial humanitarian assistance and protection lies primarily with the parties to the conflict. However, we recall the obligation of the parties concerned to ensure access to affected populations, in case they are not able or willing to provide the assistance themselves. They should have in place appropriate legal and policy frameworks to facilitate humanitarian access. For that purpose, the dialogue of the humanitarian actors with the Ukrainian government and the de facto authorities of Luhansk and Donetsk Oblast' should be intensified.

E.2.4. Local organisations: We recognise the potential of local actors in reaching affected populations and playing a major role in humanitarian response in Ukraine. The international community should support local organisations in their capacity building and awareness raising of international humanitarian standards, in order to enable them to overcome their difficulties (e.g. cases of language barrier, financial gap, insufficient accountability etc.). This will result in their increased participation and empowerment, as well as a more efficient and effective aid delivery.

E.2.5. Protection & support for host communities: In order to provide assistance and protection to the most vulnerable, the needs of the host communities must also be addressed. Humanitarian planning and response should be adjusted accordingly to foster social cohesion and prevent hostilities between host communities and IDPs in rural and urban settings. This requires adequate data collection, stable funding, short-term projects and long-term strategies, as well as collaboration between the communities and the displaced population themselves.

E.2.6. Joint needs assessment: The effectiveness of coordination mechanisms should be ensured in order to provide for an efficient, coherent, adequate and timely response. This can be achieved through transparent communication, joint strategic planning, joint needs assessment, improved information sharing and management. This will enable saving and equal distribution of resources, clear understanding of the context, and provision of reliable data on the form and scale of actual needs. For instance, it has been proven that the cash-based interventions are seen as a dignified and flexible method of providing humanitarian response, thus, they should be supported whenever possible.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Alisa Ananbeh, former employee of UNHCR-Jordan and UNHCR-Ukraine
Salla Himberg, Red Cross EU Office
Monika Kacprzak, UNICEF Poland
Anita Kołodyńska, Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Artur Malantowicz, NOHA, Facilitator
Elżbieta Mikos-Skuza, NOHA and University of Warsaw

E.3. Working group on protection in urban settings

E.3.P: The working group endorses the recommendations made by the North and the South in general, but specifically highlights recommendation S.3.5 regarding counterterrorism[3], due to its particular impact on protection in urban settings.

E.3.1: Concerning Action Area 3, rather than focusing solely on the humanitarian community, the emphasis should be first and foremost on ensuring that governments and international state community systematically ensure by all means possible the protection of civilians/crisis affected people.

E.3.2: Concerning Action Area 2, the responsibilities of governments/de facto authorities should appear first and not second. The focus should be on governments ensuring a safe and secure environment for crisis affected people rather than only for humanitarian actors. In addition, the enforcement of existing legal frameworks, rather than their adoption, should be highlighted. The wording of the recommendation should emphasise the obligation of states to ensure a safe and secure environment ("must" instead of "should").

E.3.4: The group agrees that protection in urban settings is contingent upon ensuring the livelihood of both host and refugee/displaced persons. This implies, as recommended in the North, access to humanitarian aid, the labour market and housing, without negatively impacting host communities.

E.3.4: As per N.3.6 recommendation, the group reaffirms the importance of working with local authorities and development actors to ensure that host and displaced communities have comprehensive access to all basic public services (housing, electricity, etc.), which require activities beyond humanitarian action.

E.3.5: The international community cannot accept impunity and this should be a clear position from the EU. There is an obligation to punish those responsible for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. States are obliged to cooperate with the International Criminal Court and have to empower national criminal courts. Protection is contingent on this.

E.3.6: In addition to N.3.2 recommendation, more research and collaboration with academic institutions and think-tanks should be undertaken to ensure that current and/or regular patterns of displacement and the needs of affected people are better anticipated, solutions established in advance and commitment ensured.

E.3.7: The voices of affected people must be meaningfully taken into account when devising and implementing protection strategies and measures. Knowledge of applicable laws and political rules in different situations of urban violence has to be disseminated among humanitarian actors and national and local actors.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Sophie Borel, NOHA, Facilitator
Hans-Joachim Heintze, NOHA and Ruhr-University Bochum
Michał Kurpiński, Free Syria Foundation
Khaula Sawah, International Union of Medical Care and Relief Organizations (UOSSM)

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3   Regarding Counterterrorism, the European Union's position should be more explicit concerning how to deal with this issue. This affects humanitarian aid, especially local actors. In line with the Secretary General of the WHS, states should "ensure that counter-terrorism or counter insurgency measures do not inhibit humanitarian action and provide for necessary exemptions."

E.4. Working group on forced and protracted displacement

E.4.1. Dignity and protection: Building on recommendation N.4.8, we want to emphasise that all actors should be held accountable to ensure protection of the displaced people, especially those most vulnerable because of age, gender and disability. Moreover, they should engage with and listen to displaced people throughout the project cycle in order to give them voice and choices.

There is also a need for timely determination and documentation of refugee status, and actors should commit to guarantee respect for the dignity, access to basic services and protection of displaced also before status determination.

E.4.2. Diversity and standardisation: In support for recommendation N.1.3 the working group wants to emphasise that, while recognising the need to maintain the diversity and comparative advantage of humanitarian actors, there is also a need to harmonise standards and requirements for project proposals and reporting in the context of displacement.

E.4.3. Regional frameworks: The working group calls for regional organisations to strengthen and develop normative frameworks for IDPs and climate change induced displacement and to increase work on conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding in order to contribute to address the root causes of displacement. Likewise, regional organisations should ensure that their funding and projects follow the needs of displaced people and across borders, instead of being focused on single countries. Regional funding instruments instead of country-based funding could be one option to support that.

E.4.4. Humanitarian action and development: Building on recommendation S.4.3 we see a need for development funds to support the integration of displaced populations in host communities by including IDPs and refugees in national development plans and supporting local civil society, as first responders, to host and integrate refugees and IDPs into the society, support their self-reliance and ensure their access to local services rather than assisting them within camp settings.

E.4.5. Displacement in Europe: In view of the humanitarian refugee crisis that the EU is currently facing within its borders, we strongly recommend the EU to commit towards a principled and comprehensive approach regarding reception, status determination, access to services in order to increase responsibility sharing. The EU should seek to make use of its own humanitarian expertise, including NGOs within the Member States, and operational capacity to assist displaced people within Europe. Furthermore, the EU should increase its role in conflict reduction, prevention and peace building to address the root causes of displacement. The working group confirms recommendation S.4.3 and calls on EU political actors to increase legal pathways for entry into the EU in order to ensure safer travel and prevent illegal smuggling of human beings. This could be done through larger numbers of student and non-student visas and increased family reunifications. The EU should look into the possibility to interlink certain EU funds (AMIF, DG ECHO) in order to enable a holistic support to displaced people across the European borders and their integration in Europe.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Inez Kipfer-Didavi, Johanniter International Assistance
Maciej Fagasiński, The Refugee.pl Foundation
Veronica Foubert, Geneva Centre for Education and Research in Humanitarian Action (CERAH)
Samuel Hagos, NOHA Student
Patricija Virtić, platform of Slovene development and humanitarian aid NGOs (SLOGA)
Will Wright, NOHA, Facilitator

European Humanitarian Roundtable – West Dublin, 30-31 March

W.1. Working group on access and subsidiarity

W.1.P: The working group recognises the work of the groups at previous roundtables and the importance of the European Union's principled humanitarian approach. They call on the EU to retain and strengthen the link between future actions and existing commitments such as the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (Consensus). As an overall comment on the Communication and the Secretary General's report, the group feels that there is insufficient distinction being made between the laws and modalities of response relative to disasters on the one hand and conflict on the other.

Clarifying the dimensions of subsidiarity
W.1.1: Empowerment of crisis affected populations has not been mentioned in the previous recommendations or in the Communication. Subsidiarity needs to be considered to include empowerment, solidarity and accountability.

Making subsidiarity effective
W.1.2: There is a need to move away from a language of 'us' and 'them' to a language of 'we' - we being the affected population.
W.1.3: The concept of subsidiarity, as defined in the Irish Humanitarian Summit and used in these discussions, states that humanitarian action should be a support to the efforts and capacities of affected people to help them cope in times of crisis and to assist them in their recovery in a manner that enhances their resilience to future shocks and stresses. Humanitarian actors must respect the culture and capacities of affected people and recognise that affected people are the central actors in their own survival and recovery. Subsidiarity serves as a constant reminder that humanitarian response, whether local or external, is best developed with and for affected people. The core intent of humanitarian subsidiarity is to enhance the effectiveness and coverage of crisis responses while at the same time respecting the agency of disaster affected populations. The spirit of subsidiarity is a multidirectional process seeking to identify and support the most suitable response and responders possible for each case with crisis affected people at the centre.
W.1.4: Subsidiarity will be effective if:
    W.1.4.a: response instruments are contextualised and relativised,
    W.1.4.b: all responders, irrespective of their origin and nature, apply the humanitarian principles, established codes and standards of practice in their action, and
    W.1.4.c: there is greater access to funding, control and decision making mechanisms for local actors.
W.1.5: To support the capacity of local actors: (1) funding for capacity building of local responders needs to be available and accessible, and (2) localised capacity building services need to be developed.

Diversity in funding mechanisms

W.1.6: As access to funding is a prerequisite of the ability to programme, there is a need for more varied funding mechanisms that allow NGOs to manage and access them directly.

W.1.7: The working group calls on the European Union to:

W.1.7.a: ensure the Grand Bargain strengthens the diversity of the humanitarian system, financial mechanisms, and budget holders;

W.1.7.b: reaffirm DG ECHO's responsibility to manage funds in a manner consistent with the Consensus, and as a model donor in adhering to humanitarian and Good Humanitarian Donorship principles in all funding decisions; and

W.1.7.c: encourage DG ECHO to lead on the simplification and standardisation of donor reporting, accountability, and transparency mechanisms so that they allow smaller organisations to access and apply them.

Access

W.1.8: The working group calls upon member states to adhere to obligations under international humanitarian law, including their responsibility to "respect and ensure respect" for IHL, believes that there is a need for adequate independent mechanisms to monitor and report on violations, and therefore recommends that

W.1.8.a: the European Commission work with member states to document, fund research and develop lessons learned in relation to the arbitrary withholding of humanitarian access; and that

W.1.8.b: member states support national disaster management agencies to develop and strengthen effective mechanisms for humanitarian delivery in support of a decline in bureaucratic impediments.

W.1.9: To ensure principled co-ordination between member states and EU policies, the working group calls on DG ECHO to ensure that humanitarian agencies are invited to engage in a discussion regarding the EU crisis management system that supports principled humanitarian response.

W.1.10: The working group recommends that the specificity of principled humanitarian action is recognised and secured in keeping with provision 22[4] of the Consensus.

W.1.11: In relation to counter-terrorism legislation and the prohibitions on contact, the working group calls on member states to allow for humanitarian dialogue across frontlines to enable impartial humanitarian action.

W.1.12: The humanitarian principles remain relevant and are critical to humanitarian access. The working group calls on all implementing agencies to ensure that they are applying these principles.

W.1.13: The group commends the recent Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015, provision 12) and calls on states to proactively identify and condemn any collective punishment mechanisms, such as sieges, that adversely impact crisis-affected populations' ability to access aid.

W.1.14: The working group notes the applicability of Human Rights Law to all disaster contexts and calls on states to respect their obligations under it.

W.1.15: The group calls on all member states to adopt and implement International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance (IDRL) guidelines and to support the adoption of IDRL outside the EU by the governments of all disaster affected countries.

W.1.16: The group calls on EU member states to support and encourage the adoption of regional conventions developed to protect internally displaced populations in a manner consistent with the Kampala Convention on IDPs.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Jane Backhurst, ChristianAid
Rory Downham, Institut Bioforce
Sulagna Maitra, NOHA and University College Dublin, Facilitator
Dualta Roughneen, Plan International Ireland
Tim Seal, Humanitarian Leadership Academy

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4   The principles that apply to humanitarian aid are specific and distinct from other forms of aid. EU humanitarian aid, including early recovery, should take long-term development objectives into account where possible, and is closely linked to development cooperation whose principles and practices are outlined in 'the European Consensus on Development'. EU humanitarian aid is delivered in situations where other instruments related to crisis management, civil protection and consular assistance may also come into play. Hence, the EU is committed to ensure coherence and complementarity in its response to crises, making the most effective use of the various instruments mobilised. Therefore the EU should enhance efforts to raise awareness of and take into account humanitarian principles and considerations more systematically in its work throughout its Institutions.

W.2. Working group on gender based violence and resilience

W.2.P: Concerned about the absence of any reference to gender and gender based violence (GBV) in the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council; Appreciating the attention given to gender and GBV in the UN Secretary General's Report to the World Humanitarian Summit but noting that gender has been siloed and limited to Core Responsibilities 2 and 3, where GBV was addressed in the context of armed conflict only; Ensuring that treatment with dignity is formulated without distinction as per the UN SG Report; The working group makes the following recommendations to be integrated in all future European Union documents, communications and policies.

Political leadership to prevent and end conflict

W.2.1: Global leadership is needed to end impunity on GBV in all humanitarian crises and to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable by strengthening justice systems to investigate and prosecute GBV.

Uphold the norms that safeguard humanity

W.2.2: The European Union and its member states should reaffirm previous commitments that have been made with regard to gender and GBV in humanitarian action.

W.2.3: The working group calls on all stakeholders to ensure that Refugee Law is applied without discrimination, including on the basis of sex, gender and nationality.

Leaving no one behind

W.2.4: Humanitarian programming must ensure that actions related to GBV, women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming are appropriate and distinct.

W.2.5: The working group calls upon the international community to recognise the importance of addressing GBV in all humanitarian contexts, including conflict, disasters and other emergencies (e.g. public health emergencies and displacement).

W.2.6: Humanitarian stakeholders should work to ensure equitable access to humanitarian assistance and protection and to productive resources, including housing, land and property.

From Delivering aid to reducing need

W.2.7: European humanitarian actors should work to fully utilise and promote the DG ECHO "Gender and Age Marker" throughout the whole programme cycle.

W.2.8: The working group emphasises the need to recognise the central role that women play in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, DRR and resilience building with reference to the Women, Peace and Security agenda, the Sendai Framework and Agenda 2030**.**

W.2.9: There is a need to build resilience by promoting community-based systems and organisations to prevent and mitigate GBV and to ensure survivors' access to support and care.

Investing in humanity

W.2.10: The working group emphasises the need to deliver gender-sensitive humanitarian action and implement context-specific approaches that promote women and girls' empowerment over their own lives from the first stages of a humanitarian response.

W.2.11: European humanitarian actors should work to ensure that the DG ECHO "Gender and Age Marker" informs humanitarian funding decisions.

W.2.12: Internationally, there is a need to increase investment across the humanitarian sector in targeted GBV prevention programmes.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Cristina Churruca, NOHA and University of Deusto
Lisa Doherty, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland
Siobhan Foran, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
Ronan McDermott, NOHA and University College Dublin
Réiseal Ni Cheilleachair, Trócaire
Sophie Borel, NOHA, Facilitator

Furthermore, members of other groups to agree to endorse these recommendations include:
Antonio Donini, Tufts University and Geneva Graduate Institute
Michiel Hofmann
Sulagna Maitra, NOHA and University College Dublin
Artur Malantowicz, NOHA
Martin McCann, RedR UK and Sphere
Will Wright, NOHA

W.3. Working group on protection in urban settings

While each urban context is unique and requires specific methodologies and actions, these recommendations should represent key areas of concern in providing protection in urban environments.

W.3.1: In the complexity of urban environments, humanitarian actors need to understand and acknowledge the presence, roles and responsibilities of a wide range of stakeholders.

W.3.2: Humanitarian action requires respect for existing and emerging bonds, bridges and linkages in urban environments, both physical and societal. These are critical elements in understanding conflict prevention and post-conflict reconciliation.

W.3.3: Concerning Action Area 3, the emphasis should be on ensuring that governments of the affected countries and the international community systematically ensure by all means possible the protection of civilians and crisis affected people.

W.3.4: Concerning Action Area 2, it is the primary responsibility of governments and de facto authorities to ensure safe and secure environments for crisis affected people rather than only for humanitarian actors.

W.3.5: Humanitarian programmes should, in an optimal manner, make use of, build on and strengthen formal and informal systems, including economy, health, and protection infrastructure.

W.3.6: As dissidents and those affected by violence can use urban settings to hide or remain anonymous to avoid further violence, it is crucial for humanitarian programmes to respect the chosen anonymity that urban contexts can provide some individuals.

W.3.7: Humanitarians must optimise their use of technology and innovation to better address protection and assistance in terms of the specifics of urban environments, especially with regards to groups with increased risk and special needs including women, children, the elderly, and people living with disabilities.

W.3.8: Humanitarian programming in urban contexts should involve experts in various facets of urbanisation, taking into account local expertise as much as possible.

W.3.9: The group supports recommendation E.3.4 but emphasises the need for design, maintenance, and repair of critical infrastructure to ensure the quick return to service and access following disasters.

W.3.10: Humanitarian activities in urban contexts require open and easily accessible information for increased accountability and acceptance. This should be context specific to include different outreach mechanisms for affected and non-affected populations.

W.3.11: In the long-term context of protection actions in urban environments, humanitarian actors should use and support local universities and research centres to improve lesson learning over time. This can mean support for local universities to access crucial knowledge and build local expertise.

W.3.12: The working group recognises that current urban warfare often includes indiscriminate attacks on civilian areas, critical infrastructures such as hospitals and schools, and indiscriminate use of booby traps and other deadly devices. These all represent sources of immense suffering for urban populations and result in massive displacement. The working group reiterates that all states and parties to IHL instruments must exert all pressure on warring parties to ensure safety and security of urban populations in conflict zones.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
François Grünewald, Groupe URD
Frances Hill, Enhancing Learning and Research for Humanitarian Assistance (ELRHA)
Bram Jansen, Wageningen University
Martin McCann, RedR UK and Sphere
Will Wright, NOHA, Facilitator

W.4. Working Group on Forced and Protracted Displacement

W.4.P: The working group expresses grave concern that the recent EU-Turkey deal of 18 March 2016 contradicts a large number of recommendations developed within the European Humanitarian Roundtables framework, most notably respect for the international humanitarian and refugee law, and the needs-based approach to humanitarian action. As such the deal damages the credibility of the European Union, undermines the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and constitutes a dangerous precedent of principled humanitarian donors being instrumentalised by political agendas.

W.4.1. Adherence to international law: The working group supports the recommendation S.4.2 which highlighted the need to ensure the fundamental rights of concerned peoples by a strict adherence to international humanitarian and refugee law. Furthermore, it stresses that an independent study should be conducted on the implications of breaches of international humanitarian law, especially refugee law, by the European Union, in relation to the EU-Turkey deal of 18 March 2016.

W.4.2. Upholding humanitarian principles: The working group reiterates recommendation N.4.1 and agrees that on multiple occasions humanitarian action has been instrumentalised for political and military objectives, neglecting the assistance and protection needs of the most vulnerable. All humanitarian stakeholders have to be held accountable in adhering to their own commitments. The group highlights the need for the EU member states to abide by the humanitarian principles, to which they have committed through the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid. Furthermore, the EU should comply with and advocate that its partners comply with the IASC Statement on the Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action.

W.4.3: Needs-based approach: In support to recommendation S.4.1 the working group agrees that with regard to challenges to the definitions and categorisation of displaced peoples, it is paramount for humanitarians to continue activities based on need and the principle of impartiality. While the sheer number of cases makes action difficult, assistance and protection must be provided based on needs rather than on the legal status of displaced people. In doing so, specific rights to protection of all displaced peoples must be guaranteed by Member States.

W.4.4: Independent & joint needs assessment: In reference to recommendation N.4.4 independent needs assessments are a prerequisite while joint assessments are desirable in order enable efficient, effective and adequate response to humanitarian needs. The needs assessments should not be the basis for divisive competitive processes applied by agencies and donors.

Long-term solutions

W.4.5. Context & understanding: The working group calls upon the relevant EU institutions to ensure that contextual analysis, based on disaggregated data, underpins long-term response strategies, including determination of the adequate type of response, such as humanitarian or development, or a combination of both.

W.4.6. Adequate financial tools: In reference to recommendation N.4.4 and in support of recommendation S.4.6 there is a need to develop more long term instruments in forced or protected displacement situations in order to respond to the needs of crises-affected populations. To achieve long-term and sustainable solutions, a set of smarter and more flexible tools that can be adjusted to changing contexts and needs should be developed. The importance of predictability of funding and multi-annual frameworks in achieving this should also be stressed, as well as finding durable solutions (that is, return, integration and resettlement).

W.4.7. preparedness & prevention: In support of recommendation N.4.7 the working group reiterated that the displacement of vulnerable populations can be caused by both violent conflicts and natural hazards. EU member states and their development partners need to increase investment in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation to mitigate and prepare for these risks. Likewise, in reference to recommendation E.4.3 the working group calls for regional organisations and states to strengthen and develop normative frameworks for displaced people and to increase work on conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

W.4.8. IDPs/refugees & host communities: The working group considered recommendation E.2.5 and found it applicable in all contexts. In order to provide assistance and protection to the most vulnerable, the needs of the host communities must also be addressed. Humanitarian planning and response should be adjusted accordingly to foster social cohesion and prevent tension between host communities and displaced populations in rural and urban settings. This requires adequate data collection, stable funding, short-term projects and long-term strategies, as well as collaboration between the communities and displaced population themselves.

Cross-cutting issues

W.4.9. Evidence-based approach: In reference to recommendation N.4.8 the working group affirms that the EU should ensure that its actions and those of its humanitarian partners are based on disaggregated age and gender data and are culturally appropriate. Meaningful participation of women, men, girls and boys will safeguard their rights. Vulnerable groups' needs and capacities should be identified and acknowledged to secure their self-reliance, safety and dignity. This is of particular importance in the context of forced and protracted displacements.

W.4.10. Harmonisation of HA system: The working group is concerned with the continuing bureaucratisation of the humanitarian system. The EU should initiate a process aimed at reducing or eliminating unnecessary procedures, and in particular at harmonising and simplifying administrative and financial requirements throughout and beyond the project cycle.

W.4.11. Localisation & subsidiarity: Building on recommendation N.4.6 the working group recommends that the inclusion of local actors in humanitarian action should be supported. However, in conflict situations the need to safeguard the impartiality and neutrality of humanitarian action requires a careful case by case assessment. Capacity building of local and national actors should become a commitment of humanitarian stakeholders, when necessary and possible, and when this does not prejudice humanitarian principles. The dialogue with national actors must go beyond rhetoric. Increasing the proportion of direct funding to local and national partners, where appropriate, should be supported by the EU and its member states.

These recommendations were based upon input from and agreed to by the following group members:
Brian Casey, Irish Humanitarian Summit
Antonio Donini, Tufts University and Geneva Graduate Institute
Joost Herman, NOHA and University of Groningen
Michiel Hofman, Medecins Sans Frontières Belgium
Artur Malantowicz, NOHA, Facilitator
Francisco Rey, Institute for the Study of Conflict and Humanitarian Action (IECAH)
Kathrin Schick, VOICE

NOHA Network on Humanitarian Action is an international association of universities that aims to enhance professionalism in humanitarian action through education & training, research & publications and projects. As a network of academic institutions, NOHA brings a university ethos to the existing humanitarian principles that govern humanitarian action.

With record numbers of people around the world affected by conflicts and disasters, humanitarian action is a highly relevant, dynamic and demanding field. NOHA was born from the idea that higher educational institutions and academia have an essential role to play in the humanitarian sector by offering international, multidisciplinary education, training and research.

Over the past 20 years, the NOHA network has expanded and now comprises universities from 12 European countries as well as 5 global partner universities on different continents.

1993
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12 *European +* **5** *global partner universities*

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