

GOOD PRACTICES ON DIASPORA HUMANITARIAN ENGAGEMENT





GOOD PRACTICE COORDINATION WITH INSTITUTIONAL HUMANITARIAN ACTORS

DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS HAVE ENGAGED IN EFFECTIVE COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH INSTITUTIONAL HUMANITARIAN ACTORS AND MECHANISMS.

While diaspora organizations are not perceived as traditional humanitarian actors, they often end up working in parallel systems distant from the institutional frameworks and mechanisms used by international humanitarian actors. However, it is possible for diaspora organizations to participate in international coordination frameworks, such as the cluster system, and to become a trusted and recognized partner working on humanitarian assistance.

Inclusion of diaspora humanitarians as focal points in mechanisms can enable better coordination of activities, improve information flows, reduce the potential for duplication, and improve the impact of interventions on the ground. Integrating diaspora can also build sustainability by leveraging partnerships and resources.



WHO

YEMEN AID

was established in 2016 by diaspora in the United States to provide clean water, healthcare, education

and economic opportunities for the population in Yemen.



WHAT

Over the years, Yemen Aid built its capacities in order to become a recognized humanitarian actor through learning from other diaspora organizations and engaging a dedicated resource person. The learning process resulted in the elaboration of policies to meet humanitarian standards and familiarization with bureaucratic requirements. As a result, Yemen Aid now cooperates with WFP,

UNICEF and IOM for example. The organization is a member of the health cluster and coordinates with the food security cluster to meet the emergency needs of Yemeni families. Yemen Aid distributes food baskets throughout the country in addition to providing specialized food packages for malnourished children and promoting agricultural livelihood projects for farmers.



HOW

- Apply a localized approach from the beginning.
- Build capacities to be able to meet humanitarian standards.
- Share information with other actors in an open and transparent manner.
- Guarantee access to difficult-to-reach areas and to fill operational gaps.
- Adopt a professional and organizational approach and continuously learn from mistakes.



GOOD PRACTICE DIASPORA UMBRELLA ORGANIZATIONS

UMBRELLA ORGANIZATIONS BRING AN ADDED VALUE WHEN COORDINATING INDIVIDUAL DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS, ESPECIALLY WHEN REACTING TO CRISES.

Diaspora umbrella organizations can enhance the coordination between individual diaspora crisis responses, and between the diaspora community and other humanitarian actors. This is especially important when diaspora react to ongoing crises where there is little time for organizational capacity-building, establishment of communication channels or for building partnerships.

Umbrella organizations can ensure that actors at different scales and organizations of different sizes are able to coordinate, exchange information and efficiently use resources. This also encourages diaspora organizations to learn from each other by working more closely together in response to crises.



WHO

HAITI RENEWAL ALLIANCE

A non-profit organization established by diaspora in the US to promote diaspora engagement for

the sustainable development of, and investment in the Caribbean, particularly in Haiti.



WHAT

The Haiti Renewal Alliance (HRA) is an umbrella network of diaspora organizations for humanitarian actions. The network led to the development of the ONEDIASPORA coordination platform which serves as a repository housing critical information, provides resources to registered diaspora organizations and helps improve long-term recovery efforts. The Haitian Diaspora Emergency Response Unit (HDERU), established in 2016, is a diaspora coordination model for

tracking, monitoring, and integrating the diaspora within humanitarian affairs and development more effectively. The HDERU was activated after the earthquake in Haiti on 14th August 2021 and resulted in the cooperation of more than seventy organizations. The established HRA-ONEDIASPORA FUND received pledges of over US\$1.5 million and provided funding for several registered organizations. The HDERU was deactivated on 30 September 2021.



HOW

- Integrate efforts and enhance mutual support.
- Combine funding to have more impact.
- Build organizational infrastructure regardless of limited available capacity.
- Develop a clear vision, formal registration and structure.



ASSOCIATION DES TUNISIENS
DES GRANDES ÉCOLES

GOOD PRACTICE COORDINATION WITH LOCAL AND NATIONAL AUTHORITIES

BECAUSE OF THEIR CONNECTIONS, DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS CAN EASILY COORDINATE WITH NATIONAL AUTHORITIES.

Coordinating diaspora humanitarian activities with local and national authorities in crisis-affected regions is important to maximize effectiveness and reduce the duplication of efforts and resources. In most countries, formal registration and approval is a pre-condition to operate. Engagement with local and national authorities can also form the basis of partnerships that leverage diaspora and other financial and human resources for improved impact, particularly at the local level.

Especially when crises emerge or escalate, diaspora have the advantage of building on already established relationships with authorities, particularly embassies in the countries of residence. Of course, the degree of coordination with local and national authorities will depend on the type of disaster or crisis and might be easier in situations of natural disasters and pandemics.



WHO

ASSOCIATION DES TUNISIENS DES GRANDES ÉCOLES

Established in 1990 by Tunisian diaspora in France, especially engineers, students from business schools, doctors and researchers

to reinforce connections and co-operation between Tunisia and the world.

WHAT

In response to a wave of COVID-19 infections in July 2021, Tunisian diaspora provided humanitarian support. When the Tunisian Embassy in Paris called for assistance in response to the ongoing health crisis, ATUGE requested its network to support the response, either by making donations or by assisting in the logistical part of the operation at the Embassy. Tunisian diaspora brought PPE equipment and other material, including oxygen, to the Embassy. Once the goods arrived in the

Embassy and were sorted with the help of volunteers, the relief items were transported by the authorities to Tunisia. Customs procedures were taken care of by the appropriate services. The distribution of the relief items went in accordance with the preferences defined by the diaspora, who had identified needs through their local contacts. Staff from ATUGE based in Tunisia undertook verification activities to confirm that the aid had arrived.

HOW

- Build on established contacts and previous non-crisis related relations with authorities.
- Complement strengths and weaknesses of diaspora with those of the authorities and pursue a clear division of labor.
- Continue to ensure quality and professionalism throughout the coordination with authorities.



GOOD PRACTICE CAPACITY- BUILDING

DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS HAVE THE ABILITY TO GROW AND TO BUILD THEIR CAPACITIES TOWARDS BECOMING PROFESSIONAL HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS.

Diaspora organizations do not always have the same capacities as institutional actors. Yet, upskilling diaspora capabilities and networks helps improve the impact and sustainability of diaspora humanitarian responses. Increasing diaspora capacities in turn increases the visibility of their activities and the likelihood of recognition from actors in the field.

Acknowledging the need to expand knowledge on the humanitarian sector allows diaspora organizations to grow and to expand their activities. Capacity-building is a continuous and comprehensive effort which requires a learning culture in the organization to ensure that the efforts are sustainable and effective.



WHO

DOZ E.V.

Established in 2011 as a student and youth intellectual organized group to support and protect children, youth, women, IDPs, refugees, and local communities from

long-term negative impacts of tensions and conflicts. Doz e.V. has offices in Northeast Syria, Kurdistan in Iraq and Germany.



WHAT

Throughout the years, Doz underwent a clear development process from being an informal group based in Syria towards becoming a registered NGO in Germany. The founding members realized the need to get professionalized and organized. The Organization started by creating a bank account and thereafter developed tools to be able to conduct project management, grant management and auditing. As a result of building

these capacities, Doz was able to expand its sectoral and its geographical scope from education and protection also towards agriculture and livelihoods. Because of the difficult access to Syria for humanitarian actors, Doz acted as an implementing partner for Save the Children, Mercy Corps and War Child but also implemented projects in Germany for the German Ministry of Interior or the Robert Bosch Stiftung.



HOW

- Identify the needs of and requirements for becoming a professional humanitarian actor.
- Take on a complementary role combining the local and international advantages of having offices in the field and in Europe.
- Contextualize the work of diaspora organizations within the larger humanitarian framework and seek opportunities.
- Be consistent in policies and guidelines for all countries and staff.



GOOD PRACTICE TECHNICAL & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS ARE WELL PLACED TO TRANSFER TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE IN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.

Diaspora organizations, networks, and individuals often deploy their skills and expertise in response to emergencies. Diaspora organizations have clear advantages in this regard, since they have built up their qualifications and expertise in the countries of residence but continue to have access to their countries of origin, relying on previous knowledge on the needs of the situation, the standards used in the country and on personal contacts with stakeholders which can be utilized to create the necessary connections and agreements to assist the population in a meaningful and sustainable manner.



WHO

SUDANESE AMERICAN PHYSICIANS ASSOCIATION

A humanitarian membership-based organization for physicians and other medical professionals of Sudanese descent that live and

work primarily within the United States of America, established in 2019.



WHAT

In order to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in Sudan, the Sudanese American Physicians Association (SAPA) provided support to the medical institutions in the country, including by forming a COVID-19 Taskforce. SAPA worked directly with hospitals to transfer knowledge and expertise. For example, members of SAPA joined the daily rounds

of doctors via remote technology and directly advised local colleagues on treatment. These co-visits also took place for non-COVID medical issues. Another activity was to develop and upload videos on social media explaining medical issues to the population in Sudan, for example on COVID for children or COVID for pregnant women.



HOW

- Build on knowing the right people and partners to facilitate access and the delivery of assistance.
- Determine suitable partners with the required technical knowledge and put in place guarantees for a sustainable approach.
- Constantly update understanding to reflect the actual country situation needs and capacities to determine the appropriate level of technical and knowledge exchange and support.
- Ensure technical flexibility to match the needs with the available capacities.



GOOD PRACTICE PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL PARTNERS

DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS DELIVER EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERS.

Partnerships with local civil society organizations and institutions grant diaspora organizations access to the affected populations and enable them to actually deliver aid. Local partners function as implementing partners on the ground. Especially in emergency contexts with a deep distrust of national structures, mechanisms and international organizations, the direct support of diaspora organizations to local civil society groups can create additional channels and have a more direct impact for affected communities. The allocation of greater resources to local organizations is in line with the Grand Bargain Commitments.



WHO

HEALING VENEZUELA

Established in 2016 by private persons in the UK to help the delivery of the best possible medical assis-

tance to the people of Venezuela through a variety of programmes.



WHAT

Healing Venezuela implements its programmes through partnerships with local civil society groups, rural health centres and state hospitals. To date, Healing Venezuela has donated twelve+ tons of medical supplies, delivered more than one million meals to children at risk of malnutrition, sponsored 300 junior doctors, repaired and donated twelve critical medical devices and installed three water

treatment plants in hospitals. In 2022, Healing Venezuela worked with six partners to provide medical supplies, has installed critical equipment in seven hospitals and sponsors junior doctors in eight hospitals in different areas of the country. In the malnutrition prevention program, cooperation was limited to two centers working closely with the communities.



HOW

- Ensure partnerships meet minimum standards; quality is more important than quantity.
- Respect and trust local partners for partnerships to flourish.
- Keep partnerships, and their requirements, simple and straightforward.
- Establish an appropriate management system and the right organizational culture.



GOOD PRACTICE FUNDRAISING

LOCAL CONNECTIONS AND KNOWLEDGE OF DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS CAN GENERATE FUNDING AND TRANSFER IT EFFICIENTLY TO THE AFFECTED POPULATIONS.

Diaspora organizations and individual members are highly effective in quickly mobilizing community financial and other resources in response to crises in origin and other countries. Diaspora fundraising and philanthropy is often small-scale, with fundraising conducted via community and faith networks, as well as online crowdfunding platforms. Nonetheless, there are opportunities for institutional humanitarian partners to support diaspora resource mobilization by leveraging emergency funding. Access to institutional funding encourages diaspora organizations to improve accountability and transparency mechanisms by investing in organizational development.



WHO

NEW WAYS ORGANISATION

National NGO founded by Somali intellectuals in 1993 with diaspora as board members to tackle po-

verty and promote human rights, and social justice across Somalia.

WHAT

In 2021, New Ways received institutional funding from WFP (45.1% of total budget), UNICEF (44%), UNFPA (7.4%) and the Somalia Humanitarian Fund (3.5%). Donations and crowdfunding are only a small part of their income. This is the result of a gradual development process of the organization. Using the humanitarian knowledge and expertise of its leadership to approach institutional funding

platforms, New Ways built its organizational capacities in order to meet the eligibility criteria. Local staff receive regular training to build up their capacities. The organization's budget currently tops more than one million USD, and it employs 120 staff, including in Somalia. New Ways is active in the cluster system and actively shares information with donors.

HOW

- Gain in-depth understanding of the eligibility criteria of various donors and funds.
- Merge the advantages of the international and local profile of a diaspora organization to become competitive in the application process.
- Emphasize the knowledge and experience of Somali staff and diaspora to work in their own country.
- Build and showcase track record to convince donors of abilities and capacity to deliver.



GOOD PRACTICE HUMANITARIAN- DEVELOPMENT NEXUS

DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS CAN BRIDGE THE HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS BECAUSE OF THEIR LONG-TERM INTEREST AND PRESENCE IN THE COUNTRY.

Diaspora organizations, networks, and individuals deliver interventions that span the humanitarian-development (-peace) nexus, from pre-crisis resilience building and emergency response to post-crisis recovery and reconstruction. This gives diaspora organizations an advantage, as they can respond to crises quickly, building on existing mechanisms, networks, trust, and expertise.

Diaspora organizations can transition to post-crisis recovery with ease, mobilizing diaspora networks for reconstruction. The fact that diaspora organizations are likely to retain their interest in supporting their country of origin across generations makes them a reliable partner for the humanitarian-development nexus.



WHO

KEIHAN FOUNDATION

Established in 2005 by a group of Afghan students in the Netherlands, to support the integration of

Afghans in the Netherlands, and to assist Afghans in Afghanistan.



WHAT

From its beginning, KEIHAN aimed to provide aid in the following areas: education, integration, developmental aid in Afghanistan. Gradually, KEIHAN's activities expanded and changed into durable projects. KEIHAN has collaborated with ministries in the Netherlands and Afghanistan. Since the take-over of power by the Taliban in August 2021, KEIHAN changed focus to short-term work on advocacy, to support evacuations and to share information with refugees and Afghans in the country.

All trainings were transferred to remote courses since colleagues could not visit the country in person. KEIHAN was required to re-establish connections and co-operation with universities and the Ministry of Public Health before it can restart its long-term programmes. Throughout the developments in the country, KEIHAN continued to provide support to their country of origin and remained engaged within the given possibilities and limitations.



HOW

- Rely on the long-term presence of diaspora when emergencies occur.
- Invest and engage in long-term development processes but adapt to emergency requirements.
- Demonstrate to development actors the value of diaspora, its network and connections, to support the transition process.
- Continue with previous programs, facilitating the transition from humanitarian to development work, as soon as the situation allows.



GOOD PRACTICE DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

DIASPORA UTILIZE OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY NEW DIGITAL TOOLS TO EXPAND AND STRENGTHEN THEIR SUPPORT TO THEIR COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN.

Making use of digital resources amplifies and brings visibility to diaspora organizations' work. Social media, for instance, is a powerful tool to convey lived experiences and plays an important role in fundraising. Online platforms are often used to respond quickly in crises in order to assess needs, raise funds, and mobilize resources, as well as for remote knowledge exchange (e.g. telemedicine), volunteering, mentoring, and coaching.

Digital tools allow diaspora to enhance or to expand their support to the affected population in countries of origin, either by inventing new ways of supporting or by increasing the scope and size of the assistance. Digital tools are easily accessible for diaspora, especially for the youth.



WHO

GLOBAL UKRAINE

Global Ukraine was established by young, educated expatriates in 2015 becoming a unique bridge between Ukraine, Europe, and the

world. Its purpose is to safeguard Ukraine's interests by using the modern tools of cultural, scientific and business diplomacy.



WHAT

Using digital tools, Global Ukraine created a transnational online space where leading Ukrainian organizations, independent leaders, and experts promote Ukraine's interests at the global level. Global Ukraine offers a digital platform as a service and limits its role to connecting its network for them to share support, as well as human and social capital. Through this platform, Global Ukraine also facilitates humanitarian assistance. Founded in 2017, the Money

Touch Hub service provided by Global Ukraine's Global Business Hub arose out of a need for direct cash transfers to Ukraine to meet humanitarian needs. The service allows the users in Europe to transfer money from their Visa or Mastercard directly into respective beneficiary accounts in Ukraine. The Global Ukraine Network receives credit from every transfer and uses these funds to finance its humanitarian projects



HOW

- Explore how digital tools can overcome standard challenges for diaspora support.
- Use the flexibility of digital tools to support initiatives while working or travelling abroad and to enlarge the support base of diaspora, especially of youth.
- Explore previous attempts and adapt them to the current needs and situation.



GOOD PRACTICE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS CAN PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS BOTH IN THEIR COUNTRIES OF RESIDENCE AND COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN.

A possible role for diaspora is in emergency preparedness. Due to their long-term understanding and knowledge of both their country of origin and their country of residence, diasporas are best placed to anticipate disasters and the resulting needs. They can form part of the professional humanitarian assistance programmes, where diaspora follow the good practices of other humanitarian actors in an attempt to anticipate arising needs and preposition goods and supplies in the region. Preparedness activities can also be organized in the countries of residence where diaspora can take on the responsibility of preparing their fellow nationals in advance of emergency situations.



WHO

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION INDONESIA

The Alumni Association of Filipino alumni in Indonesia was established

to form a network of Filipino expats in the country.



WHAT

The main focus of the University of the Philippines (UP) Alumni Association is not humanitarian assistance, even though the diaspora occasionally engage in providing relief assistance. However, following the 2018 West Java Earthquake in Indonesia, the UP Alumni Association started to realize the importance of disaster preparedness and launched the Disaster Preparedness Forum. Although the Forum was a one-off event, it did give the neces-

sary impetus to enhance preparedness to assist nationals from the Philippines when a natural disaster would occur in Indonesia. A particular need was identified to support temporary migrant workers from the Philippines in the country in these situations, since no official provisions were in place before. Since the Forum, the Embassy has put in place mechanisms to assist nationals in case of emergencies and ensures a 24/7 contact line.



HOW

- Understand preparedness in a broad and inclusive manner, both countries of origin and countries of residence.
- Consciously use the experience of individual diaspora members to drive the agenda and strengthen connections.
- Recognize opportunities resulting from crises to improve the system.