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**DEMAC TOOLKIT**  
**POCKET GUIDE**  
GUIDANCE FOR COLLABORATIVE  
ADVOCACY WITH DIASPORA

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# DEMAC TOOLKIT POCKET GUIDE

The DEMAC Toolkit is a compilation of ten short, hands-on pocket guides on diaspora humanitarianism. Out of the ten, five guides are tailored to humanitarian practitioners, covering the following topics:

1. Definition and typologies of diasporas
2. Awareness raising materials on diasporas' role in emergency response
3. Guidance on integration of diaspora in stakeholder analysis
4. Methodology to map & assess the engagement of diaspora in humanitarian crises

## **5. Guidance for collaborative advocacy with diaspora**

This pocket guide is focusing on guidance for collaborative advocacy with diaspora. Interested in the other four booklets? Find the complete DEMAC Toolkit with all ten pocket guides on our website [www.demac.org](http://www.demac.org)

# DEMAC TOOLKIT POCKET GUIDE

## **Why this DEMAC toolkit?**

The DEMAC toolkit intends to offer practical guidance to humanitarian practitioners to enhance engagement and coordination with diaspora organizations involved in humanitarian response.

The toolkit is inspired by DEMAC lessons learned and good practices on diaspora humanitarianism. It provides guidance and definitions for humanitarian actors and sets the framework for increasing understanding, knowledge and engagement with diaspora organizations in humanitarian settings.

The toolkit does not intend to provide a binding, predetermined list of interventions or types of activities that may or may not be implemented, as this is dependent on the specific context and would appear overly prescriptive. Therefore, DEMAC encourages adaptation of this resource to the respective local situation.

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# GUIDANCE FOR COLLABORATIVE ADVOCACY WITH DIASPORA

## **Advocacy & presence on the ground**

Recurrent tensions between speaking out about abuses and staying to deliver aid is a common issue for humanitarian actors. Taking a public stand against violations of human rights and humanitarian law can sometimes jeopardize the presence on the ground.

Connection and collaboration with diaspora actors can support advocacy efforts. Working with diaspora specialized in human rights or advocacy can minimize operational risks while maximizing the impact of advocacy for the protection of civilian populations at risk in times of crisis.

Diaspora actors have the capacity to increase awareness on issues affecting their country of origin, to advocate for aid support and for the protection of affected populations. They can contribute to voice amplification and joint advocacy messages with humanitarian actors.

Diasporas can mobilize, persuade and denounce violations in the public realm in Western countries as well as in their country of origin through local media, local authorities, social media and their international networks. Diaspora actors particularly make use of new technology and social media as advocacy and mobilizing tools.

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## **Humanitarian Development-Peace Nexus**

Humanitarians are increasingly recognizing that securing the protection of civilians affected by conflict in the short-term must go hand in hand with efforts to address the long-term lack of respect for basic human rights.

Diaspora organizations have been actively and continuously addressing issues of civilian harm in specific contexts such as Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine. They succeeded in influencing government policies and practices on the protection of civilians. They have been particularly instrumental in facilitating advocacy on attacks on healthcare personnel and facilities in Syria and to advocate for the rights of the people of Afghanistan during and after the evacuation in August 2021.

Their sustained engagement enables the diaspora actors to continue addressing long-standing challenges and violations and keep the duty-bearers, conflict parties and third-party states accountable for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law.

# GUIDANCE FOR COLLABORATIVE ADVOCACY WITH DIASPORA

## **Collaborative advocacy**

For greater collaborative advocacy with diaspora actors the humanitarian agencies can bilaterally or via the cluster:

- Encourage humanitarian staff to undertake collaborative advocacy at global and field levels
- Identify and engage with key diaspora organizations that are vocal and influential
- Share information about grave violations and abuses with identified diaspora organizations
- Share time-critical information on communities at risk of forced displacement
- Share joint statements and common positions of coalitions of humanitarian organizations
- Draw on diaspora organization's local networks and influence in local advocacy (e.g. prevention of child recruitment, promoting girls' education, etc.)
- Consolidate contextual, stakeholder and legal analyses: diasporas can provide detailed documentation of individual violations. Humanitarian actors can provide analysis of the impact of violations in terms of needs and vulnerabilities. Together this helps building a picture of patterns of abuse for stronger evidence-based advocacy

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## **Effective collaboration**

Bilaterally or via the cluster, humanitarian agencies can

- Share advocacy messages that humanitarian agencies operating on the ground cannot convey publicly without jeopardizing their presence. Further, they can have bilateral discussions on how this information can be used for advocacy
- Support diaspora advocacy efforts by disseminating their messages and statements for aid support and protection of affected populations
- Coordinate complementary legal actions when possible

## **Recommendations**

- Assess the risks involved for the security of the affected population and for the security of humanitarian actors and agencies
- Agree on common terminology and positions
- Agree on the degree of confidentiality needed to minimize operational risks
- Ensure clear guidance on advocacy and protection for collaboration and encourage collaborative advocacy from information-sharing to joint action wherever possible.

# ABOUT DEMAC

The mission of DEMAC is two-fold:

- 1) to enable inclusive coordination and collaboration among diaspora organizations providing humanitarian assistance, and across diaspora organizations and institutional humanitarian actors, and
- 2) to facilitate higher levels of engagement and visibility for diaspora organizations in the humanitarian system.

The objective is to contribute to transforming the humanitarian eco-system by laying the groundwork for a deeper understanding of diasporas as humanitarian actor groups with different modus operandi for the implementation of aid in practice, identifying and opening potential spaces for engagement and cross-fertilization, and improving coordination between diaspora and institutional relief providers.



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