



ECOSOC HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS SEGMENT

UN HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK 19-21 June 2018

Title:

Building Acceptance for Safe and Sustained Access to People in Need

Sponsors and Organizers:

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA)

Date and Time: Thursday, 21 June 2018, 18:00 – 19:15

Place: Conference Room E, UN Secretariat, New York

This is one of the side-events to be convened during the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment, in keeping with this year's theme: *Restoring humanity, respecting human dignity and leaving no one behind: working together to reduce people's humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability.*

Background and objectives

Released during last year ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment, the study "Presence and proximity - To Stay and Deliver, Five Years On", stressed the importance of acceptance strategies and highlights the critical interplay between humanitarian access and principled humanitarian action. "Despite progress, the emphasis on acceptance has not always filtered down to the country office and sub-office levels, where understandings of acceptance – and familiarity with organizations' acceptance policies and guidelines – were generally limited," the report found in 2017. One year on, this side-event will follow-up on the recommendations of the study and examine the progress made so far at normative and operational level.

As highlighted in the Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit and the 2017 Secretary-General's Report on Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, "[e]fforts to build acceptance of humanitarian action by all parties are critical to gain and maintain humanitarian access, especially as most current armed conflicts are non-international and there is a multiplicity of non-state armed groups."

This event will therefore identify how humanitarian programming and adherence to humanitarian principles contribute to building acceptance, managing security risks and facilitating access to population in need.

Discussion points

Using concrete case studies and best practices from the field, this side event will answer the following key questions:

- What are the different operational modalities used by the humanitarian community to gain acceptance (policy, ethics, communication, attitude, management, etc.)?
- What are the major challenges identified so far to sustain access and pursue acceptance? Why is it important to address them and how could this be done?
- How can we involve stakeholders, such as donors, practitioners and policy makers in reaching the overarching objective of sustaining access and pursuing acceptance?

Intended outcomes/conclusions/recommendations

The side event will aim at:

- a. Identifying challenges and limitations to building acceptance in the new security environment;
- b. Identifying lessons-learned and best practices in terms of security and programme management;
- c. Identifying avenues for cooperation between and amongst relevant stakeholders.

Format

A panel discussion followed by a Q&A session.

Chair and moderator:

- Mr. Aurélien Buffler, Head of the Policy Advice and Planning Section, UN OCHA

Panel composition:

- Mr. James Munn, NRC, Director, NRC Geneva
- Ms. Ute Kollies, OCHA Mali, Head of Office
- Mr. Bastian Richter, Programme Criticality Secretariat, Programme Specialist
- Mr. Antonio Galli, UNICEF, Humanitarian Access Policy Advisor

Background Material

- 'Presence and Proximity - To Stay and Deliver, Five years On', a study commissioned by NRC. OCHA and the Jindai School of International Affairs, June 2017
<http://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Presence%20and%20Proximity.pdf>

Contact

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