Title:
Humanitarian assistance operations in high risk environments

Sponsor and Organizers:
NRC and OCHA

Date and Time: Thursday, 22 June 2017, 8.30-9.45
Room XXVI, Palais des Nations, Geneva

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 and Leaving No One Behind: Working together to reduce people’s humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability.

Background and objectives

In 2011, OCHA published a landmark study, To Stay and Deliver, which collected and documented humanitarian organizations’ good practices in deploying and delivering relief in highly insecure environments. The report provided advice and recommendations in critical response areas such as how to manage risk, build responsible partnerships, adhere to humanitarian principles, and build acceptance and negotiations with relevant actors. The report advocated for further cultural change, moving away from a ‘bunkerized approach’ towards adopting more nimble, innovative ways to stay and provide assistance despite the odds.

In 2017, OCHA, NRC and the JSIA are launching a follow-up study Presence and Proximity: To Stay and Deliver, Five Years On, which outlines changes (where they occurred) to the operational environment since 2011, with recommendations to the humanitarian and donor communities.

The objective of this event is discuss practical challenges to operational presence in humanitarian crises, and recommendations to humanitarians, Member States, donors and parties to conflict to adopt so that, even in the most brutal of conflicts, people in need can access the basics they need to survive and be safer.

Discussion points

Against this backdrop, the side-event will focus on the following suggested questions and discussion points:

- Challenges in ensuring presence and proximity in an evolving humanitarian environment
- Protection by presence
- Negotiating access and pursuing acceptance

Intended outcomes/conclusions/recommendations
Participatory discussion which challenge the recommendations of the study.
Participants have an understanding of the challenges to presence and proximity.
Space is created for panelists and participants to discuss possible improvements.

Format

- **Co-organizers:** NRC and OCHA
  - Presentation of themes and potential ways forward, as proposed by the study.
  - Moderated Q&A session by the chair.
  - Questions from the floor.

Moderator:

- **Mr. Stephen O’Brien, USG for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator**

Panel composition:

- **Mr. Jan Egeland, Secretary-General of the Norwegian Refugee Council**
- **Mr. Vincent Lelei, Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia**
- **Ms. Ashley Jackson, researcher, co-author of the study Presence and Proximity**

Background Material

The Presence & Proximity study will be available on the OCHA website on 22 June


Contact

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