Event Title: Shocks to the system: Humanitarian financing, quality funding, and transparency in the face of rising needs

Date/time: 23 June, 8:30-10:00 EST

Sponsors: Development Initiatives (DI) and UN OCHA

Objective:

Humanitarian needs and the financial resources to meet them have once again reached a record high – more than $46 million is currently required to assist almost 200 million of the 300 million people in need. While still experiencing the impacts of the pandemic, the humanitarian system is attempting to sustain delivery in the face of sudden and pressing new needs. For example, the sudden manifestation of the crisis in Ukraine has implications for multiple other crises, including food shortages in regions of Africa that are already experiencing drought. This, along with other complex crises, such as the ones currently being experienced in Afghanistan, Yemen, creates pressure on a system that is not only recovering from the pandemic but also responding to increased numbers of people in need from conflict and natural and other disasters.

This is one of the virtual side events to be convened on the margins of the 2022 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (HAS), which builds on this year’s HAS theme: “Strengthening humanitarian assistance: good practices and mobilizing action in the application of international humanitarian law, the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and in response to the climate crisis.”

Panel Members: (names, titles, and organizations)

- Christina Bennett, CEO Start Network-- Moderator
- Anja Nitzsche, Chief, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Branch – Presenter
- Angus Urquhart (Crisis & Humanitarian Lead, Development Initiatives)
- Amal Syam (Director of the Women’s Affair Center) - Panelist
- Adessou Kossivi (Regional Coordinator of West, Central & North Africa and West Asia of the Global Network of Civil Society Organization for Disaster Reduction) – Panelist
- Farida Bena, Director of Humanitarian Policy & Advocacy, International Rescue Committee – Panelist
- Mrs. Amiera Alhefeiti, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations

Main points raised by each panelist:

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<th>Panelist</th>
<th>Points raised</th>
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<tr>
<td>Anja Nitzsche</td>
<td>Summary of the 2022 Global Humanitarian Overview report (UN OCHA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Angus Urquhart</td>
<td>Preview of the 2022 GHA Report - humanitarian financing in the current global climate’</td>
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<td>Amal Syam</td>
<td>The financial reality for women’s organisations in oPt, the concrete actions organisations like theirs cannot do because they didn’t have funding and the significance of a more diverse donor base with timely and flexible funding in the context of increasing need/increasingly constrained finance (less funding) globally.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adessou Kossivi</td>
<td>The financial reality of organisations and networks in the context of increasing need, as well as the impact of climate risk on funding and the commitments of the Grand Bargain.</td>
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Farida Bena
An assessment of current efforts in to improve the quality and localisation of aid as both a recipient of assistance as well as a donor to partners and the impact of the slow pace of change. The opportunities and challenges in this context for progress.

Amiera Alhefeiti
What drives the choices the UAE makes about where and who to fund, as well as what changes they might need to make as the year goes on- and next year, as the humanitarian landscape becomes more dire due to the secondary impacts of the war in Ukraine.

Key messages of the side event:

This event will:
• Provide a retrospective of humanitarian funding trends, as well as an update of the current funding status of coordinated inter-agency plans to raise awareness of continually high humanitarian needs, funding gaps and urgent priorities.
• Examine existing opportunities in the humanitarian funding landscape for adaptation and collective advocacy for humanitarian plans, pooled funding mechanisms, and best practices to fund humanitarian crises; and promote system improvements and better coordination for funding to meet and reduce humanitarian needs.
• Reflect on the need for a strategic and coordinated approach to advocate for more quality funding, including cascading to local partners, speed and flexibility. In this regard, this discussion will also cover some of the key points related to humanitarian funding that are being discussed in Grand Bargain political caucuses will be presented.
• Highlight the importance of coordinating different types of financing (humanitarian and development) to address crisis needs, particularly given the risk of decreases in Overseas Development Assistance in the current context.
• Show how increased pressures on the system affect the ability to achieve long-needed reforms.

Main points raised during the discussion with participants:
• What are the funding mechanism(s) for early warning systems for better prevention, detection and timely actions for better action?
• Did the GHA report look at exploring whether countries that increased their funding to humanitarian appeals have added additional funding to their ODA budgets? Or are they pivoting their development funding to fund new humanitarian crises? There is a real risk of setting our progress back with achieving the SDGs, if our donors couldn’t continue to fund the longer term development goals.
• Given that we have limited resources, how do we make the most of what we have? The system is focusing on the improvements to the quality of funding and to localisation through the Grand Bargain process. Where does more progress need to be made?
• In the case of the Central African Republic, the Humanitarian Country Team has agreed to allocate almost 30% of the Humanitarian funds (per CBHF allocation) to local organisations This was a good move to encourage the national organisations to implement projects on the ground. Why can’t this good practice be replicated in other areas with humanitarian crises?

Outcomes of the side event:

For the in-session poll, which asked what is the most important way humanitarian finance needs to change and adapt, the majority of respondents (24/84) said a more coherent approach to the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus.

The audience for the event understood current humanitarian funding trends and the current status of plans to raise awareness of high humanitarian needs, funding gaps and urgent priorities, as well what changes we might begin to
expect in those trends as the result of the food insecurity in the Horn of Africa and the situation in Ukraine.

The panelists demonstrated how increased pressure on the systems affects the ability to achieve long-needed reforms. They each identified key changes that need to happen in the next year, before this group convenes again, including reflecting on the need for a strategic and coordinated approach to advocate for more quality funding, cascading to local partners, speed and flexibility.

The recording is available to watch here.