



ECOSOC HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS SEGMENT

UN SECRETARIAT, NEW YORK 27-29 June 2016

High-Level Panel on “Moving beyond business as usual: Working together to reduce need, risk and vulnerability”

Tuesday, 28 June 2016; From 10:00 – 13:00
ECOSOC Chamber, New York

This is one of three high-level interactive panels 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*. The objective is to build an understanding of a new way of working to reduce need, risk and vulnerability and reflect on outcomes stemming from the World Humanitarian Summit, discussing practical ways to move forward on them.

Background and theme

Tens of millions of people live in acute humanitarian need. Many millions more are vulnerable to socioeconomic shocks and the risks of devastating effects of conflict and natural hazards. While the existing aid model brings relief and advancement to many, too many people face protracted and recurrent crises that leave them dependent on aid or at risk of new or worsening shocks. The Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030 constitute a new era in national and international cooperation and provide a comprehensive, transformational, 15-year results framework for all actors to work to meet the needs of people. In line with these goals, the World Humanitarian Summit consultation process documented the widespread call for a new way of working that brings diverse actors together across mandates, sectors and institutional boundaries to deliver stronger results for people affected by crises and reducing their risk and vulnerability

Moving beyond “business as usual,” this new way of working means that humanitarian actors and others should aim to move beyond just *addressing* humanitarian needs to *reducing* needs. This shift places people at the center, by asking what it would take to reduce people’s risk and vulnerability and improve their development prospects, and then charting a course for collaboration with a diverse group of actors to achieve this. The panel will discuss what it would take to implement the Secretary-General’s vision for achieving this which includes, actors working together towards collective outcomes reducing need, risk and vulnerability, over multiple years, and based on comparative advantage. In practice, this new way of working will require joined up risk, needs and capacity analysis, common problem statements, better coordinated planning and programming, empowered leadership, and coherent financing to advance the Secretary-General’s Agenda for Humanity. This new way of working will require greater support and investment in local, national and regional leadership, capacity strengthening and response systems. Recognizing that the particular shape of the new way of working will be determined by context and that nothing should undermine the commitment to principled humanitarian action, the approach aims to meet immediate needs in times of crisis, while also working actively to move people out of crises and on to a path toward the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Key Issues/Questions

Against this backdrop, the High-Level Panel will focus on the following suggested questions to discuss the practical application of the new way of working and the changes it implies.

- How can the international community further strengthen national and local capacity to address need, vulnerability and risk?
- How can humanitarian actors use the opportunity of the SDGs to contribute to reducing need in support of local and national institutions while recognizing the need for independent and principled humanitarian action in emergency situations?
- How does early development action reduce humanitarian suffering and the length of protracted crises?

- What changes, including within UN agencies, will need to be made so that relevant actors - particularly humanitarian and development - can work better together towards long-term results for people that also contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and how the international financial architecture can support this?