**Assignment 7: Leadership in Humanitarian Contexts**

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Introduction

States have the primary responsibility to ensure the human rights of their citizens are respected, protected and fulfilled. During times of humanitarian crisis, if states are unable or unwilling to fulfil this role, humanitarian organizations attempt to provide assistance and protection to populations in need.

Humanitarian principles and standards of conduct for humanitarian workers have been developed by various actors over the past several years, based largely on international humanitarian law and the work of the ICRC. The Red Cross Movement and many of the major humanitarian NGOs have adopted a 10-point Code of Conduct. The “do no harm” principle, developed by Mary B. Anderson in the 1990’s, has developed into an approach, inspiring a series of training workshops for humanitarian workers. The Sphere Humanitarian Charter includes a set of principles that constitute an operational framework for accountability for the Steering Committee on Humanitarian Response, Interaction, VOICE, ICRC, and ICVA. The UN agencies are committed to the three core humanitarian principles listed in GA Resolution 46/182 which established the present system of UN coordination in humanitarian crises, i.e. humanity, neutrality, impartiality. Globally, the role of identification and upholding of common humanitarian principles falls to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the only body that brings together the UN agencies, the Red Cross Movement and the NGOs working in humanitarian action. At country-level, a group that reflects the composition of the IASC is often established as the primary forum for such discussions.

The essential elements for this presentation is focused Leadership in Humanitarian Contexts. The limitations of this research are based on: What Humanitarian Principles stand for, with two Humanitarians principles? What the following terms as used in Humanitarianism (i. humanitarian intervention; ii.Disaster Management; iii. Humanitarian Assistance; and iv.Common Humanitarian Action Plan) mean? What are the five types of emergencies? What are the two principle functions and two auxiliary functions of humanitarian systems? What six facets of coordination are as highlighted in the Humanitarian practice? Two types of the analytical techniques are used: (1) Definition- setting down the precise of a word or phrase and showing why the distinctions implied the definition are necessary by expanding on particular elements that may be sources of confusion or misunderstanding. In addition, (2) Explanation – clarifying by the use of explanation, model and example.

# Define Humanitarian Principles. Elaborate in details two Humanitarians principles.

All UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) activities are guided by the four humanitarian principles: humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. These principles provide the foundations for humanitarian action. They are central to establishing and maintaining access to affected people, whether in a natural disaster or a complex emergency, such as armed conflict. Promoting and ensuring compliance with the principles are essential elements of effective humanitarian coordination. These humanitarian principals are define as follow:

* **Humanity**: Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found. The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings.
* **Neutrality**: Humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.
* **Impartiality**: Humanitarian action must be carried out on the basis of need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress and making no distinctions on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political options.
* **Independence**: Humanitarian action must be autonomous from the political economic, militarily or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.

The revised set of humanitarian principles makes a clearer distinction between **humanitarian principles**, which are concerned with how to ensure the integrity and non-politicized nature of humanitarian work, and **programming principles**, such as coordination of activities and gender equality, which have more to do with ensuring solid programming in emergencies (as in other contexts). Therefore, coordination and gender equality have been removed from the list of humanitarian principles. However, they have been integrated into the relevant areas below.

1. **The humanitarian imperative**: Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found, with particular attention to the most vulnerable in the population, such as children, women, the displaced and the elderly. The dignity and rights of all those in need of humanitarian assistance must be respected and protected. The humanitarian imperative implies a right to receive humanitarian assistance and a right to offer it. At times, humanitarian access to civilian populations is denied by authorities for political or security reasons. Humanitarian agencies must maintain their ability to obtain and sustain access to all vulnerable populations and to negotiate such access with all parties to the conflict.
2. **Neutrality**: Humanitarian agencies must not take sides in the hostilities or in controversies based on political, racial, religious or ideological identity (non-partisanship/independence). Transparency and openness are key issues to keep neutrality. Neutrality for an organization that has taken on a rights-based approach must not, however, be an obstacle to tackling human rights violations. Neutrality is not a justification for condoning impunity or turning a blind eye to egregious human rights abuses. It does not negate the need for some form of action, whether through strategic advocacy, simple presence, political demarches and local negotiations.
3. **Impartiality**: aid is delivered to all those who are suffering; the guiding principle is only their need and the corresponding right. Human rights are the basis and the framework for an assessment of needs. This principle includes both the proportionality to need (where resources are not sufficient, priority is always given to those most affected) as well as the principle of non-discrimination (no one should be discriminated against based on their sex, age, ethnicity, identity, etc.). It is crucial to emphasize state responsibility in ensuring that aid is delivered in an impartial way.
4. **Do no/less harm**: Although aid can become part of the dynamics of the conflict and may even prolong it, humanitarian organizations must strive to “**do no harm**” or to minimize the harm they may be inadvertently doing simply by being present and providing assistance. To minimize possible longer-term harm, humanitarian organizations should provide assistance in ways that are supportive of recovery and long-term development.
5. **Accountability**: there are four stakeholders in the provision of aid assistance: the beneficiary community; the national/local authority; the donor and the aid agency. Within this relationship, international aid agencies shall hold themselves accountable to both the beneficiary communities (that their needs for assistance and protection are met, with dignity) and the donors (that assistance is provided for the proposed purpose). Coordination among organizations is thus a key part of this principle. National/local authorities, on their part, shall hold themselves accountable for the protection, safety and well-being of populations living in areas over which they claim control.
6. **Participation of affected populations, in particular women and children**: Humanitarian action tends to look at short-term needs and forget the responsibilities of the aid community to give sustainable aid in a way that realizes the right of affected populations to participate in decisions that affect their lives. It is, however, important to build on capacities in the affected population, and promote the participation of beneficiaries in all that we do. Participation raises questions, namely 'participation of who?’ (Men, women, girls, boys, traditional and modern institutions, etc.), 'participation for what?' (The objectives of participation, e.g. to facilitate targeting of programmes, to ensure buy-in of local populations, etc.), and 'how to do participation?' (e.g. how to address discrimination in participatory processes, how to ensure that people engaged and participating in the aid process will not themselves be targets of human rights violations and stigmatised as the result of their participation?).
7. **Respect for culture and custom**: Understanding local customs and traditions is, of course, important, not only in carrying out your work, but also in understanding local values when connecting them to internationally recognized human rights. While local culture and customs vary, human rights are universal and applicable to all human beings, no matter what the cultural setting, and must be paramount. Some interventions require particular sensitivity to local customs.

# Define the following terms as used in Humanitarianism

## Humanitarian intervention

It is a doctrine generally understood to mean coercive action by States involving the use of armed force in another State without the consent of its government, with or without authorization from the UN Security Council, for the purpose of preventing or putting to a halt gross and massive violations of human rights or international humanitarian law. The UN’s operations in Northern Iraq and Somalia, and NATO’s operation in Kosovo have all been termed humanitarian intervention. (OCHA)

## Disaster Management

Disaster is a serious disruption of a community or a society functioning, causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources. In other words, a natural hazard (potential threat) can lead to different outcomes.

While, Disaster risk management is an important part of disaster risk reduction because it comprises all forms of relevant activities, including structural and non-structural measures to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) adverse hazard effects. These actions need to be accompanied by a systematic process of administrative decisions, organizational and operational skills and capacities to implement policies and strategies and to facilitate the coping capacities of a community or a society with regard to the impacts of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters.

## Humanitarian Assistance

Aid that seeks to save lives and alleviate suffering of a crisis affected population. Humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the basic humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality, as stated in General Assembly Resolution 46/182. In addition, the UN seeks to provide humanitarian assistance with full respect for the sovereignty of States. Assistance may be divided into three categories - direct assistance, indirect assistance and infrastructure support - which have diminishing degrees of contact with the affected population - (OCHA)

## Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP)

The CHAP is a strategic plan for humanitarian response in a given country or region and includes the following elements: (1) a common analysis of the context in which humanitarian action takes place an assessment of needs. (2) Best, worst, and most likely scenarios. (3) Stakeholder analysis, i.e. who does what and where. (4) A clear statement of longer-term objectives and goals; (5) Prioritized response plans; and (6) A framework for monitoring the strategy and revising it if necessary. (FTS Glossary).

# Using examples explain five types of emergencies.

The most telling characteristics of complex emergencies are high levels of violence perpetrated by warring factions against civilian populations and vulnerable populations, the threatened extinction of minority, ethnic, and religious populations resulting in the largest migration of people in the history of humankind, and the catastrophic destruction of basic public health protections and infrastructure. Five types of emergencies are classified as follow:

1. **Emergencies are normally based on civil conflicts**: Since the end of the cold war the nature of emergencies have changed dramatically. Conflicts are increasingly of an internal nature, exacerbated by uneven social and economic development, religious identities, lack of democratic space, and ethnic versus national identity. In the past when most armed conflicts were international, i.e. between states, armies fought each other, not individuals. While realities have changed, the international legal frameworks still reflect the realities as they were during the two World Wars. At that time, it was clearly a question of an international war between several states and therefore a matter that could easily be referred to the international arena. It has been much more challenging to "internationalize" civil wars. Some call the trend "privatization" of war and relief, not only because private actors rather than states are involved, but because it is hard to distinguish between political and criminal violence. In today’s internal conflicts, not only are individuals victims of warfare, but they are also perpetrators of violence and genocide.
2. **Typical to complex emergencies is the lack of authority and security**: National authorities, where they exist, are normally not in effective control of the territory, or a control only part of the territory. As a result, there is lack of security both for the civilian population and the humanitarian community. Working in complex emergencies means dealing with government authorities as well ask non-state entities, i.e. rebel movements and insurgent groups, and this causes legal and political dilemmas. In some recent crisis it has become a rather difficult task to keep track of which party to deal with. In some situations there are so many different warring parties and authorities to deal with, and the situation is so extremely volatile there may be different authorities for different days.
3. **Because of lack of "responsible" authority, flagrant violations of human rights and massive displacement are the result**: The type of emergencies that are evolving today, are particularly horrific in that human rights are being increasingly violated and the erosion of humanitarian space is endemic. For example, humanitarian agencies are being denied access to groups of people who are in need of their assistance. Women and children are not only the victims of war; they have become the deliberate targets of warfare. As a result, the numbers of displaced and victims of armed conflicts are enormous, and humanitarian actors face not only financial hurdles, but also legal, moral and political dilemmas. It has been estimated that more than 80% of the victims in today’s conflicts are women and children. It is clear that in today’s conflicts we are dealing with erosion of traditional values. For example, in all societies children are accorded some sort of special protection, but during an internal conflict, those values are eroded by the circumstances. This is also reflective of the changing nature of conflicts.
4. **Disruption of infrastructure and economic system are likely to occur:** Political aspects give complex emergencies their unique characteristics. Some situations that are described as complex emergencies could also be argued to be, in effect, deep and protracted political crisis engendered by profound social change, or sometimes even the lack of it. Most emergencies stem from the complex interaction among a wide variety of social, economic and political factors. Instability is extremely disruptive to any effort in maintaining an infra-structure that supports society. Roads, movement of services and goods, cash flow, etc. – all are affected by warfare. In some emergencies it may even be the humanitarian community which lays the basis for an infrastructure and an economic system. This fact carries with it certain responsibilities and duties to act so that the affected population can benefit in the longer term perspective as well.
5. **Complex emergencies combine internal conflict with large-scale displacements of people**, **mass famine and fragile or failing economic, political and social institutions**: Complex emergencies or complex political disasters, the designation of complexity reflects the multiple political, economic, social, ethnic, and religious factors that lead first to the conflict, and then, prevent its resolution. The Global Humanitarian Emergencies, 1995 U.S.Mission to the UN, January 1995 This report begins at the root of the coordination problem: the tasks required on the ground and the actors who can perform these tasks. It highlights the complexity of these emergencies and points out the formidable challenges to effective coordination at the national policy level. Three cases--Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia--will be used to examine how the U.S. government responded to unfolding events. The report concludes with specific recommendations for improving coordination within the U.S. government.

# Highlight the two principle functions and two Auxiliary Functions of Humanitarian systems. Support your answers with relevant examples.

The objective of humanitarian organizations in crisis response is to alleviate human suffering and meet basic needs. Plans and operations to meet this objective will be based on information such as affected population numbers, locations, profile and needs, as well as contextual information regarding logistics, security, capacities and plans of other agencies.

The effectiveness of any response is dependent on the quality of information available. However, in a complex and rapidly changing crisis environment, reliable, accurate and up-to-date information is often scarce and difficult to locate. Humanitarian missions, carried out in chaotic and fast-changing environments by multiple actors, often lack even the most basic shared information systems. This means surveys are frequently repeated and the results not shared or effectively used. Although individual organizations bear responsibility for dealing with this issue, there are certain common information needs which can benefit the humanitarian community as a whole. In this context, a focal point for information sharing and processing, such as an OCHA Office or Humanitarian Information Centers (HIC), raises the efficiency of the humanitarian community, saving individual agencies time and energy on information sharing and processing, and providing a common platform of available information which facilitates collaboration.

# Explain the Six facets of coordination as highlighted in the Humanitarian practice

Coordination relates to the process of planning and decision-making among organizations. Bringing agencies together to share and analyze information, and jointly develop response goals and strategies, coordination can also assist internal decision-making by providing the framework within which each organization can plan and execute its response activities. Therefore, by strengthening the coordination process (through providing ‘best possible’ information as shown in the previous section) the benefits of good Information Management (IM) practices at the inter-agency level flow through to the programming process of individual agencies.

As illustrated earlier, IM is a sequence of linked activities, essentially taking raw data, compiling/collating and associating it with other relevant data, and presenting this in a format designed to assist analysis, decision-making and action regarding aspects of a humanitarian crisis. As with coordination, IM does not in itself produce best-possible decisions or action; rather it supports this goal by providing decision makers with high quality information products relevant to the situation under consideration.

The ‘humanitarian community’ encompasses a large number of entities, each with particular interests and abilities. They range from formal, highly structured governmental institutions, through specialist international agencies to independent non-governmental organizations and concerned individuals. In an acute crisis, as these different types of relief stakeholders flood to the area, all under intense pressure to engage as quickly as possible, the characteristics of the ‘humanitarian community’ often mirror the fragmented and rapidly changing nature of the crisis itself.

Acknowledging this, UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182 (1992) recognized the need to ‘make more effective the collective efforts of the international community’, and confirmed that ‘the UN has a central and unique role to play in providing leadership and coordinating the efforts of the international community to…ensure the prompt and smooth delivery of relief assistance’.

The purpose of coordination is to enable humanitarian organizations to maximize the impact of their collective effort. In simple terms coordination output might produce a set of programmes that are compatible (avoiding gaps or overlaps); targeted to the most in need; and delivered in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

Six facets of coordination have been identified:

1. Avoiding duplication
2. Taking coherent approaches
3. Efficient use of resources
4. Leadership
5. Direction
6. Strata (local, sub-national, national, international)

The Humanitarian Coordinator, with support from OCHA and the UN Country Team, has primary responsibility for the structure and functioning of coordination mechanisms4. The impact on humanitarian response (measured in terms of the six facets above) will depend on their performance and the level of participation by humanitarian actors in the process.

In practice, coordination is a complex process (joint analysis, planning and decision-making; building consensus on goals and priorities) but the first step is to ensure that the relevant actors are at least working with the same information and that this is as accurate and timely as possible. Information is in this sense the foundation stone on which decision-making and coordination are based.

# Conclusion

Recent years have seen a shift in the way the international community thinks about the relationship between security and development. Specifically, it is now recognized that security and sustainable development are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing. One consequence of this new thinking has been the increasing involvement of development organizations in peace building activities.

A similar logic has been at work with regards to humanitarian organizations, many of which, notwithstanding their specific modus operandi and adherence to humanitarian principles, have also tried to incorporate a peace building and development perspective into their work. At the same time, experience has shown, in many contexts around the world such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia and El Salvador, that security sector reform should be considered a central aspect of transition peace building.

Humanitarian organizations have generally maintained a somewhat ambiguous relationship with the security sector. Key security sector actors, such as the armed forces and the police, are responsible for guaranteeing their security, safety and access to beneficiary populations in often-volatile environment of transition situations. But at the same time, these actors may well be parties to the conflict, and responsible for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, and so are prime targets of the persuasion, advocacy, monitoring activities of these organizations.

# References

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