

**Report on the Regional Consultations for the Middle East and North Africa
In preparation for the World Summit on Humanitarian Action**

**Dead Sea, Jordan
3 -5 March 2015**

1. Within the framework of preparations for the World Summit on Humanitarian Action due to be held in Turkey in May 2016, regional consultations at the level of the Middle East and North Africa were held in the Dead Sea, Jordan, on 3-5 March 2015. This has been the fifth round of regional consultations out of a set of eight, held under the co-chairmanship of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the League of Arab States and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Action, and with the participation of 180 delegates from 17 Arab countries, namely: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Kuwait, Morocco, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Palestine, Oman, Syria, Tunisia, the UAE and Yemen (Annex no.1 – Consultations Program). The OIC was represented by the Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Mr. Amjad Moussa from the same department.
2. Mr. Nasr Jouda, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Jordan, delivered the inaugural address followed by statements delivered by Amb. Badreddine Alali, Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs at the League of Arab States, the OIC Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Mr. Valery Amos (Annex no.1 – Statement of the OIC Assistant Secretary General). The consultations were also attended by a number of international and regional organizations and many civil society institutions and representatives of the affected local communities as well as national and international NGOs, UN agencies, the International Red Cross and Crescent, and representatives of the private sector and academia.
3. The consultations were preceded by preparatory meetings with 1,230 people representing the segments concerned with humanitarian action (Report on this aspect attached under Annex no.3) Most of the participants in the regional consultations reaffirmed what was mooted in the preparatory phase of the consultations, expressing deep concern over the ongoing ordeal endured in the region, and voicing the view that the prevailing situation is inadmissible and that the decision-makers in the region and across the world must take every necessary measure to put an end to this tragic situation and address the root-causes of the humanitarian sufferings in the region with an emphasis on the fact that there are no simply humanitarian solutions for political ones.
4. Many of the participants highlighted the longstanding ordeal endured by the Palestinian people considered as the core of the problem and called for an end to the occupation and for the establishment of the independent Palestinian State such as to honour the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

5. The Regional consultations of the World Summit on humanitarian action in the Middle East and North Africa focused on six of the themes that had emerged from the preparatory meetings, as follows: protection of civilians, humanitarian aid channeling, extended crises and migration, centralized local response, alertness to emergencies and humanitarian funding. A number of additional issues will be considered within the framework of future preparatory meetings.
6. Many recommendations were tabled during the consultations around each theme, leading to the emergence of a generally agreed perception that humanitarian efforts cannot offer an effective defense against the current humanitarian crises, given their nature and dimension. There were also calls for an overhaul of the humanitarian action system and its work procedures in order to ensure a greater level of protection and assistance to the needy. The participants expressed hopes and expectations as to the important role of the World Summit on Humanitarian Action in implementing the required changes and refocusing on the chronic humanitarian needs, the rescue of lives and the alleviation of human sufferings, and also the hope that humanitarian assistance should not be used as a substitute for political action.
7. The regional consultations of the Middle East and North Africa brought together a distinct group of active humanitarian parties, and many expressed the hope that this network of humanitarian action activists in the region will endure and pave the way for broad partnerships such as to advance these recommendations.
8. The summary was approved by the participating organizations including the OIC, the Arab League and the UN office, in favour of coordinating humanitarian action. It is worth noting that the summary as presented by the co-chairmanship is not a consensual document enjoying the consent of all participants, but it still reflects the major findings and recommendations as expressed by the participants in these regional consultations. (Annexed-4)



WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT

REGIONAL CONSULTATION
Middle East and North Africa
Jordan 3-5 March 2015



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BRIEFING PACK

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Countries in the Middle East and North Africa regional consultation



Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

FOREWORD



As we gather in Amman for the Middle East and North Africa Regional Consultation, we enter a crucial phase in our consultation process for the World Humanitarian Summit. I expect this meeting, the fifth of eight regional consultations, to advance the global discussions significantly and pave the way towards the summit in Istanbul in 2016.

The Middle East and North Africa region has witnessed a substantial rise in humanitarian crises; in Syria alone an estimated 12.2 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. Many of the region's crises have lasted for years or even decades, and host countries and communities are struggling with accommodating growing numbers of displaced people.

Let us not forget that these protracted crises will have a profound impact on the lives and livelihoods of millions of women, men and children for years to come. The average length of time refugees are displaced is now 17 years – an entire childhood and youth for those displaced as young children or born during displacement.

These numbers illustrate in the most dramatic way the need to rethink our approach to humanitarian action, and I am calling on all of you to seize the opportunity of this Regional Consultation to come up with concrete solutions to tackle these challenges. It is our chance to think about how we can work differently and more effectively in future – to save lives and reduce suffering.

I would like to thank the Regional Steering Group and their partners for making sure that civil society organizations and people affected by humanitarian crises were at the core of the consultations leading up to this meeting, making this a truly inclusive process. I am particularly pleased to see that great efforts have been made to include and amplify the voice of the region's youth. We need to make sure that we capitalize on the strong numbers and the often unused potential of young people and find better ways to engage them in humanitarian response.

During the consultation of individuals, civil society organizations, affected communities and government representatives, a number of crucial issues emerged, which will frame our discussions during the next days. Stakeholders across the region identified the protection of civilians, limited humanitarian access and the impact of counter-terrorism legislation as key concerns. Other issues, such as the importance of putting affected people at the heart of humanitarian action and the localization of humanitarian response, reaffirmed demands coming out of previous WHS consultations.

Perhaps most importantly, stakeholders consistently stated that humanitarian aid cannot continue to be a substitute for political action. All those consulted agreed that there is a need to find solutions to the root causes of people's suffering – which goes beyond the mandate of humanitarians.

It is encouraging to see that actors across the region appear ready to find new ways of more effectively meeting humanitarian needs and implementing the necessary changes. In this spirit I call on you to go beyond the usual conversations and to enter into a real debate on what can and should be done. Should this meeting arrive at a predictable conclusion, then we will have failed to meet our expectations to truly reshape aid and cooperation.

The World Humanitarian Summit is our opportunity to embrace new actors, forge stronger partnerships and adapt to the next generation of crises. It is our chance to take bold steps towards new ways of working together. The time for change is now. We can and must do more to save lives, reduce suffering and preserve human dignity.

Dr. Jemilah Mahmood
Chief, WHS secretariat

Dr. Jemilah Mahmood is the Chief of the World Humanitarian Summit Secretariat and has more than 15 years of experience working in disaster affected countries. She was the Chief of Humanitarian Response at United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in New York from 2011-2009, and from 2013-2011 was concurrently a Senior Visiting Research Fellow at the Humanitarian Futures Programme at King's Policy Institute, King's College London, and worked on private sector and military roles in disasters as well as engagement with a diverse set of humanitarian actors. She is also a medical physician and the founder of MERCY Malaysia, one of the most successful humanitarian organizations from the global south, leading it for a decade. Dr. Mahmood has worked closely with regional organizations, particularly ASEAN, and has been an active member of several humanitarian international boards.

BACKGROUND AND GOALS

World Humanitarian Summit

The first World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), to be held in Istanbul in May 2016, is an initiative of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. It will bring together governments, humanitarian organizations, people affected by humanitarian crises and associated partners including the private sector to propose solutions to our most pressing challenges and set a forward-looking agenda to keep humanitarian action fit for the future. This will be the first-ever humanitarian gathering of such scope.

This initiative comes at a crucial time. Humanitarian needs worldwide are already massive and likely to keep mounting. Global trends such as climate change, urbanization and population growth are creating new challenges for the future. The humanitarian landscape is also changing: the number of actors involved in humanitarianism is increasing and new kinds of actors are participating. Technologies are bringing new methods and partnerships to the humanitarian sphere, enabling people affected by crises to express their views and needs more immediately and with greater impact. At the same time, humanitarian action is riskier than ever: a record number of humanitarian workers were victims of violence in 2013.

Regional Consultations

To explore the options of a future humanitarian agenda, a consultative process that started in 2014 has been bringing together humanitarian actors and other stakeholders in a series of regional consultations. These aim to identify regional perspectives on what changes are required to meet the humanitarian challenges of now and the future. To date, four regional consultations have taken place: West and Central Africa (Abidjan, June 2014), North and South-East Asia (Tokyo, July 2014), Eastern and Southern Africa (Pretoria, October 2014) and Europe and Others group (Budapest, February 2015). After the regional consultation for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the remaining three will be for the Latin America and Caribbean region (7-5 May in Guatemala City), for the Pacific region (30 June - 2 July in Auckland), and for South and Central Asia (early August, location TBD).

Regional Consultation for MENA: Goals and Ways Forward

The WHS secretariat envisions the WHS as an opportunity to mobilize broad support and commitment on changes that are necessary to meet the humanitarian challenges of the future. The outputs of the Dead Sea event will have a major influence on the summit and its preceding global consultation, to be held in October 2015 in Geneva. They should be bold and advance the global discussions significantly; and they should feature specific, implementable recommendations for humanitarian actors and other stakeholders in the region, and perhaps commitment to pilot some of them immediately so as to gain experience before the summit.

The regional consultation will respond to the issues and recommendations that have emerged from the preparatory stakeholder consultation process and are presented in the Stakeholder Analysis Report. Participants are expected to take stock of regional progress and lessons for humanitarian action and identify key recommendations on how to better meet humanitarian needs in the region. These recommendations will be captured in a co-chairs' summary and a final regional consultation report, both informing subsequent WHS regional and thematic discussions.

Given that no single gathering in a region facing so many humanitarian crises can encompass all key actors and issues, various stakeholder consultations will continue in the region after the Dead Sea meeting, including those with the private sector and academia. The Regional Steering Group (RSG) will continue to function so as to follow up on further consultations in the region and to promote the implementation of recommendations that emerge from the regional consultation process in the lead-up to the summit in 2016.

There is much work to be done. The regional consultation for MENA needs to result in bold and substantive recommendations to ensure that Istanbul is a platform for meaningful and far-reaching change—not just on how to adjust the present system but on what is needed to respond to the humanitarian challenges of the future. People in need now and in the coming years require and deserve no less.

ANNOTATED AGENDA

Overview

The regional consultation meeting will take place over two and a half days (5-3 March 2015) at the Dead Sea in Jordan. The meeting format will adopt a combination of plenary and breakout group sessions. The consultation will be opened by high-level representatives of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, League of Arab States (LAS) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), followed by a keynote address by the UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

The opening remarks will be followed by an overview of the global WHS process as well as a summary of main findings of the pre-consultation process in the MENA region. These presentations will set the stage for subsequent breakout group discussions. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees will make closing remarks on Day 1.

In the afternoon of Day1 and over the course of Day 2, parallel breakout group sessions, facilitated by regional and global experts, will take place to promote active participation and to stimulate creative thinking on best practices and lessons learned on six key humanitarian issues: emergency preparedness, humanitarian financing, protection of civilians, protracted crises and displacement, humanitarian access and localizing humanitarian response.

Participants will be pre-assigned to groups and will each be involved in three breakout group sessions. Plenary sessions on the Day 2 and Day 3 will be an opportunity to outline and validate the key findings related to each issue.

A panel on forced displacement in the MENA region will take place in the evening of Day 2 with a number of high-level global and regional subject matter experts.

During the final plenary sessions on Day 3, the RSG co-chairs will present the draft outcomes and recommendations for endorsement. The consultation will be closed by the high-level representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the UN Secretary General's Humanitarian Envoy and the host, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The opening and closing sessions on Day 1 and Day 3 will be public, with media presence and a live Twitter feed.

MONDAY, 2 MARCH 2015

17:00- 21:00	Registration of participants at the Kempinski Hotel Ishtar Dead Sea reception Participants will be given their badges and conference package upon registration.
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DAY 1 - TUESDAY, 3 MARCH 2015

08:00-09:00	Registration of participants at the King Hussein Bin Talal Convention Center Participants will be given their badges and conference package upon registration.
OPENING PLENARY SESSION (PUBLIC SESSION)	
09:00 – 09:15	Welcome by the Master of Ceremonies (MC) Ms. Alia Al-Dalli , International Director Designate MENA region, SOS Villages International
09:15 – 10:30	High-level opening remarks • His Excellency Nasser Judeh, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan • His Excellency Ambassador Dr. Badr Eddine El Allali, Assistant Secretary-General, Head of Social Affairs Sector, League of Arab States (LAS) • His Excellency Ambassador Hesham Youssef, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) • Ms. Valerie Amos, United Nations Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator
10:30 – 11:15	Group photo and coffee break
PLENARY SESSION (CLOSED SESSION)	
11:15 – 11:30	World Humanitarian Summit: Setting the stage Dr. Jemilah Mahmood , Chief of the World Humanitarian Summit secretariat
11:30 – 11:35	Video Animated video of the preparatory stakeholder consultation process in the MENA region
11:35 – 12:05	Presentation on the regional consultation preparatory process and the main findings Ms. Rema Jamous-Imseis , Head of OCHA Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa On behalf of the WHS Regional Steering Group, participants will be briefed on the preparatory process in the lead up to the regional consultation. They will also be informed of the main findings that emerged from the process and the rationale for the selection of breakout discussion session topics.
12:05 – 12:15	Briefing on breakout session methodology
12:15 – 13:30	Lunch

BREAKOUT GROUP SESSION 1 (CLOSED SESSION)	
13:30 – 16:30 Coffee will be served during the session	Breakout group discussion 8 discussion sessions in parallel on Emergency Preparedness and Humanitarian Financing
16:30 – 17:00	Coffee break
PLENARY SESSION (PUBLIC SESSION)	
17:00 – 17:45	High-level remarks Mr. Antonio Guterres , United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
17:45 onwards	Light dinner reception Light dinner reception and WHS photography exhibition "The Spirit of Humanity"

DAY 2 – WEDNESDAY, 4 MARCH 2015	
PLENARY SESSION (CLOSED SESSION)	
09:00 – 10:00	Feedback from day 1 breakout group discussions Presentation of the outcomes and recommendations from working groups on Emergency Preparedness and Humanitarian Financing
10:00 – 13:00 Coffee will be served during the session	Breakout group discussions 8 discussion sessions in parallel on Protection of Civilians and Protracted Crises and Displacement
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
BREAKOUT GROUP SESSION 3 (CLOSED SESSION)	
14:00 – 17:00 Coffee will be served during the session	Breakout group discussions 8 discussion sessions in parallel on Localizing Humanitarian Response and Humanitarian Access
PANEL DISCUSSION (CLOSED SESSION)	
18:00 – 19:30	Panel discussion on forced displacement in the MENA region Speakers: • Dr. Chaloka Beyani, Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons • Dr. Mohammed bin Ghanem Al-Ali Al-Maadheed, President of Qatar Red Crescent Society • Mr. Muhannad Hadi, Regional Director for Middle East and North Africa of the World Food Program • Mr. Richard Wright, Director, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East Moderated by: Ms. Alia Al-Dalli , International Director Designate MENA region, SOS Villages International

DAY 3 - THURSDAY, 5 MARCH 2015	
	PLENARY SESSION (CLOSED SESSION)
09:30 – 11:00	Feedback from day 2 breakout discussions Presentation of the outcomes and recommendations from working groups on Protection of Civilians, Protracted Crises and Displacement, Localizing Humanitarian Response and Humanitarian Access
11:00 – 11:45	Coffee break
	PLENARY SESSION (CLOSED SESSION)
11:00-13:00	Presentation and discussion of the co-chairs' summary LAS, OIC and OCHA will present the co-chairs' summary of the regional consultation findings and recommendations for discussion
	CLOSING PLENARY SESSION (PUBLIC SESSION)
12:30 – 13:15	High-level remarks • Mr. Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross • His Excellency Dr. Abdullah Al Matouq, United Nations Secretary-General's Humanitarian Envoy
13:15-13:25	Host government closing remarks Ms. Leena Al Hadid , Director, International Relations and Organizations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
13:25 – 14:30	Lunch

PARTICIPANTS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Throughout the regional consultation, participants are requested to adhere to the following code of conduct:

- **Timeliness** – Given the limited amount of time for the regional consultation and the broad range of issues that are to be covered, it is important that all sessions start and end on time. Presenters are expected to abide by the timeframes they have been given and participants are asked to avoid long discursive statements during the discussion sessions, but to state their point succinctly. Timekeepers will be assigned to support each session; all presenters, facilitators and participants are asked to respect the timekeeper and to conclude their discussions when requested.
- **Use of telephones and computers** – Participants are asked to show due respect for their fellows by silencing their phones and refraining from using their computers while in the plenary and breakout group rooms, and to exit the room to take any urgent calls.
- **Respects for diversity** – All participants are expected to respect - and encourage - the diversity of opinion and experience of their fellow participants. In order to foster an environment in which people feel safe to make bold and provocative suggestions, we must start with a commitment to be open to all ideas and to discuss them on their merits.
- **Language** – The regional consultation will be conducted in Arabic and English. Simultaneous translation will be provided in the plenary and breakout group sessions. All presenters, facilitators and participants should make a conscious effort, however, to speak clearly and slowly in order that they can be easily understood and to avoid using jargon and acronyms.
- **The Chatham House Rule** – All sessions labeled "Closed Sessions" on the agenda will be conducted under the Chatham House Rule as follows:

When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.
- **Coverage of the public sessions of the regional consultation meeting** – The public sessions of the regional consultation will be recorded by a videographer and photographers and media representatives will be present. Key statements will be publicized on social media.
- **Social media** – Participants are encouraged to share their observations, photographs and favorite ideas from the public sessions via social media. To follow the WHS proceedings, please visit Facebook (World Humanitarian Summit and *القمة العالمية للعمل الإنساني*) and Twitter at @WHSummit and @WHSummitAR and join the conversation with the hashtags #ReShapeAid and #WHSmena.
- **Participant interviews** – A limited number of one-on-one interviews will be conducted by media representatives and conference videographer in order to support documentation of the regional consultations. If a participant is willing to be interviewed, they are encouraged to inform the secretariat team to be considered for the interview roster. Please contact Ms. Heba Sharaf, OCHA (sharafh@un.org) or approach the media registration desk.

BIOGRAPHIES OF HIGH-LEVEL REPRESENTATIVES



H.E. Mr. Nasser Judeh

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

His Excellency Mr Nasser Judeh is Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. He has previously served at the Royal Hashemite Court, first in His Majesty King Hussein's press office and subsequently as private secretary to HRH Prince Hassan.

Judeh established and headed the Jordan Information Bureau in London and has served as Director of Jordan Television and Director General of the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation. Judeh was Government Spokesperson and Minister of State for Media Affairs and Communications in previous governments.

Born in Amman, Judeh received his elementary and secondary education in Jordan and the UK and obtained a BSc degree in Foreign Service at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. Judeh is a native speaker of Arabic, equally fluent in English and a proficient speaker of French.



Ms. Valerie Amos

United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Valerie Amos is the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. Ms. Amos brings extensive knowledge and experience to the position. She was most recently the United Kingdom's High Commissioner to Australia.

She has been a long-time campaigner and advocate on human rights, social justice and equality issues. She is a former Secretary of State for International Development in the British Government and was also President of the Privy Council and Leader of the House of Lords.

Born in Guyana, she holds a Bachelor of Arts in sociology and a Master of Arts in cultural studies as well as honorary doctorates from eleven UK and one US University. She was awarded the order of the Volta by the Government of Ghana and has also been honored by the Government of Benin. She was also recognized by the Smithsonian Museum for African Art for her work on the continent.



Mr. Antonio Guterres
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

António Guterres became the 10th UN High Commissioner for Refugees on June 15 2005. A former Portuguese prime minister, Guterres was elected by the UN General Assembly to a five-year term. In 2010, the General Assembly re-elected Guterres to a second five-year term.

Before joining UNHCR, Guterres spent more than 20 years in government and public service. He served as Portuguese prime minister from 1995 to 2002, during which time he was heavily involved in the international effort to resolve the crisis in East Timor. As president of the European Council in early 2000, he led the adoption of the so-called Lisbon Agenda and co-chaired the first European Union-Africa summit. He also founded the Portuguese Refugee Council in 1991 and was part of the Council of State of Portugal from 1991 to 2002.

From 1981 to 1983, Guterres was a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, as well as chairman of the Committee on Demography, Migration and Refugees. In addition, he has been active in Socialist International, a worldwide organization of social democratic political parties. He was the group's vice-president from 1992 to 1999 and president from 1999 until mid2005-.

Guterres was born on April 14 1934, in Lisbon and educated at the Instituto Superior Técnico, where he remains a visiting professor.



Mr. Peter Maurer
President of the International Committee of the Red Cross

Peter Maurer was born in Thun, Switzerland, in 1956. He studied history and international law in Bern, where he was awarded a doctorate. In 1987 he entered the Swiss diplomatic service, where he held various positions in Bern and Pretoria before being transferred to New York in 1996 as deputy permanent observer at the Swiss mission to the United Nations.

In 2000 he was appointed ambassador and head of the human security division in the political directorate of the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs in Bern. In 2004 Mr Maurer was appointed ambassador and permanent representative of Switzerland to the United Nations in New York. In this position, he worked to integrate Switzerland, which had only recently joined the United Nations, into multilateral networks.

In June 2009, the UN General Assembly elected Mr Maurer chairman of the Fifth Committee, in charge of administrative and budgetary affairs. In addition, he was elected chairman of the Burundi configuration of the UN Peacebuilding Commission. In January 2010, Mr Maurer was appointed secretary of State for foreign affairs in Bern and took over the reins of the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs, with its five directorates and some 150 Swiss diplomatic missions around the world. He succeeded Jakob Kellenberger as ICRC president on 1 July 2012.



Dr. Abdullah Matouq Al-Matouq
United Nations Secretary-General Humanitarian Envoy

In November 2012, 28, the Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon appointed Dr. Abdullah Al-Matouq as The Humanitarian Envoy for Kuwait to work closely with the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs to build stronger partnerships in Kuwait and the region.

Dr. Al-Matouq's appointment was extended in December 2014 for the third consecutive year, expanding his mandates to work closely with the region, the Muslim world, governments and non-governmental organizations, League of Arab States, Organization of Islamic Cooperation and influential member states to raise the profile of major humanitarian crises around the world, build partnerships and create a platform for humanitarian dialogues and networks.

In May 2010, 11, Dr Al-Matouq was elected to head the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) as the 12th chairman of its board of directors. Dr. Al-Matouq holds an advisor role at the Diwan Al-Amiri for HH the Amir since 2010 till present. From 2003 to 2006, Al-Matouq was the Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, and in July 2006 up until March 2007, he was the also the Minister of Justice. Before being appointed as a minister in Kuwait's Cabinet, Al-Matouq worked as a faculty member at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training.

Born in 1957, Al-Matouq holds a master degree from Imam Mohammed University in Madina, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and a PhD from Glasgow University in Scotland, United Kingdom. In 2005, Al-Matouq was among seven Muslim Scholars who were presented with a badge of honor for arts and sciences of the first degree presented by the president of Egypt.

CO-CHAIRS OF THE REGIONAL STEERING GROUP



Ambassador Hesham Youssef
Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

He is an Egyptian diplomat and was chef de cabinet to the former Secretary General of the Arab League, Amr Moussa (2011-2003). Ambassador Youssef's career as a diplomat began when in 1985 he joined the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt. He went on to work at the Egyptian Embassy in Canada and then at the Egyptian mission to the UN and WTO in Geneva. He joined the Arab League as an official spokesman in 2001.



Ambassador Dr. Badr Eddine Al Allali
Assistant Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Head of Social Affairs Sector

Ambassador Dr. Badr Eddine Al Allali currently holds the position of Assistant Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Head of Social Affairs Sector. Before joining the League of Arab States, he was the director of the Moroccan Institute of Diplomatic Studies and prior to that the director of the Asian and Oceania Affairs Department at the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation.

Ambassador Dr. Al Allali was the former Moroccan Ambassador to Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific Islands, Malaysia and Brunei and the former director general of the Islamic Centre for Trade Development, which is affiliated to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

He has served as professor at the Higher Institute of Commerce and Contracts' Management in Morocco, with a focus on economic development. He has taken part in numerous debates on international relations, the dialogue between cultures and participated in international and regional conferences on economic development and international trade.



Ms. Rema Jamous-Imseis
Head, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa

Ms. Rema Jamous-Imseis is the Acting Head of the OCHA Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa in Cairo. She has been with the United Nations since 2003 and has held a variety of positions in political, legal and humanitarian affairs.

Prior to joining the UN, she served as Legal Counsel to the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario and worked as a civil litigator in Canada. Previous work experience includes consultancies and academic research in human rights, judicial independence and the rule of law.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES



Ms. Alia Al-Dalli
International Director Designate of the MENA Region for SOS Villages International

Ms. Alia Al-Dalli is the International Director Designate of the MENA Region for SOS Villages International. She is the former Director of UNDP Regional Center in Cairo and has served in several other positions for UNDP, including as Chief of SURF for the Arab States, Cluster Coordinator of Governance and Human Development in the Iraq Programme and as Resident Representative ad interim and Deputy Resident Representative in Morocco.

She has long-term work experience with international NGOs, private sector as well as governmental and intergovernmental organizations. She holds an MSc in Agricultural Economics from the University of London and a BSc in Psychology from Brunel University.

REGIONAL STEERING GROUP MEMBERS

	ORGANIZATION	NAME	TITLE	CONSTITUENCY
1	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	Ms. Raghad Al-Saqqa	Counsellor	Member State
2	League of Arab States	Dr. Leila Negm	Director of Health and Humanitarian Aid Department	Regional Organization
3	Organization of Islamic Cooperation	Amb. Hesham Youssef	Assistant Secretary General of Humanitarian Affairs	Regional Organization
4	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	Ms. Rema Jamous-Imseis	Head of Office	UN Agency
5	Directions Consulting	Ms. Mona Abu Suleiman	Strategic Philanthropy Advisor and co-host of popular talk show Kalam Nawaem.	Media
6	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Mr. Amin Awad	Regional Refugee Coordinator for Syria / Director of the MENA Bureau	UN Agency
7	International Crisis Group	Mr. Issander Al Amrani	North Africa Director	Academia/Think Tank
8	The Humanitarian Forum	Dr. Hany Al Banna	President	Civil Society Organization

9	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Kuwait	Mr. Zayed Al Mashaan	Head of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs	Member State
10	Al Waleed Bin Talal Foundation	Ms. Nauf Al Rawaf	Executive Manager of International Projects	Charitable Foundation
11	N/A	Ms. Media Dawoud	Syrian refugee who works closely with UNHCR as a general Refugee Outreach Volunteer in Lebanon	Affected Community
12	Qatar Red Crescent Society	Dr. Khaled Diab	Director of Relief and International Development	Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
13	Sharek Youth Forum	Ms. Dima Hanania	Program Manager and M&E Officer	Youth
14	Government of Egypt (on the RSG in personal capacity)	Dr. Laila Iskander	Minister for Urban Renewal	Social Entrepreneur
15	International Committee of the Red Cross	Mr. Michel Meyer	Diplomatic Advisor for the Near and Middle East	Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

REGIONAL CONSULTATION VENUE

King Hussein Bin Talal Convention Center
Hotels Area, Dead Sea, Sweimeh, 11953, Jordan
Tel: +962-5-3560222
Fax: +962-5-3560223

ACCOMMODATION

A block booking has been made for participants at the Kempinski Hotel Ishtar Dead Sea:

Kempinski Hotel Ishtar
Swaimah, Dead Sea Road, Dead Sea, 11194, Jordan
Tel: +962 5 356 8888

AIRPORT TRANSFER

The organizers will arrange a limited number of shuttle buses to transport participants from the airport to the Kempinski Hotel on 2 March 2015 at scheduled intervals throughout the day. Participants should look for a WHS team member and a WHS sign posted in the arrivals terminal after collecting their luggage and clearing customs, should they require further information.

Public taxi service at the airport can be hired outside of the terminal at the rate of approximately 78 USD for a maximum of three passengers.

TRANSPORTATION FROM THE HOTEL TO THE VENUE

A frequent shuttle service will be provided between the Kempinski Hotel and the conference venue. Participants can also walk (approximately 10 minutes).

REGISTRATION

Registration for the meeting will take place from 17:00 hours to 21:00 hours on 2 March 2015 in the lobby of the Kempinski Hotel and will continue at 08:00 hours at the King Hussein Bin Talal Convention Centre on 3 March 2015.

Please note that access to the conference area is restricted to registered participants. Participants are expected to wear their badges visibly at all times and in all areas within the conference site. If you lose your badge, please report this to the organizers immediately.

DRESS CODE

Business casual.

MEALS

Lunch is provided during all three days of the regional consultation. If you have any special dietary requirements, please inform the organizers as soon as possible.

EXCHANGE RATE

1JOD is approximately 1.4USD (as of 23 February 2015).

WEATHER

The weather forecast for the Dead Sea can be found at the following website:

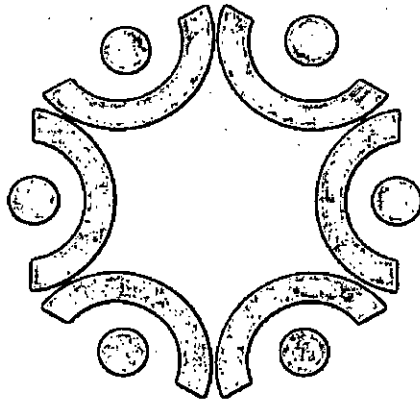
<http://www.myweather2.com/City-Town/Jordan/Dead-sea.aspx>

INTERNET

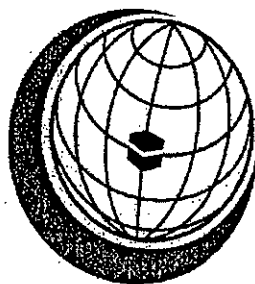
Wireless connection is available free of charge at the King Hussein Bin Talal Convention Center and at the Kempinski Hotel.

CONTACT PERSONS

Should you require any further information or logistics assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Safaa Sabbah (+20102 2469 320; sabbah1@un.org) or Ms. Ranya Eldessouky (+20128 2813 466; eldessouky@un.org).



**WORLD
HUMANITARIAN
SUMMIT**



**SPEECH OF AMBASSADOR HESHAM YOUSSEF
ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS
AT THE
REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS FOR MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA
IN PREPARATION FOR THE WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT**

JORDAN, 3 MARCH 2015

Excellency Mr Nasser Judeh

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan;

Ms Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator;

Ambassador Badrudeen Alali, Assistant Secretary General for Social Affairs at the League of Arab States;

Mrs Alya Al-Dali;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to begin my speech by expressing gratitude and appreciation to Jordan which is hosting these important consultations towards the preparations for the World Humanitarian Summit. I would not be exaggerating if I say that the international community awaits the outcomes of these consultations given that this region is the centre of some of the world's most complex humanitarian crises and houses the largest number of victims throughout the world.

I also want to seize this opportunity to extend gratitude and appreciation to Ms Valerie Amos who would soon be leaving her high-level position. She has left a clear footprint in humanitarian action and would be remembered as one of the high points in the United Nations efforts in this field. I should also thank the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Action (OCHA), the Humanitarian Forum and the Secretariat of the World Humanitarian Summit under the leadership of Mrs Jamila Mahmoud for their efforts in preparing for these consultations. I am pleased to see here today representatives of several partner international and regional organizations, civil society organizations, academics, journalists, the business community and representatives of disaster victims.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The general climate and framework of humanitarian action have changed in recent years and decades. This caused the United Nations Secretary General to initiate the proposal for the convening of a world humanitarian summit. We are happy that the summit would take place in Turkey, a member state of the OIC.

We all must recognize that the world today has become more advanced. But at the same time it has become more fragile and vulnerable to crises and disasters. Climate change and environmental conditions generally are more threatening. While the world is richer, there is at the same time a wider gap between the rich and the poor. Humanitarian disasters, both natural

and those resulting from crises, have grown in an unprecedented way. At the same time there is a widening gap between resources required for assistance and when we are mostly in need of them.

The size of humanitarian needs in 2014 amounted to about US\$17bn, which is a record number, but only a little more than half of those needs were met. This year about US\$16.5bn is needed, and these estimates are expected to increase in the light of the developments the world is going through, especially in our region where 40 million people would require assistance. This figure includes more than 12 million Syrians, 8 million Yemenis and millions from Iraq, Palestine and other regions. How do we envisage the future of Syria when half of the children of Syrian refugees and the displaced could not receive education in the past 4 years? What about the future of the Palestinian people in Gaza who have faced destruction of 3 wars in six years and are witnessing very slow reconstruction efforts?

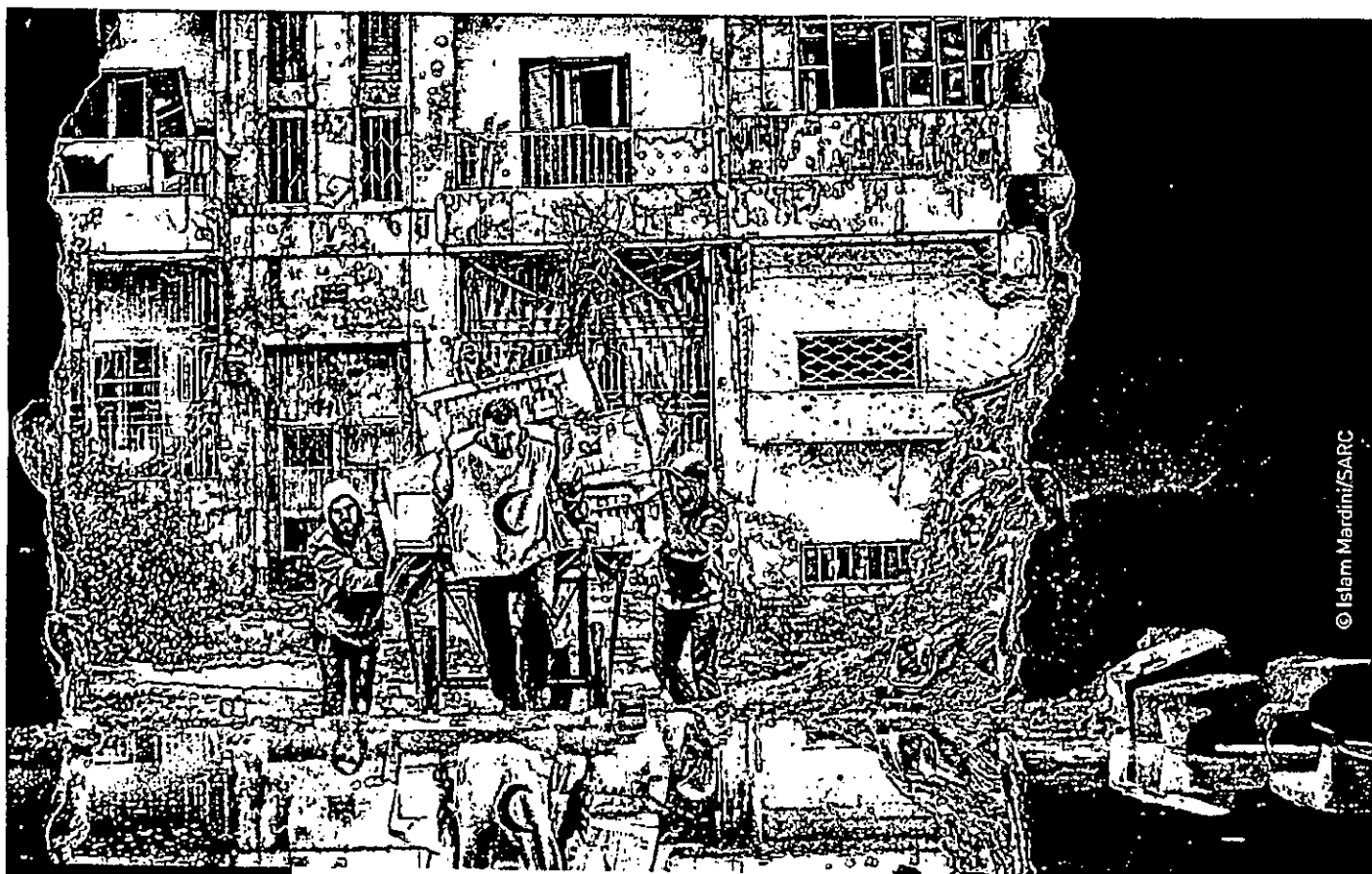
In the Muslim world we cannot forget the recent disasters starting with the tsunami which killed more than 200,000 lives. There were the Pakistan flooding which drowned close to one-fifth of the country; the wave of drought that led to famine in 2011; the absence of food security in Yemen and the Sahel and Sahara regions, and finally the Ebola epidemic and its disastrous aftermath. The challenges in the Arab and Islamic world are likely to dominate international humanitarian action in the foreseeable future.

In the light of these developments that we see, the humanitarian action system would need to develop or indeed restructure so that it can perform as expected. Against this backdrop, the issues to be discussed at these consultations will include six key subjects: i) Providing protection for civilians; (ii) Delivering assistance to those in need, challenges that have acquired new dimensions in the light of the existence of extremist groups and terrorist organizations, notably ISIS which has made protection of civilians and the delivery of assistance to millions in Syrian and Iraq more difficult, complex and dangerous. Similarly, the existence of huge difficulties in providing financial support and transferring financial resources under international rules that seek to prevent them from getting to terrorist organizations and extremist groups. (iii) How institutions can be better prepared for disasters and crises, how to develop policies, train human resources and provide financial resources to combat the disasters. (iv) How to deal with the enduring crises the region is witnessing. (v) Raising the capability of local societies to confront crises and building partnerships with the civil society, the business sector, research centres, media and the youth. (vi) Evaluating the general framework for humanitarian action and how to develop it, including how to provide the necessary financing for humanitarian work.

When we talk of financial resources and burden sharing, many of the advanced countries used to think that they bear the greatest share of humanitarian needs. Then many crises occurred, chiefly the Syrian crisis and proved to the world that Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, in particular, bear huge burdens that many times exceed their fair share. Therefore we can only express our sincere

appreciation for what they are doing. We also appreciate the efforts of many states in the region in the humanitarian domain, notably Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Kuwait, which hosted the Syria I and II conferences and is ready to host Syria III before the end of this month. At the same time, we wish to express our disappointment at the level of international response to facing the plights of millions displaced persons and refugees in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Palestine, Iraq following the snowstorms and the harsh winter they are still experiencing.

We all must give utmost priority to the plights of women and children in our discussion of the various themes to be tabled at the summit. We must also discuss how to confront the attraction of the youth to crises zones by extremist groups and terrorist organizations.



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REGIONAL CONSULTATION MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA JORDAN, 3-5 MARCH 2015

CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY

The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) regional consultation for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) was held at the Dead Sea, Jordan, from 3-5 March 2015. It was hosted by the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and co-chaired by the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

In the spirit of the summit's multi-stakeholder approach, the meeting brought together 180 participants from 17 countries¹ representing Member States of the United Nations, regional organizations, civil society, affected communities, national and international non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the private sector, academia and religious leaders, as well as observers from five countries that have hosted or will host World Humanitarian Summit consultations. The meeting was preceded by preparatory stakeholder consultations with 1,230 individuals representing their wider constituencies.²

¹ Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

² The preparatory stakeholder analysis report can be found at <http://goo.gl/FnHmOv>.

The majority of participants at the regional consultation reaffirmed the sentiment of stakeholders consulted in the preparatory process, expressing outrage at the level of human suffering in the region. The current situation was deemed unacceptable and there were calls for global leaders to take necessary measures to reverse this tragic situation and address the root cause of people's suffering. **There are no humanitarian solutions to political problems.** This was a key message of the regional consultation with many highlighting the protracted plight of the Palestinian people as a central example, calling for an end to occupation and for the fulfillment of their inalienable right to self-determination.

The WHS regional consultation for the MENA region focused on six key issues that emerged from the preparatory stakeholder analysis. These were Protection of Civilians, Humanitarian Access, Protracted Crises and Displacement, Emergency Preparedness, Localizing Humanitarian Response and Humanitarian Financing. A number of other issues will be considered in the course of further stakeholder consultations in the region.

The main findings and recommendations were as follows:

1. Protection of Civilians

The increasing scale and severity of attacks against civilians in the region led to calls for greater respect of international laws that govern the protection of civilians. The primary responsibility of states in this regard was emphasized with strong calls for accountability and the implementation of these laws. These included the requirement to:

- Ratify international instruments pertaining to the protection of civilians, in particular the second Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions and the 1951 Refugee Convention;
- Establish national committees on International Humanitarian Law (IHL), where these were not yet in place, to bring relevant national legislation into conformity with international law;
- Provide IHL training for armed and police forces, as well as other relevant officials, with the support of donors and participation of humanitarian actors where relevant;
- Monitor the application of IHL and hold perpetrators of violations accountable through the establishment of national or international mechanisms or to activate those that are already in place.

Participants urged **regional organizations**, such as the League of Arab States (LAS), Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to **strengthen their role in the protection of civilians**. This could include the adoption of regional instruments that protect and assist internally displaced persons (IDPs), building on the experience from other regions; the establishment of mechanisms to monitor violations of IHL, civilian casualties and access issues; and fostering consensus among Member States on concrete measures to protect civilians in conflicts.

The **international donor community** was requested to ensure sufficient funding for protection activities and to support initiatives aimed at promoting respect for IHL and human rights throughout the region.

Parties to conflicts, including armed groups, were urged to meet their obligations in the respect of IHL and facilitate the work of humanitarian actors, including by ensuring access and lifting restrictions that preclude their work. This requires humanitarian actors to engage in dialogue with all parties to a conflict, including armed groups. In line with IHL, this engagement for legitimate humanitarian purposes should be encouraged and not criminalized.

Protection should be at the heart of humanitarian action with mechanisms for achieving this objective appropriate to each organization's mandate and strengths. Monitoring violations of IHL is required from the outset of a crisis. Addressing protection concerns should constitute an integral part of humanitarian needs assessments, including tackling the protection needs of specific groups, such as women, children, displaced persons, migrants and those with disabilities. It also requires effective coordination among different sectors. Humanitarian organizations need to enhance their capacities on protection through training and mentoring of their staff.

Participants recognized the **critical role played national authorities and civil society organizations**, including the National Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in protecting civilians, including through applying and promoting local customs and practices in protecting civilians and disseminating information on international law to IDPs and refugees, as well as to their host communities. The media is also a powerful tool to be harnessed to raise awareness about IHL violations and calling for its respect.

The protection of civilians was deemed a universal principle, with **frameworks and practices existing in religious and other traditions and norms** from the region. There were calls to explore the synergies between these and international legal protection frameworks with the aim of developing context-specific practices and interventions that can better protect civilians on the ground. The role of religious leaders in providing protection and facilitating assistance was emphasized.

2. Humanitarian Access

Whilst re-affirming the principle of state sovereignty, the lack of access to people in need was highlighted as a significant obstacle in the region. Governments and other **parties to conflicts, including armed groups, should facilitate unimpeded access** of humanitarian assistance and staff to affected people, which is critical to understanding the numbers of people affected and their needs.

Humanitarian access requires humanitarian organizations to negotiate with concerned parties with the objective of reaching affected people. In this regard, the **principles of humanitarian action were widely re-affirmed** and were deemed important in facilitating the ability of humanitarian organizations to operate in conflict areas.

There were repeated calls to **de-politicize humanitarian action**, and ensure assistance was provided in a transparent manner and on the basis of need alone. The UN Security Council was seen as a forum in which humanitarian issues are frequently politicized with the use of the veto highlighted in resolutions pertaining to humanitarian action.

While the importance of **countering terrorism** in the region was recognized, the negative impact of laws and related measures on humanitarian negotiation, financial transfers and access should be mitigated, with many humanitarian actors calling for greater clarity of the implications of these laws and for their legal protection to safeguard their ability to operate.

Attacks against humanitarian workers and property were condemned with more action demanded to protect those providing humanitarian assistance. The international community has to install a process or a mechanism by which it can hold states and non-state actors accountable and financially-liable if they deliberately cause unjustified economic or financial loss to the humanitarian sector. This, for example, should cover medical, educational and other facilities.

The importance of **close proximity of humanitarian organizations to the people they serve** was deemed essential for building trust and acceptance with these communities. International humanitarian organizations should ensure local partners are provided with access to adequate financial resources, assets and insurance schemes to ensure staff safety and security.

3. Protracted Crises and Displacement

Recognizing the needs of displaced people, including for durable solutions, and the burden placed on host governments and communities, there was a call for **increased burden sharing** of hosting refugees by the international community and the need to ensure a **holistic approach to the management of crises**, including planning for future displacement. Actors should address the needs of host communities in response planning and use humanitarian and development approaches, in line with national and local priorities. Development interventions should come at an early stage and include support to the local economy and making investments in basic services and infrastructure that benefit both the displaced and their hosts.

Participants called for the scaling up of efficient and coordinated **cash-based programming** to provide people with greater choice and for including **temporary employment opportunities** as part of response programming. These were deemed necessary to ensure service delivery that preserves the dignity of displaced people. When appropriate, priority should be given to voluntary return programs.

International finance institutions were encouraged to provide investments under favourable terms to help middle income countries rapidly shoulder the burden of refugees.

A **network of academic and training institutes** should be established and supported within the region to develop management and technical expertise in crisis management.

The **psychosocial impact of violent conflict** and protracted displacement was recognized and targeted support needed to be integrated in the response, in particular for women, the elderly and children.

4. Localizing Humanitarian Response

The importance of national and local authorities and organizations taking the lead in humanitarian response was widely affirmed, as was accountability to and participation of affected people. International humanitarian actors need to include **local capacity building measures** as an integral part of their programming, which will help facilitate a timely and planned exit.

Local organizations should receive a greater portion of humanitarian **funding and be able to access these directly**. This requires decreasing inefficiencies by removing the multiple levels of sub-contracting and intermediaries, and increasing the contribution of country-based pooled funds, such as Emergency Response Funds, to national and local actors.

Humanitarian **coordination mechanisms should be made more inclusive**, complementary and accessible to local organizations. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee should be reviewed and adapted to better reflect the diversity of humanitarian actors and the challenges faced within specific regions, including through its possible decentralization. To encourage greater trust and collaboration between local and international organizations, the latter should demonstrate greater transparency in their operations and criteria for selecting partners.

5. Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness and **understanding of risk** should be prioritized in the region, taking into consideration vulnerabilities and specific contexts, including differences of urban and rural settings. Common, multi-hazard risk analysis should be encouraged, including through greater links with academia, research and development and the private sector to allow for more informed **early warning and early action**, both for natural and conflict related crises.

Participants called on national governments to **develop and implement national legislation on emergency preparedness**, including contingency plans and early warning systems, and identify the roles and responsibilities of government ministries, civil society, National Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the private sector amongst others. Integrating emergency preparedness in education curricula at all educational levels was deemed important to instilling a culture of prevention and rapid response.

Governments should commit a certain percentage of their budgets to emergency preparedness, informed by the cost efficiency of disaster preparedness versus response. They should also endorse regional instruments and mechanisms on emergency preparedness, building on lessons learnt within and outside the region.

The capacity of civil society organizations should be strengthened to better prepare for emergencies. This includes supporting more **institutionalized forms of youth engagement**, whose role and contribution to humanitarian action, recovery and development was widely acknowledged and commended.

6. Humanitarian Financing

There were wide calls to address the **funding gap between increasing humanitarian needs and available resources**. Humanitarian organizations need to make concerted efforts to improve their efficiency, such as through greater use of cash-based programming and minimizing overhead costs. This would benefit from engagement with the private sector to leverage innovation, resources and expertise. Moreover, private sector engagement in humanitarian action was encouraged with tax breaks as possible incentives.

Following major pledging conferences or appeals for funding, **follow up mechanisms**, such as the top donors group for the Syria crisis, should be established to ensure pledges are fulfilled in a timely manner.

The **culture and traditions of Islamic giving** should be leveraged to support regional and local humanitarian organizations' work in the region, with several mechanisms suggested. This requires concerted dialogue with existing institutions and experts on the subject to draw up concrete proposals on how this could be achieved.

Understanding the extent of the funding gap requires a more comprehensive picture of humanitarian funding in the region. Thus, **national and regional mechanisms** should be established, with the aim of collecting information on funding by the diverse range of actors that work and operate in the region. The League of Arab States' resolution passed in March 2014 calling for the establishment of a coordination mechanism is one avenue for taking this forward.

Addressing the funding gap also requires more sustainable interventions that focus on building resilience and development objectives in addition to meeting people's immediate needs. This will necessitate more **predictable and longer-term humanitarian financing** as well as better leveraging of **development financing**. There were some calls for mandatory financial contributions for the most severe humanitarian crises.

Conclusions

The main findings and recommendations pointed to an overall sense that **global humanitarian efforts are failing to cope** in effectively addressing the scale and nature of current humanitarian crises. There were calls to **reform the current humanitarian architecture** and its ways of operating to ensure greater protection and assistance to people in need. Participants expressed hope and expectation that the

WHS would be an important process to put these changes into effect, which are essential to reaffirming the humanitarian imperative of saving lives and alleviating human suffering. Equally important is the need to **ensure that humanitarian aid is not used as substitute for political action**.

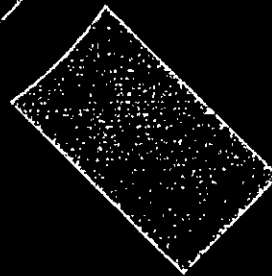
The WHS MENA regional consultation brought together a unique network of humanitarian actors in the hope that it would set the foundations for broad partnerships that can take forward these recommendations.

The Co-Chairs' summary was endorsed by the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. It is not a consensus document but rather captures the main findings and recommendations articulated by participants at the regional consultation. A more detailed report will follow and can be found on www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/whs_mena.

The Co-Chairs encouraged all actors from the region to champion the recommendations, turn them into specific actions and share lessons on their experience.



WORLD
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PREPARATORY STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

World Humanitarian Summit Regional Consultation for the Middle East and North Africa

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INTRODUCTION



Extensive stakeholder consultations were held across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)¹ region in preparation for the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) regional consultation, scheduled to take place in Jordan on 3–5 March 2015. The aim of these consultations was to identify priority humanitarian challenges and opportunities facing the MENA region in order to lay the foundation for further discussions in Jordan. The outcomes of the regional consultation will feed into the WHS thematic and global consultations and eventually the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, 2016.

Findings from an initial set of consultations with civil society organizations, governments and affected communities in the MENA region were set out in a scop-

ing paper², developed in late 2014. The paper identified twelve key humanitarian-related challenges faced by different constituencies and was used to inform successive consultations with a broader range of stakeholders. The findings outlined in the scoping paper are included and elaborated on in this report, in addition to outcomes from subsequent consultations in the region.

The report is divided in three parts: The first explains the process undertaken to collect and analyse stakeholder perspectives. The second outlines the findings of the preparatory stakeholder consultations and the third identifies the priority humanitarian issues and questions for discussion at the WHS regional consultation in Jordan.

¹ For the purposes of the World Humanitarian Summit, the MENA region includes: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

² Available on the World Humanitarian Summit website at <http://goo.gl/yUc1mJ>



OCHA/Isaac Athanasiadis

PREPARATORY STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PROCESS

Under the guidance of the WHS Regional Steering Group for the MENA region, a host of partners helped organize consultations with different constituencies between May 2014 and February 2015.³ A number of approaches were used to engage different stakeholders, including Member States, affected communities, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), national societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, youth and the media.

1,231 individuals from diverse backgrounds were consulted in the spirit of the summit's multi-stakeholder approach, with particular effort made to engage civil society organizations and people affected by humanitarian crises. The latter included separate consultations with refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), migrants and other impacted populations and conducted separately for men, women, youth and community leaders, where appropriate. Civil society organizations were

consulted at the national level, followed by two regional meetings convened to first review emerging findings and then to consolidate civil society recommendations.

The stakeholder groups consulted and the format for each consultation are summarized in the table below.⁴

The final stakeholder analysis report is an attempt to capture the main findings and recommendations discussed during the preparatory stakeholder consultations. The report is not intended as a consensus document but rather represents a variety of opinions and positions of multiple stakeholders consulted with the aim of stimulating discussion and facilitating the development of recommendations at the WHS regional consultation for MENA. Additional consultations with the private sector and academia in the region are scheduled to take place after the WHS regional consultation in Jordan and will also feed into the global summit process.

CONSTITUENCY	CONSULTATION FORMAT	NUMBER
Civil society organizations	National consultations in Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya (held in Tunisia), Saudi Arabia, Palestine (West Bank and Gaza), Tunisia, Syria (held in Turkey), Qatar and Yemen. Regional consultation in Jordan to review emerging findings. Regional consultation in Morocco to consolidate final recommendations.	586 representatives consulted
People affected by humanitarian crises	Focus group discussions in Egypt, Jordan, Palestine (West Bank and Gaza), Syria and Yemen with refugees from within and outside the MENA region, internally displaced people, migrants, vulnerable groups and impacted host communities. Questionnaire completed by participants following the focus group discussions.	327 individuals consulted
Youth	Two online consultations. Online questionnaire.	119 individuals consulted
General public	Online consultation on the WHS web platform.	83 individuals consulted

³ See Annex and Acknowledgements for a list of organizations involved in convening preparatory stakeholder consultations.

⁴ See Annex for a timeline of preparatory stakeholder consultations.

CONSTITUENCY	CONSULTATION FORMAT	NUMBER
Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement	Meeting in Qatar with MENA Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of the Red Cross, and the Arab Red Crescent Organization.	44 representatives consulted
United Nations agencies, international NGOs and NGO networks	Roundtable discussion in Jordan on bridging humanitarian and development action	39 representatives consulted
Member States and Regional Organizations	Meeting in Egypt convened by the League of Arab States for those Member States included in the WHS MENA regional consultation. ⁵ Roundtable discussion held in Kuwait on Gulf perspectives.	15 representatives consulted
Media	Roundtable discussion in Jordan.	16 individuals consulted
Financial institutions	Roundtable discussion in Kuwait on Gulf perspectives.	2 individuals consulted

⁵ A meeting in New York was held in February 2015 with the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations to initiate a bilateral consultation. This was due to their membership suspension at the League of Arab States, which did not allow them to participate in the abovementioned government consultation. The outcomes of the bilateral consultation were not finalized in time to feed into the final stakeholder analysis report for the MENA region, but will however, feed into the global WHS process.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA: A CHANGING HUMANITARIAN LANDSCAPE

The Middle East and North Africa region has witnessed a substantial rise in humanitarian crises, as countries experience significant political, economic and social upheaval as well as the effects of natural disasters and rapid urbanization. The result is a region witnessing intolerable human suffering and unprecedented levels of vulnerability. In Syria, there are an estimated 12.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, including 7.6 million who are internally displaced. Over 3.8 million refugees have fled to neighbouring countries, with a significant impact on millions of vulnerable host communities in Jordan, Lebanon and to a lesser extent Egypt; in Iraq, an upsurge in violence led to the displacement of 1.8 million people last year, with an estimated 5.2 million people currently in need of humanitarian assistance.⁶

The ongoing occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip has created a protection crisis, with 1.9 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. There are over 15 million people in Yemen suffering from malnutrition, displacement and insecurity; in Libya, increasing violence has forced over 400,000 people to flee from their homes.⁷ The protracted nature of these crises, some having lasted for decades, has undermined development gains and challenged the ability of governments and communities to cope with shocks and address the impact of ongoing conflicts.

Individuals, civil society organizations, affected communities and government representatives consulted in the lead up to the WHS regional consultation for MENA consistently expressed outrage at the staggering level of human casualties and suffering in the region's current humanitarian landscape. They bemoaned an overall lack of accountability for violations and the failure to implement appropriate responses to current crises in the region. They further underscored the need for solutions that address the root cause of people's suffering, consistently stating that **humanitarian aid cannot**

continue to be a substitute for political action. This is a key message that needs to be at the forefront of the regional consultation.

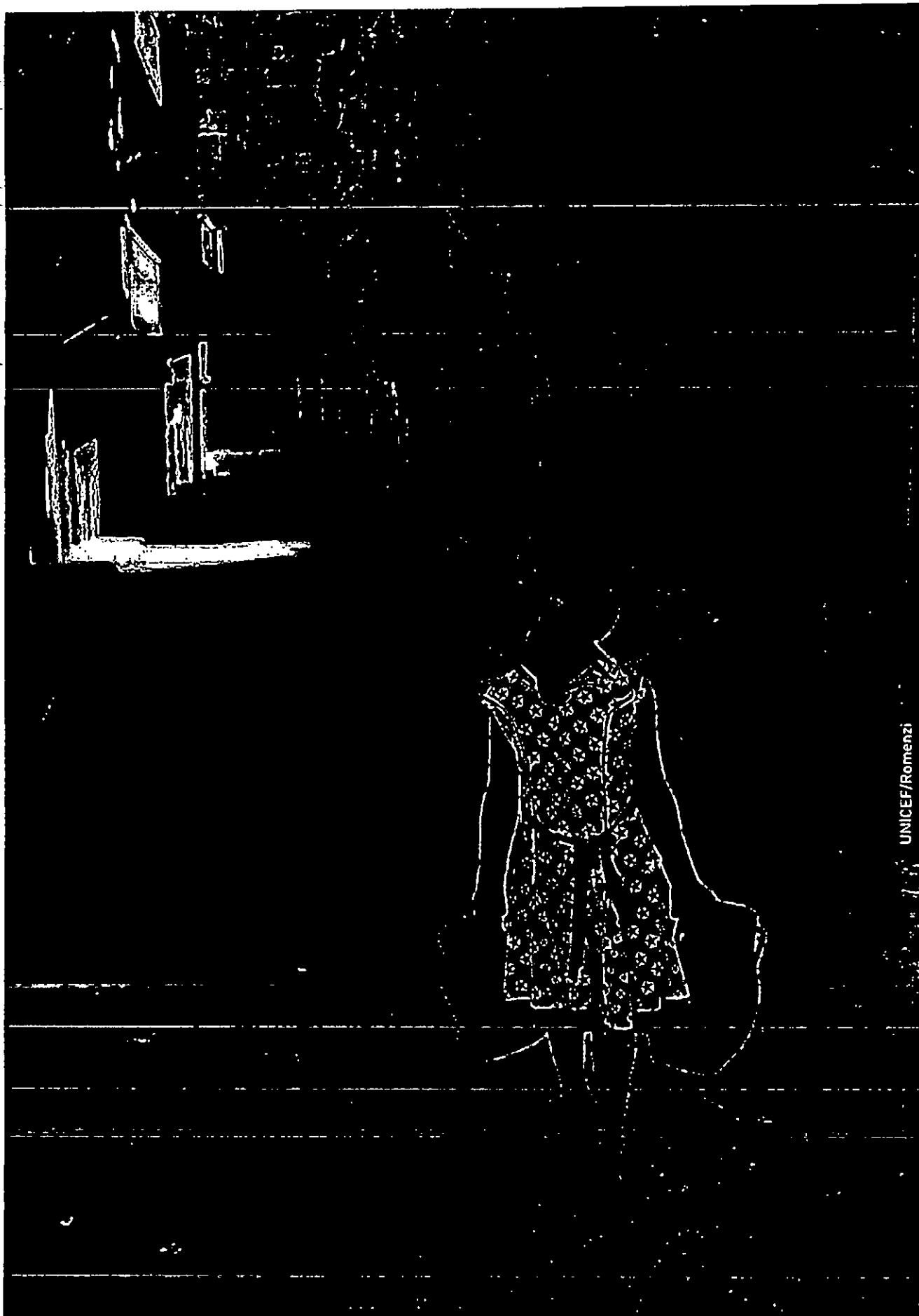
In the absence of political solutions to these humanitarian crises, stakeholders called on governments and the humanitarian community to renew their efforts to provide people with much needed protection and assistance. There was a recognition that the continued provision of relief alone is not feasible and there is consensus on the need to find innovative ways of more sustainably meeting people's needs with dignity. Whilst recent efforts at promoting greater cooperation between humanitarian and development actors and strengthening people's resilience are to be applauded, more needs to be done to improve results in practice.

The current humanitarian system was cited as inadequate in the face of the changing humanitarian landscape in the region. There were consistent calls for real reform; change that better engages and promotes the efforts of numerous regional and national institutions and organizations. International assistance should work towards localizing humanitarian response, emphasizing national responsibility and accountability and strengthening local capacities to prevent, manage and respond to crises.

Putting people first by ensuring that the needs and capacities of affected people are at the heart of humanitarian action was also central to many of the discussions held during the preparatory consultation process. Yet, in practice, efforts are consistently falling short. This was the unanimous message from consultations with people affected by crises and is one of the main challenges facing the humanitarian community in the region. The WHS regional consultation for MENA is an opportunity to identify ways of addressing this failure, with many of the stakeholders consulted expressing the hope that it will not be missed.

⁶ *Syria Response Plan 2015 (OCHA); Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2015-2016 (UNDP; UNHCR); Iraq Strategic Response Plan 2014-2015 (OCHA).*

⁷ *Strategic Response Plan for occupied Palestinian territory 2015 (OCHA); Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan 2014-2015 (OCHA); Regional Humanitarian Snapshot: November - December 2014 (OCHA).*



UNICEF/Romenzi

KEY HUMANITARIAN ISSUES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Protection of Civilians

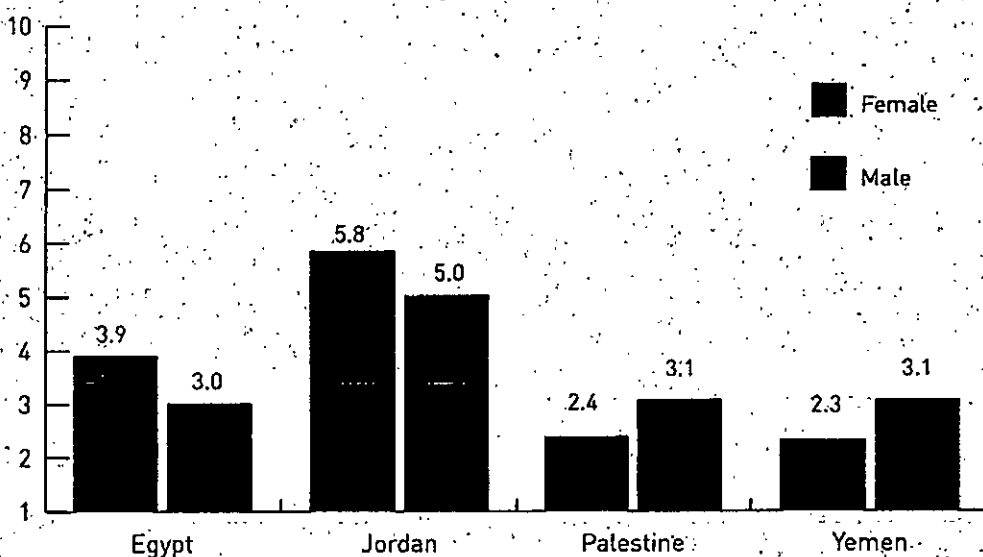
Protecting civilians is a central component of the principle of humanity, defined by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to include efforts to "prevent and alleviate human suffering" and "to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being". Various legal instruments exist to promote the protection of civilians, grounded in International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights and Refugee Law. In addition, several religious and ethical frameworks emphasize the need to protect civilians from harm and violence.

Similar to previous WHS regional consultations⁸, stakeholders consulted in the MENA region identified **protection of civilians as a priority concern in the region** and pointed to the increasing scale and severity of attacks against civilians. They stated that conflicts in countries such as Iraq, Libya, Palestine, Syria and Yemen disproportionately affect civilians and actors fail to adhere to international legal obligations. Crisis-affected people consulted in the region rated their sense of safety and protection poorly, as seen in the graph below. Women and men in Jordan reported the highest levels of safety and feeling protected. The two countries where re-

spondents reported the lowest levels, Palestine and Yemen, were also where men reported feeling less safe than women. When asked for affected people's priority needs during an emergency, safety ranked in the top three in all countries alongside food and shelter. On average, safety ranked as the top priority for women consulted across the region and third for men.

Emphasis was placed on the need to address specific protection needs among affected populations. Refugees in Jordan and Egypt and IDPs in Syria noted that women and girls are at greater risk of gender-based and sexual violence as well as forced and early marriages during times of conflict and displacement. Government representatives consulted also called for better consideration of the impact of conflicts on women, children and people with disabilities. They, as well as affected people consulted in Palestine, placed emphasis on the provision of psychosocial support in addition to physical protection. Refugees and stateless people noted how they are particularly marginalized and vulnerable to protection abuses such as physical violence, and displaced people in Yemen mentioned the lack of protection for individuals with disabilities and HIV-AIDS. The online consultations shed light on the importance of affording all migrants, including victims of human

Average degree to which affected people feel safe and protected from violence in their current situation (on a 10-point scale where 10=high and 1=low)



Source: Survey among affected people consulted in the region

⁸ West and Central Africa, North and South-East Asia and Eastern and Southern Africa in 2014, and Europe and Others group in 2015.

trafficking and unaccompanied minors, the same protection rights as all other affected groups.

There is widespread concern and frustration at the lack of accountability in the region for violations of the legal frameworks that protect civilians. Most stakeholders – from government representatives and civil society to UN agencies and affected people – emphasized the need to bring perpetrators to justice, calling for **greater enforcement, in an objective and universal manner, of International Humanitarian, Human Rights and Refugee Law**. Some consultations also raised the issue of perceived double standards in bringing governments and parties to account, with Israel cited as an example of a country that is not held to the same stringent standards as others.

There was also emphasis, particularly by Libyan and Palestinian civil society organizations and crisis-affected people across the region, on **the primary responsibility of governments in ensuring the protection of their citizens and facilitating humanitarian action**. Many regretted the fact that several Member States in the region have not signed up to key legal frameworks such as the 1951 Refugee Convention and 2009 Arab League cooperation agreement in organizing and facilitating relief operations. Where international legal frameworks have been endorsed, there were calls to ensure they are adequately reflected in domestic laws and are effectively applied in practice.

Stakeholders called on Regional Organizations, such as the League of Arab States (LAS) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), to play a greater role in speaking out against those that violate laws that protect civilians and to demand that their Member States better uphold their obligation to protect civilians. The role of the **UN Security Council** was repeatedly discussed, with broad consensus among stakeholders that it **has failed to uphold its mandated responsibility to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure the protection of civilians**. The UN Security Council was accused of politicizing humanitarian action; with some participants in the Kuwait roundtable discussion putting forward a suggestion that the use of the veto in Security Council decisions on issues related to humanitarian action be banned.

Some stakeholders, including government representatives and civil society organizations, discussed the **Responsibility to Protect (R2P)** in the region. This included a call by many civil society organizations and some governments for the establishment of humanitarian corridors and possibly safe havens in conflict zones, in which affected people could receive protection and

assistance. This raised questions, however, of how this could be done in practice without militarizing and politicizing humanitarian action. Some government representatives rejected such appeals, emphasizing respect for state sovereignty. Others stressed the importance of not associating R2P primarily with military intervention and that greater efforts should be placed on political solutions to the many conflicts in the region.

Civil society organization often argued that humanitarian organizations in the region are largely focusing their efforts on providing material assistance rather than **fulfilling their role in addressing protection concerns**. Crisis-affected people in various locations identified the same imbalance and in most cases stated that they did not know how to seek protection from humanitarian actors, which was also seen as a result of weaknesses in communication between aid organizations and affected people. A number of humanitarian organizations, however, declared their commitment to protection, with one UN agency advocating for “putting protection at the forefront of humanitarian action” and another emphasizing how its programmes encourage community-based protection approaches. Several civil society organizations highlighted the important role they could play in protection, for example through advocating for other actors to bear their duty or through programmes that ensure people’s well-being and prevent forced displacement. Many called for these efforts to go beyond the misleading assumption that their mere presence ensures protection and suggested a need for wider sharing of practices that have proven to be effective, including innovative ways of contributing to affected people’s security. Increasing humanitarian organizations’ role in protection should not detract, however, from recognizing their limitations in what is ultimately a security and political issue, the main responsibility of which lies with governments.

Humanitarian Access

Stakeholders noted that barriers to humanitarian access have become one of the most pervasive challenges to effective humanitarian action in the region. This includes both affected people’s access to humanitarian assistance and protection as well as humanitarian organizations’ access to people in need.

Stakeholders felt strongly that **people’s movement must not be restricted** as it impedes their safe, timely and sustained access to assistance and protection. For example, parties to conflict may restrict communities’ movements as part of their political or military strategies, such as in besieged areas of Syria and in the occupied Palestinian

territory. This prevents civilians from seeking assistance beyond their immediate surroundings. Stakeholders also discussed how some governments close their borders with conflict-affected neighbours and thereby prevent people from seeking safety and asylum in their territories. Syrian refugees also expressed concern over deportations by neighbouring states, in violation of the principle of *non-refoulement*.⁹ Some government representatives recognized the consequences of closing their borders to refugees but pointed to their need to maintain stability in the context of a growing and unsustainable movement of displaced people in the region. They called for **greater burden sharing among the international community in terms of providing affected people with access to safety and assistance**.

Red tape and bureaucratic obstacles reduced humanitarian organizations' access to affected populations. Humanitarian organizations in the region discussed how delays in gaining security clearances and visas for staff slow down the delivery of assistance, consume limited staff time and resources and promote biases toward areas in which access is less restricted, thereby breaching the principle of impartiality. Stakeholders therefore called for the **easing of bureaucratic obstacles** that impede humanitarian action.

Civil society organizations and international humanitarian organizations alike argued that **measures taken by some donor and national governments and financial institutions, such as banks, to counter terrorism must be reviewed, as they are imposing undue restrictions on the ability of humanitarian organizations to operate** according to agreed standards and principles in areas in which there are proscribed groups. For example, Syrian and Iraqi humanitarian organizations stated that they are unable or unwilling to operate in parts of their countries controlled by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) due to funding restrictions or fears that they could be accused of providing material support to terrorism. Palestinian and Libyan organizations also expressed concern over restrictions that have been placed on the transfer of funds to Islamic charitable organizations and democratically elected governments. While recognizing the need for governments to combat terrorism, civil society groups called on them to ensure counter-terrorism legislation does not undermine the humanitarian imperative, or lead to relief operations being determined on criteria other than humanitarian needs.

Attacks on humanitarian workers have become commonplace, with the year 2014 witnessing 35 attacks in Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Syria and Yemen. The majority of attacks impact local staff or organizations, and national societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement noted with alarm the particular vulnerability of local volunteers to attacks as they serve as frontline responders. This was echoed in the online youth consultation, where participants called for enhanced security measures to enable volunteerism in humanitarian work. General insecurity is creating restrictive operational environments, with humanitarian organizations unable to properly assess the level of humanitarian needs. For example, in Iraq, Libya and Syria, most humanitarian actors noted their inability to carry out adequate needs assessments or provide assistance and protection to those most affected across the country. Government representatives, humanitarian organizations, youth volunteers and participants in the online discussions all condemned violence against humanitarian workers and called for **better protection of aid workers and adherence to International Humanitarian Law**. Civil society organizations gathered in the regional meeting in Morocco advocated for the establishment of an international association that provides training and capacity development to humanitarian workers and their families and advocates for their safety and security.

In response to security concerns and other access constraints, many humanitarian organizations in the region have resorted to alternative methods of aid delivery. This includes 'remote management', where international agencies work from outside of the country or from capitals through local implementing partners. However, stakeholders consulted both online and in the region noted with concern that this creates additional challenges with regards to monitoring and accountability. It also transfers security risk to local partners, many of which do not have the capacity or resources to develop appropriate security protocols or acquire adequate insurance schemes. More broadly, it is compromising humanitarian organizations' proximity to affected populations, impacting accountability, preventing an adequate understanding of their needs or the ability to foster acceptance between organizations and the communities they aim to serve. Criticism was particularly directed at UN agencies, as their low **acceptance of risk** and subsequent security measures mean that one of the main institutions tasked to respond to humanitarian crises is often either the first to leave or unable to operate effectively where people are most affected.

⁹ *Non-refoulement is a principle of international law which forbids returning a victim of persecution to their persecutor. It was officially enshrined in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, article 33: "No Contracting State shall expel or return ("refouler") a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion."*

Cross-border operations were discussed by stakeholders as a potential way to better access hard-to-reach communities in Syria. Yet several humanitarian organizations noted that the UN Security Council resolutions that authorized UN agencies and their partners to use border crossings and routes across conflict lines have not been effective in practice and called for states, together with humanitarian partners, to better facilitate the provision of humanitarian relief, including across frontiers when this is the most effective way of providing life-saving assistance. Some government representatives in the region called for further exploration of the legality of cross-border operations, placing emphasis on respect for state sovereignty.

"Humanitarian organizations are often unable to protect themselves, and consequently cannot protect us."

Palestinian woman in Gaza

Stakeholders consulted in the region and online widely recognized that reaching people in need of assistance and advocating for their protection requires humanitarian organizations to **engage and negotiate with all parties to a conflict**, including militaries and non-state armed groups. In practice, however, humanitarian or-

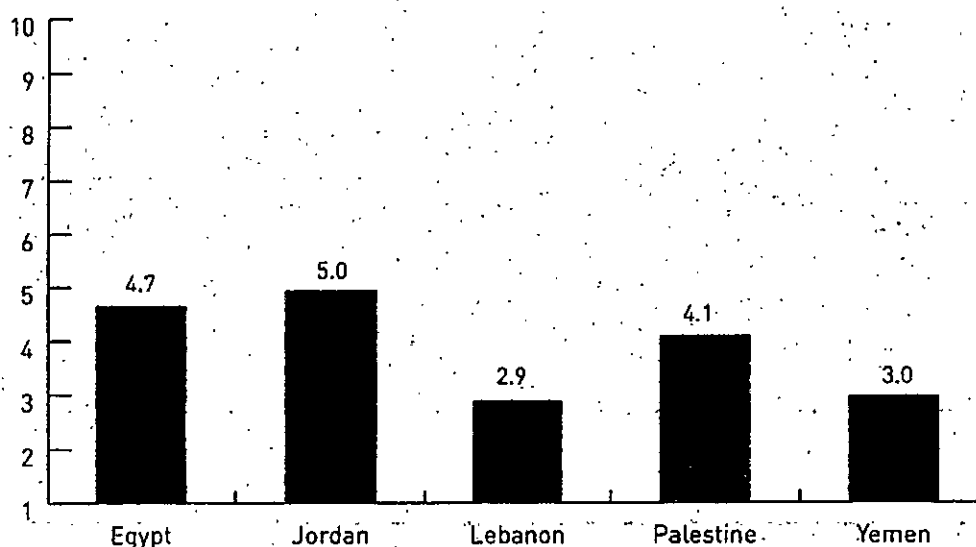
ganizations often feel they lack the necessary guidance and capacity to effectively engage with these actors. Counter-terrorism legislation and donor funding restrictions also make humanitarian organizations reluctant to engage with some actors for fear of criminal prosecution. Civil society organizations across the region, particularly in Egypt, Libya and at the regional civil society meeting in Morocco, called for recognition of the need for this dialogue and adequate capacity building and sharing of best practices.

Emphasis was placed on identifying ways to ensure humanitarian access, with stakeholders seeing the potential of **harnessing context-specific and culturally accepted frameworks** to help people meet their needs. As an example, participants in the Kuwait roundtable suggested capitalizing on Islamic principles and traditions, such as *Al Ash-hor Al Haram*, which calls for pauses in fighting during holy months of the year, thus creating the space for people to receive assistance and protection.

Principles of Humanitarian Action

The core principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence reflect longstanding humanitarian experience and are widely accepted by states and humanitarian actors as those that should guide humanitarian

Average degree to which affected people think aid groups are neutral and impartial (on a 10-point scale where 10=high and 1=low)



Source: Survey among affected people consulted in the region

action. Yet, stakeholders across the region discussed the reality of there often being a lack of respect – or perception thereof – for the principles of humanitarian action by some aid organizations and donors. The views of affected people on the subject were particularly damning: they critically discussed aid groups' neutrality and impartiality in consultations and evaluated these qualities poorly in the survey, as shown in the graph on page 10.

Their experiences reflected a lack of respect for some of the principles of humanitarian action by some aid agencies. In Lebanon, several Syrian refugees reported that they felt that they had not received humanitarian assistance from some local organizations due to their political or religious affiliations. Syrian refugees, currently residing in Egypt, recounted how they had not received assistance in some parts of Syria as warring parties denied relief services to individuals that belong to particular political factions or religious sects. Eritrean refugees in Yemen recounted experiences of feeling humiliated and lacking dignity due to humanitarian organizations' perceived preferential treatment of the Somali refugees compared to other refugees from Arab countries. Similar observations of discrimination were made by displaced ethnic Yemeni minority. These differences may be the result of some governments developing different policies in terms of entitlements for refugees' on the basis of nationality.

"A lot of humanitarian actors do not provide aid based on needs alone. Many look at appearance, faith or political affiliation before assessing actual needs."

Young female refugee in Egypt

Stakeholders pointed to the politicization of humanitarian action. Civil society and international humanitarian organizations as well as affected people all detailed examples of political prerogatives taking precedence over humanitarian action by states, donors and the UN Security Council, noting the negative effect this had, for example, on meeting the needs of Syrian and Palestinian civilian populations. This included the perceived stalling of the UN Security Council in calling for cross-border humanitarian assistance into Syria and the use of aid as a substitute for political action, such as in the case of Gaza. Stakeholders called for **better accountability mechanisms to counter the political influence on humanitarian action** in the region and for advocacy on clarifying the difference between humanitarian and political arms of organizations like the United Nations. While stakeholders frequently advocated for better

bridging humanitarian, development and peacebuilding activities, as is discussed below, they cautioned humanitarians to **be mindful of potential partners' more politically oriented mandates and ideologies** and to manage the risk of compromising or being perceived to compromise principled humanitarian action.

"When you decide to help someone you have to remove all their affiliations and simply treat them as humans."

Female youth leader from Palestine

Stakeholders did not explicitly rank the principles of humanitarian action by importance. Yet there seemed to be **consensus on the principle of impartiality**, with affected people, humanitarian organizations, governments and participants in the online consultation emphasizing the importance of responding solely on the basis of need and without discrimination. Neutrality was equally advocated for, but stakeholders expressed a level of pessimism regarding the level to which it could be implemented in practice, including UN agencies and international NGOs, but especially local actors operating in politically polarized contexts such as Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen.

Additionally, the awareness and operationalization of the principles of humanitarian action differed among humanitarian actors, with a call for common understandings and sharing of best practices on how they can be implemented in practice. To complement the core humanitarian principles, civil society organizations and youth actors emphasized the importance of principles from religious traditions or worldviews, such as religious duty, solidarity or social justice. They argued that framing the core principles differently, for example by using Islamic terminology, could help to gain acceptance or facilitate access in certain contexts in the region.

Responding to Protracted Crises and Displacement

Stakeholders were unified in stating that the **increase in protracted armed conflicts and long-term displacement** in the region was pushing the humanitarian system far beyond the boundaries of what it was designed to manage. With the Syria crisis in its fifth year and the Palestinian and Sahrawi refugee crises stretching for decades, it is evident that in the absence of **political solutions**, humanitarian relief is required for increas-

ingly long periods of time. Thus, efforts are rightly being directed to more sustainably respond to people's needs. In Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen governments and the aid community are seeking to implement harmonized approaches that bring together humanitarian and development action, for example through the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) in response to the Syria Crisis, targeting both the displaced and impacted host communities. These efforts should not however, undermine the importance and urgency of finding solutions to protracted crises and displacement, which should remain a priority.

Despite efforts to develop more sustainable approaches, stakeholders from civil society, governments and humanitarian organizations recognized the gap between existing strategies that bring humanitarian and development actors together and their effective implementation in practice. More effective implementation requires a better understanding of how to **overcome the current divide between humanitarian and development programming** and their funding structures. This would lead to smoother transitions from short- to long-term relief as well as for joint planning and financing between governments, humanitarian and development actors, financial institutions and the private sector. These approaches also require an adequate policy environment, in which donors and national governments are working towards the same objectives and humanitarian principles.

Stakeholders, including civil society organizations in nearly every country consulted in the region, called for **building the capacity of local governments and civil society organizations** to manage the majority of relief efforts in protracted crises and for **international organizations designing an exit strategy into their programmes from the outset**. While several civil society organizations called for capacity support from international organizations, many were also vocal in highlighting the role of local organizations. As exemplified by a Lebanese civil society representative: "We should be the main force in responding to needs. We should not wait for others to act."

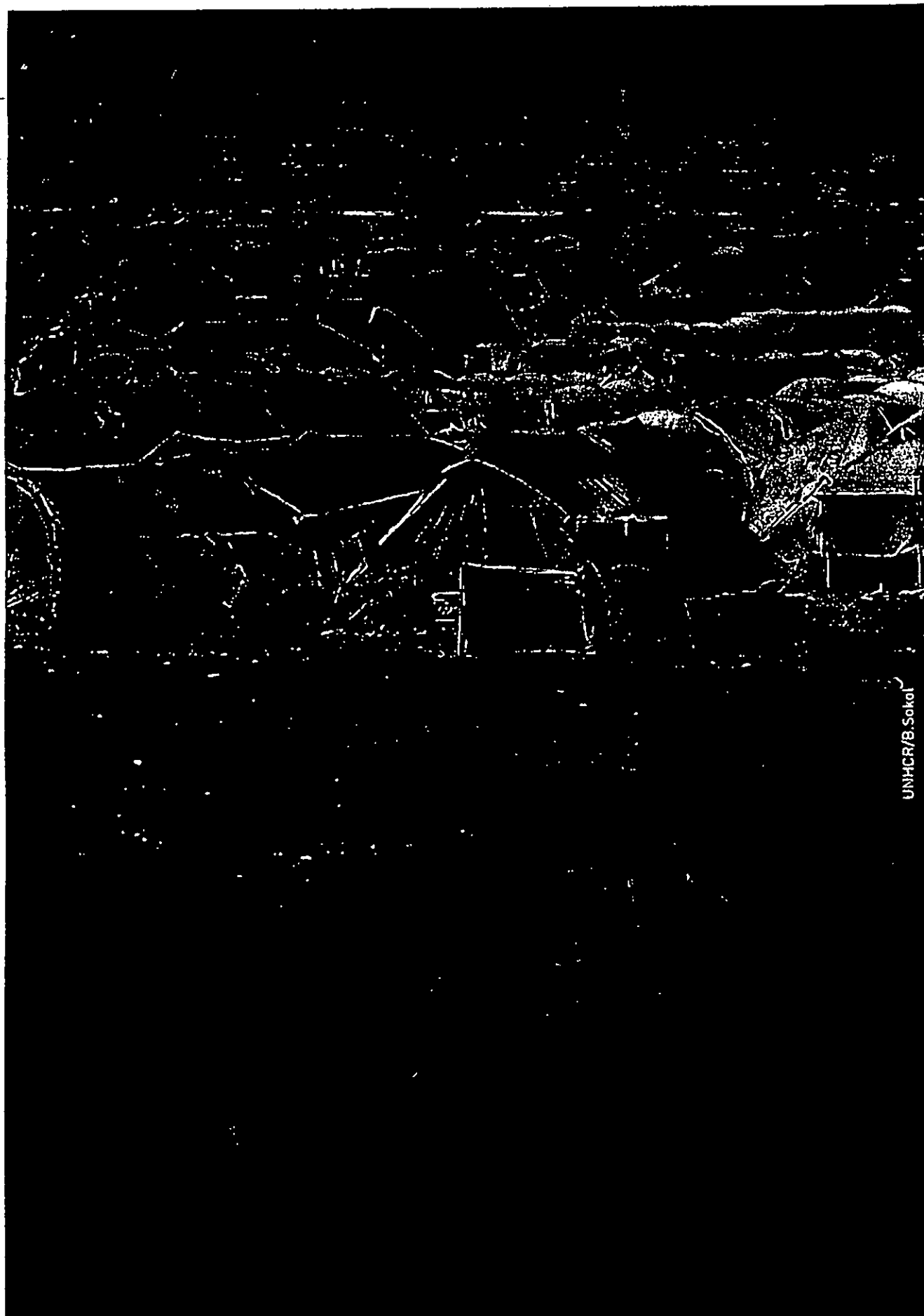
Consultations addressed the **role of humanitarians in tackling root causes of conflict and displacement**, with stakeholders recognizing that crises often become protracted in the region due to the lack of political solutions. Stakeholders consulted were divided, however, with many calling on humanitarian organizations to only focus on the consequences of humanitarian crises and not its causes, as otherwise, it would be difficult for them to preserve their neutrality and impartiality and such activities could open the door to the politicization of assistance. Rather, they suggest-

ed that conflict mediation and peacebuilding efforts should operate in parallel with humanitarian efforts and complement the work by facilitating better humanitarian access and opportunities for more sustainable programming.

Governments and humanitarian organizations applauded the generosity and continued commitment of the countries in the region to protect and assist displaced people. They pointed, however, to the imbalance in the response to the Syrian refugee situation and how the burden was being shouldered by a small number of neighbouring countries. This is not deemed sustainable, since growing numbers of refugees in such a small number of countries could lead to further instability in the region. They therefore advocated for **increased burden-sharing among the international community**. Acknowledging that many of the crises in the region are likely to have humanitarian implications for years, stakeholders called for durable solutions for displaced populations, including third country resettlement. Proposals included the adoption of temporary stay in countries that are dependent on labour migration taking advantage of the skills and experiences of refugees. This would provide them with livelihood support and, at the same time, benefit the economies of refugee hosting countries.

The protracted nature of displacement and the fact that the overwhelming majority of refugees in the region have settled in host communities in urban areas rather than camps highlights the importance of **addressing challenges with regards to social cohesion and tolerance for diversity**. Whilst many Syrian refugees consulted in several countries praised the warm welcome they received by host communities, they also discussed how over time tensions have emerged between them with instances of physical violence and psychological abuse, including towards children. Jordanian civil society organizations observed tensions in the country between Syrian and Palestinian refugees and host communities and noted how these tensions often arose from competition over employment opportunities in the informal market.

In response to tensions between displaced people and host communities, as well as to demands for preserving dignity, affected people routinely asked for **income-generating activities** as opposed to food and vouchers that leave them reliant on host governments and aid organizations. This was in line with the online consultation outcomes and the discussions with government representatives, who highlighted the importance of supporting refugees' self-reliance. Affected people in Jordan and Lebanon highlighted the impor-



UNHCR/B. Sokol

tance of allowing refugees to work, which is not currently the case in several countries in the region. The private sector was also deemed to have a core business interest in building communities' self-sufficiency in protracted crises, and involving them in employment creation was encouraged.

Engagement with Affected Communities

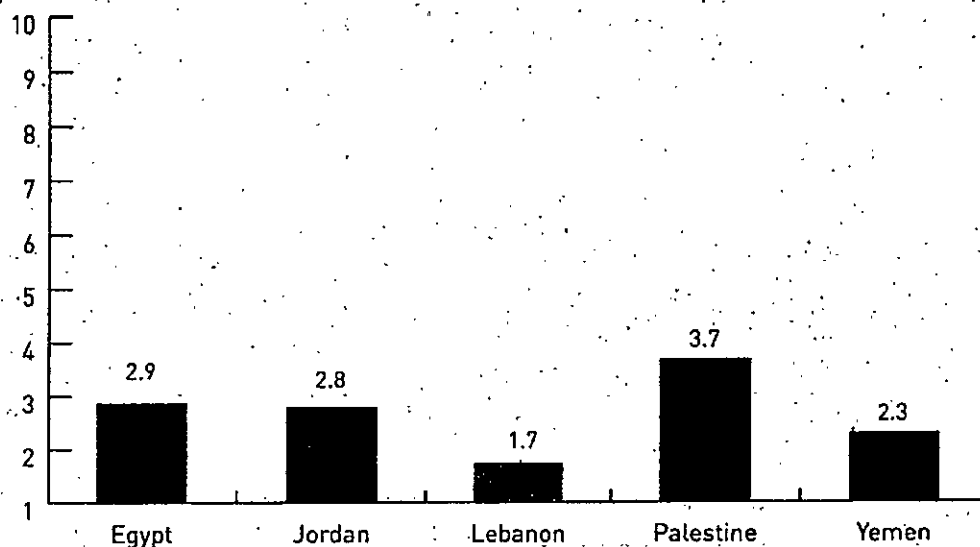
Orienting humanitarian efforts around the needs, rights, capacities and views of affected people has long been recognized as a critical way to improve humanitarian action and it has been one of the most frequent recommendations emerging from previous WHS regional consultations. Policies and guidance have been developed by different actors and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee which has endorsed five commitments towards promoting accountability to affected populations¹⁰, which is an important aspect of engagement with affected communities.

Stakeholders across the region underscored the importance of **meaningfully involving affected commu-**

nities in humanitarian preparedness and response. Communities are at the forefront of meeting their own needs and their efforts should be supported and built upon by humanitarian organizations. In addition, consultations across the region suggested that such partnerships would improve the understanding of humanitarian needs, build trust between aid organizations and communities and promote demand-driven humanitarian action.

Consultations held with affected communities revealed that people did not feel that aid organizations adequately consider their opinions when planning and delivering humanitarian relief, as seen in the graph below. Despite numerous humanitarian organizations already conducting comprehensive participatory assessments to inform their programme planning, affected people stated that **more needs to be done to ensure that affected communities are consulted meaningfully and a level of decision making power and influence is devolved to them.** Civil society participants in the Morocco regional meeting amplified this call and advocated for affected people's involvement in humanitarian programme planning and implementation particularly in protracted sit-

Average degree to which affected people think that aid groups consider their opinions (on a 10-point scale where 10=high and 1=low)



Source: Survey among affected people consulted in the region

¹⁰ The five commitments address improving organizational governance and leadership on integrating feedback and accountability mechanisms in all aspects of humanitarian programs; ensuring transparency in operations; actively seeking and integrating affected peoples' feedback and complaints to improve policy and practice; enabling participation in decision making processes; and improving design, monitoring, and evaluation of programs. For more information, see: <http://goo.gl/quLy40>.

uations. Youth consulted in the region expressed strong interest in being involved in humanitarian programme design as well as monitoring and evaluation.

"Humanitarian organizations need to provide information about their services because it is not humane to respond to refugee information needs with 'I don't know'."

Female refugee in Yemen

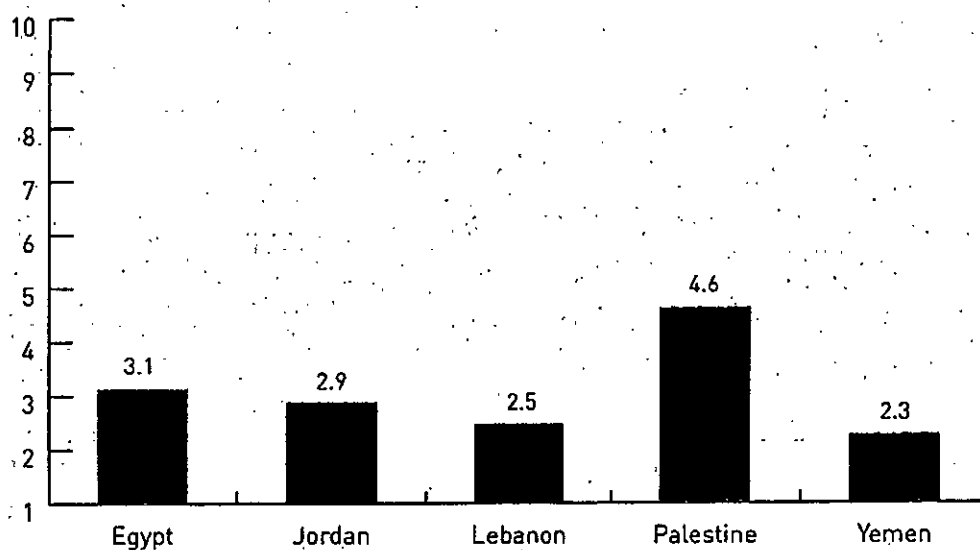
Better engagement with affected people includes **reaching all segments of the affected population and catering for their specific needs, vulnerabilities and capacities** – for example those for women, girls, boys and men. Civil society organizations in Iraq cautioned that women had to be engaged in a culturally sensitive manner, for example by having female humanitarian workers from the region engage with them and by holding separate meetings from those conducted with men. They also suggested that religious leaders could support engagement with communities, with current cooperation limited between humanitarian organizations and religious institutions involved in humanitarian work. Some stakeholders placed importance on finding

innovative ways to engage with the increasing number of affected people living in urban areas, given that they are often difficult to identify in large settlements.

Despite calls to better engage affected communities in needs analysis, vulnerability mapping and aid distribution, many refugees consulted across the region expressed concerns over the power given to some community leaders in such activities. Examples were given that recounted suspicions of aid diversion and corruption. In fact, concerns over preferential treatment of certain people by community leaders were raised in nearly all affected community consultations. In response to such concerns, affected people called for **stronger accountability and transparency measures at the local level to ensure appropriate targeting**.

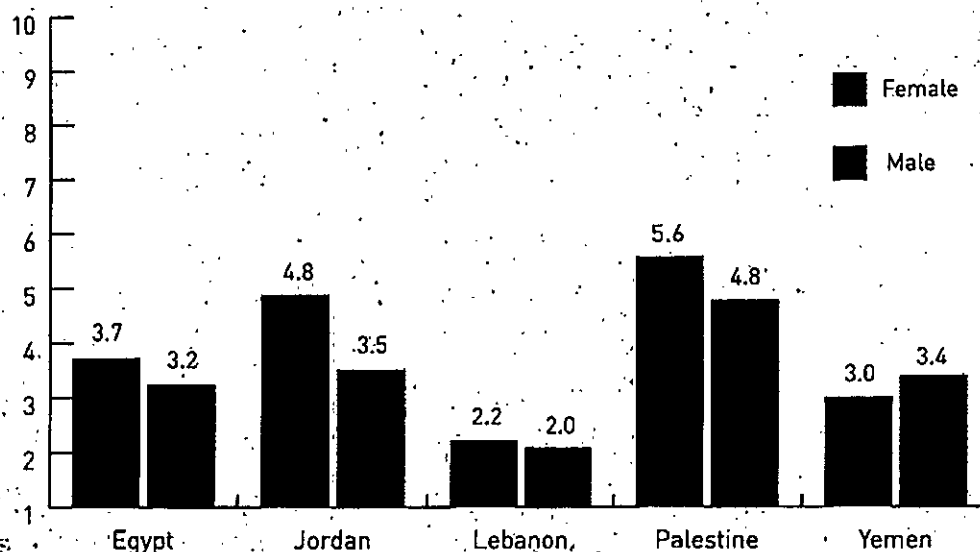
Affected people consulted in the region seldom felt that their priority needs were met, as shown in the graph below. This finding was supported by stakeholders who highlighted how affected people at times sell the in-kind assistance they received and use the funds to purchase other goods or services. To truly put people's needs at the heart of humanitarian action, stakeholders argued that **people need to be given a choice** over what kind of humanitarian assistance they receive. **Cash-based approaches** were an often-mentioned example

Average degree to which affected people think their priority needs are being met by aid groups (on a 10-point scale where 10=high and 1=low)



Source: Survey among affected people consulted in the region

Average degree to which affected people feel that they and their community are treated with respect and dignity by aid groups (on a 10-point scale where 10=high and 1=low)



Source: Survey among affected people consulted in the region

of how such choice could be provided, particularly in urban contexts and where markets are functioning well. In fact, stakeholders noted how the use of unconditional cash assistance is already increasing significantly across the region to improve affected people's choice in how they prioritize their household needs. The call for giving people a choice was resounding in consultations with affected communities, who frequently emphasized how giving them a choice in the type of assistance they need helped ensure their dignity, which they felt was often lacking. As visualized above, men and women respondents in Palestine reported feeling treated with the highest levels of respect and dignity, whereas men and women in Lebanon reported the lowest levels.

"We should consider affected communities as potential investors and not just subjects of receiving charity. This will help uphold their dignity and lead to more sustainable approaches to meeting their needs."

Participant in the regional civil society consultation in Morocco

Affected people in Egypt, Jordan and Yemen in particular highlighted their lack of knowledge of the humanitarian response system, including the roles of different organizations in humanitarian action in the region, what kind of goods and services affected people are entitled to and what relief organizations' selection criteria are for targeting beneficiaries. This highlights the **importance of basic information as a primary need for affected communities** and supports the current discourse of Communicating with Communities, also discussed in the online consultation. It also places emphasis on communication that is conducted in local languages and in a culturally appropriate manner. To complement existing efforts to inform affected people of their rights and entitlements, stakeholders called, stakeholders called for innovative ways through which aid agencies could better transfer knowledge to affected people even in hard-to-reach and besieged areas. Some affected people noted, however, that mobile phone technologies can dehumanize interaction with communities and underscored the need for in-person dialogue where information can also be passed on from affected people to humanitarian organizations in a two-way relationship.

The significance of two-way communication was also highlighted with reference to **accountability to affected people**. Crisis-affected individuals across the region



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expressed dissatisfaction with the provision of humanitarian relief and noted how they lack the means to hold humanitarian organizations to account for not fulfilling their rights or not abiding by appropriate standards. Refugees consulted in Lebanon and Yemen, for example, stated that they are not aware of any existing feedback mechanisms to voice their opinions and complaints about local organizations or UN agencies. Several civil society organizations in the regional consultation in Morocco suggested that affected populations' feedback could be included in the performance evaluation of humanitarian organizations. Others went much further and suggested that affected people should be able to take legal action against governments and humanitarian organizations for not upholding their rights to assistance.

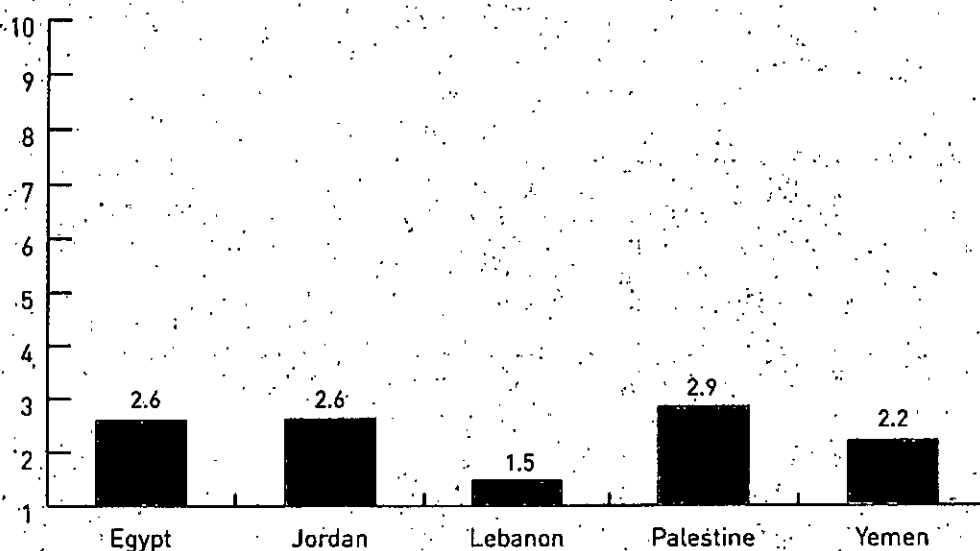
Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction

The frequency and severity of natural disasters in the MENA region has increased significantly, with the average number of disasters tripling over the last 30 years, affecting more than 40 million people and costing an es-

timated US\$20 billion.¹¹ Risks are particularly high in cities as a result of rapid urbanization and poor urban planning, population growth, elevated water demand in arid environments and the contamination of water resources. These risks are expected to increase in the years to come due to the effects of global climate change. In addition, vulnerability has become a dominant social feature in the region and is driven by changing social, political, ethnic and cultural dynamics. A consensus is emerging that greater investment in building resilience and disaster preparedness will help to ensure that when a crisis hits, lives and livelihoods are not immediately destroyed and development gains lost.

There is an increasing **political commitment** to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), emphasized during consultations with government representatives, but also evident through LAS' leading role in supporting and promoting the integration of DRR measures in regional policies and the Gulf Cooperation Council calling for strong regional commitment to strengthen resilience to natural hazards. Yet, stakeholders noted how **funding for emergency preparedness and DRR** remained limited and was not in line with these political commitments. They suggested that governments and other donors could commit a certain

Average degree to which affected people think aid groups help them, their family and their community prepare for future crises (on a 10-point scale where 10=high and 1=low)



Source: Survey among affected people consulted in the region

¹¹ *Natural Disasters in the Middle East and North Africa: A Regional Overview* (World Bank, 2014).

percentage of their humanitarian or development funding to such activities. In addition, stakeholders noted that local governments and communities are often not sufficiently informed or involved in the implementation of these political commitments and regional initiatives, thus failing to take their needs and capacities into account.

Government representatives, civil society organizations and participants in the online consultation called for **faster response to early warning signs** in the region, both for natural and man-made disasters. They advocated for closing the gap between early warning and response and placed emphasis on the importance of countries and communities recovering rapidly when shocks and stresses occurred. Stakeholders across the region also identified a lack of updated risk information and risk analysis as an obstacle to early action and noted the academia's and particularly sciences' potential in addressing this. Some government representatives emphasised the importance, in the interests of national security, of maintaining control over what information is shared and how it is used.

Affected people consulted across the region are concerned over their limited **knowledge and capacity to prepare and respond** to disasters. Refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen, for example, noted how they have not received any training or capacity building and are not familiar with any preparedness measures, and are thus unaware of how to respond when the crisis occurs. As highlighted by a community leader in Gaza, "we have been in three wars already and each time we act surprised and do not know how to respond." The graph on page 18 shows how affected people do not think that aid groups adequately help them prepare for future crises. In response to this reality, civil society organizations advocated for creating deployable volunteer groups before crises occur – a recommendation endorsed in youth consultations – as well as developing contingency plans and organizing emergency drills in communities.

In line with previous WHS regional consultations' recommendation to **localize humanitarian preparedness and response**, stakeholders in the MENA region highlighted the importance of strengthening local actors' ability to reduce disaster risks and prepare for future crises. Civil society organizations in Tunisia placed emphasis on ensuring local ownership of disaster preparedness through involving them in decision-making and aligning international support with existing national plans and frameworks. Some government representatives encouraged countries in the region to cooperate in local capacity building; however, they also emphasized the importance

of international support, given the global nature of many of the risks and threats they face and the differing level of experience and capacity at the local level in the region. In the context of rapid urbanization, some stakeholders advocated for capacity development to also take place at the level of municipalities and mayors.

Humanitarian Coordination and Collaboration between International, Regional and Domestic Institutions

A key principle of effective humanitarian action is adequate coordination and collaboration between humanitarian actors in order to ensure that responses build on each other, avoid duplication and address the most pressing needs and gaps in assistance. Systems have thus been developed to promote humanitarian coordination, such as common needs assessments, strategic planning and coordination forums such as Humanitarian Country Teams and clusters or sectors. There have also been attempts to strengthen these with the agreement by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) on a Transformative Agenda in 2011.¹²

Despite these efforts, stakeholders argued that the existing **coordination mechanisms need to become more inclusive and representative** of the breadth of humanitarian responders in the region. Civil society organizations and government representatives in particular discussed how the IASC and mechanisms such as the cluster system are not effective and do not reflect the current constellation of humanitarian stakeholders in the region, often bypassing willing governments, businesses, civil society organizations and representatives of affected communities. The current humanitarian system was criticized for representing unequal power relations between Northern and Southern organizations and civil society organizations from various countries also noted that they often find it difficult to understand all the different mandates, structures, strategies and appeals, which hinder efforts to coordinate activities with them.

Affected people's experiences of humanitarian coordination are largely bleak, particularly in relation to targeting and aid distribution. Refugees in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon argued that poor coordination among humanitarian organizations had led to gaps in aid provision as well as duplications in response. They noted how refugees often had to proactively approach

¹² The IASC is an inter-agency forum for coordination, policy development and decision-making involving the key UN and non-UN humanitarian partners. In 2011, the IASC agreed on the Transformative Agenda, a set of actions to substantively improve the current humanitarian response model.

a number of different organizations as there were limited referral systems between aid groups. Affected people in Syria similarly called for improvements in coordination, particularly between local and international actors and recommended that international humanitarian actors and donors support and fund local coordination initiatives.

Some civil society organizations advocated for a shift in focus **from the international humanitarian system's inward-looking coordination to an emphasis on shared ownership of humanitarian response between international, regional and domestic institutions.** Emphasis was placed on supporting local capacity to respond, given governments' and civil society organizations' knowledge of local contexts, including languages, cultures and governance structures. While consultations highlighted the need to support government leadership of humanitarian coordination, with government representatives themselves discussing the importance of effective multi-sector coordination within countries and the need to strengthen regional coordination mechanisms and crisis management rooms, some civil society stakeholders questioned the impartiality of governments who are party to a conflict in coordinating or delivering humanitarian relief.

"The main obstacle to coordination is a lack of trust. To overcome this, we need transparency, dialogue and a unified vision."

Tunisian civil society representative

Despite the calls for localized response and true collaboration, international humanitarian organizations pointed out that some regional and local humanitarian actors are often reluctant to share information or promote coordination with international counterparts, impacting the overall effectiveness of response. Civil society organizations in Egypt, Libya and Morocco explained that this is due to a lack of trust between local organizations, governments and international organizations, often stemming from lack of transparency, perceived power imbalances and suspicions of corruption. Civil society organizations also admitted that the lack of coordination structures among themselves hinder cooperation with international partners and expressed an interest in **creating regional civil society networks.**

Humanitarian Financing

Despite involvement by a large array of donors from within and outside of the Middle East and North Africa, available humanitarian financing failed to meet the current scale of demand in the region. In addition to **utilizing existing humanitarian resources better**, there was a need to **mobilize additional sources** of funding, including through financial institutions and the private sector. In fact, Arab governments have called for the creation of a regional bank for reconstruction and development to help address crises such as Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Palestine and Syria.

Several government representatives questioned the current discourse on humanitarian funding in the region. They rejected the terms "emerging" or "non-traditional" donors and appealed for **greater recognition of the culture and traditions of giving in the region.** In line with acknowledging regional specificities in funding, civil society organizations in their regional meeting in Morocco suggested to better leverage Islamic finance mechanisms – such as *saddaqa* and *waqf*¹³ – to support humanitarian work in a sustainable manner. Stakeholders called, however, for a sound analysis of the implications of encouraging such mechanisms' use for humanitarian purposes, given their other social functions in support of non-humanitarian needs.

There was some concern by UN agencies, international NGOs and civil society organizations that large amounts of humanitarian funding from the region are not being **reported in shared databases**, such as the Financial Tracking Service. This limits the ability to gain a comprehensive understanding of humanitarian financing flows and hinders current response and prioritization efforts. There has been some progress towards addressing this gap, with a Top Donors Group established for the Syria response. The League of Arab States also passed a resolution to establish an Arab humanitarian coordination mechanism, which would capture aid flows from Arab states in the region.

Stakeholders also called for **donors to fulfil financial pledges** to humanitarian assistance, such as at the Syria pledging conferences held in Kuwait. They further called for better compliance with the **Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles**, which emphasize impartiality, timeliness, predictability and flexibility with regards to humanitarian financing. Furthermore, members of the

¹³ *Saddaqa* is an Islamic term for "voluntary charity". Under the concept of *saddaqa*, a *waqf* is a religious endowment in Islamic law, usually donating a building, land or cash for Muslim charitable purposes.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement placed importance on finding innovative solutions to **donor fatigue in protracted crises and in the context of a region with numerous crises**. This was echoed by Eritrean refugees in Yemen, who argued that the humanitarian community has forgotten about their longstanding humanitarian situation, with other more high-profile crises in the region attracting attention. Stakeholders called for the need to **de-politicize humanitarian funding and ensure** funding decisions are based on needs and not on the political and strategic importance of countries to donors.

The disproportionate allocation of direct funding between international organizations and local actors in favour of the former was identified as a key obstacle to the much demanded localization of humanitarian response. Local organizations were concerned at their disadvantage in brokering direct partnerships with international donors, often forced to go through UN agencies or international NGOs. Whilst this can be an important first step in building trust and capacity, local organizations complained that subsequent opportunities for bilateral engagement with donors are rarely forthcoming. This was deemed to be spurred by donors' unwillingness to take risks with local organizations, especially in contexts where counter-terrorism activities are taking place, and also due to organizational self-interest in which UN agencies and international NGOs act as "middle men", maintaining their role and presence in what has become a competitive industry. Civil society organizations in Lebanon described the scene as "a humanitarian marketplace". Stakeholders suggested a need to **enable direct funding for local organizations**, including the creation of additional country-based pooled funds for local actors.

Affected people's perceptions of humanitarian financing were in line with civil society organizations' demand for greater transparency. Palestine refugees, for example, called for clearer **communication on funding decisions** and were concerned about corruption. Across the region, affected people expressed frustration over some crises being more funded than others and asked for less opaque communication on funding decisions. Syrian refugees in Jordan argued that humanitarian organizations prioritized promoting themselves to donors over meeting community needs.

In an effort to identify **additional sources of funding**, stakeholders highlighted the potential role of the private sector, financial institutions and the diaspora. Civil society organizations suggested that tax breaks could be used to incentivize individuals and organizations to fund humanitarian action, while youth volunteers advocated for businesses committing a certain percentage of their

revenue to relief activities. Youth themselves were seen as an untapped resource, given the significant wealth in parts of the region – notably the Gulf countries – and the potential of engaging them in humanitarian fundraising through youth-friendly social media campaigns.

Enhancing the Role of Media

The media has proven a powerful force in **shaping the perceptions and response** of individuals, organizations and governments to humanitarian crises in the region. Various consultations raised the need to engage the media in a conversation about their pivotal role and impact in humanitarian affairs.

Stakeholders across constituencies **highlighted the media's often politicized coverage** in the Middle East and North Africa and called for objective reporting of humanitarian crises. Many refugees and migrants in the region, such as those in Egypt and Lebanon, believed that the media promulgates a negative image of their communities, affecting social cohesion and their safety and well-being. Media representatives, while recognizing political influence in certain news outlets, also highlighted the need for humanitarian organizations to go beyond giving them statistics on money spent or goods provided but rather facilitate engagement with affected people and access to operations so the media can better understand and report on humanitarian situations. As highlighted by one journalist consulted in the region, "humanitarian organizations do not see the media as a partner, but rather a medium to publicize their work".

"Change starts with individual mindsets and the media are a powerful tool to influence that mindset."

Tunisian civil society representative

Media representatives also called on the **need to train journalists so as to better understand humanitarian issues**, which are complex and require specific expertise. However, even with well-trained journalists, it is not always easy to get editors interested in humanitarian stories, particularly in protracted crises where stories may be deemed repetitive or no longer in the public interest. Citizen journalism and the use of social media platforms were deemed as alternative ways to improve coverage and address the lack of reporting in mainstream media. Some felt that greater coverage could be used as a way to promote an understanding of humanitarian values and principles among the general public, which was deemed currently lacking.

Media representatives also spoke about their role in advancing transparency and accountability in the humanitarian sector. One of the main barriers, in addition to a lack of in-depth understanding of the sector, is **reluctance by humanitarian organizations to be scrutinized**. Information requests are often not provided in a timely or comprehensive manner and as mentioned, journalists are rarely provided with access to affected people or operations. Some felt that this was also due to the lack of proximity that many humanitarian organizations have, particularly the UN, to affected populations. A proposal was made for **journalists to be embedded with humanitarian organizations**, which would serve to improve their understanding of the sector and their ability to report in a way that can promote more accountability. This would also require professionalism and integrity by the journalists so as to build trust in the relationship. Consultations also addressed the influence that distorted media coverage can have on humanitarian funding and programming. Stakeholders were concerned about the media being able to draw attention to certain humanitarian crises and not cover others and suspected that donors and humanitarian organizations react to media triggers more than to where needs are greatest. For example, Palestinians consulted in Gaza mentioned that aid was distributed in specific areas depending on the presence of media coverage. Other stakeholders felt that the scale of needs in Yemen has largely been forgotten, or as one stakeholder questioned, "perhaps never known in the first place."

Empowering Youth in Humanitarian Action

The Middle East and North Africa region is experiencing an unprecedented "youth bulge", with nearly 30 per cent of its population between the ages of 15 and 29.¹⁴ Consultations frequently highlighted the importance of better engaging youth in humanitarian response and strengthening volunteer networks, which many stakeholders consulted, including government representatives and civil society organizations, recognized as a key component of humanitarian action.

"Youth are not the problem, they are the solution."

Tunisian male youth respondent to online survey

Youth are already closely involved in humanitarian action, as consultations in the region confirmed. 87 per cent of respondents to a youth survey in the region stated that they contributed in some manner to assisting affected people in humanitarian situations. Given the often *ad hoc* nature of their involvement in humanitarian relief, young people called for **more institutionalized forms of youth engagement**, for example through creating youth branches in civil society organizations and relevant government departments, establishing an international youth coalition on humanitarian action and expanding existing youth policies and codes of conduct. Stakeholders appreciated the involvement of youth in the work of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and noted the potential of other organizations drawing on their lessons learned. Emphasis was placed on encouraging girls' and young women's involvement, as most youth involvement in humanitarian action was perceived to be for boys and young men.

Volunteerism has a long tradition in the region, with many established organizations tracing their roots back to volunteer initiatives. As a Gazan civil society representative noted "Volunteerism is the foundation of our institutionalized humanitarian efforts and its strength will determine the future of humanitarianism in the region." Many civil society organizations and youth groups noted the emphasis placed on volunteerism in Islam and Arab culture, with those in Iraq suggesting that religious leaders could play a greater role in **encouraging young people to volunteer for humanitarian causes**. Government representatives and Syrian refugees in Jordan similarly called for better encouraging of volunteerism in the region. Young IDPs consulted in Syria also stated their commitment to volunteering in humanitarian action, many already engaged in aid delivery in Damascus, but highlighted the need for greater **training and capacity support** to improve their effectiveness and enhance opportunities.

To maximize young people's awareness of and ability to respond to crises, civil society organizations in Kuwait and Tunisia advocated for **including humanitarian issues in education curricula**. Participants to the virtual youth consultation suggested using religious education classes in schools to increase awareness of the principles of humanitarian action and to use after-school activities for capacity building and emergency drills. Civil society organizations and youth groups in Palestine called for training on disaster preparedness in schools from an early age, recognizing that youth were often the

¹⁴ Brookings Institution: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/topics/middle-east-youth>.

first responders to humanitarian crises. Governments in the region also discussed the possibility of training youth on disaster response in cooperation with student unions and higher education institutes.

Migration

The MENA region continues to see large and complex migration flows. Most migrants are from Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, making their way towards the Gulf, North Africa and the Mediterranean region. In September 2014 alone, over 12,700 people reached Yemen from the Horn of Africa, and over 200,000 refugees and migrants crossed the Mediterranean to Europe in 2014, with a large majority of boats departing from Egypt, Libya and Turkey.¹⁵

"If you want to protect us from the sea, ensure that our dignity is protected on the ground."

Young male refugee in Lebanon

There is a general absence of national asylum systems in the region, as well as inadequate implementation of international human rights framework as it applies to migrants. Migrants' journeys are fraught with risks and vulnerabilities, including discrimination, violence, and sexual, social and economic exploitation, as well as lack of respect of basic rights, decent living conditions, access to health care and a poor working environment.

An often overlooked issue is the impact of crises on international migrants, who can get stranded in conflicts as has happened recently in Libya. Migrants are also vulnerable to human trafficking, particularly women and unaccompanied minors, and become increasingly at risk as they undertake onward movement from their first country of refuge to the next. In consultations in the region and online, government representatives, civil society organizations and other stakeholders advocated for **greater awareness-raising and mitigation of the risks of migration** and human trafficking, as well as for a discussion aimed at finding solutions to migration, even if temporary in nature.

Travelling in unsafe vessels and often at the mercy of smugglers and harsh weather conditions, it is estimated that over 3,000 people perished at sea in 2014 while attempting to reach Europe. Despite the dangers of the journey, several young people consulted in the MENA region still considered attempting to cross the Mediterranean by boat, citing poor living conditions and limited employment opportunities as key push factors. The complexity and importance of addressing migration across the Mediterranean was acknowledged at the 2014 annual Protection Dialogue organized by UNHCR, where the need for coastal nations and regional blocs to revise their immigration and security policies to better protect migrants was underscored. There was concern in the region that migration was primarily addressed by governments as a security issue, but as was argued at the High Commissioner's Protection Dialogue, **ensuring national security should not contradict respecting international law, tolerance and the imperative to save lives.**

¹⁵ So Close Yet So Far from Safety (UNHCR, 2014). Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/542c07e39.html>.



CONCLUSIONS AND WAYS FORWARD

This report has outlined the diverse opinions and positions on the main priority humanitarian issues that have emerged from the preparatory stakeholder consultations. Many of these issues are in line with priorities identified in previous WHS regional consultations. This signals a sobering reality of globally shared humanitarian concerns. Yet, it is also a source of optimism, as actors across regions are facing similar challenges and appear united in wanting to find ways to more effectively meet pressing humanitarian needs.

In the absence of much-needed political solutions to the region's humanitarian crises, stakeholders called on the humanitarian community to renew their efforts to provide people with protection and assistance. While it is widely acknowledged that people's needs and rights should guide all humanitarian action, efforts to achieve this continuously fall short. Protection violations persist with little accountability, humanitarian access remains limited and humanitarian crises are becoming increasingly protracted. The global humanitarian architecture struggles to remain fit for purpose and has much room for improvement when it comes to fostering true collaboration between international, regional and local actors. There are also strong calls to strengthen regional and local humanitarian response, but the concrete steps on how to arrive at locally owned humanitarianism have not been clearly mapped out in the region.

The WHS regional consultation for MENA provides a platform to tackle some of these challenges and suggest concrete ways forward. It will not be possible to adequately address all the issues outlined in this report; thus, the regional consultation meeting will focus on developing conclusions and recommendations on the six topics that have been most prominently discussed during preparatory consultations and are considered to be some of the main priorities in the region. Based on the findings related to these topics, the Regional Steering Group has put forward the following questions to stimulate participants' preparation for the regional consultation. More concise discussion questions will be developed and shared with the participants for discussion at the regional consultation.

Protection of Civilians

- How can Governments, Regional Organizations and non-state actors better meet their responsibilities in supporting and advocating for the protection of civilians, including by ensuring greater respect for International Humanitarian, Human Rights and Refugee Law?

- How can greater accountability by states and parties to conflict be achieved in the face of clear violations of the law?
- How can humanitarian actors, including the UN and non-governmental organizations, contribute to better protecting civilians and supporting affected communities' own protection mechanisms?
- How can the diverse and specific protection needs of affected communities be best addressed?
- What other protection frameworks or principles exist, such as local customary law and practice, that could be harnessed for better protecting civilians?

Protracted Crises and Displacement

- How can humanitarian organizations more sustainably contribute to meeting people's needs and increase their resilience and self-sufficiency in protracted crises?
- What are the core building blocks that are required to enhance coherence between humanitarian and development actors so as to more sustainably respond to people's needs in protracted crises?
- How can the trend and impact of increasing and protracted displacement in the region be mitigated?
- What is the role of humanitarian actors in addressing the 'underlying causes' of conflict or crises in order to prevent them from re-occurring?
- How can a more coherent approach be developed between Governments, their development partners and the humanitarian community to support the hosting of displaced people, including the impact on host communities? How can greater burden sharing be fostered in terms of hosting the displaced in the region?
- How can the private sector be better mobilized to engage and support humanitarian action in protracted crises?
- What adjustments need to be made to the tools, approaches, coordination mechanisms and partnerships in the region to more effectively respond to crises in urban areas?

Humanitarian Access

- How can Governments and non-state actors better facilitate access for humanitarian organizations and enhance the ability for people under threat to seek protection and assistance, including across borders?

- How can humanitarian organizations enhance the security of their staff and their partners without jeopardising their proximity to affected people and transferring risk to local partners?
- How can the negative impact of international and national counter-terrorism measures on humanitarian access be mitigated?
- How can appropriate humanitarian dialogue between humanitarian actors and parties to a conflict and other actors of influence be enhanced in a principled manner?
- What innovative practices in improving humanitarian access in the region can be shared and scaled up?
- How can affected people be given a greater choice in the kind of assistance and protection they receive? What lessons can be learned from the use of cash based approaches in the region?
- How can national responsibility and accountability for humanitarian action be strengthened?
- How can humanitarian funding more directly reach the actors that are best placed to deliver humanitarian services, and where appropriate, be increasingly channelled to national and local actors?
- How can international humanitarian actors ensure that their efforts are building national and local capacity to better prepare and respond to crises in the short, medium and long term?
- How can international, regional and national co-ordination mechanisms be made more inclusive so as to cater for the needs of the breadth of humanitarian responders?
- How can trust be built among local, national and international actors to facilitate cooperation and information-sharing?

Emergency Preparedness

- What incentives and support is required for Governments to better manage risk and reduce vulnerability, and to make appropriate budget allocations and actions for building resilience and responding to crises?
- How can the role of Regional Organizations be strengthened to promote emergency preparedness and risk management?
- How can community resilience be strengthened to better cope with shocks and crises? What lessons can be learned from current efforts?
- How can it be better ensured that early warning signs result in early and appropriate response?
- What is required to scale up Government and donor investment in emergency preparedness?
- What is required, including partnerships with science and the private sector, to better anticipate natural hazards and crises and their impacts, and ensure that humanitarian action is fit for purpose in preparing for and responding to such events?

Localizing Humanitarian Response

- How can affected communities be meaningfully consulted and a level of decision making power and influence devolved to them?
- How can community responders, including youth and volunteers, be better supported in humanitarian preparedness, response and recovery?

Humanitarian Financing

- How can Governments and Regional Organizations work better with the international community to improve donor coordination and ensure that there is a common picture of humanitarian financing?
- How can the culture and traditions of charitable giving in the region be better recognized and harnessed to meet humanitarian needs?
- How can financial institutions and the private sector be better mobilised to engage and support humanitarian action in the region?
- How can Good Humanitarian Donorship principles or similar frameworks be taken up or adapted for donors from the region?
- How can the impact of counter-terrorism legislation be mitigated so as not to undermine the transfer of funds for relief operations?
- What is required to reduce the gap between increasing needs and available resources within the region?

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Cooperation and Development (MICAD) of United Arab Emirates, Palestinian Non-Governmental Organization Network (PNGO), Qatar Charity, Qatar Red Crescent Society, Royal Charity Organization, Sharek Youth Forum, Syrian NGO Alliance, Syrian Women's League, Tunisia Charity, Tunisian Red Crescent, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and United Nations Population Fund.

A special mention is required for The Humanitarian Forum for their leadership and commitment in mobilizing individuals and organizations across the region to organize preparatory consultations and raise awareness and support for the World Humanitarian Summit process.

Finally, the Regional Steering Group would like to thank Al Walid Bin Talal Foundation, the Government of Netherlands and the League of Arab States for sponsoring the WHS regional consultation for MENA.

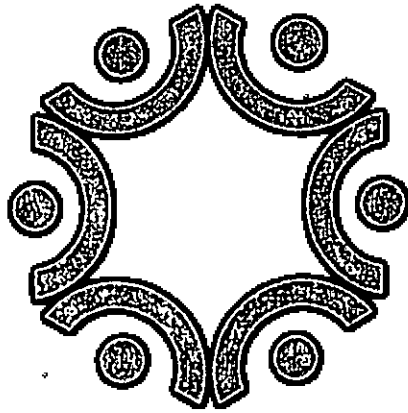


ANNEX: TIMELINE OF PREPARATORY STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

DATE	COUNTRY	EVENT	CONSTITUENCIES CONSULTED	HOST ORGANIZATIONS
MAY 2013	Bahrain	National civil society consultation	Civil society organizations	Royal Charity Organisation and The Humanitarian Forum
	Qatar	National civil society consultation	Civil society organizations	Qatar Charity, Qatar Red Crescent Society and The Humanitarian Forum
JUNE 2014	Kuwait	National civil society consultation	Civil society organizations	International Islamic Charitable Organization and The Humanitarian Forum
	Yemen	National civil society consultation	Civil society organizations	The Humanitarian Forum Yemen and the Humanitarian Forum
	Jordan	National civil society consultation	Civil society organizations	Jordan Hashemite Charitable Organization and The Humanitarian Forum
	United Arab Emirates	National civil society and government consultation	Civil society organizations and government representatives	Ministry of International Cooperation and Development of UAE
AUGUST 2014	Tunisia	National civil society consultation	Civil society organizations	Tunisia Charity, Tunisian Red Crescent, Islamic Relief and The Humanitarian Forum
SEPTEMBER 2014	Tunisia	National civil society consultation for Libyan NGOs	Civil society organizations	Al-Taher Azzawi Charitable Organization and The Humanitarian Forum
	Saudi Arabia	National civil society consultation	Civil society organizations	Al Walid Bin Talal Foundation and The Humanitarian Forum
	Jordan	Regional civil society consultation I	Civil society organizations	The Humanitarian Forum and Jordan Hashemite Charitable Organization
OCTOBER 2014	Kuwait	High-level roundtable on the World Humanitarian Summit: Perspectives from the Gulf Region	Governments, civil society organizations, financial institutions and UN agencies	International Islamic Charitable Organization, The Humanitarian Forum and UNOCHA
NOVEMBER 2014	Lebanon	National civil society consultation	Civil society organizations	Amel Association, ICVA and The Humanitarian Forum
	Lebanon	Focus group discussions with affected people	Refugees from Palestine and Syria	Lebanese Organization for Studies and Training, Amel Association, ICVA and UNOCHA
	Egypt	National civil society consultation	Civil society organizations	League of Arab States and The Humanitarian Forum
	Iraq	National civil society consultation	Civil society organizations	Iraqi Red Crescent and the Humanitarian Forum
	Turkey	National civil society consultation for Syrian NGOs	Civil society organizations	Syrian NGO Alliance, Qatar Charity, The Humanitarian Forum and UNOCHA

DECEMBER 2014	Palestine	National civil society consultation	Civil society organizations	Qatar Charity, PNGO, The Humanitarian Forum and UNOCHA
	Egypt	Focus group discussion with affected people	Refugees from Syria	Arab Organization for Human Rights and the Syrian Women League and UNOCHA
JANUARY 2015	Qatar	The MENA Red Cross and Red Crescent Consultative Meeting	MENA Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of the Red Cross, and the Arab Red Crescent Organization	Qatar Red Crescent Society
	Morocco	Regional civil society consultation II	Civil society organizations	The Humanitarian Forum, ISESCO, Qatar Charity and Al Waleed Bin Talal Foundation
	Egypt	Focus group discussions with affected people	Refugees and migrants from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and Syria	International Organization of Migration
	Yemen	Focus group discussions with affected people	Internally displaced persons; refugees from Eritrea, Somalia, Yemen and Syria	The Humanitarian Forum Yemen and ICVA
FEBRUARY 2015	Jordan	Roundtable for United Nations Agencies and International NGOs	United Nations agencies, international NGOs and NGO networks	UNHCR
	Egypt	Government consultation	LAS Member States included in the WHS MENA regional consultation	League of Arab States
	Syria	Focus group discussions with affected people	Internally displaced persons	UNFPA
	Palestine	Focus group discussions with affected people	Palestine refugees	ICVA and Sharek Youth Forum
	Jordan	Focus group discussions with affected people	Refugees from Syria	UNFPA
	Jordan	Focus group discussions with affected people	Refugees from Iraq, Palestine Somalia, Sudan and Syria	ICVA, Care International and UNOCHA
	Online	Regional youth consultation I	Youth	Sharek Youth Forum and UNOCHA

FEBRUARY 2015	Egypt	IFMSA youth consultation	Youth (medical students from the region)	IFMSA and UNOCHA
	Online	Regional youth consultation II	Youth	Sharek Youth Forum and UNOCHA
	Jordan	Media roundtable	Media	IRIN and UNOCHA



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