



WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT

ISTANBUL • 23-24 May 2016

People at the Centre

SPECIAL SESSION

Core Responsibility Four of the Agenda for Humanity



“We must return our focus to the people at the centre of these crises, moving beyond short-term, supply-driven response efforts towards demand-driven outcomes that reduce need and vulnerability.”

Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit

CONTEXT

“People want to express their needs and desires, and know that their voice makes a difference. People want to be recognized and empowered as the central agent of their lives and their futures. And people want to thrive, to be self-reliant and to improve life for themselves and for their families... Affected people must be consistently engaged and involved in decision-making, ensuring participation by women at all levels.

Legitimate representatives of communities should be systematically placed at the leadership level in every context. People must also be able to influence decisions about how their needs are met and rely upon all actors to deliver predictably and transparently.”

One Humanity, Shared Responsibility: Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit

There was a strong call from the World Humanitarian Summit consultations for all humanitarian action to put affected people at the heart of humanitarian action by making changes which:

- recognize people and communities affected by crises as the primary agents of response, increasing their voice, choice and leadership in humanitarian assistance and protection
- support individual and community-based self-protection coping strategies, systems and mechanisms, reducing dependency and vulnerability
- increase accountability to affected people



The Summit must mark a major shift in humanitarian action to truly empower affected people as the driving force of any humanitarian response.

OBJECTIVE

The five core responsibilities of the Secretary-General's *Agenda for Humanity* lay the foundations for humanitarian actors and other stakeholders to work more effectively to uphold people's safety, dignity and the right to thrive. It is clear that this desire for change comes from the grassroots. This Special Session will invite commitments from stakeholders which:

- ensure affected people know what they can expect from aid providers and are able to express their views and concerns.
- ensure all humanitarian responders, including member states and donor countries, listen and respond to the feedback and perceptions of affected people.

These commitments may include the following:

- All stakeholders should adopt the Core Humanitarian Standard and International Aid Transparency Initiative Standard, with clear benchmarks for achieving these.
- Donors should commit to make sustained funding conditional on the systematic collection of feedback from affected people on the quality and utility of humanitarian programmes.
- Humanitarian agencies should establish a common approach to providing information to affected people and collecting, aggregating and analysing feedback from communities to influence decision-making processes at strategic and operational levels.

BACKGROUND

The first-ever World Humanitarian Summit will take place from 23 to 24 May 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey. Following three years of extensive consultations with more than 23,000 people in 153 countries, this will be the moment to answer their overwhelming call for a renewed commitment to humanity. In his report for the World Humanitarian Summit, the United Nations Secretary-General calls upon Member States and other stakeholders to endorse and get behind five core responsibilities. These will ensure that we can deliver more and better on behalf of all those who are suffering and who need assistance. The Secretary-General's *Agenda for Humanity* spells out how this can be achieved.

The Special Sessions respond to the specific calls made during the consultation process. They will focus on launching strategic initiatives underlying the five core responsibilities. These initiatives aim to harness the vision, skills and capacities of stakeholders in each relevant area. Istanbul is the opportunity to demonstrate unity and solidarity with the needy, to prevent and end suffering, and to take all the necessary steps to place our



common values of humanity back at the heart of the decision-making process.

The Special Sessions will provide a platform for Member States and other stakeholders to make specific commitments in support of these and as a means of achieving the Agenda for Humanity. .

FORMAT AND STRUCTURE

The Special Session will be a roundtable discussion including representatives of affected communities, supported by a moderator. A summary document will capture the commitments made during the Session and contribute to the Commitments to Action document of the World Humanitarian Summit.

This Special Event will last for one hour. As there may not be sufficient time for all participants to announce their commitments they will be asked to share them before or during the Summit.

The Special Sessions will be open to media and webcast live. The time and location for this session will be made known shortly.

REGISTRATION AND SPECIAL SESSION PREPARATIONS

The focal point will engage with interested stakeholders in the run-up to the Summit to assist in the development of commitments. Please refer any queries related to this session to Alexandra Sicotte-Levesque at peoplecentred.session@whsummit.org. As part of the online registration process for the Summit there will be the opportunity to register to attend this session. Details on registration will be circulated to all invitees in the coming weeks.