What Is The Role Of The International Community?

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International Community

- International / Regional organizations
- Donors
- Unilateral/multilateral assistance through countries' international agencies
- Global civil society actors:
  - NGOs, Social movement and Networks;
  - Think tanks and commissions ;
  - Media (incl. NTIC).

Role

- To save lives while ensuring basics for survival
- Their actions consist in:
  - Early warning & preparedness,
  - Capacity building,
  - Fundraising,
  - Influencing (advocacy, campaign)
  - Development aid & resilience programs,
  - Research.
  - Etc.

How to help nations facing crises, while maintaining momentum on the SDGs?

1. ***Preparedness as a key to succeed or a way to minimize casualties***
   - **Vulnerability assessment**
     - Audit on the vulnerable areas, the nation's ability and resources,
     - The presence of other international actors and the identification of who is doing what
     - Identification of anything that could lead to or exacerbate a crisis and the potential solutions; etc.
   - **Planning** to effectively manage and minimize casualties: actions for immediate response in order to alleviate the effect of the crisis especially regarding the SDGs.
   - **Communication**: early awareness, information sharing and learning from best practices

According to the Oxfam CD in Mali, the NGOs provide direct assistance to the population when the government is not prepared or does not have the resources. But their role is also to raise awareness, to support in preparedness and to mobilize.

How to help nations facing crises, while maintaining momentum on the SDGs?

2. Identify and address practical and strategic needs

- **Practical needs by the delivery of direct assistance**:
  Food, WASH, Protection, Cash/vouchers, etc.
  In doing so, the International Community will also avoid unpredictably induced issues.
  During the Niger flood in 2010, rapid direct actions by the delivery of sanitary kits, WASH, avoided an amplification of the crisis through disease spread and health issues (*former Oxfam Country Director in Niger*).

- **Strategic needs** while accounting for unpredictable dynamics induced by the crisis.

  Researchers : post-disaster changes and the destruction of the social structure could lead to worsening the conditions and the livelihoods of the most vulnerable people.

  For instance, the amplification of gender roles and identities and the transformation of gender relations. *(Bradshaw, 2010, 2013; IRP, 2009; ICRC, 2015*)

  Failing to account for strategic needs could lead to failure in ensuring the SDGs.

Example: Following the Ebola Outbreak, a new community of Ebola survivors emerged. They are living facing discrimination and stigma while dealing with their own trauma. The UN Human Rights Commission and NGOs work to ensure the respect of their fundamental rights and dignity, to ensure that this community will be taken into account and protected by the government in the same way as the overall population.

How to help nations facing crises, while maintaining momentum on the SDGs?

3. After the direct response

- Work to ensure the reinforcement of the nations' and the communities' capabilities to prevent, manage and respond to crises by building their resilience.
- In addition, development programs should be linked wherever possible to long term development actions to ensure the ground for the SDGs.
- Important to raise evidence based knowledge through research to improve future responses, policy and practices.

Throughout the response, the International Community should

- Find the best way to combine humanitarian, development and campaign works;
- Gather expertise through partnerships at any level globally or locally;
- Ensure an inclusive action, meaning ensuring the program will account for the most vulnerable and that nobody will be left behind.

Synergies for great cooperation, and faster and more effective responses

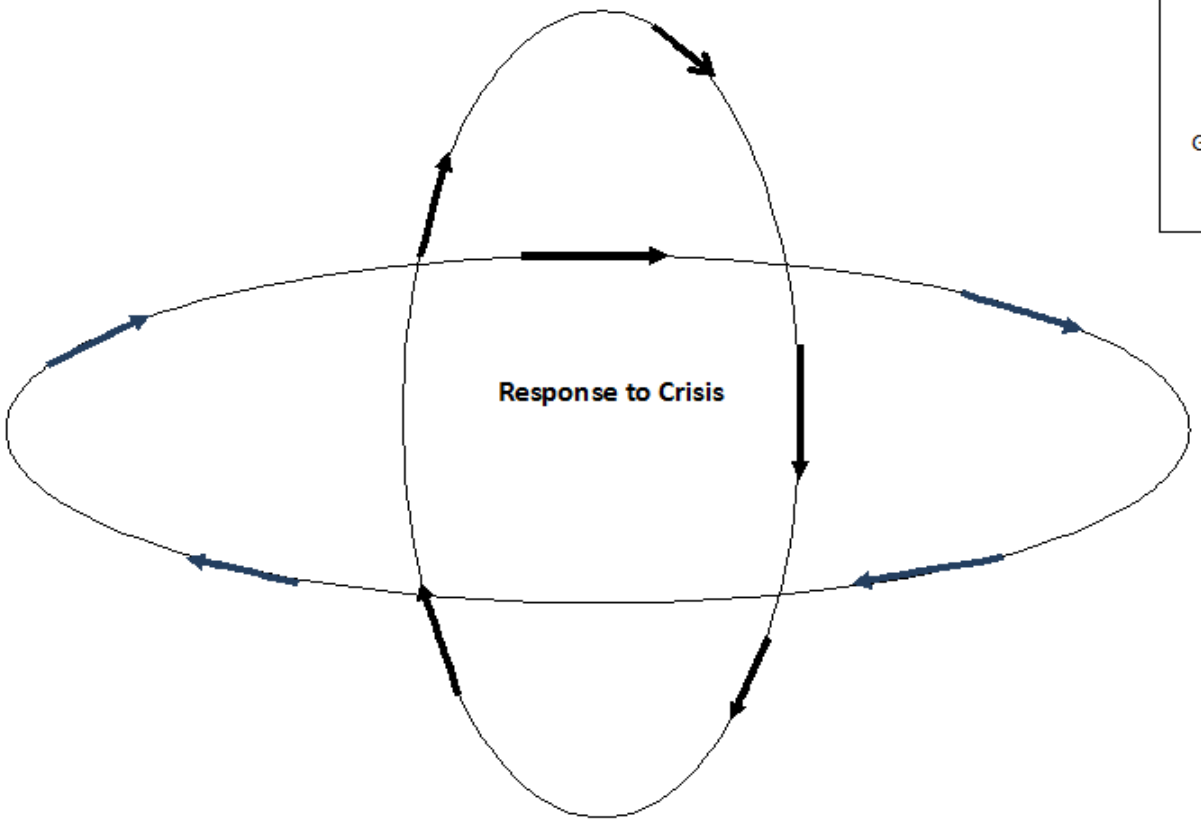
- "The *success of humanitarian aid operations ultimately depends on the ability of organizations to work together*" (Moore and al., 2003).

- Cooperation is a strategy to mitigate the international actors' weaknesses and to ensure effective responses.
  International actors have made significant attempts to combine their efforts in order to be able to respond to crises.
  Partnerships include: sharing information, joint operations and projects, sharing resources (staff, goods, cash, and other items), and so forth

For instance:

- International and Regional organizations are the most important actors in the provision of humanitarian aid and development assistance.
  The UN usually coordinates the response to avoid duplications and conflicting activities.
- NGOs generally have strong expertise working with communities and population, as well as a significant network in the countries.

Identify horizontal and vertical partnerships



International actors

International/Regional organizations
Donors
Unilateral/Multilateral assistance
Global civil society actors (NGOs, Social movement, Networks, Think tanks, Consortium, Media)

Local actors

Governments
National donors
National civil society actors
Communities

Some examples of Oxfam's partnership in WAF

Vertical cooperation

- **Communities:** in **Mali**, Oxfam ensures a close and trusting relationship with communities through the implementation of a "committee of complaint" (comité *de plainte*). This committee allows the communities to complain if the intervention does not respect what was planned. They may complain to a coordinator, the CD, the RD.

- **Local NGOs/ civil society organizations:** Oxfam works to improve their capacity to conduct humanitarian related activities in food security, livelihoods and WASH.

- **Donors**: Oxfam raises funds through public appeals and private donations

- **UN**: Oxfam receives logistics support provided by the **UN** (air lift of human goods and personal, land transport, etc.)

Horizontal cooperation

- **In Mali**: Oxfam is a member of a consulting group for international NGOs which work together to provide humanitarian assistance, to share approach regarding the way of working and who is doing what, to agree about common advocacy programs, to raise an early warning about hotspots/ vulnerable people, to share security information.
  They also work together to increase effectiveness in attracting grants.

Synergies for great cooperation, faster, and more effective responses

An effective response depends on the government's reaction.

The case of flooding in Niger in 2010 *(ref. Former Oxfam Country Director in Niger)*

The government's reactivity during the floods that struck Niamey in 2010 helped in facing the crisis and reduced casualties.

The government

- Knew his weaknesses.
- Immediately asked for international assistance,
- Gathered NGOs and coordinated a response involving a number of agencies.

In fact, NGOs were already present due to an ongoing food security crisis.

The challenge was to continue to respond to the food security crisis while responding to the flood crisis, especially to be flexible enough to reallocate the available resources.

The environment was not favorable because it was the worst famine and flooding in Niger's history, but the collaboration between the government, the NGOs, the media, the donors, and the communities led to an efficient response.

Development and resilience

- Development assistance in addition to humanitarian actions
  - To rebuild and reestablish basic social, economic, and productive infrastructure;
  - To reduce LT vulnerability
  - To reinforce the people, communities and the nation's ability to adapt and to recover promptly following a crisis. To be more resilient

- The International Community now recognizes that risk reduction and resilience should be established in both humanitarian and development thinking *(Humanitaran Coalition)*

Some actions undertaken

- The Global Resilience Partnership is an existing instrument that aims to help people adapt and invest in more resilient future, to build resilience rather than only focusing on repair.

- In Afghanistan, the WHO provides trainings to respond to the shortage of health workers (including midwives and nurses), especially to women and people in the most isolated communities. This favors a body of health workers to treat and save their own people. The organization ensured the availability of medicine and medical equipments, especially in the disaster prone areas.

- Oxfam works to deliver immediate aid through local market structures whenever possible. This contributes to support and reinforce local economies, infrastructures, and ensures sustainable responses

Challenges and limitations

- Development assistance could worsen the situation if it does not account for the social, political condition and the dynamics induced by the crisis.

- The difficulty to reallocate funds devoted to development assistance, and to struggle with persistent humanitarian issues

  For instance: In Mali, the signature of the peace agreements, following the conflicts, led to an increase of the budget allocated to the development assistance to the detriments of humanitarian actions.
  The issue is that actors are trying to re-build (road, schools) in some insecure areas or areas where humanitarian crisis is ongoing which guarantees, neither the implementation nor the achievements.

- The respect of donors' commitment. In addition, the recent migration crisis in Europe turns away the attention of donors, and this is worrying for ongoing crises in WAF.
  For instance : the world's largest humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin took some time to attract attention of the Media and to raise funds.

THANK YOU