

DEFINITIONS: CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE HUMANITARIAN ACTION

ADAPTING THE OECD CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF HUMANITARIAN ACTION



RELEVANCE

Is humanitarian action doing the right things?

Relevance refers to whether humanitarian action is in line with the needs and priorities of people affected by crisis in each specific context, and with the needs and priorities of institutions and partners at macro and micro levels.



COVERAGE AND INCLUSION

Who does humanitarian action reach and how does this relate to humanitarian need, including protection?

Coverage means exploring which members and groups within the affected population have been reached through humanitarian action, and how this relates to humanitarian need, including protection, in terms of focusing on those most affected by crisis. Inclusion means humanitarian action without discrimination (e.g. on the basis of nationality, race or ethnicity, gender, religious belief, class, disability, sexual identity and orientation), while also addressing the specific and diverse needs of different groups/ individuals.



EFFECTIVENESS

What has humanitarian action achieved? How well and for whom?

Effectiveness measures the results achieved by humanitarian action across different groups,

and the quality of humanitarian assistance.



EFFICIENCY

How well are resources being used for humanitarian action?

Efficiency measures the extent to which humanitarian action delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way. It explores the use of financial resources, plus human, technical, time, environmental, social or other material resources, relating this to results at all levels of the results chain. It may also mean exploring operational aspects of humanitarian action, i.e. how well action has been managed.



INTER-CONNECTION

How does humanitarian action take account of the medium and longer term, and how does it connect with development and peacebuilding?

Inter-connection refers to the need to ensure that: a) short-term humanitarian action is designed, planned and implemented to take into account medium- and longer-term considerations; and b) humanitarian action connects appropriately to development and peacebuilding.

Note, ALNAP's 2006 EHA guide refers to connectedness. This is now replaced with the more commonly used term 'inter-connection', which can be more easily translated.



COHERENCE

How complementary, coordinated and consistent is humanitarian action across different actors?

Coherence refers to: a) complementarity and coordination of humanitarian action between actors engaged in humanitarian work; and b) alignment with, and consistency between policies and standards, both at organisational and system-wide levels.



IMPACT

What are the higher-level and transformative effects of humanitarian action?

Impact examines the effects of humanitarian action from individual and household levels, through to macro and systemic changes to societies. Beyond immediate effects, impact captures the unintended, varied and collective effects of humanitarian action – positive or negative, in the short, medium or long term.

PRIORITY THEMES

PUTTING AFFECTED PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE

Evaluates the extent to which humanitarian action: a) meaningfully involves affected people in decision-making; b) recognises their agency; c) ensures their protection; and d) is grounded in their needs, priorities and aspirations.

Despite commitments, deep-rooted power imbalances limit whether humanitarian actors are genuinely led by people affected by crisis. Evaluations can examine the extent to which humanitarian actors are being led by or are responding to the preferences and priorities of people affected by crisis in a timely manner; the quality of engagement, including cultural sensitivity and power and trust between humanitarian actors and communities; and if the perspectives of people affected by crisis have

been listened to and acted upon.

LOCALLY-LED HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Evaluates the degree to which humanitarian action: a) supports local actors, b) shifts power and resources to frontline responders, and c) reinforces locally owned crisis response and recovery. Evaluations can examine local actors' leadership (or lack thereof) in humanitarian action and explore structural and operational barriers that limit their influence, recommending how these barriers can be overcome. Evaluations can also assess variations in local actors' values, priorities and power dynamics, and how this shapes local actors' leadership and relationships with communities affected by crisis (e.g. their role in the inclusion or exclusion of certain groups in receiving humanitarian assistance).

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CRISIS

Evaluates the extent to which humanitarian action: a) contributes to or mitigates the climate crisis, and b) considers local and/or Indigenous knowledge, practices and solutions around the environment and climate crisis. The climate crisis can significantly increase humanitarian needs, contributing to displacement, instability and violence through climate-related events like droughts and floods. In line with the principle of 'Do No Harm', consider environmental factors in how humanitarian action is planned and implemented, and whether it minimises negative environmental impacts.

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You can find more detail in the [full evaluation criteria guide](#). This briefing is available in [Arabic](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#).

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