

Talking Points OAS Session 'From Coordinated to Integrated Implementation of the 2030 Agenda: the development, humanitarian and peacebuilding nexus'

ECOSOC Chamber, 2 March, 10:00 – 11:30

Introduction

The current focus on a development, humanitarian and peacebuilding nexus is a welcome advance, crucial to addressing the critical needs of hundreds of millions of people worldwide living in situations of poverty, conflict and crisis. The 2030 Agenda recognises the need to work to build resilience in the poorest countries both to respond to and to help prevent humanitarian crisis. The Agenda emphasises that “there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development”. We must recognise the need to act globally to ensure the necessary continuum of effort in averting and solving conflicts and crises, delivering vital humanitarian assistance, building the resilience of vulnerable communities and strengthening long term development to empower peoples and release countries from dependency on aid.

At the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), emphasis was placed on the need for development, humanitarian and political actors to set aside traditional institutional labels and ways of working and move towards **collective outcomes over multi-year time frames**, with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the common overall results and accountability framework. The commitments made by Member States at the WHS provide a solid foundation for what is now being termed as a “New Way of Working”, that *transcends humanitarian and development divides*.

With three OCHA Level Three emergencies, and numerous other humanitarian situations, many of them protracted, there is an overwhelming demand for humanitarian assistance that goes beyond the immediate response to natural disasters or other emergencies that we have traditionally dealt with.

Recent policy developments, whether stemming from commitments made at the WHS, to achieving the SDGs, or responding to needs of refugees all recognise the continuum of support that is needed in order to solve our problems. There is now a recognition that a collaborative and coherent response is needed that respects specific circumstances but also transcends organisational silos.

Enhancing Coordination

Promoting collaboration and coherence between the UN Development System and humanitarian agencies and peacebuilding initiatives will help guide strategic decision-making that will support effective action within the nexus. How do we do this?

All options should be explored, including:

- Conducting joined-up needs assessment, situation, risk and problem analyses, which should also include an analysis on the impacts of climate change on humanitarian and development work;
- Carrying out joint planning and programming, on a multi-year basis, within UN Country Teams to facilitate achieving the SDGs, to take action to prevent humanitarian crises, and to tackle fragility;
- Ensuring that reporting should not just aggregate and evaluate the impact of discrete actions, but should also explain how different activities, with different points of origin, are coordinated and are not duplicated or even competing against each other;

- Being conscious that this nexus should not be considered one-directional. Just as humanitarian efforts should enable an environment appropriate for long-term development, sustainable development activities need to be re-examined to ensure that they build resilience and prevent potential humanitarian situations and reduce fragility;
- **Financing modalities** that can support **collective outcomes and flexible and predictable multi-year programming** and enable the redirecting of development assistance quickly and flexibly to where it is needed most.

Responsibility for the national implementation the SDGs lies primarily with national governments, but development challenges and the causes of humanitarian crises often transcend borders. Fragmentation of responsibility can lead to a gap in providing a continuum of support. It is vital that country teams, including all UN actors work together to collaborate to respond to human need rather than in terms of different categories of support. Specific efforts should be made to promote inter-agency and Resident Coordinator discussions. These should aim to develop situationally-appropriate responses and ensure shared strategic, sustainable development outcomes. A well-coordinated and thought-through response framework that supports the application of Multi-year funding and pooled resources, may also be key for building resilience and delivering longer-term benefits.

Resident Coordinator System

Again in those circumstances, the UN resident Coordinator is central to delivering an appropriate, effective and efficient response. This already happens, but can be improved. Ireland looks forward to the Secretary General's report on the Resident Coordinator System. The report needs to outline all potential possibilities that will allow us to take bold steps to ensure the Resident Coordinator System is optimised and fully fit for purpose. A standalone Resident Coordinator System could be considered, to enable collaboration and promote transparency and accountability. Implementing the SDGs will require more than co-ordination – it will need joined-up and responsive planning by country teams.

Gender

In formulating our response, we must have regard to the specific needs of women and girls as well as their ability to contribute to sustainable development efforts. Gender cross-cuts the development, humanitarian and peacebuilding nexus and must be mainstreamed throughout our response to achieve sustainable results -- gender-sensitive implementation is achieving sustainable peace, addressing fragility and improving resilience. The Women, Peace and Security Agenda should not be seen only in the context of conflict; it is a tool that can enhance inclusive participation across sustainable development, humanitarian and peacebuilding work. The successful gender mainstreaming efforts that have been carried out in the development pillar of the development, humanitarian and peacebuilding nexus should be seen throughout, in order to maximise results and expedite achievements.

Conclusion

The development, humanitarian and peacebuilding nexus is not a policy concept, but a reflection of reality. The recent policy reviews offer us an opportunity to better address fragility and vulnerability in its many inter-related forms. As well as promoting collaboration to allow humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts to provide a foundation for long-term development, so can development be an effective means of crisis-prevention. We should enable development efforts to better recognise the warning signs of fragility and to address them before crises hit.