

# THE CORE STANDARDS FOR BETTER HUMANITARIAN SYSTEM

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 Analysis

Humanitarian action have existed throughout the history of civilization, across the world, and done with different practices. For instance, the Islamic ideas of zakat and other charities have been particularly important in Islamic geography. Similarly, other religions have a similar approach to those who need humanitarian assistance. However, the current international humanitarian system (classical humanitarian system or Dunantist system) has originated from the West, and is mostly based on the European experience of wars and natural disasters.

In the 21st century, the Eurocentric perspective has become controversial in terms of

understanding and responding to complex crisis situations. This is why so many criticisms have been voiced toward the classical humanitarian system. It should be noted that the concept of humanitarian aid has long been dominated by a classical paradigm. The primary aims of this paradigm are preventing human losses and providing the basic needs of people to survive, such as water, health, housing, and food. Also, this classical paradigm focuses solely on principled aid. The most fundamental criticism of the classical paradigm is about the focus of short-term relief provision. Furthermore, local aid providers are likely excluded from the



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humanitarian system's picture.

In recent years an alternative paradigm, called the Resilience Paradigm as well, was created by humanitarian actors and intellectuals. The paradigm foregrounds building on local response capabilities for the purpose of preventing a humanitarian crisis and eliminating undesirable conditions. It prioritizes on developing assistance programs such as health, housing, and education. Correspondingly, it also stresses on preventing dependency of victims, which is associated with the provision of relief, and contrasts it with development approaches. To put it in a different way, communities and people affected by crisis should have been given not only financial support but also initiatives for their self-sufficiency. In short, humanitarian actors should “not just give the fish” to the people in need, but teach them “how to catch the fish.” In the meantime, it's useful to raise

their awareness in terms of coping with crisis situation such as natural disasters, epidemics, wars and so on. Individuals should also be aspired to be involved in humanitarian activities.

The nature of crises is always changing. The prolonged conflict in Syria, the forced flight of the Rohingya people in Myanmar, the natural disasters categorized as catastrophic events, they all indicate a dramatically altering world of crises. Complicated crises will tend to become more common. Aid programming will also become increasingly complex. Hence It's widely agreed that the aid system too needs to change.

It is with this realization, humanitarian organizations have set out the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS), involving nine principles that INGOs/NGOs and individuals active in humanitarian actions can improve the quality and effectiveness of the assistance they supply.



So humanitarian response is be appropriate, relevant, effective, and timely. Besides, it strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects. It is very important to be based on communication, participation, and feedback. Complaints of people in need are welcomed and addressed by humanitarian actors. Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve their profession. Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably. Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose.

According to these standards, it is essential to response the expectations of the people in need by respecting their fundamental rights and dignity. Similarly, humanitarians must strengthen their accountability through improved responses. Accountability, which is usually considered as abidance and counting assigned performance indicators and reporting back, is an obligation on the part of decision-makers or those with power to account the use of that power. By strengthening accountability, individuals can hold humanitarian organizations to account should there be anyunsuitable activities.

CHS is designed for organizations who directly play the financial and technical role of humanitarian responses. It stands on the the

principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, independence, accountability, transparency, gender equality, responsibility sharing and coordination. In the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS), communities and people affected by the crisis stand at the center of humanitarian action. It is essential to respect their fundamental human rights such as the right to live with dignity, protection, and security, adhering to the international law.

CHS was created as a respond to the changing needs of improvements in humanitarian practice. And the current humanitarian system needs to transform from that of emergency aid to development aid; because emergency needs always change once the moment of crisis passes, and the people in need seek longer-term assistances to rebuild their lives for a better future. And hopefully these people too can help others in the future.

To conclude, what is expected from humanitarian organizations is that the humanitarian actors should use the aforementioned criteria to shape their internal procedures. Thus, a rational attitude taking into account the needs of the societies trapped in humanitarian crises will be widespread for a better and sustainable humanitarian system.

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> “Core Humanitarian Standards”, CHS Alliance, Group URD and the Sphere Project, <https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/files/files/Core%20Humanitarian%20Standard%20-%20English.pdf>