



**Brussels, 21 December 2023  
(OR. en)**

**17056/23**

**COHAFA 127  
DEVGEN 238  
COJUR 71  
SAN 768  
RELEX 1517  
INTER-REP 105**

**NOTE**

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Protection of humanitarian and health workers in humanitarian crises - presentation by Médecins du Monde

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Following the meeting of the Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA) of 19-20 December 2023, delegations will find in Annex the presentation made by Médecins du monde <sup>(1)(2)</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Médecins du monde Belgique, identification number in the EU Transparency Register: 562583120901-18.

<sup>2</sup> This document contains a presentation by an external stakeholder and the views expressed therein are solely those of the third party it originates from. This document cannot be regarded as stating an official position of the Council. It does not reflect the views of the Council or of its members.

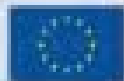
***“The risks we face are beyond human comprehension” :***

## **Advancing the protection of humanitarian and health workers**



*Presentation of the main findings of a report coordinated by Action Contre la Faim (ACF), Humanity and Inclusion (HI) and Médecins du Monde (MdM) under the Presence, Proximity and Protection ECHO funded project*

**COHAFA meeting  
December 20th 2023**



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# Context

- **2023 is going to be the deadliest year for humanitarian workers**
- **Presence, Proximity, Protection Project** : Improve the humanitarian communities' effectiveness in responding to the issue of shrinking humanitarian space (Impact of CT measures, Access and Protection)
- **Specific objective on the protection of humanitarian and health workers:**
  - Identify NGOs priority challenges and recommendations on the protection of humanitarian and health workers
  - Support evidence-based and collective advocacy towards States, donors, UN and humanitarian coordination, INGOs, and L/NNGOs
  - Foster dialogue and maintain the topic at high-level of the political agenda



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# Methodology

- Builds on the outcomes of the 2021 Discussion Series on *"Ensuring the protection, safety, and security of humanitarian workers and medical personnel in armed conflict"*
- 79 interviewees - including local and national actors
- Humanitarian Talk at the EHF 2023. Find the replay: [HERE](#)

## DISCUSSION SERIES:

Ensuring the protection, safety and security of humanitarian workers and medical personnel in armed conflict



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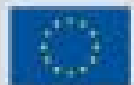
ACTION  
CONTRE  
LA FAIM



NORWEGIAN  
REFUGEE COUNCIL

## 3 key priorities & associated recommendations

- 1 Reinforce security risk management and capacities for all NGOs and local health actors
- 2 Sustain and scale reliable data collection, sharing and analysis mechanisms at local and global levels
- 3 Protect humanitarian space to better protect humanitarian and health workers



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1

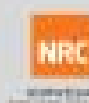
## REINFORCE SECURITY RISK MANAGEMENT(SRM) MECHANISMS AND CAPACITIES

1. Effectively, adequately and systematically fund security costs
1. Mitigate the transfer of risks to local and national actors
1. Reinforce and effectively implement Duty of Care policies

With a focus on  
local and national  
staff (INGOs,  
L/NGOs, national  
health structures)



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1

## REINFORCE SECURITY RISK MANAGEMENT(SRM) MECHANISMS AND CAPACITIES

**Effectively, adequately  
and systematically  
fund security costs**

Align donor policies and adopt a broad definition of what security entails

Ensure dedicated budget lines (direct costs– not at the expense of other program costs)

Improve NGOs' internal processes and procedures to promote an internal security culture

Develop specific models of SRM adapted to health teams, including outside the aid system, drawing from the humanitarian experience



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1

## REINFORCE SECURITY RISK MANAGEMENT(SRM) MECHANISMS AND CAPACITIES

Mitigate the transfer  
of risks to local and  
national actors

Shift towards a risk sharing approach within  
partnerships

Include SRM in  
partnership  
agreements

Share overheads  
and indirect costs  
with L/NGOs

Reinforce access for  
L/NGOs to SRM  
training resources  
and tools



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1

## REINFORCE SECURITY RISK MANAGEMENT(SRM) MECHANISMS AND CAPACITIES

**Reinforce and  
effectively  
implement Duty of  
Care policies**

Set minimum standards within and between organisations adapted to the context and national legislations

Enhance coordination between HQ and field level to develop inclusive DoC policies

Support the development of DoC policies with adequate funding as part of program security budget lines

Improve coordination and resources sharing among the UN, INGOs and L/NGOs



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## 2

### **SUSTAIN AND SCALE RELIABLE DATA COLLECTION, SHARING AND ANALYSIS MECHANISMS AT LOCAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS**

- 1. Reinforce and expand capacities for data collection sharing and analysis**
- 1. Include and empower local and national actors more widely in data collection, sharing and analysis mechanisms**
- 1. Address security concerns relating to data collection and sharing**



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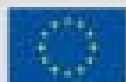
2

## SUSTAIN AND SCALE RELIABLE DATA COLLECTION, SHARING AND ANALYSIS MECHANISMS AT LOCAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS

Reinforce and expand capacities for data collection sharing and analysis

Continue to support coordination and data sharing among all stakeholders collecting data

Engage in humanitarian diplomacy and dialogue on how to best scale data collection and raise awareness on existing tools



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2

## SUSTAIN AND SCALE RELIABLE DATA COLLECTION, SHARING AND ANALYSIS MECHANISMS AT LOCAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS

Include and empower local and national actors more widely in data collection, sharing and analysis mechanisms

Continue to support the ongoing inclusion of L/NGOs in existing field-based data collection mechanisms

Increase funding and support constant data collection in local coordination in countries where operational platforms are not present



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2

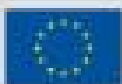
## SUSTAIN AND SCALE RELIABLE DATA COLLECTION, SHARING AND ANALYSIS MECHANISMS AT LOCAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS

Address security concerns relating to data collection and sharing

Continue to scale security protocols and minimum standards of data sharing

Strengthen data sharing between existing data collection mechanisms to support their varied objectives

Organise regular NGO cross-departments dialogue (advocacy and security)



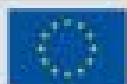
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### 3

## Protect humanitarian space to better protect humanitarian and health workers

1. Protect humanitarian action from the politicisation of aid
1. Mitigate the impact of sanction regimes and counterterrorism measures on principled humanitarian action and the provision of impartial healthcare and guarantee unimpeded access
1. Enhance compliance with IHL and humanitarian principles



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3

## PROTECT HUMANITARIAN SPACE TO BETTER PROTECT HUMANITARIAN AND HEALTH WORKERS

Protect humanitarian action from the politicisation of aid

Ensure a clear distinction between the political/security/military agendas and principled humanitarian aid

Support NGOs' capacities to engage in humanitarian negotiations on a par with all parties to the conflict

Support communication strategies and tools to counter disinformation campaigns



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3

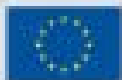
## PROTECT HUMANITARIAN SPACE TO BETTER PROTECT HUMANITARIAN AND HEALTH WORKERS

Mitigate the impact of sanction  
regimes and counterterrorism  
measures on humanitarian action  
and impartial health care

Support the transposition of humanitarian  
exemptions into regional and national legal  
frameworks (in line with UNSC RES 2664) - EU level  
and operating countries

Do not request measures such as the screening or  
vetting of beneficiaries

Continuously monitor the impact of CT measures  
and sanctions on humanitarian action



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3

## PROTECT HUMANITARIAN SPACE TO BETTER PROTECT HUMANITARIAN AND HEALTH WORKERS

Enhance compliance  
with IHL and  
humanitarian principles

Improve and increase context specific  
training, awareness raising and  
mainstreaming of IHL and humanitarian  
principles for all actors

Speak out and reinforce existing judicial and  
non judicial accountability mechanisms



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# Recent advocacy & possible next steps

## International level

- ECOSOC HAS side event - June 2023
- Launch of the report - World Humanitarian Day August 19th 2023
- Workshop with EU and MS delegation in New-York and UNGA engagement - October 2023
- Member States and donors champion implementation of recommendations
- Bring the recommendations at ICVA level

## EU level

- Presentation to DG ECHO fields (June 2023) and Brussels HQ (Sept 2023)
- VOICE webinar - September 2023
- Collaboration with EU presidencies
- 2024 EHF - High-level session

## National level

- Member States' National Humanitarian Strategies (France, Spain etc.)
- Engagement with EU and MS delegations / country offices / regional hubs
- Discussion with local and national actors to foster implementation of recommendations



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# Questions

1. How can the EU and Member States better protect humanitarian and health workers in their action and how can humanitarian organisations support these engagements?
1. How to mobilise field-based EU and Member States representations in order to foster the implementation of the recommendations in context-specific in close collaboration with the local/national actors ?



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National  
Refugee Council

Access the full  
report:

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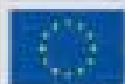
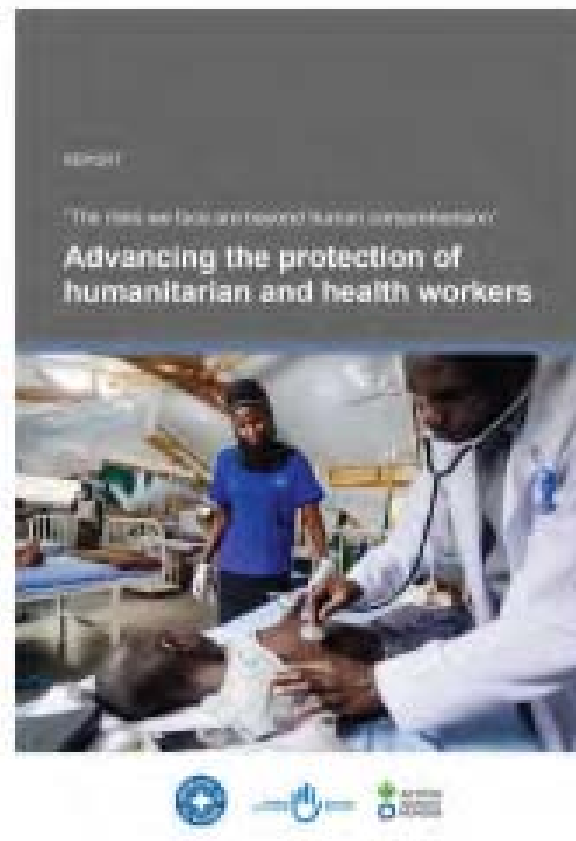


Access the  
executive summary :

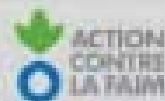
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humanitarian  
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protecting their staff?

**BE IN TOUCH!**

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[cqueval@actioncontrelafaim.org](mailto:cqueval@actioncontrelafaim.org)



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