

Where is that revolution at?

Participation of affected communities in the humanitarian sector

Marc Herzog, WV Deutschland

DeGEval Arbeitskreis Entwicklungspolitik und Humanitäre Hilfe - Frühjahrstagung 21.06.2023, Stuttgart

How is participation operationalized and framed in the humanitarian sector

Core Humanitarian Standards

- 4 - Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback.
- 5 - Complaints are welcomed and addressed.

AAP (Accountability to Affected Populations)

- Participation and inclusion
- Communication and transparency
- Feedback and response

-IASC AAP Taskforce 2

-Grand Bargain Participation Revolution workstream 6

GB workstream 6 on participation revolution – operational definition

- **Inclusion of people affected by humanitarian crises and their communities in decisions to ensure that the humanitarian response is relevant, timely, effective and efficient.**
- **Provision of accessible information, ensuring an effective process for participation and feedback is in place and that design and management decisions are responsive to the views of affected communities and people.**
- **Donors and aid organisations should work to ensure that the voices of the most vulnerable groups, considering gender, age, ethnicity, language and special needs are heard and acted upon. This will create an environment of greater trust, transparency and accountability.**



In terms of increasing the actual influence that affected people have in the design, planning and delivery of aid at country level (in strategies and/or programmes/projects), there is as yet no evidence of a substantive shift in practice on the ground to deliver ‘an accountable humanitarian response, where decision-making power is in the hands of those affected by crisis’ as asserted by the IASC (IASC, 2022b).

In 2021, outgoing UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock gave 4 reasons for the lack of movement in the sector.

- **Despite informational awareness of the needs and preferences of affected communities, aid actors did not consistently act upon these.**
- **Many organisations had developed their own approaches but these developments were too often piecemeal and not sufficiently connected across the humanitarian system.**
- **There were insufficient incentives / pressures making it obligatory for aid actors to integrate participatory approaches into their operational work.**
- **the humanitarian system is not held accountable for what people ask for versus what they receive. There is no independent assessment of how agencies perform in this regard.**

Enabling factors for participation



Preventing factors for participation



REFERENCES

ALNAP (2022) *State of the Humanitarian System – An ALNAP study*, ALNAP

Grand Bargain work stream 6 (2017) *Grand Bargain Participation Revolution work stream Agreed, practical definition of the meaning of “participation” within the context of this workstream*, Grand Bargain work stream 6

Ground Truth Solutions (2022) *Listening is not enough: People demand transformational change in humanitarian assistance - Global analysis report*, Ground Truth Solutions

Lough, O., O'Callaghan, S. (2021) ,Five years on from the World Humanitarian Summit: lots of talk, no revolution', *Overseas Development Institute* - <https://odi.org/en/insights/five-years-on-from-the-world-humanitarian-summit-lots-of-talk-no-revolution/>

Lowcock, M. (2021) *What's wrong with the humanitarian aid system and how to fix it – Speech at Center for Global Development*, April 22,
file:///C:/Users/MaHerzog/Downloads/USGRemarksAccountabilityCGD%20final%20CAD_22042021%20(1).pdf

Metcalfe-Hough, V., Fenton, W., Manji, F. (2022) *The Grand Bargain in 2022: an independent review*, ODI

PHAP (2022) *Building Trust through Participation - IASC AAP Task Force Event*, December 12
<https://phap.org/PHAP/Events/OEV2022/OEV221213.aspx?WebsiteKey=8052120b-9239-4731-a3ab-1336a529e920>

PHAP (2020) *Participation in Practice: Examples of inclusive action for a “Participation Revolution” (event report)*, PHAP