

## **Humanitarian Access Working Group (AWG) Sample Terms of Reference**

### **1. Background**

Humanitarian partners encounter serious bureaucratic and conflict related access impediments across their areas of operations. A lack of coordinated approaches to certain access constraints and dilemmas has been shown to have detrimental effects on partners' ability to negotiate principled ways of working. In light of the persistent humanitarian needs and humanitarian access constraints a more coordinated access approach is needed, including a dedicated forum in the form of a HAWG.

### **2. Objective**

The HAWG will contribute to a more efficient and coordination humanitarian response, by supporting the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and other humanitarian partners to establish and maintain principled humanitarian access.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

The HAWG is responsible for identifying and analyzing humanitarian access issues and supporting efforts to resolve these issues in a coordinated manner. The HAWG focuses especially on:

- Promoting a principled and coordinated approach to improving humanitarian access
- Identifying priorities relating to access and recommending actions to be taken by Partners, Sectors, Agencies, Donors and/or the HCT;
- Informing and advising operations, sectors and senior humanitarian leadership through the provision of an evidence-based analysis;
- Facilitating the sharing of experiences, best practices, lessons-learned and knowledge between UN agencies, NGOs and other partners on access policies, as well as practical solutions on the ground;
- Supporting and contributing to the development of guidance tools and building of understanding on access negotiations, as well as defining common messages, and positions and strategies related to access issues;

The HAWG meets on a monthly basis (or as deemed necessary). Potential actions for the group include:

- Monitor and analyze issues and trends related to access and produce joint analyses on the access environment for the HCT and partners
- Support the development and implementation of a HCT access strategy
- Develop collective approaches, positions, and messaging to address recurrent issues which continue to restrict access
- Develop key messages on access and feed into any relevant documents such as the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)
- Support external engagements of partners, HCT members, and the HC

### **4. Membership and Chairing**

The HAWG is co-chaired by the OCHA Head of Access and X NGO Country Access Adviser. In their roles the co-chairs will share responsibilities and decision-making evenly. The HAWG will include key representatives from UN agencies, sector Coordination Structures, INGOs, and NNGOs; with standing invitations to ICRC and MSF as observers. Members will be selected and revolved according to a HAWG membership policy. See Annex 1. The broader access community will meet every six weeks as the National Access Working Group to facilitate broader information sharing and discussion.

### **5. Reporting Lines**

The HAWG will report directly to the HCT. To facilitate this reporting line both co-chairs will attend the HCT meetings to provide a brief update on the access environment, to receive instructions from the HCT, and to update on ongoing initiatives.

### **6. Frequency of meetings and agenda setting**

The HAWG will meet every month in person. The agenda will be set by the co-chairs in consultation with HAWG members and HCT priorities. Minutes from each meeting will be taken by the co-chairs and circulated for validation no longer than 48 hours after each meeting. Minutes will consist of broad summaries and action points and will not contain sensitive information.