

**NRC**

NORWEGIAN  
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STUDY

# HUMANITARIAN ACCESS ARCHITECTURE AND TOOLS IN THE HUMANITARIAN SYSTEM



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December 2024



Funded by  
the European Union

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This research was produced with the financial assistance of the European Union.

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Layout & Design: BakOS DESIGN

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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AAP</b>	Accountability to affected populations	<b>IRC</b>	International Rescue Committee
<b>AMRF</b>	Access monitoring and reporting framework	<b>JOP</b>	Joint operating principles
<b>ATHA</b>	Advanced training programme on humanitarian action	<b>JRP</b>	Joint response plan
<b>BAI</b>	Bureaucratic and administrative impediments	<b>KII</b>	Key informant interview
<b>CCHN</b>	Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiations	<b>MRM</b>	Monitoring and reporting mechanism on children in armed conflict
<b>CMCoord</b>	Civil-military coordination	<b>MSF</b>	Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders)
<b>ERC</b>	Emergency relief coordinator	<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and evaluation
<b>GAWG</b>	Global access working group	<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>HAWG</b>	Humanitarian access working group	<b>NRC</b>	Norwegian Refugee Council
<b>HC</b>	Humanitarian coordinator	<b>OCHA</b>	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>HCT</b>	Humanitarian country team	<b>PHAP</b>	International Association of Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection
<b>HNO</b>	Humanitarian needs overview	<b>PSEA</b>	Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse
<b>HNRP</b>	Humanitarian needs and response plan	<b>Sitreps</b>	Situation reports
<b>HPC</b>	Humanitarian programme cycle	<b>UNHCR</b>	The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>HRP</b>	Humanitarian response plan	<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	<b>UNSC</b>	United Nations Security Council
<b>ICCG</b>	Inter-Cluster Coordination Group	<b>WASH</b>	Water, sanitation and hygiene
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross	<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>ICVA</b>	International Council for Voluntary Agencies		
<b>INGO</b>	International non-governmental organisation		

## 1

# INTRODUCTION

Humanitarian access is central to an effective humanitarian response.<sup>1</sup> Given the growing number of armed conflicts around the world and the increasingly challenging political environments in which humanitarian action takes place, maintaining humanitarian access is proving ever more difficult. It has become a pressing priority for the humanitarian system in recent years, leading to the development of structures, frameworks, mechanisms, strategies, approaches, tools and products intended to increase leadership on the issue.



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To date, however, the usefulness of access architecture and tools had not been assessed, leading the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) to commission this study to better understand how efforts are organised within humanitarian action and assess whether the systems developed are effective in improving access to populations affected by crises.<sup>2</sup> This report is based on

research carried out between September and November 2024 including a desk review, online survey and consultations with a cross-section of stakeholders in the humanitarian system at the global and country level.

<sup>1</sup> Humanitarian access is generally defined as humanitarianists' ability to reach affected populations and plan, implement, deliver and monitor aid interventions in a principled way; and people's ability to access assistance and protection safely and in dignity.

<sup>2</sup> This study builds on previous NRC research on humanitarian access structures and approaches, such as *Inter-Agency Access Mechanisms: NRC's Engagement in Coordination to Enhance Humanitarian Access of March 2016*.

# 2

## BACKGROUND

### 2.1 INCREASING HUMANITARIAN ACCESS CHALLENGES

The environment in which humanitarian operations have become increasingly challenging in recent years. Growing needs and a widening funding gap coupled with an erosion of respect for basic humanitarian norms and standards in conflict settings have made access more difficult, especially when it comes to hard-to-reach populations. People affected by crises experienced high to extreme access constraints that made it difficult for them to meet their basic needs in 36 countries between December 2023 and June 2024.<sup>3</sup>

Armed conflict and military operations are the most severe access constraints, with fighting in Gaza, Myanmar, Ukraine and elsewhere recently putting many populations out of humanitarians' reach. Attacks on humanitarian personnel and property have continued to increase, with 2023 the deadliest year yet to be an aid worker.<sup>4</sup> Unconstitutional changes of government and the emergence of de facto authorities in Afghanistan, Myanmar, countries across the Sahel and elsewhere have meant that much-needed humanitarian assistance has become increasingly unwelcome in politically unstable regions.

Bureaucratic and administrative impediments (BAI) such as visa restrictions and taxes have increased in countries such as Venezuela and across the Middle East. The severity of these constraints gravely restricts the provision of assistance to affected populations in many humanitarian crises.

### 2.2 A STRENGTHENED HUMANITARIAN ACCESS ARCHITECTURE

Faced with these mounting challenges the humanitarian system has had to strengthen its approach to access in recent years. Facilitating and coordinating efforts to establish and maintain access is central to the mandates of the United Nations (UN) emergency relief coordinator (ERC) and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).<sup>5</sup>

There is no system-wide access policy under the auspices, for example, of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), but architecture has developed organically within the system to respond to operational demands. This includes the establishment of humanitarian access working groups (HAWGs), the drafting of access strategies, the development of access constraint monitoring and reporting systems, the production of a variety of access tools, information management products and training initiatives.

These evolving approaches have been codified in guidance. OCHA published the first version of its Minimum Package of Services on Humanitarian Access in 2019 to cover gaps in operational guidance and encourage a more systematic and predictable approach to access across the organisation and the humanitarian community more broadly.<sup>6</sup> NRC published a HAWG Co-chair Toolkit in 2023 which offers practical guidance on coordinating an HAWG from its establishment through to the delivery of activities in support of the wider humanitarian community.<sup>7</sup> The IASC produced guidance on BAI in 2023.<sup>8</sup> Individual UN agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have also developed their own policies, strategies and approaches to humanitarian access, and have invested in a growing number of access advisers in humanitarian operations.

<sup>3</sup> ACAPS, *Humanitarian access overviews*, available at <https://tinyurl.com/5n8fc7vx>.

<sup>4</sup> Humanitarian Outcomes, *Aid Worker Security Report 2024*, August 2024, available at: [https://humanitarianoutcomes.org/AWSR\\_2024](https://humanitarianoutcomes.org/AWSR_2024).

<sup>5</sup> See for example *General Assembly resolution 46/182*, 19 December 1991.

<sup>6</sup> OCHA, *Minimum Package of Services on Humanitarian Access*, 2019, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2tzn3rd3>

<sup>7</sup> NRC, *HAWG Co-chair Toolkit*, 2023, available at <https://tinyurl.com/2b9eanaz>.

<sup>8</sup> IASC, *Guidance Understanding and Addressing Bureaucratic and Administrative Impediments to Humanitarian Action*, 2022, available at <https://tinyurl.com/4vzbrs9>.

# 3

## OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

**Humanitarian access structures, frameworks and other initiatives are now commonplace in most humanitarian responses, but this does not necessarily mean they have led to successful engagement at a strategic level or improved access on the ground. There has never been a thorough assessment of the usefulness of access approaches and the extent to which global policy commitments on the issue are implemented at the field level, including the enablers of progress and barriers to it.**

As such, this study's objective was to provide an in-depth overview and assessment of the different components of the inter-agency access architecture in the humanitarian system with a view to understanding whether it is leading to increased leadership, field implementation and positive results.

There are variety of ways in which the humanitarian system addresses access. This study, however, focuses on inter-agency systems established to organise and coordinate collective efforts rather than the actions of individual agencies. It acknowledges that many activities related to humanitarian access occur outside the remit of inter-agency systems, an analysis of which was beyond its scope. The study's principal focus is on HAWGs, given their central role, but it also includes some of the other coordination mechanisms and stakeholders involved in access efforts, albeit not in their entirety. Most of the research centred on country-level architecture and tools, but it also covers global mechanisms established to support field operations.<sup>9</sup>

A mixed methodology involving quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis was used to produce the study. A desk and literature review was undertaken, including an analysis of access policy guidance developed at the inter-agency level to identify commitments made. Forty-four key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted with stakeholders in the humanitarian system globally and operations in six countries: Haiti, Mozambique, Myanmar, Sudan, Ukraine and Yemen. This included humanitarian coordinators (HCs) and members of HAWGs, OCHA, international NGOs (INGOs) forums and local and national NGOs. To gather the broadest possible perspective of those working on access, an online survey was distributed widely at the global, regional and country levels, which attracted 119 respondents.

The study was limited by the time available and the extent of research and consultations that were possible. Analysing six countries provided important lessons, but experiences were quite divergent. The study provides a snapshot of the current situation rather than a historical account of how approaches to access have evolved. Despite these limitations, it provides important insights for organisations working on humanitarian access.

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<sup>9</sup> Several humanitarian crises have had a regional impact, often requiring cross border operations, but this study does not specifically address the regional coordination of access approaches.

# 4 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The study analysed eight components of the humanitarian access architecture and tools derived from the guidance available: coordination; planning; analysis, monitoring and reporting; information management; advocacy, diplomacy and negotiations; policy advice; staffing and capacity building; and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).<sup>10</sup> A combination of these components makes up a theory of change on what is required for the humanitarian system to address access constraints effectively. The study provides an analysis of where the gaps in the architecture and tools are, and which areas need to be strengthened.

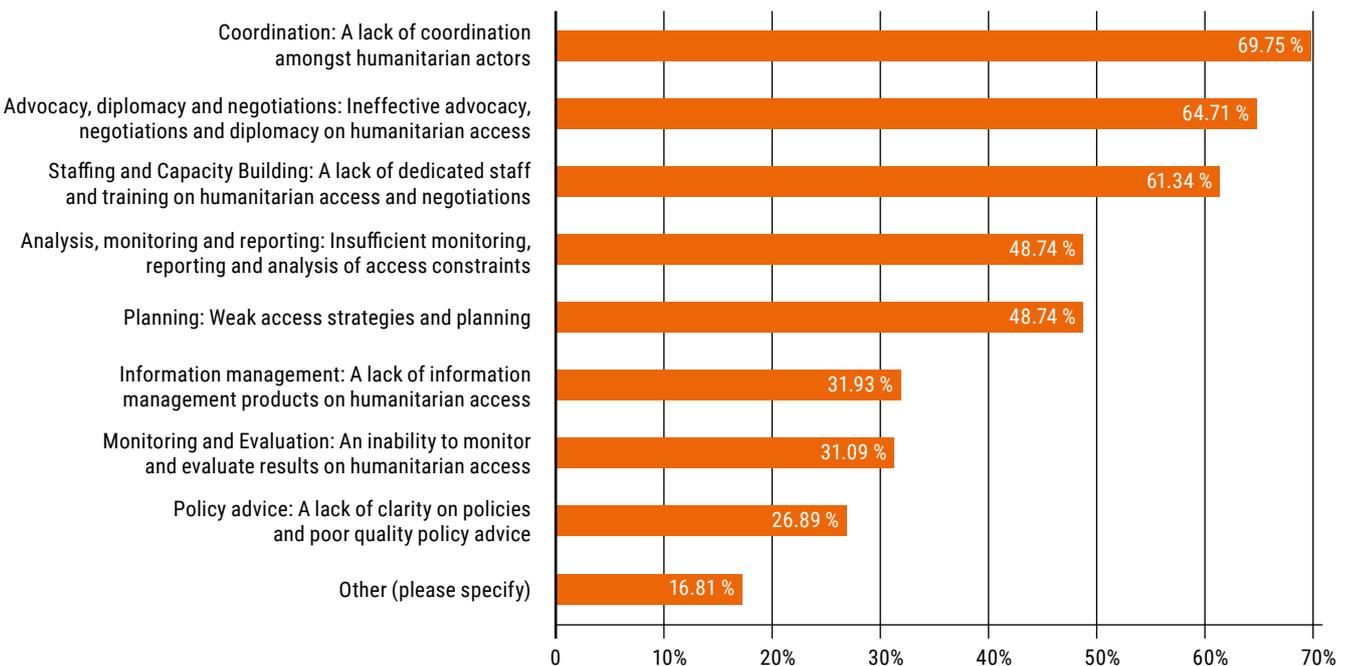
The data collection tools, and analytical framework used in the study were organised around these components, as are the findings presented below. For each component, actions expected of humanitarians based on the guidance are presented before an assessment of the current situation and analysis of the challenges and opportunities for making further progress. Figure 1 below shows the relative importance of the different factors according to survey respondents.

## 4.1 COORDINATION

### KEY FINDING

**The lack of confidence in and accountability within access coordination mechanisms mean the issue tends to be dealt with as a technical matter characterised by information sharing and analysis among agencies rather than collective action to solve common access challenges under the leadership of the HC.**

**Figure 1:** Main challenges within the humanitarian system that prevent access constraints from being effectively addressed



<sup>10</sup> See in particular OCHA's *Minimum Package of Services on Humanitarian Access* (2019) and NRC's *NGO Co-Chair Toolkit* (2023).

A significant part of humanitarian access occurs at the level of individual organisations, but coordination between them is important to share information and analysis and facilitate joint action to address common challenges. According to the survey respondents, lack of coordination amongst humanitarian actors was the main obstacle to addressing access constraints effectively (see figure 1).

There are several coordination mechanisms relevant to access within the humanitarian system which interreact with others on related issues such as staff safety and security, protection and civil-military coordination (CMCoord). This study addresses HAWGs more specifically and their interaction with humanitarian country teams (HCTs), well as the linkages to the global level.

#### 4.1.1 HUMANITARIAN ACCESS WORKING GROUPS

HAWGs are a central part of the access architecture. They are not a mandatory element of a humanitarian response, but they have become more common in many crisis settings. There are currently 25 HAWGs, meaning they are present in the majority of crises where there is an UN-led humanitarian appeal or HCT.<sup>11</sup> They were the fifth most common national thematic subgroup in 2022, behind accountability to affected populations (AAP), cash coordination, information management, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).<sup>12</sup>

HAWGs are co-chaired by OCHA and an international NGO. NRC is co-chair of eight. HAWGs tend to be convened at the national level, but also sometimes at the sub-national level. They act as technical advisory body to HCTs and are “responsible for identifying and analysing humanitarian access issues and priorities, and developing advocacy, operational and policy recommendations to address these challenges”.<sup>13</sup>

The study found that overall HAWGs were considered useful coordination mechanisms for addressing access challenges. They were viewed as bringing stakeholders together, sometimes at a quite senior level, to discuss constraints and coordinate potential solutions. Sixty-nine per cent of survey respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that HAWGs “ensure effective coordination to provide advice to HCTs and other humanitarian actors on how to address humanitarian access challenges”.

Despite this generally positive assessment, however, several challenges were noted during KIIs and in the survey (see figure 2). Many stakeholders felt HAWGs were mainly restricted to information sharing, analysis and policy formulation, rather than translating these into practical solutions to overcome constraints. Many interviewees also cited a lack of trust among HAWG members and difficulty in formulating common positions to achieve collective actions. Some HAWGs have also become too large and have had to restrict their number of members to ensure more focused discussions.

Reflecting a broader problem in the humanitarian system, the lack of participation of local and national NGOs emerged as an issue in several countries.<sup>14</sup> This is particularly concerning when local stakeholders often have the best access to hard-to-reach populations. Language and limited knowledge of coordination mechanisms were some of the barriers noted, but also poor relations between international and local organisations in general. None of the HAWGs consulted had resolved the problem, and only a few local and national NGOs are statutory members. Some co-chairs have considered convening separate meetings with a larger group of such organisations to increase engagement with them.

<sup>11</sup> HCTs were active in 30 countries in 2022.

<sup>12</sup> OCHA, *Note on IASC coordination structures at country level in 2022*, 21 December 2023, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/3whfxz2a>.

<sup>13</sup> OCHA, *Minimum Package of Services on Access: Terms of Reference on Access Working Groups*, 2019, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2tzn3rd3>.

<sup>14</sup> NRC and Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, *Toward local humanitarian engagement: Reflections on engaging local partners in hard-to-reach areas*, June 2024, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/52beurt8>.

Some stakeholders saw HAWGs as consumed by processes at the expense of coming up with practical ways to solve access challenges. The development of access products was often seen as an end in and of itself, rather than a tool for improving access. Some also said that while HAWGs were meant to be technical advisory bodies to HCTs the latter rarely asked them for such support, which raises questions about their usefulness and added value. HAWGs' success was often attributed to the personalities involved and the co-chairs' strength in coordinating members. The frequent rotation of co-chair positions, or the lack of them, was seen as reducing a HAWG's effectiveness and ability to coordinate in some countries.

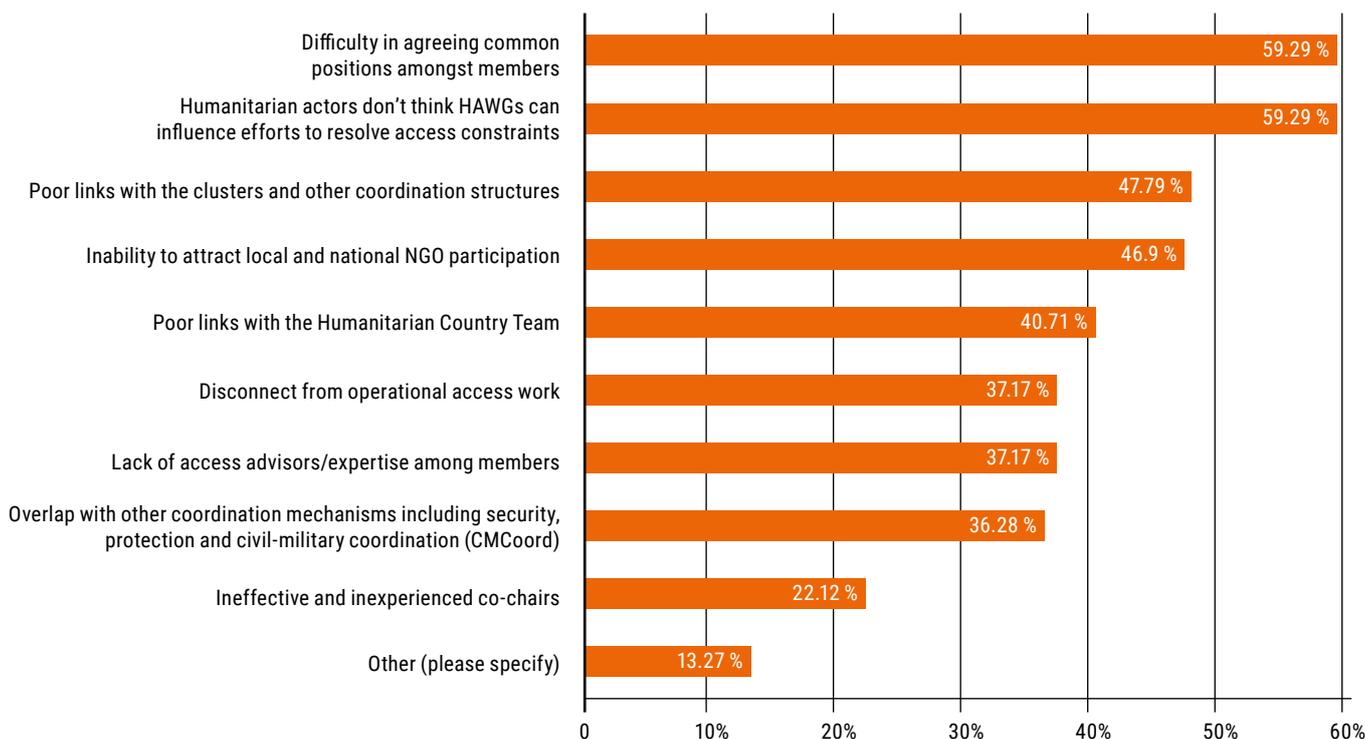
HAWGs have close links with coordination mechanisms on other related topics such as staff safety and security, CMCoord, protection and advocacy. Despite the risk of overlap and duplication, most stakeholders felt the different roles and responsibilities of the groups concerned were clear and that they functioned in a complementary way.

That said, HAWGs were sometimes seen as quite isolated in the humanitarian coordination system more broadly. There were not always close links with clusters and inter-cluster coordination groups (ICCGs) to provide support to sectors, and links with HCTs were noted as a particular challenge. HAWGs were also portrayed as taking technical approaches to what are often a strategic issues. They do not have a strategic mandate, but they have not always formulated their technical advice and recommendations in a strategic way to HCTs. Doing so would increase the chance of their advisory being taken up.

#### 4.1.2 HUMANITARIAN COUNTRY TEAMS

HAWGs are meant to coordinate the technical and operational approach to humanitarian access, while HCTs are meant to be responsible for the strategic approach to ensure collective action to address major constraints common to the overall humanitarian response. Humanitarian access is formally included in HCTs' generic terms of reference and the compacts they develop.<sup>15</sup> As HCT chair, the HC is expected to play a leadership role on access, including engagement with host governments and parties to conflicts as outlined in the HC handbook.<sup>16</sup>

**Figure 2:** The main coordination challenges HAWGs face



<sup>15</sup> IASC, *Standard terms of reference: Humanitarian country teams*, 2017, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2eupduxx>.

<sup>16</sup> IASC, *Leadership in humanitarian action: Handbook for humanitarian coordinators*, 2024, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/y489hbnp>.

The study, however, revealed a fragmented approach to implementing these policy expectations. The relationship between HCTs, HCs and HAWGs was inconsistent and varied across countries. In some settings, HAWGs said they operated largely independently of the HCT. In others, there was no predictable relationship between the two despite the HCT frequently addressing access issues. In other still, a more positive engagement was reported, but not frequently.

Concerns were raised about the effectiveness of HCT meetings in addressing access issues. HCTs were often seen largely as information-sharing forums rather than strategic decision-making bodies, often lacking meaningful discussion and trust among members. These challenges are not specific to access, but common for other issues addressed by HCTs as highlighted by recent research by ICVA.<sup>17</sup> The KIIs also revealed that NGOs perceive a UN bias in HCT decision making, in which their access concerns and needs are not always given the same priority in advocacy or negotiations as those of UN agencies.

The effectiveness of access coordination within HCTs often depends on the HC's personal commitment. Some HCs were found to have shown such leadership, while others were reportedly more disengaged on the issue. Some were reported as recognising the value of HAWGs by requesting additional support, while others preferred to rely on other staff and stakeholders for analysis and decision making outside HAWGs and related coordination structures.

One of the key challenges identified in a recent report on simplifying the humanitarian system by NRC's secretary general and a former ERC, Jan Egeland, and the current deputy ERC, Joyce Msuya, is that "many double and triple-hatted humanitarian leaders lack the humanitarian experience crucial for negotiating access or effectively defending humanitarian principles". Egeland goes on to say: "These leaders' essential role in prioritizing protection and defending humanitarian principles is too often compromised by a lack of humanitarian expertise or willingness to engage robustly with assertive governments."<sup>18</sup>

Interviewees for this study also frequently mentioned a lack of accountability within HCTs on humanitarian access as the crux of the problem. Although agreements are reached, follow-through is often limited with agencies not respecting the common positions taken or committed to taking action to address the concerns identified. This lack of cohesion reduces the potential impact of a coordinated and strategic approach, because many agencies continue to manage access challenges independently, diminishing the potential benefits of collective efforts. These findings indicate that the current access architecture often lacks the accountability and leadership needed to function effectively.

#### 4.1.3 GLOBAL ACCESS COORDINATION MECHANISMS

While the principal focus of the study was on the country level, global access coordination mechanisms also exist to exchange information and provide limited technical guidance to humanitarian operations, and to act as a conduit for global advocacy to address acute challenges in specific settings. OCHA chairs a global access working group (GAWG), and the International Council for Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) maintains a working group of its interested members. Access is not an explicit part of IASC's coordination structures, but the most recent IASC Task Force on preserving humanitarian space has addressed the issues of Bureaucratic and Administrative Impediments (BAI) and counter-terrorism and promulgated related guidance.

Some access advisers noted a preference to resist access becoming part of IASC's coordination structures because this could overly formalise an issue that benefits from a more informal approach, especially at the field level, given potential government scrutiny. Compared with other cross-cutting issues in the humanitarian system, there has been less active global coordination on access and less global guidance and technical support for humanitarian operations. Some stakeholders saw the value of convening access advisers globally more often to exchange on good practices and after-action reviews.

<sup>17</sup> ICVA, *Cracks in Coordination: A Brief Review of Trust and Engagement in Humanitarian Country Teams*, 2024, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/bde5fvth>.

<sup>18</sup> OCHA, *Proposals for a simplified and more efficient humanitarian system*, December 2024, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/rn96stnf>.



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Acute access challenges in specific crises may also be taken up at the global level to seek solutions through bodies such as emergency directors' groups (EDGs) and even in IASC principals' meetings. Several stakeholders noted that the previous ERC had prioritised access and played an active role in negotiations at the highest level in a range of settings.<sup>19</sup> This role was welcomed and unblocked several challenges in certain countries.

That said, the division of responsibilities between the ERC and HCs was not always clear, and it was noted that interventions by the ERC should not lead to an overreliance on them. Nor should they reduce HCs' responsibility to lead access efforts. It was also noted that there were no formal mechanisms or procedures for elevating access concerns to the global level, leading to a potential disconnect between subnational, national and global coordination levels.

<sup>19</sup> A humanitarian negotiation unit was developed in OCHA to provide analysis and advice to the ERC and field operations to address some of the most intractable access challenges.

<sup>20</sup> Data provided by OCHA; additional documents such as action plans and frameworks of action were also reviewed.

<sup>21</sup> OCHA, *Minimum Package of Services on Humanitarian Access, Annex 3*, 2019, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2mcwxyam>.

## 4.2 PLANNING

### KEY FINDING

**HCT access strategies are useful planning tools, but they are not essential for achieving better access and could be made more actionable, while access could also be more fully integrated into the humanitarian programme cycle.**

As well as coordinating inter-agency humanitarian access efforts it is also necessary to plan for them. This study addresses two examples of such planning: HCT access strategies and addressing access within the humanitarian programme cycle (HPC).

### 4.2.1 HCT ACCESS STRATEGIES

Access strategies are not a mandatory requirement for HCTs, but an increasing number have developed them. Fourteen have been produced so far, of which nine were reviewed as part of this study.<sup>20</sup> OCHA has published a template, according to which HCT access strategies should include an overview and analysis of access constraints, objectives to address them and an action plan.<sup>21</sup>

The study found tepid support for HCT access strategies as a useful planning tool. Only 48 per cent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that "HCT access strategies ensure a strategic and coordinated approach to addressing access constraints". Many stakeholders said it was important to have them to bring humanitarians together to define a common approach to access, but very few felt they helped the implementation on the ground. "Weak access strategies and planning" ranked fifth in terms of the challenges that prevent constraints from being addressed effectively (see figure 1).

Despite the commitments made in them, HCT access strategies were not seen as providing accountability that leads to an enforceable

commitment among HCT members on access issues. Interviewees also revealed frequent challenges that went beyond creating access strategies. If objectives are defined without clear action plans or accountability mechanisms, a strategy's effectiveness is undermined.

The HCT access strategies reviewed for this study varied widely in approach and structure, despite OCHA's template. They were inconsistent in format, and often in their objectives and priorities. Many were not fully developed strategies at all, but rather action plans, engagement frameworks or context analyses, leading to descriptive rather than strategic approaches. Their scope also differed significantly. Some assigning clear tasks to the HC or HAWG, but others did not. Some established specific timelines, while others use generalised terms such as short, medium or long-term goals.

Objectives were often formulated as broad outputs or activities, such as "more access monitoring" or "more access negotiation" rather than clear end-states to achieve, such as "access to X part of the country is improved" or "BAI is reduced". The strategies also often combined security, CMCoord, advocacy and logistical issues. These areas are related to access, but their inconsistent inclusion prevents clear guidance on accountability and limits cohesive action.

Given these issues, some interviewees noted that in some cases they preferred to have more actionable tools, such as joint operating principles (JOP) or codes of conduct, which offer clear, achievable outcomes. This reveals a strong need to separate objectives from actionable outcomes, a distinction often blurred in the strategies reviewed.

Good practices identified include strategies that went further by incorporating action plans with assigned responsibilities and timelines. Other helpful additions were annexes, such as a common terminology or a list of access-related "dos and don'ts" for practical guidance.

#### 4.2.2 ACCESS WITHIN THE HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMME CYCLE

Access is identified as a cross-cutting area in the HPC given its essential role in reaching affected populations.<sup>22</sup> The structure for the humanitarian needs and response plans (HNRPs) that are produced from the HPC does not accommodate a standalone section on access but rather considers its part of the planning assumptions and operational capacity. OCHA introduced a "boundary setting" element to the HPC to more clearly prioritise life-saving assistance in HNRPs given global funding challenges.

Access considerations are a clear part of this approach. The guidance for the 2025 HPC, for example, encourages defining the HNRPs scope to shape initial objectives, considering access constraints alongside projected needs and risks. As part of the response analysis, HAWGs are positioned as key participants to ensure that the response is appropriate, relevant and feasible.<sup>23</sup>

Despite this guidance, the study revealed that humanitarian access is only partially addressed in the HPC with potential to integrate it more fully. Fifty-nine per cent of survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that "Humanitarian access is sufficiently integrated in the humanitarian programme cycle, including humanitarian needs and response plans". Similarly, an examination of 22 HNRPs, response plans and joint response plans (JRPs) in countries with active HAWGs showed that access is primarily considered part of the context analysis rather than a key strategic element. Many HNRPs only refer to access as an obstacle or barrier to the humanitarian response, rather than addressing how to deal with the issues strategically. This highlights a persistent gap in making access a core component of the HPC.

In terms of access analysis linked to the assessment of needs, the review revealed an unbalanced approach that does not always differentiate between areas with the greatest needs and those that are inaccessible, in order to

<sup>22</sup> The humanitarian programme cycle is a coordinated approach used by the humanitarian community to plan, implement and evaluate responses to crises. Its key stages are needs assessment and analysis, response planning, resource mobilisation, implementation and monitoring, evaluation and learning, and operational peer review and after-action review.

<sup>23</sup> OCHA, *2025 Step by Step Guide to Producing HNRPs*, September 2024, available at <https://kmp.hpc.tools/facilitation-package>.

improve the targeting of the response.<sup>24</sup> Treating access as a standalone section within the HNRP structure also tends to isolate the topic, limiting its integration into broader response planning. Of the 22 HNRPs analysed, 19 had a standalone section on access, most often together with the planning assumptions and operational capacities.

Apart from general context analysis, which included access constraints, the operationalization of access across the HNRPs tended to emphasise advocacy or humanitarian negotiations as areas for improvement, but they lacked a fully integrated and concrete access strategy. In the HNRPs' sector plans, access was referred to as a barrier to services such as health, education or water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), typically in terms of constraints on communities' access to aid. This approach, however, only addresses the general need for aid and again lacks a coherent, cross-cutting access strategy to overcome sectoral challenges.

Interviewees confirmed that HAWGs are only minimally involved in the HPC process and HNRP development, with access strategies rarely linked to overarching HNRP objectives. Timelines are also not aligned. HAWGs tend to work on biannual or multi-year strategies, while HNRPs are typically annual, which further hampers the integration of access planning in the HRP process.

## 4.3 ACCESS MONITORING, REPORTING AND ANALYSIS

### KEY FINDING

**Access monitoring, reporting and analysis systems are sufficient in most cases to identify the main access constraints and inform negotiations. They are hampered, however, by a lack of trust that limits how much information organisations share and overly focus on access challenges that organisations face at the expense of those affected populations face.**

A comprehensive analysis of the access constraints in a given crisis is the cornerstone of any humanitarian access strategy and actions to improve access to affected populations. The ERC committed in 2007 to establishing more systematic monitoring and reporting of access constraints, bringing cases of grave concern to the Security Council and supporting efforts to increase access on the ground.<sup>25</sup> As a result, OCHA developed its country-level access monitoring and reporting framework (AMRF), which provides a systematic tool for tracking access constraints.

The AMRF uses a standardised typology of access constraints divided into three broad categories: violence and security; bureaucratic and administrative; and logistical. Each category is then split into sub-categories. It tends to focus, however, on access constraints that hinder aid agencies access to affected populations rather than those that prevent affected populations from receiving assistance.

The implementation of the AMRF varies from one country to the next but frequently includes online and offline procedures for organisations to report individual access incidents as well as focus group discussions used to collect information on the main access challenges. Based on the AMRF, OCHA develops and publishes information management products that describe the humanitarian access constraints in a given crisis (see below).

<sup>24</sup> As shown in Humanitarian Outcomes' SCORE reports, access issues have a direct effect on people's needs that should be considered from the planning phase of the humanitarian response.

<sup>25</sup> Constraints on humanitarian access were one of the priority issues highlighted in the UN secretary general's sixth report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict and discussed by the Security Council in November 2007.

While the AMRF provides a centralised and exhaustive database of access constraints at the country-level it is not the only mechanism by which they are reported and analysed. Individual agencies have their own reporting procedures for monitoring access constraints they face. ACAPS also provides reports on global access constraints and those for individual crises, albeit from secondary source information.<sup>26</sup>

The denial of humanitarian access is also one of the six grave violations of child rights included in the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children in armed conflict (MRM).<sup>27</sup> Monitoring the impact of sanctions, counter-terrorism measures and other impediments to humanitarian responses is also relevant to humanitarian access. The UN Security Council adopted resolution 2462 in 2019, emphasising that counter-terrorism measures should not impede humanitarian activities or violate international humanitarian law, and requesting periodic updates on the issue.<sup>28</sup>

The study found that overall the monitoring, reporting and analysis systems on access constraints work adequately, though with variation in the quality of analysis produced from one country to the next. Most stakeholders felt there was enough analysis to develop access strategies and engage in access negotiations to address the concerns noted, albeit with certain challenges. Sixty-two per cent of survey responses either agreed or strongly agreed that “access monitoring and reporting systems allow for safe and timely reporting and analysis of access constraints”.

The study identified, however, several challenges with the access reporting, monitoring and analysis systems that have been established. It was ranked fourth in terms of impediments to effective access approaches (see figure 1). The most concerning challenge was a frequently reported lack of willingness on behalf of organisations to report access incidents or share

information on access constraints in HAWGs and elsewhere. This was put down to a lack of trust that information would be dealt with appropriately and a lack of confidence that reporting on access constraints would lead to any meaningful action.

Even when access incidents are reported, organisations often said it was unclear how the information was used and that they received no feedback on any negotiations that might have taken place based on it. Aid agencies were also said to withhold information about access constraints to improve their chances of securing support from donors. The cumulative impact of these considerations was a sense that access challenges were significantly under-reported in many crises.

Significant information is often collected about access constraints, but there was also concern that it did not always translate into more detailed analysis of the actual denial of access, which could then be addressed with the authorities responsible. A lot of effort had been put into tracking the movement of aid trucks in several countries, for example, but not the broader access challenges. While aid agencies might face access constraints, there needs to be a distinction made with the actual denial of humanitarian access, which requires a specific legal analysis of the situation. The monitoring of access constraints can also often be reduced to merely the security threats faced by aid agencies. In recent years, the IASC has, therefore, also developed ways to better monitor Bureaucratic and Administrative Impediments.<sup>29</sup> Nor is there an analytical framework to assess how constraints affect organisations’ presence and reach and their ability to deliver assistance.<sup>30</sup> These issues, taken with the fact that AMRF focuses on analysing the constraints organisations face at the expense of those affected populations experience, led several stakeholders to suggest that it may be timely to review OCHA’s framework.

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<sup>26</sup> For more details and examples of these reports see ACAPS’ *Humanitarian Access Overview reports*. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/5n8fc7vx>.

<sup>27</sup> UNSC, *Resolution 1612 of 2005*, which established the MRM, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2veyryrd>.

<sup>28</sup> UNSCR, *Resolution 2462 of 2019*, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/3cajxw88>.

<sup>29</sup> IASC, *Understanding and Addressing Bureaucratic and Administrative Impediments to Humanitarian Action, 2022*, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2bwy7afd>.

<sup>30</sup> HPG/ODI, *Humanitarian access in hard-to-reach areas in UNICEF MENA operations*, February 2020, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/yarczafc>.



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## 4.4 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

### KEY FINDING

**Information management products on humanitarian access are considered useful but rely on the quality and timeliness of the analysis they are based on, which varies between contexts.**

The analysis of access constraints forms the basis of information management products that feed into operational decisions on access and advocacy with authorities. The existing guidance on access coordination suggests a critical need for translating information on access constraints into products that build a common understanding of the access landscape, enabling the HC, HCT and other coordination bodies to contribute effectively to operations in hard-to-reach areas.<sup>31</sup> Although there is a wide range of access products and organizations specifically focused on generating information in this area, the desk review for this study did not examine access products produced by individual agencies. Instead, it focused on those produced at the inter-agency and country level.<sup>32</sup>

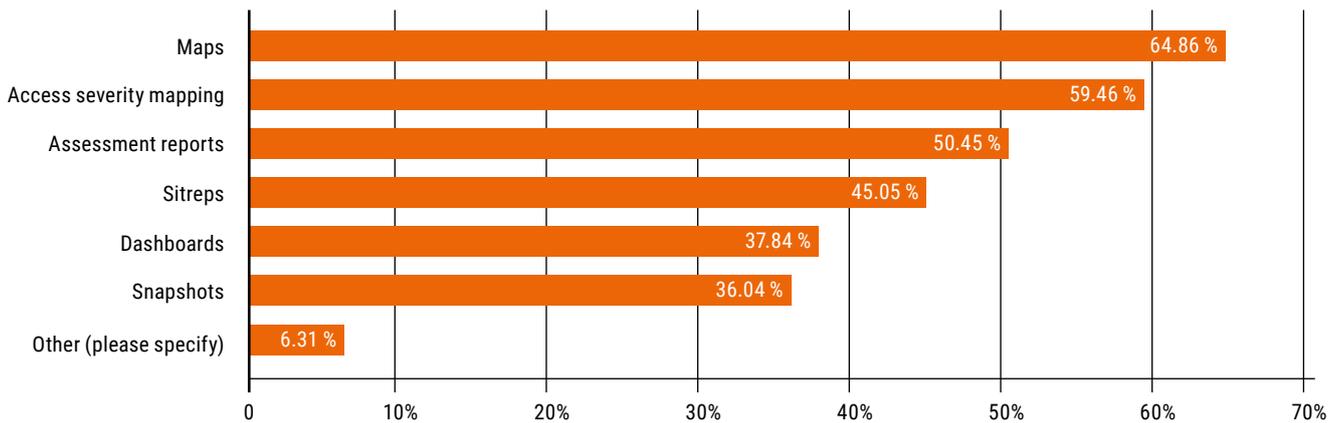
These include:

- a) **Maps:** Geographic, political and thematic maps on access constraints.
- b) **Access severity maps:** Maps that provide more in-depth analysis of the severity of access constraints across a country which may be overlaid with other relevant data, such as figures for people in need and agency presence.
- c) **Assessment reports:** Rapid multi-sectoral needs assessments that refer to access constraints and other issues.
- d) **Situation reports (Sitreps):** Reports that provide an overview of needs, responses and gaps within an emergency and which refer to access issues.
- e) **Dashboards:** Documents that allow stakeholders to quickly understand the strategic priorities of a response and the impacts of access constraints.
- f) **Snapshots:** Overviews of the access environment based on incident reporting, monitoring and analysis.

<sup>31</sup> OCHA, *Minimum Package of Services on Humanitarian Access*, 2019; NRC, *NGO Co-Chair Toolkit*, 2021.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

**Figure 3:** Most useful information management products on humanitarian access



Survey responses suggest the most useful information management products for addressing access challenges are primarily geographic and assessment-related tools (see figure 3). These are useful in project design and advocacy, but some stakeholders said they were often not granular enough to address specific operational issues. Other products, such as snapshots and dashboards, vary in relevance based on the availability and timeliness of data, and the setting in which they are used.

Despite the reliance on these information products, several operational challenges were noted. Organisations may rank access severity differently based on their own perspectives and experiences, making it difficult to reach a consensus. There was also widespread concern about data timeliness. Products based on outdated data or reports are not useful for planning and can lead to poorly informed decisions. OCHA has developed online platforms for organisations to report access incidents in many countries, but there is no global-level tool that can be adapted for this purpose. Each setting has its own system.

The study also found significant challenges in the effectiveness of these tools due to low participation in reporting exercises. Meetings intended to engage different actors often have minimal attendance, possibly due to resource constraints or declining interest. Respondents also suggested that debriefings and structured discussions were missing from the information-sharing process. Information products are circulated, but without follow-up meetings or discussions to interpret and act on the data their full value is lost.

## 4.5 ADVOCACY, DIPLOMACY AND NEGOTIATIONS

### KEY FINDING

**A lack of humanitarian leadership and support for principled humanitarian action are the main barriers to better collective advocacy, diplomacy and negotiations to address common access challenges facing the entire humanitarian system.**

Advocacy, diplomacy and negotiations with authorities and non-state armed groups responsible for providing safe, timely and unimpeded humanitarian access to crisis-affected populations, but which frequently constrain it, form one of the most important and challenging elements of the humanitarian system's approach to the issue. Several studies and guidelines on humanitarian negotiation have been produced, but this study was not concerned with the individual merits of different approaches.<sup>33</sup> It focuses instead on whether the humanitarian system is organised in the best way possible to undertake such activities effectively.

Advocacy, diplomacy and negotiations on access constraints may take place anywhere from the frontlines of humanitarian operations by individual staff and agencies at checkpoints or in meetings with local authorities right up to the national level by heads of agencies and HCs with host governments and non-state armed groups. For the most intractable access challenges, global

<sup>33</sup> CCHN, *Field Manual on Frontline Humanitarian Negotiation*, November 2019.

action may also be sought to address such issues – as noted in the section on coordination – all the way up to the UN Security Council which has pronounced itself on humanitarian access issues.

This makes it difficult to generalise on the issue, but this study did provide some insights into factors that affect the effectiveness of advocacy, diplomacy and negotiations. Many stakeholders felt this component of the architecture was often the missing link in making headway on addressing access challenges. Within the theory of change of how the eight components of access analysed interact, this was often the one seen as hardest to achieve. Survey respondents ranked it second among the most important challenges to an effective approach on access (see figure 1). It was not the lack of access analysis or absence of access strategies or other documents that has been the problem, but rather the inability to translate analysis and strategies into effective engagement with authorities and non-state armed groups.

While most access negotiations are conducted by individual organisations in relation to their projects, staff and operations there is also the need to act together to address common access challenges for the entire humanitarian response and constraints that are too large for any one organisation to deal with. In some of the countries this study examined, HAWGs engaged in access negotiations despite their official role as technical advisory bodies to HCTs.

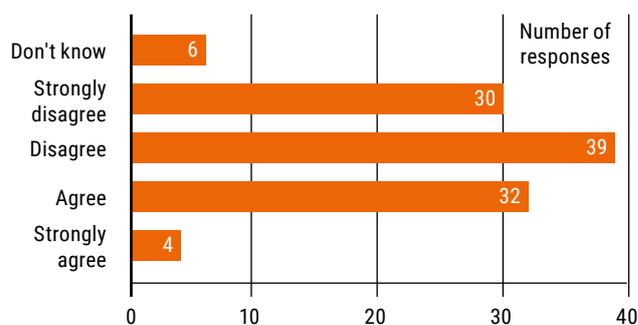
Many stakeholders, however, frequently reported the challenges of mobilising their HCT and in turn the HC to take action. Coordinating an approach to access “by committee” within HCTs was not seen as the best way forward and was often perceived as unproductive. It was not always clear who should be undertaking collective access negotiations on behalf of humanitarian actors and whether there were the rights skills and competencies to undertake this sensitive work.

Humanitarian leadership was seen as the critical ingredient for spearheading such efforts, but many stakeholders felt it was missing. Negotiating access on behalf of the humanitarian community is included in the generic terms of reference for HCs, but many were considered too risk adverse

to take bold action or ill-equipped to provide leadership in this area.<sup>34</sup>

Sixty-two per cent of survey respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that humanitarian leadership is providing sufficient leadership on access advocacy, diplomacy and negotiations” (see figure 4). HCs themselves, however, and other stakeholders consulted felt it was unrealistic to expect the humanitarian leadership to be able to resolve access issues that are often intractable for many reasons rather than lack of effort by any one stakeholder.

**Figure 3:** Level of agreement with the statement that ‘humanitarian leadership (including Humanitarian Coordinators, head of agencies, etc.) is providing sufficient leadership on access advocacy, diplomacy and negotiations’



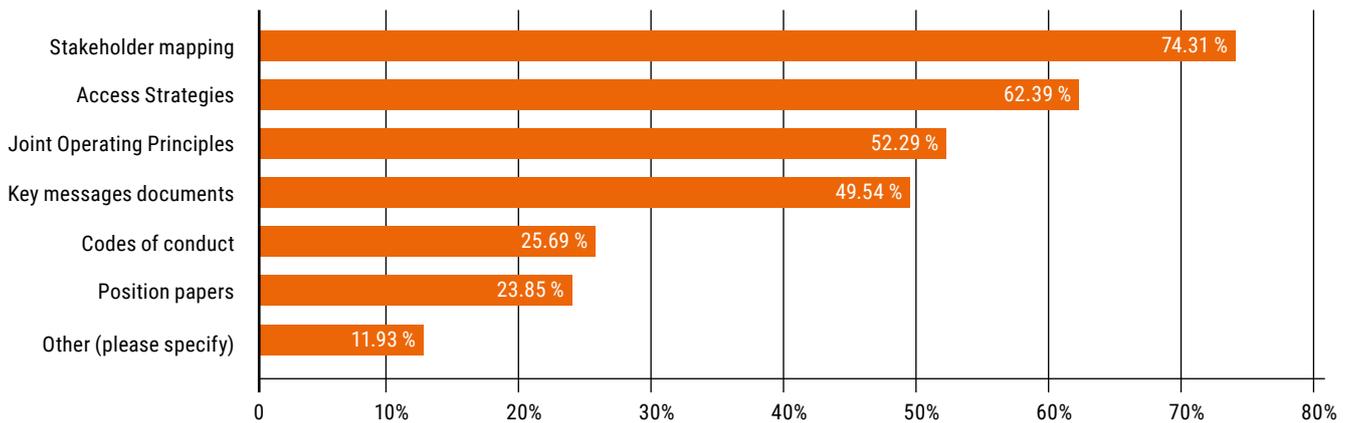
There was also serious concern among stakeholders consulted in some countries that a lack of understanding of the humanitarian principles was undermining joint action on humanitarian access. Only 45 per cent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that “humanitarian actors have a clear understanding of humanitarian principles and how they should be applied in access advocacy, diplomacy and negotiations”.

Besides, when advocacy action is taken it rarely represents the views of NGOs, which do not receive feedback and information on the efforts undertaken.<sup>35</sup> In places where the UN has a political mission or envoy as well as a humanitarian presence, there was also concern about the blurring of mandates in which political discussions are prioritised at the expense of access issues.

<sup>34</sup> IASC, *Terms of Reference for Humanitarian Coordinators*, January 2024.

<sup>35</sup> ICVA, *Cracks in Coordination: A Brief Review of Trust and Engagement in Humanitarian Country Teams*, 2024; NRC, *Toward local humanitarian engagement: Reflections on engaging local partners in hard-to-reach areas*, June 2024.

**Figure 5: Most useful access tools for engaging in advocacy, diplomacy and negotiations on access issues**



## 4.6 POLICY ADVICE

### KEY FINDING

**Policy advice and tools on humanitarian access are generally considered useful but often involve laborious processes, and there is limited accountability for their implementation.**

As a technical advisory body, a key role of HAWGs and the access advisers that participate in them is to provide policy advice on humanitarian access to HCs, HCTs and individual agencies experiencing access challenges. This includes advice on applicable legal and policy frameworks and global guidance on issues such as access negotiations.<sup>36</sup>

Plenty of practical guidance on humanitarian access exists, but the IASC has no system-wide policy, framework or guidelines as it does on other cross-cutting issues such as protection, gender and AAP. There have been IASC guidelines on BAI and counter-terrorism issues, but not the entirety of humanitarian access issues. Although it was beyond the scope of this study, it was noted that an increasing number of UN agencies and INGOs are developing their own access policies and procedures.<sup>37</sup>

A key role of HAWGs at the country level has been to develop tools such as JOPs, codes of conduct, stakeholder mappings and position papers to coordinate the humanitarian community's approach on access. Figure 5 below shows how survey respondents ranked the relative usefulness of these tools. It was not within the scope of this study to assess their individual utility, but in general most stakeholders felt they could be useful in formulating common positions and facilitating collective action, particularly through HAWGs and HCTs. The challenge was often to ensuring their implementation.

A growing number of humanitarian operations have developed JOPs to reaffirm a commitment to the humanitarian principles in complex and politically sensitive settings. There is rarely disagreement about the content of JOPs, but many stakeholders felt it was difficult to ensure that all humanitarian organisations respected and implemented them. Many also felt the development of such documents often became the end itself rather than a means of improving access. There were several complaints about the inordinate amount of time spent drafting and agreeing these documents and while their actual use was at best inconsistent.

<sup>36</sup> OCHA, *Minimum Package of Services on Humanitarian Access*, 2019; NRC, *HAWG Co-chair Toolkit*, 2021.

<sup>37</sup> For example, UNICEF's humanitarian access field manual and guidelines for engagement with armed non-state actors, both from 2021, and WFP's notes on access, published since 2006.

## 4.7 STAFFING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

### KEY FINDING

**Access advisers provide important technical support and advice, but there needs to be more training on the issue, especially at the field level.**

Another key element of the humanitarian access architecture is having the right kind of staff with knowledge and experience of working on access issues to support humanitarian operations.

### 4.7.1 STAFFING

As the UN agency mandated to coordinate humanitarian access, OCHA usually has units dedicated to the issue in its country offices, either combined with or separate from CMCoord.<sup>38</sup> Other UN agencies, such as the World Food Programme (WFP) and UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), have established access units in their HQs and country offices in recent years, as have some of the larger INGOs.

Access advisers are now common in the humanitarian system and they have become more professionalised. However, they tended to have grown out of the safety and security function which is frequently combined with and/or CMCoord rather than having a protection or programmatic focus. Several stakeholders noted that these different staff functions and profiles are complementary and should work in the same team or be part of the same job profile.

Many organisations have invested in specialist access staff, but others have chosen to maintain access as a mainstreamed responsibility within management, programme and operations staff. Tellingly, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) do not have specialist access staff in their country operations, but they are among the leading organisations on the issue. There is a trade-off between providing specialist staff for what is a mainstreamed responsibility, because access should be everyone's concern.

Most stakeholders felt staff capabilities on access were sufficient and not a key impediment to efforts to improve humanitarian access. Staffing levels vary from one country to the next and operations are often over-stretched, but this was not a unique problem to access. Nor is there inter-agency standby capacity for access as there is for protection, gender, cash programming, PSEA and other cross-cutting issues.

Frequently, well-functioning HAWGs and other access systems were put down to having the right kind of personalities. When this was not the case, concerns about trust within the coordination mechanisms were more likely to manifest themselves which begs the question of whether the right people are hired for these roles. The high turnover and long gaps in OCHA and NGO co-chair roles for HAWGs was cited as a particular problem. In some operations the lack of specialized staff on access negotiations was seen as an impediment to some of the most challenging access challenges with non-state armed groups in some operations, but this tended to be a question of leadership rather than a lack of expertise or capacities.

### 4.7.2 HUMANITARIAN ACCESS TRAINING

While the access function has become increasingly recognised as a key function within the system, the need for more training for frontline staff was widely seen as a priority. Only 32 per cent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that “humanitarian actors have sufficient capacities (including staff and training) to address humanitarian access challenges”.

Several organisations have invested in providing training on humanitarian access. OCHA now runs global-level humanitarian access trainings in the same way as it has for CMCoord for several years. NRC has also invested in developing access training. The Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation (CCHN), a joint initiative supported by ICRC, MSF, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and WFP, provides workshops and resources to train humanitarians worldwide on negotiations.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Access was made one of six priorities in OCHA's *Strategic Plan 2023-26*.

<sup>39</sup> The main resource from the CCHN is the *Field Manual on Frontline Humanitarian Negotiations*. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/37vnf8tb>.

Capacity building has been also provided by Conflict Dynamics International, the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative's advanced training programme on humanitarian action (ATHA) and the International Association of Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection (PHAP).<sup>40</sup> The HAWGs consulted for this study, however, frequently said they did not have the time or resources to focus on training because they had to prioritise operational issues.

## 4.8 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### KEY FINDING

**There are currently no meaningful monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems for measuring progress on humanitarian access.**

The final component of the access architecture and tools assessed by the study was the ability of humanitarian actors to measure the progress and impact of their actions to improve humanitarian access. It would be a huge assumption that simply investing in processes such as coordination mechanisms, strategies and analyses leads to better humanitarian access, but in the absence of mechanisms to measure progress and the impact of such initiatives it is impossible to gauge improvements. Even if it were possible to do so, it would not always be easy to attribute them to humanitarian action when other external factors might equally be responsible for any changes in the operational environment.

Most of the HCT access strategies reviewed as part of this study mentioned the importance of monitoring implementation, but very few HAWGs have developed M&E tools related to humanitarian access. Only 45 per cent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “humanitarian actors have the means and tools to measure progress of their efforts to address humanitarian access challenges”. Few access indicators are included in HNRPs and no one has yet developed a monitoring framework to measure progress on the issue.



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It has been possible in some humanitarian operations to track metrics such as the number of truck movements and convoys as a proxy indicator for the level of humanitarian access, but not to ascertain the cause of any change in the situation. It is also notoriously difficult to apply conventional M&E approaches to measure the results of advocacy. While not perfect, narratives and scenarios offer a way to at least try to understand any changes occurring and responsibility for them. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) has developed a quality of access measurement tool which it uses to measure progress in access, but this is a rare example of such an approach.

Stakeholders felt that developing the means to measure progress on access was a key priority.

<sup>40</sup> See more information about these training at the *Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: 2020 Global Synthesis*.

## 5

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Achieving safe, timely and unimpeded access to affected populations has always been a challenge for humanitarians, but it has become more acute in recent years because of the trajectory of some conflicts and the political environment in which humanitarian action now takes place.**

This study has outlined how the access architecture has evolved organically to help the humanitarian system address the challenge. HAWGs and access advisers are now a common feature of humanitarian operations, and the strategies, tools and approaches they have developed have significantly improved humanitarians' efforts to achieve better humanitarian access. Most of the stakeholders consulted thought this had been a positive development and that progress had been made.

It is not possible to conclude, however, that the current humanitarian access architecture and tools are fit for purpose. Insufficient leadership, poor respect for the humanitarian principles and lack of accountability and trust in the system and accountability are key barriers to achieving collective action on humanitarian access at the strategic level. Many efforts are relegated to the technical level with limited results.

Many useful tools and approaches have been developed, but there are significant inconsistencies in their application from one context to another. A stronger policy commitment to humanitarian access in the humanitarian system is required, as is greater technical support for humanitarian operations to ensure greater predictability in approaches to access.

Some of the challenges this study identifies relate to broader dysfunctions within the humanitarian system that are not specific to humanitarian access. Others, however, are within the powers of those working on humanitarian access to address. Despite the importance of humanitarian access to the success of so many humanitarian operations it does not receive enough attention from the humanitarian community as a priority. With this broad conclusion in mind, the following recommendations are addressed to the stakeholders mentioned in brackets after each point:

- Promote a policy discussion on humanitarian access within the IASC so the issue receives increased attention, underlining that it is a collective responsibility for the whole humanitarian system, establishing a clear accountability framework that clarifies the expected roles and responsibilities of stakeholders such as HCs, HCTs and HAWGs, and providing minimum standards for humanitarian operations (IASC).
- Map the policies and procedures of individual organisations on humanitarian access with a view to identifying best practices (GAWG).
- The GAWG should be strengthened, reinforced and better resourced to play a more active role in producing guidance and providing technical, operational and capacity-building support to field operations, especially HAWGs, with consideration given to merging it with ICVA's access working group (GAWG/donors).
- Organise an annual workshop to bring together HAWGs and other key access stakeholders in the humanitarian system to share best practices and strengthen ways of tackling constraints (GAWG).
- Review HAWGs' terms of reference to clarify their role within the IASC coordination mechanisms and make them more formal structures with more predictable engagement with HCTs, ICCGs and clusters (GAWG/IASC).
- Develop and roll out a dedicated mandatory training and capacity-building programme for HAWG co-chairs (GAWG).
- Increase the participation of local and national NGOs in HAWGs, and if necessary, organise separate briefings to engage them further (HAWGs).



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- Ensure that humanitarian access is incorporated more fully in HCs' performance assessments, the compacts they sign and the training they receive. Consider more use of UN humanitarian envoys in politically challenging environments (IASC/OCHA).
- Review the AMRF with a view to revising the analytical framework to include not only access constraints faced by aid agencies but also those preventing crisis affected populations from accessing assistance (OCHA).
- Based on existing country examples develop a common online platform/database that can be adapted to different settings to encourage more real-time reporting of access incidents (OCHA).
- Develop templates and guidance for more consistent access severity mapping by HAWGs (GAWG/OCHA).
- Produce short optional guidance on the development of HCT access strategies to improve their quality and make them more actionable (GAWG).
- Further develop how access is addressed within the HPC so that access severity is systematically linked to the assessment of humanitarian needs, and strategies for addressing access constraints are included on HNRP overall objectives and individual sector plans (OCHA/HAWGs).
- Develop a mechanism whereby HCs and HCTs can bring actions to address intractable access constraints at the country level to the attention of the ERC and IASC principals with clarity on roles and responsibilities (IASC/OCHA).
- Develop an M&E framework, including generic indicators, for measuring progress on addressing access constraints by HAWGs, HCTs and other stakeholders (GAWG).

These recommendations should be discussed via GAWG, the IASC and other relevant bodies within the humanitarian system as the basis for developing a multi-year workplan to address the issues raised in this report, and to strengthen approaches to access in the humanitarian system that should in turn be presented to donors to mobilise the necessary resources for it to be implemented.

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