



CENTER FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS



Third Transatlantic Dialogue on Humanitarian Action

## **Looking Ahead:** Addressing current and future challenges in humanitarian assistance

### ***Conference Report***

Renaissance Marriot Hotel, Brussels, Belgium, June 8, 2009

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## Introduction

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the Global Public Policy Institute and the Johns Hopkins University's Center for Transatlantic Relations co-hosted the Third Transatlantic Dialogue for Humanitarian Action. The Dialogue was the last in a three part series conducted under the auspices of the "Raising the Bar: Enhancing Transatlantic Governance of Disaster Relief and Preparedness" project. Held at the Renaissance Hotel in Brussels, Belgium, the conference brought together European and American experts, officials and representatives of NGOs to compare and contrast the approaches of the European Union and the United States in providing international help to address major disasters.

The humanitarian field is facing increased pressure from internal and external issues. There is internal pressure to define what it means to be humanitarian today: Is a strict understanding of the humanitarian principles required to maintain humanitarian space or can humanitarians assist in addressing the root causes of problems. Externally, the world faces an increasing number of disasters and complex crises which are greater in scale than ever before and shrinking resources to address humanitarian concerns. As the two biggest donors of international humanitarian aid, the EU and the U.S. could spearhead the humanitarian policy debate by enhancing transatlantic approaches to managing disasters and by promoting reform both at the bilateral and the multilateral levels.

As the final conference for the 'Raising the Bar' project, this dialogue session looked forward at emerging issues that will continue to shape the debate about the humanitarian field. Building on the research component of the project and the previous two dialogues, this session examined how to include other actors in the transatlantic debate on humanitarian assistance, the issue of root causes vs. humanitarian principles using Sudan as a case study, the role of emerging donors such as China and the Middle East countries, local ownership, and the impact of the financial crisis.

The event was a private meeting under Chatham House rules. This report will present the major themes raised at the conference. The agenda and participants' list appear at the end of the report.

### The project is generously supported by



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## Presentation of the project's results

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Transatlantic Dialogue opened with a discussion of the 'Raising the Bar' project's results to date. The project is part of the European Commissions' pilot program on "Transatlantic Methods for Handling Common Challenges." As such the project aims to formulate recommendations for enhanced transatlantic cooperation in emergency relief and preparedness for the 2010 EU-U.S. summit. The project also hopes to foster transatlantic dialogue between decision-makers, experts and practitioners in the humanitarian arena and identify good practices and possibilities for mutual learning.

The project has two main components, the first is a set of research groups designed to examine four key issues relevant to transatlantic governance of humanitarian assistance: implementing lessons learned, linking relief to rehabilitation and development, business engagement and civil-military relations. Within each study group four case studies and an overarching framework piece were produced. These case studies and reports will be published as an edited volume. In addition three policy papers, on topics associated with the project, and an action paper highlighting the main policy recommendations of the project are to be produced.

The 'Raising the Bar' project also contains a dialogue component, of which this third transatlantic dialogue on humanitarian is the final part. The dialogues were meant to foster transatlantic debate by bringing together key thinkers, decision-makers and practitioners from either side of the Atlantic to create a strategic community.

The 'Raising the Bar' project found that there are growing challenges facing humanitarians. With the increasing number and severity of disaster and crises and limited resources all actors are under strain to be as efficient and effective as possible. However, the new face of humanitarian disasters has also meant there is increased tension surrounding the humanitarian principles as new actors and new ideas about how best to deliver aid are introduced. This tension around the principles has meant that there is confusion about what it means to be humanitarian. These realities, coupled with the fact that the EU and the U.S. are the largest donors (comprising 65% of total aid volume), show that there is clearly a need for transatlantic cooperation in humanitarian assistance. Both donors also have a strong influence over multilateral institutions and have a large field presence making them well placed to effect change. Previously, pragmatic cooperation has been overshadowed by policy differences but with new political leadership on both sides of the Atlantic, potentially resulting in institutional and policy reforms, now is an extraordinary opportunity for these two world leaders to come together.

Enhancing cooperation in humanitarian assistance would create a strengthened transatlantic partnership as well as creating greater coherence in humanitarian assistance. It would also allow for more opportunities for mutual learning and could be the impetus needed for system-wide reform. However, there are also risks associated with increased cooperation. Currently, humanitarian efforts have suffered from a perception of Western bias; increased transatlantic cooperation could potentially exacerbate this. Increased cooperation could also potentially threaten the independence of aid. Finally, there are costs to coordination that may prove to be too high.

With these risks in mind, the 'Raising the Bar' team has developed a set of recommendations for enhancing transatlantic governance of humanitarian assistance. The first of these is the need to encourage, and create opportunities for mutual informal learning. Second, the transatlantic partners should become more involved in the governance of multilateral aid channels. This includes pushing for reform, adopting a more strategic approach to multilateral institutions and focusing on EU-U.S. cooperation. Finally, the project's research found that there is a need for high level dialogue on humanitarian assistance. There are several options for such



dialogue including: holding high-level bilateral dialogues to address key policy differences, high-level consultation groups and expanding the strategic ECHO-USAID dialogue.

Recommendations have also been developed for each of the four study groups covered by the project. To improve the capacity of humanitarian donors to implement lessons learned it was noted that the transatlantic partners should increase their focus on and better their policy making capacity. They should also enhance conceptual clarity and coherence and expand/create technical surge capacity within their donor organization.

To strengthen the role of humanitarian donors in linking relief rehabilitation and development (LRRD) the EU and the U.S. should improve their understanding of LRRD, decide where linkages are desired and then improve the practical methodologies for creating those linkages.

To maximize business contributions, while minimizing the risks their engagement could have it was suggested that donors should increase investments in preparedness activities, develop common standards for business engagement of all types, and enhance the transparency of their contracts and engagements with businesses.

Finally, to address the normative problems of civil-military cooperation and improve operational approaches the project team encourages the transatlantic partners to find ways to minimize conflict with humanitarian principles, develop stricter standards on civil-military cooperation and enhance the effectiveness of civil-military cooperation.

More detailed information on the recommendations from the project is available in the research volume and action paper – electronic copy of which can be found at [www.disastergovernance.net](http://www.disastergovernance.net).

## Panel 1 Sudan: Tensions between principles and practice

Sudan has been plagued by internal conflicts for the last 20 years. This has left implementing agencies and donors with the difficult task of determining how to best serve at need populations: By addressing root causes of disasters, which may require activities that are not 'independent', 'neutral' or 'impartial', or by providing more traditional humanitarian assistance knowing that this is, at best, a stop gap measure which will have to be repeated.

On the ground, humanitarians face increasing pressure. Operational neutrality, a requirement of humanitarian action, is increasingly difficult to maintain in complex crises like Sudan where the situation has elements of a humanitarian and protection crisis. The former requires making no public statements to maintain neutrality in a highly charged environment, while the latter requires that NGOs speak out against protection issues such as sexual assault. Humanitarian aid is also hampered by bureaucracy. In Sudan, the government does not always facilitate the delivery of aid particularly to remote locations meaning that aid cannot be delivered on the basis of need. Even though humanitarians may want to implement assistance in a principled manner, today's complex crises make that difficult or impossible.

While many actors may want to tackle root causes of problems, there is the question of whether or not humanitarian agencies are mandated to address root causes at all. The discussions at the conference concluded that dealing with root causes is not part of the humanitarian mandate, but that when delivering assistance, humanitarians need to take root causes into consideration. Addressing them requires political engagement and as such, it is a developmental and diplomatic issue. In order to maintain their operating space, humanitarian agencies must continue to have a principled stance and operate accordingly.

While implementing agencies may not have the mandate to address root causes, other actors are better placed to do so. Donors can do much to address root causes in Sudan and create more space for humanitarians to work. First, however, donors must change their view of the country and the peace process. They need to start thinking of the country as a whole unit and as part of a greater region. At the moment, from Sudan's perspective, Western powers appear to want to cleave pieces of the country off – first the South, then Darfur. While the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was a forward thinking document, it has been neglected to the detriment of the peace process as a whole. Clearly, peace by pieces does not work. Once donor governments are no longer viewed as trying to break the country apart, they can more effectively put pressure on Khartoum to effect positive change.

The second thing donors and implementing agencies can do is increase the diversity of their partner organizations. When NGOs were asked to leave Sudan after the issuing of an arrest warrant for President Omar Al-Bashir, many of those asked to leave were Western, while Muslim NGOs were able to stay. It is clearly important for donors and implementing agencies to ensure that NGOs are not perceived as tied to any one donor in a politically sensitive area such as Sudan. Donors should also support inter-agency cooperation between Muslim and western NGOs as a potential way to increase trust in Western NGOs in Muslim countries. Donors must also work to increase dialogue both amongst their own agencies and between donor countries on the subject of Sudan.

However, while the EU and the U.S. are strong donors, they are not strong enough to address some of the root causes of the crisis within Sudan. No amount of political pressure, or aid, can address internal causes of conflict. Identity crises, conflicts over the allocation of scarce resources, inequality between different parts of the country, fighting amongst the Khartoum elite and criminal behavior are all issues that must be addressed by the Sudanese themselves.



Following the completion of the panel discussion participants split into three breakout sessions. Two of these sessions discussed themes and conclusions from the policy papers on China's role in humanitarian assistance and local ownership, while the third was used to go into greater detail about the project's results.

## **Breakout Group 1: The rise of aid diplomacy? Emergency assistance as a tool to engage regional powers**

This breakout group used the “Raising the Bar” Policy Paper *China’s Potential Role in Humanitarian Assistance* as a starting point for discussions. Diversifying the humanitarian donor community has many potential benefits. In addition to the obvious increase in funds, humanitarian assistance can also serve as a potential tool for engaging new and emerging global and regional powers. Diversifying donors could also help to boost the legitimacy of humanitarian endeavors in politically sensitive situations and thus improve access to at-risk communities.

From the perspective of these new donors there are also obvious benefits to engaging in humanitarian assistance, namely increasing international reputation, particularly at the regional level. However, they are facing barriers to engaging with the existing humanitarian apparatus. Initially, traditional donors were reluctant to work with donors such as China unless they agreed to the terms of the traditional donors. Today, a new willingness of traditional donors may be emerging to work with new donors on their terms as it builds cultural knowledge, improves relations and builds trust and mutual understanding with emerging powers. Other barriers to emerging donors are that many of these new donors such as Brazil and China have limited funds and a different understanding of state sovereignty. They may also view humanitarian assistance as a foreign policy tool. However, there is more to humanitarian donorship than money and these countries have non-monetary humanitarian resources such as large numbers of peace keepers and a better understanding of the regional context. Therefore it is possible for them to be active players despite comparatively low financial donations.

While the GPPi policy paper focused on China, there is another set of new donors that bear examining: the Middle-Eastern states. There are many political and cultural differences between Muslim donors and traditional donors, but the basic tenants of humanitarian assistance can be found in Islam and there is a strong emphasis on the importance of charity in the Islamic faith. However, like other emerging donors, these countries do not always have fully-fleshed out humanitarian policies and have limited funds (which are tied to the price of oil) for humanitarian assistance. Muslim countries also tend to support issues given much media coverage and other Arab countries. Aid is also often tied to political goals.

Unfortunately, Muslim donor countries, while being a huge potential source of funds, are not members of the OECD, the UN’s Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), or other important representational for a. As such, their voices remain unheard. This results in the creation of parallel aid structures which are not in the best interest of those in need. Despite their lack of representation, recently many of these donors have started giving funds to the UN and other western organizations in order to increase their legitimacy in the West. It would behoove traditional donors to recognize these contributions and find ways to give these donors a voice in donor forums.

The EU and the U.S. are well positioned to lead the way on the issue of diversifying the humanitarian community; they share the same concerns and have substantial field presence, unlike other donors. However the issue of new donors has only come to the forefront in the past few years. As such, policies are still being developed. Traditional donors such as the European Commission want to ensure the survival of effective and principled humanitarian aid, and many feel that diversification and discussion on the issue is the only way to do so. In fact, for new EU member states DG ECHO engages with national governments to help clarify the focus of humanitarian assistance policies as this is a relatively new policy area for these countries. Some discussants believe strongly that the discussion on diversifying the humanitarian



community should include host governments as well as donors. This would help with access issues and with the (incorrect) view that only Westerners are involved in humanitarian assistance. There are many highly dedicated local people engaging in humanitarian efforts. Nevertheless discussants recognized that a dose of realism is required when talking to host governments, as discussion of the humanitarian principles will only go so far with hostile authoritarian governments.

To engage with these new powers traditional donors need to take their statements at face value and understand where the countries currently stand. Lecturing and finger pointing will reduce the desire for mutual cooperation. Beginning with less problematic areas of humanitarian assistance such as natural disaster response is a pragmatic starting ground. Using humanitarian assistance as a tool for engaging with new powers, however, is a delicate balance because if aid is used as a tool it cannot be neutral. Clearly more research and dialogue on the subject is needed.

## Breakout Group 2: The importance of local ownership

Local ownership is vital to successful aid efforts. First responders after a disaster are always those who are geographically close to, or in, the affected community. And, as it is their lives and livelihoods that are at risk, local populations are well placed to receive, want and utilize preparedness and response training and tools. Despite these facts local populations are poorly integrated into humanitarian thinking and programming. This breakout group, using the 'Raising the Bar' policy paper on local ownership as a starting point, addressed the challenges to and benefits of local ownership in humanitarian initiatives.

The first point to come out of this breakout group is that local ownership is about much more than just capacity building, it is about the impact outsiders have on these communities, and stands in contrast to the idea that these populations are mere victims of disasters. To be local means that you are in the vicinity of the problem, are there to stay, are amongst the first to respond, and know the culture, people, economic, moral and political structures of the affected community. Local ownership is also about transferring decision making power to those in the know and the perception the local community has of outside support.

Humanitarians know that local ownership is an important part of successful response measures, yet it remains elusive in reality. Why discussion of local ownership is not translating into results was a matter of much debate with some discussants feeling that it was because humanitarians are not serious about the issue and that there are few good practices that can be replicated elsewhere, while others felt that humanitarians believe strongly in the issue but need assistance from donors to create local ownership.

While the benefits of local ownership are obvious, there are difficulties as well. When discussing local ownership, conversations should not romanticize local culture. Discussants felt that it was important to remember that not all local groups are good and all outsiders are not bad. Historical issues and cultural clashes may make local ownership a burden to effective response efforts in some cases. It was also felt that local ownership is more of a development issue and determining the line between the humanitarian and development realms is always difficult.

Further, some felt that the entire concept of outside assistance is counterproductive to local capacity building and ownership as it undermines community structures. Locals often know that the assistance is only going to last for a few years and thus exploit it, it is not permanent to them and they want to make the most of the opportunity presented. Corruption is a problem with local ownership particularly when donors demand proof of success through quantitative indicators. Discussion on this topic revealed that the debate around local ownership would benefit from more qualitative measurement to support quantitative information.

Donors also acknowledge the importance of local ownership but are prevented from assisting in its development due to mandates and bureaucratic structures. Some donors, such as the European Commission, cannot give money to local NGOs, nor can they give long-term funding through humanitarian funds. Capacity building and ownership requires a longer time frame than current humanitarian funding structures allow for. Further, most donors do not have a wide field presence, if they have an office it is generally at a head quarters level and not in every community. Finally, building capacity and ownership requires special skill sets that are currently lacking in humanitarian donor agencies.

To overcome these barriers the European Commission works with governments and member states and gives financial support to international organizations that do capacity building. It also funds preparedness efforts. However, if local ownership/capacity building is to be funded



by humanitarian budget lines, the benefits of local ownership will have to be proven vis-à-vis direct money for beneficiaries. Joint donor policy on the issue is important to some donors, as is continuing to emphasize preparedness activities which support local ownership. Donors could also work to link the large and growing body of research on the issue to policy and outcomes on the ground.

## **Breakout Group 3: Bridging the Atlantic: How to Enhance EU-U.S. Cooperation in humanitarian assistance**

This breakout group was used to examine the fundamental ideas behind and results of the 'Raising the Bar'-project. Using the Action Paper as the starting point, the breakout group examined possible ways forward and new roles for the two partners to enhance collaboration among themselves and with other actors of humanitarian assistance.

The core findings of the 'Raising the Bar'-project confirmed that enhanced transatlantic cooperation in humanitarian assistance would be beneficial to both of the transatlantic partnership and the humanitarian community at large. As they are the two largest donors and both have significant field presence, the EU and the U.S. are well-placed to initiate change and spearhead efforts to define and professionalize the humanitarian field. Project research found that if the transatlantic partnership could be strengthened it would serve to increase efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance, through creating strategic direction on important issues such as LRRD, new actors, and institutional learning.

Increased transatlantic governance in humanitarian assistance also has some potential pitfalls. Namely that an increased presence of Western donors and ideas would serve to reinforce ideas that humanitarianism is not universal, thus hindering access to at-risk communities which are located in countries wary of Western interference. Western dominance could also serve as a further barrier to increased participation by new and emerging donors. Further by focusing only on donor governments a transatlantic partnership misses out on key viewpoints necessary for understanding and reforming the humanitarian assistance.

This is not to suggest that there is currently no cooperation taking place. In fact, the opposite is true – particularly at the field level, where informal cooperation occurs regularly. This finding was confirmed by donor representatives in the discussion who also pointed out that while field level cooperation occurs naturally it is at times less useful and more resisted at higher levels. Joint field assessment missions in countries of mutual interest have occurred in the past and serve as a model for increased cooperation. Donors agree that more dialogue and cooperation would be helpful as increased understanding can reduce duplications and mixed messages sent to recipient communities and implementing agencies. Annual, high level policy dialogues such as the one on agriculture could be created for other issues and sectors. That being said there is some frustration on the part of the U.S. when dealing with Europe because humanitarian policies and programs frequently differ between the EU and member states. More coherence within Europe is necessary before stronger transatlantic cooperation can occur.

However, donors are not the only actors who would benefit from increased transatlantic dialogue. In fact, better transatlantic governance in humanitarian assistance requires that other key actors be given a place in the dialogues. Perhaps the largest missing dimensions from the 'Raising the Bar'-project's analysis are the two core pillars of the humanitarian system: the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and the NGOs.

Recent research done on the subject of NGO cooperation reveals there is much more transatlantic cooperative activity going on than one would expect. There is also a lot of cooperation among the different NGOs from both sides of the Atlantic in the field. However, while the practitioners in the field seem to have few problems working together the same cannot be said for the senior people in their respective headquarters – an issue shared by donors. NGOs have an advantage over donors in terms of transatlantic cooperation as many NGOs are or-



ganized into organizational and advocacy consortia creating mechanisms for dialogue. At the field level, they are also coming together to apply for funding from donors, particularly USAID. As most donors funding goes through them, enhancing transatlantic cooperation requires that the implementing agencies be involved in the dialogue.

## Panel 2: Financial Crisis to Complex Crises

The impact of the financial crisis on humanitarian assistance is still unfolding. While we know that the financial crisis is reducing aid flows, it is also making at risk populations more vulnerable as they lose livelihoods and remittances as well as other financial supports shrink or disappear. The full effect on at risk populations remains unclear. The purpose of this panel and the related discussions was to examine these issues and determine what humanitarians can do in the face of shrinking budgets to mitigate the effects of the financial crisis on fomenting or exacerbating crises.

The financial crisis has resulted in major reductions in capital flows, foreign direct investment and currency depreciation across much of the developing world. Cautious estimates suggest that 53 million people have been pushed back below the poverty line as a result of the crisis. This number is likely to increase when one considers that the growth rate in most developing countries has shrunk by up to 5 percent. In other words, the impact of the financial crisis on the developing world has been far more devastating than that in the Western World. This is particularly true for those areas with strong links to the U.S. and Western Europe such as Latin America and the emerging economies in Eastern Europe.

Africa is a slightly different story. At the advent of the crisis many African leaders thought that their countries would not suffer the same effects as their economies were less integrated into the international financial systems that were collapsing elsewhere. Unfortunately, they were mistaken. Economic reforms allowed the average annual growth rates to rise and inflation to decline, making Africa attractive to private capital flows as well as increasingly integrate the continent into the world economy through trade, tourism and migration. So, indirectly, the continent is affected as the crisis inhibits investment, reduces remittances, lowers export prices and reduces tourism earnings. This has resulted in a continent-wide recession and severe balance of payments crises in 30 countries. NGOs and International Organizations providing key services across the continent are also experiencing a drop in their funding as individual donations shrink which could lead to a reduction in services. For example, the UNHCR believes it may have a funding gap of 100 million USD. If governments do not commit themselves to filling the contribution gap humanitarian crises will be exacerbated and any chance of meeting the Millennium Development Goals will be lost.

When looking at what governments can do to mitigate the effects of the financial crisis on humanitarian crises, the focus must be not only on donor governments but examine the developing nations' governments who are responsible for the well-being of their citizens as well. This is a problem that cannot be solved by donors alone. While expanded aid is necessary the aid must be properly targeted at fragile states allowing them to withstand the dangers stemming from the current economic crisis. A contraction of donor aid may exacerbate the problem if they are unable to pay essential services including the wage bill of their security services. Expanded/emergency loan programs by World Bank, IMF, and other financial institutions to meet cash shortfalls in the short-term are also necessary.

The governments of at-risk nations bear responsibility for mitigating the effects of the financial crisis on their populations and must acknowledge the peculiar context in which they function and tailor their solutions to meet specific challenges. However, governments should reignite the fight against corruption, cut down on "profligate spending" and reorder their priorities to reflect the current times. Also, governments should subsidize inputs for production of indigenous foods towards sustainable levels. There is no more appropriate time than now for governments to subsidize farm inputs and make pragmatic commitments to replace imported

foods with indigenous ones so as to reduce the balance of payment deficits that are weighing down African economies.

There are also those who believe that the developed nations should consider unconditionally cancelling all unfair and immoral debts and that there should be a deliberate refusal action on the part of African nations to repay immoral and unfair loans owed to developed nations. The thinking is that these debt payments not only absorb resources essential for sustainable development, but also fail to reduce the debt. Owing to this crisis, export earnings of African countries are falling and most nations would have to borrow new money to pay old debts. The debts therefore continue to pile on one another leaving African nations with little hope for escape. If the debts were not paid the money earmarked for repayment could be re-channelled to development and humanitarian projects rather than be used to service unending debts.

Major donor countries, foundations and private donors will focus on trying to solve their own internal economic issues before turning their focus to issues abroad. The bounce back in aid spending is expected to take three years. However despite its global impact the recent G20 summit is a clear indication that the developed countries do not consider Africa as an integral part of the solution to the crisis. The global nature of its effects is a sufficient indication that any meaningful and sustainable solution to the crisis should be an all inclusive one that involves both the developed and the developing world. However, what is needed are not new commitments to aid, there are many good programs in place already. Instead, donors need to meet and implement commitments already made.

## AGENDA

**09:45 am**      **Registration and welcome coffee**

**10:15 am**      **WELCOME**

Daniel Hamilton, Director, Center for Transatlantic Relations, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University

**10:30 am**      **PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT'S RESULTS**

Julia Steets, Associate Director, GPPi

- Key findings and recommendations of the 'Raising the Bar' project

**11:00 am**      **PANEL DISCUSSION I**

### **Sudan: Tensions between Principles and Practice**

Goals of this session: Sudan has been a regular recipient of foreign assistance for over 20 years. The prolonged nature of the conflicts in Sudan has led some humanitarian NGOs to concentrate more on addressing the root causes of the conflict and taking a more political stance. Using Sudan as an example, this session aims to highlight the tension between maintaining the humanitarian principles and space and addressing the root causes of conflict in practice. The panel will discuss policy options for dealing with these tensions for donors such as the European Commission and the U.S. Government.

Moderator: Daniel Hamilton, Director, Center for Transatlantic Relations, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University

Panel members:

Nicky Smith, Director of Advocacy and Government Relations, International Rescue Committee

- The fine balance between supporting international efforts to address root causes and maintaining operational neutrality to provide aid in Sudan

Gemma-Tracee Apiku Duddell, relief worker and former refugee

- A beneficiary perspective on the tension between providing aid and addressing the root causes of emergencies in Sudan

Jeremy Lester, European Commission, DG DEV E2, Head of Unit Relations with the countries and the regions of the Horn of Africa, Eastern Africa and Indian Ocean

- European perspectives on root causes versus strictly principled action. How to overcome the challenges donors face in complex emergencies such as Sudan

**12:30 pm**      **LUNCH**

**1:30 pm**      **BREAKOUT GROUPS**

Participants will discuss key topics in disaster relief and preparedness in breakout groups. As part of the 'Raising the Bar' project, policy papers were prepared. They are sent to participants prior to the meeting. The authors of the

policy papers will lead discussion on these core issues and their implications for EU and U.S. policy, as well as their enhanced cooperation. The third breakout group will be an opportunity to further discuss the implications of the project's key findings and recommendations outlined at the beginning of the conference.

### **Breakout Group I: The rise of aid diplomacy? Emergency assistance as a tool to engage regional powers**

Presenters: Johannes Luchner, European Commission DG ECHO, Head of Unit for General Policy affairs, Relations with donors, and Evaluation and Andrea Binder, Project Manager, GPPI

Based on the 'Raising the Bar' Policy Paper *China's Potential Role in Humanitarian Assistance*, this breakout group will look at different approaches towards humanitarian assistance as a possible policy area for engaging emerging powers and diversifying the humanitarian community.

Discussants:

Dr. Ajaz Ahmed Khan, Senior Policy Advisor, Islamic Relief Worldwide

- The growing role of Islamic countries in humanitarian assistance, the potential differences in the conception and principles governing aid

Asad Beg, European Commission, DG RELEX H2, Desk Officer China

- Using emergency assistance as a policy area for strengthening relationships to China / Arab countries

### **Breakout Group II: The importance of local ownership**

Presenter: Beatrice Pouligny, Independent Researcher, Visiting Professor at Georgetown University

Using findings from the 'Raising the Bar' Policy Paper on local ownership as a starting point, this breakout group will examine the importance of local ownership in emergency response efforts and the difficulties in strengthening local capacity and creating local ownership.

Discussants:

Stephen Asubu, former Country Manager, Global Care Uganda

- What does it mean to be local? A perspective from the ground

Walter van Hattum, Policy Officer, European Commission DG ECHO

- Donor issues in supporting (local) capacity development

### **Breakout Group III: Bridging the Atlantic: How to enhance EU-US- cooperation in humanitarian assistance**

Discussing the key findings and recommendations of the 'Raising the Bar' project presented at the beginning of the conference, this session will examine possible ways forward and new roles for the two partners to enhance collaboration among themselves and with other actors of humanitarian assistance.

Facilitators: Julia Steets, GPPi Associate Director and Daniel Hamilton, Director, Center for Transatlantic Relations, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University

Discussants:

Dana J. Francis, Refugee Officer, First Secretary, United States Mission to the European Union

- A US perspective on transatlantic cooperation in humanitarian assistance

H. Roy Williams, President and CEO of the Center for Humanitarian Cooperation and former Director of the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance OFDA

- Risks and opportunities of enhanced transatlantic cooperation on humanitarian assistance

Wolf-Dieter Eberwein, President of VOICE (Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies)

- Between advocacy and liaison: NGO cooperation with transatlantic humanitarian donors

**2:45 pm**

## **COFFEE BREAK**

**3:15 pm**

## **PANEL DISCUSSION II**

### **Financial Crisis to Complex Crises**

Goal of session: While there has already been much discussion of the financial crisis' impact on aid flows, there has been limited discussion on the potential effects the financial crisis may have on fomenting new crises or exacerbating existing ones. The globalized economy means that decisions taken by bankers on Wall Street have effects in Bangalore. While the effects of the financial crisis in the Western world are measured in dollars and jobs, elsewhere the price will be paid in lives. This session seeks to explore the effects of the financial crisis on complex crises and what donors can do to mitigate them.

Moderator: Julia Steets, Associate Director, GPPi

Panel members

Ali M.S. Fatemi, President and Professor of Economics, European Center for Advanced International Studies, American University of Paris

- Why the financial crisis is affecting the developing world more harshly and what donors and international financial institutions can do to help

Abdul-Wahab Sulleyman, Senior Accountant, Food and Drugs Board, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Ghana

- The effects of the financial crisis in Africa; what at risk nations need to prevent them from sliding into humanitarian crises

Jonathan Addleton, USAID Representative and Counselor for International Development at the US Mission to the European Union in Brussels

- The impact of the financial crisis on remittance flows and on aid flows. How the US is adapting its humanitarian response to these changes

**4:45 pm**

## **FAREWELL AND NEXT STEPS**



Julia Steets, Associate Director, GPPi

- Next steps for building on these results; the 2010 EU-U.S. Summit

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<i>NAME</i>	<i>INSTITUTION</i>	<i>POSITION</i>
Jonathan ADDLETON	U.S. Mission to the European Union	USAID Representative and Counselor for International Development
Gemma-Tracee APIKU DUDELL		Relief worker and former refugee
Steve Echodu ASUBU	Former Country Manager of Global Care Uganda	Independent Researcher
Jane BACKHURST	World Vision	
Paola BARIOLI	UN-OCHA Liaison Office, Brussels	Intern
Asad BEG	European Commission, DG RELEX	Desk Officer China
Andrea BINDER	Global Public Policy Institute	Project Manager
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