A Missing Link?
Diaspora’s Place in an Enhanced International Humanitarian System

3 October 2016, United Nations City, Copenhagen, Denmark

The conference will bring together EU and international representatives from civil society, diaspora organisations, humanitarian organisations, and research institutes to explore and discuss opportunities and strengths related to Diaspora Humanitarianism.

This conference is the final activity of the DEMAC project (www.demac.org), which has been funded by the EU Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection from June 2015 until October 2016 and co-funding from Danida. The conference results will be taken forward to shape further work in the next phase of the DEMAC initiative, and seeks to inform future policy and research debates.

Based on the research findings and the recommendations of diaspora and institutional humanitarians documented, compiled and facilitated in the various activities throughout the DEMAC initiative, the conference seeks to exhibit the plethora and heterogeneity of diaspora humanitarianism by showcasing examples from different settings in man-made conflicts and natural disasters, highlighting the advantages of diaspora humanitarianism for affected communities (willingness to take risks, fast response, access, trust, language skills, length of engagement etc.). Alongside describing the challenges and opportunities of diaspora humanitarian action, it will convey the realities of their actions and the spaces which they create and operate in.

The DEMAC conference will explore and discuss opportunities for genuine collaboration of diaspora humanitarians with institutional responders on a structural level.

The conference will comprise:

1. Insights into diaspora humanitarian responses;
2. Presentation of DEMAC findings and recommendations;
3. Academic perspectives on opportunities and challenges of diaspora humanitarianism;
4. Expert discussion on challenges for inter-institutional-diaspora coordination;
5. Panel discussion to explore spaces for collaboration.
Welcome & Housekeeping
Mingo Heiduk - DEMAC Team Leader, Danish Refugee Council, DEMAC Consortium
Christian Boehm (Conférencier) – Policy Advisor, Danish Refugee Council

Opening Remarks
Andreas Kamm – Secretary General, Danish Refugee Council
Morten Jespersen – Ambassador, Under-Secretary for Global Development and Cooperation, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Emil Bech Andersen – Deputy Head of Policy and Strategy, ECHO

Key note speeches
Dr. Hany El-Banna – President, Humanitarian Forum
Smruti Patel – Director, Global Mentoring Initiative

Session 1
Presenting examples of diaspora humanitarianism from Somalia, Syria and Sierra Leone
This panel will present Diaspora in Action and the “sector’s” heterogeneity, width, scale, comparative advantage and added value, as well as areas of support for enhanced coordination and action. Each panelist will be invited to briefly speak about their work, and moderated questions will follow the presentations.

Panelists:
Kippy Agyei – Executive Director, Heaven Homes
Fadi Al Dairi – Country Director Turkey, Hand in Hand for Syria
Fatumo Farah – Director, HIRDA

Moderator:
Onyekachi Wambu - Director, AFFORD-UK

Session 2
DEMAC: Findings and Recommendations
Presentation of DEMAC findings over the last 17 months which will refer to the research report ‘Diaspora Humanitarianism: transnational ways of working’, diaspora workshops and diaspora commitments at WHS amongst many other DEMAC activities.

The session will be presented by:
Mingo Heiduk – Team Leader, Danish Refugee Council Diaspora Programme, DEMAC Consortium
Melissa Phillips – DEMAC Consultant
Panel discussion: “Diaspora Humanitarianism: transnational ways of working”
This session will allow each of the panelists to present a brief reflection on DEMAC outcomes based on the report “Diaspora Humanitarianism: transnational ways of working” and other relevant studies. A moderated discussion will follow.

Copies of the report are available in the conference room and can also be downloaded on the DEMAC website.

Panelists:
El Khidir Daloum – Consultant, humanitarian and development specialist  
Dennis Dijkzeul – Professor, Ruhr University Bochum  
Eva Svoboda – Research Fellow, ODI

Moderator:
Astrid De Valon - IASC Task Team Coordinator, UNHCR

Session 4

Moderated interview: Challenges in coordinating an enhanced response: How to enhance response capacity through partnering and complementarity?
This session will be an interview of Fadi Al Dairi (Country Director Turkey, Hand in Hand for Syria) and Gareth Owen (Humanitarian Director, Save the Children), addressing coordination between Diaspora and ‘conventional’ humanitarian responders. Heba Aly, Director of IRIN News will conduct the interview.

Session 5

Exploring spaces for collaboration – the way ahead
This session will be a panel discussion on the way ahead for collaboration between the ‘conventional’ humanitarian system and the Diaspora actors and actions. The panel will be asked to reflect on diaspora’s place in an enhanced international humanitarian system, collaboration in the future, and what is needed to make this a reality.

Panelists:
Memuna Janneh – LunchBox Gift  
Stuart Kefford – Humanitarian Affairs Officer, Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team (STAIT)  
Elisah Mbiza – Network Coordinator, NEAR  
Robert Smith – Chief of Partnerships Coordination Section, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Moderator:
Paul Knox-Clarke – Head of Research ALNAP

Closing remarks

Robert Smith – Chief of Partnerships Coordination Section, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs  
Onyekachi Wambu - Director, AFFORD-UK, DEMAC Consortium