

Initiative

#CSRhumanitarian

THE PRIVATE SECTOR AS A PARTNER IN HUMANITARIAN AID

“The Power of Partnership”

A Code of Values for partnerships between German humanitarian organisations and the private sector



german
humanitarian
assistance

DEUTSCHE HUMANITÄRE HILFE



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FOREWORD BY DR BÄRBEL KOFLER MDB, PATRON

Humanitarian aid and business – can they go hand in hand? The answer is a resounding yes! There have always been some reservations about the relationship between humanitarian organisations and businesses – on both sides. Perhaps partly because of a lack of mutual understanding about what companies could bring to humanitarian responses. At the same time, many companies have already made a social commitment (‘Corporate Social Responsibility’) and so are playing a key role in sustainable development. It’s hardly surprising, then, that one concern unites us: supporting people in need.



It is from this shared interest that we aim to develop various forms of partnerships. After all, there is huge potential in humanitarian organisations and businesses working together. Given growing global humanitarian needs, this potential should be actively pursued, for example through the transfer of technical expertise and innovation. The German Federal Government also committed to these partnerships at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul.

Shared values are important for successful collaboration. The humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence must remain fundamental to all humanitarian efforts. It is important for me to emphasise that. In addition, certain values that characterise successful partnerships are developed while working together. As a result, this guide brings together the values that are of equal importance to companies and humanitarian organisations for the first time.

The initiative #CSRhumanitarian has supported the intensive dialogue between businesses and aid organisations in Germany with numerous events and surveys. The initiative has laid the cornerstone for this guide, which has been developed jointly by businesses and humanitarian organisations. Let us continue to build on these values in the future!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Bärbel Kofler'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Bärbel Kofler

Federal Government Commissioner for
Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid

FOREWORD BY MICHAEL BRAND MDB, PATRON

The aim of the wonderful initiative #CSRhumanitarian is to provide concrete support to people in severe need of humanitarian aid. It networks key players – aid organisations and companies – to meet the growing global needs for humanitarian aid. I was delighted to become patron of the initiative, and will continue to support it with conviction and to the best of my abilities.



Existing humanitarian response mechanisms are no longer sufficient. With over 65 million people fleeing from humanitarian catastrophes, the number is the highest it has been since the end of the Second World War. More than 125 million are dependent on humanitarian aid for survival. The number and duration of humanitarian crises and disasters are, sadly, at a record high.

Combining the expertise, skills and potential of the business sector and non-governmental organisations opens up new horizons for humanitarian response. This guide shows the results that players have taken together through different rounds of dialogue on various topics.

The initiative – started by the Foreign Office and shaped in collaboration with the relief coalition Aktion Deutschland Hilft and the business sector – has resulted in this ‘Code of Values for partnerships between German humanitarian agents and the private sector,’ developed over a two-year process. It contains helpful and concrete recommendations for you.

Its basis and the motivation behind it are to safeguard humanitarian principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. On this basis, companies that are already involved and those that are interested by this excellent work will benefit both nationally and internationally. After all, humanitarian aid plays a fundamental and profound part in shaping a better world.

Many thanks for your respect and for your key commitment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Brand'.

Michael Brand

Chair of the Working Group on Human Rights and Humanitarian Assistance of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the German Bundestag

ABOUT OUR APPROACH

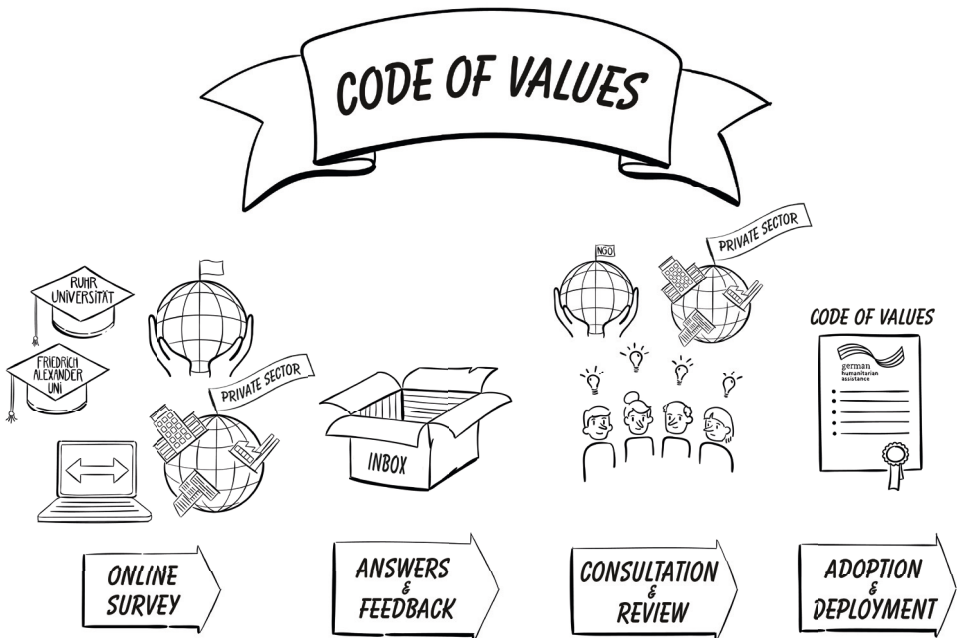
Organisations are already valued partners in tackling acute humanitarian emergency situations, and can play a key part in increasing the efficiency of humanitarian aid and expanding emergency aid capabilities. The German business sector is largely aware of its global responsibility and is committed in the context of 'Corporate Social Responsibility' (CSR). In an international comparison, however, collaborations between humanitarian organisations and the private sector in the national context still tend to focus on financial donations to major humanitarian disasters and crises. Furthermore, humanitarian organisations often see a donation as the most efficient way to support humanitarian aid. On the other hand, there is growing interest from the business sector to show their increasing humanitarian commitment by contributing resources that are directly related to their core business, such as deploying staff (corporate volunteering) or providing in-kind donations and expertise.

This desire for new forms of collaboration, and the growing number of actors, could change the humanitarian landscape. This development will bring additional resources, but will also change the way in which the humanitarian community plans, coordinates and responds. What is needed to address this growth in actors and the potential tensions in the field between the private sector and humanitarian organisations, while at the same time safeguarding humanitarian principles?

To answer this question, the Foreign Office initiative #CSRhumanitarian worked with businesses and non-governmental organisations to develop the 'Code of Values for partnerships between German humanitarian organisations and the private sector'. In the last quarter of 2017, an online survey was conducted with the professional support of the Institute of Economics at the Friedrich-Alexander University of Erlangen-Nuremberg (FAU), the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict at the Ruhr University Bochum (IFHV) and in cooperation with Aktion Deutschland Hilft e. V. The preliminary results of the survey were discussed jointly by humanitarian organisations and businesses as part of a dialogue workshop in January 2018.

This guide builds on internationally applicable ethical guidelines, and invites further development of the content in accordance with in-house organisational processes and structures in concrete partnerships. It is the result of a process of participatory dialogue and identifies the following collaboration values for partnerships between businesses and humanitarian agents: Equality – Transparency – Reliability – Efficiency & Effectiveness – Sustainability – Innovative capacity.

Derived from the values, the guide formulates recommended actions for successful collaboration between businesses and humanitarian organisations.



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OUR VALUES

EQUALITY

The humanitarian landscape is increasingly changing with the involvement of new partners, such as the private sector. These differ not only with their focus on profit making from humanitarian organisations, but also in terms of their processes or organisational structures. The two partners are often not familiar with each other's processes, aims and approaches, and there is no shared language. Defining rules of collaboration that will apply equally to both sides based on open, fair, and respectful interaction is essential. Successful partnerships are therefore defined just as much by appreciative communication and the forward-looking management of expectations and relationships, as by respecting humanitarian principles and local cultures.

Partners commit to undertake the following:

- respect the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.
- operate on the basis of existing United Nations ethical guidelines for collaboration with the private sector, for example the 'Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact' or the 'UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights'.
- show responsibility to those affected by crises, and respect local cultures and structures when delivering and implementing joint humanitarian responses.
- accept the (legal) equality of the entities and recognise each other's competencies.
- familiarise themselves with each other's humanitarian missions and corporate visions, and reach a shared understanding through open exchange about humanitarian challenges and commercial interests.
- encourage the mutual transfer of experience and knowledge in order to learn with – and from – each other.

TRANSPARENCY

Transparency means being open about the key aims, interests and processes in the partnership. This includes honest communication about the limits and the general framework of humanitarian aid, e.g. implementing only needs-based humanitarian responses. Open dialogue between the partners also highlights opportunities for developing strategic partnerships and facilitates joint learning with – and from – each other.

Partners commit to undertake the following:

- make binding commitments ahead of the partnership regarding the use of resources, and maintain open communication concerning any required changes throughout the collaboration (subsequent costs, changes to the framework conditions, etc.).
- advise on humanitarian challenges and commercial interests in the collaboration, and highlight risks and plan changes with sufficient time.
- undertake to communicate openly and truthfully about their aims and activities.
- act in accordance with relevant internal and higher-ranking compliance guidelines and have zero tolerance for all forms of corruption.
- commit to provide transparent reporting and accounting for third parties and to communicate with each other regarding the audit process.
- build trust by communicating regularly and in a forthcoming manner.

RELIABILITY

Long-term commitments enable fast, flexible and reliable aid for people in need. By balancing commercial interests and humanitarian needs, trusted partners can plan with greater certainty to respond to humanitarian needs. Such partnerships are defined by stability and strong, collaborative management. This means that in addition to humanitarian response, disaster prevention measures can be promoted to ensure that humanitarian needs do not arise in the first place.

Partners commit to undertake the following:

- agree to binding partnership goals, which can be planned and measured, and maintain ongoing communication with respect to any required changes.
- appoint responsible points of contact within the company and the humanitarian organisation.
- have staff support at the appropriate management level to achieve shared aims.
- provide sufficient resources on both sides, and communicate if these are not available.
- promise discretion and non-disclosure of agreed content in the context of a partnership.

EFFICIENCY & EFFECTIVENESS

Partnerships with the private sector can help to make humanitarian aid faster and more responsive. Following natural disasters or humanitarian crises, financial donations are often the most efficient form of aid in saving lives and alleviating need. Focusing on impact-oriented humanitarian aid enables planning certainty for business partners.

Collaborative partners can achieve a greater impact by creating synergies and bringing in joint resources. However, these resources must be deployed – in particular, in-kind donations – according to need, and adapted to the culture and context. People affected by the crisis must also be consulted and involved in the delivery of aid. Additional costs for transport, maintenance or training should also be considered.

Partners commit to undertake the following:

- deliver significant added-value through their partnerships for people affected by natural disasters and conflicts.
- focus on humanitarian needs and provide the most effective resources with respect to the needs of the people affected.
- use in-kind donations with careful consideration, and only where these cannot be procured regionally or locally, due to the emergency.
- assess resources that the private sector can contribute as part of its core business to increase the efficiency of humanitarian response, such as advisory services and technical or infrastructure support.
- promote the shared provision of relevant resources to increase the efficiency of humanitarian response.

SUSTAINABILITY

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) dominate the current sustainability debate nationally and internationally. The SDGs bring together social, business and environmental aims; are relevant to both rich and poor countries; emphasise shared responsibility; and consider questions such as inequality, as well as patterns of production and consumption. Needs-based humanitarian response and disaster prevention focus on saving lives, alleviating suffering and preserving human dignity. Good humanitarian responses can also help move towards achieving the SDGs.

In the humanitarian context, however, sustainability should be understood primarily as the ability to reliably provide aid that is adapted to the context, while ensuring the participation of local actors and the affected population.

Partners commit to undertake the following:

- strive to build a long-term partnership that guarantees responsible, reliable and sustained support for humanitarian responses.
- take care, in the context of the collaboration, to respect and support the affected population and consider the potential impacts of aid on the local markets and indigenous structures.
- ensure that humanitarian aid is delivered in ways that help people potentially affected by crises and catastrophes to become more resilient and better prepared.
- consider, where possible in the context of a multi-stakeholder approach, greater participation by the local population in the implementation of longer-term aid and build responses upon local capacities.
- ensure that any potential subsequent costs are also considered (e.g. logistics, upkeep, maintenance or training).

INNOVATIVE CAPACITY

New technologies and the potential of digitalisation are increasingly changing the face of humanitarian response. These already include the use of cashless transfer payments via mobile phone, biometric processes, such as iris scanning for refugee registration, or the use of satellite technology to record and map the damage caused by natural disasters.

Business partners can use their innovative capacity to support the humanitarian system in developing new solutions for growing humanitarian challenges. In addition to technical innovations, there is also an increasing need for social innovation.

Partners commit to undertake the following:

- encourage the mutual transfer of experience and knowledge in order to learn with – and from – each other.
- generate ideas to promote mutual understanding of future-oriented technical and social developments in the humanitarian context to help work responsibly towards a safer and fairer world.
- seek a win-win situation, and be aware that developing technical or social innovations also requires the willingness to take risks and the availability of the necessary resources.
- understand that shaping and further developing technical and social innovations requires strategic, long-term partnerships, as well as contributing far-reaching professional expertise and knowledge of the humanitarian challenges.

ABOUT THE INITIATIVE #CSRHUMANITARIAN

The United Nations (UN) estimates that by 2018, more than 136 million people worldwide will be in need of humanitarian aid. With the growing humanitarian needs, existing aid systems are reaching their limits. The German Foreign Office has established the initiative #CSRhumanitarian to facilitate professional exchanges between companies and aid organisations and support new approaches for businesses to accept their corporate social responsibility to meet global humanitarian needs. Central to these approaches is the question of potential partnerships and their limitations. The initiative pays particular attention to the growing interest from companies to contribute with specific resources, such as employees, knowledge transfer or infrastructure.

The initiative, which is part of the global process of dialogue following the UN World Humanitarian Summit (2016), used a participatory multi-stakeholder approach. During a series of workshops and training sessions, participants from civil society, politicians, business and research discussed humanitarian principles and new forms of cross-sector partnerships. The 'Code of Values' represents a milestone in this dialogue. It was developed jointly by the participants through consensus to help shape future cross-sector partnerships between German humanitarian organisations and the private sector.

As a collaborative partner of the German Foreign Office's publicly-funded project 'Understand humanitarian aid, shape humanitarian aid', Aktion Deutschland Hilft e. V. was commissioned with the concept development and implementation of the series of events.

APPENDIX

Guidelines, principles and standards in humanitarian response

- Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and
- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief
- The Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response
- Zwölf Grundregeln der deutschen Humanitären Hilfe (Twelve Basic Rules of German Humanitarian assistance)
- WHO Drug Donation Guidelines
- Guidelines for the award of Procurement Contracts within the framework of Humanitarian Aid Actions financed by the European Union

International guidelines for collaboration with the private sector

- The Global Compact's Ten Principles
- UN Guiding Principles on Public-Private Collaboration for Humanitarian Action
- UN Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector
- UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
- Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship
- Principles on Public-Private Cooperation in Humanitarian Payments (World Economic Forum)

Humanitarian principles

Humanitarian aid is an expression of ethical responsibility and international solidarity. Needs-based aid is grounded on the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.

Initiative

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