



Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's roles as international humanitarian actor

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Date Revised:	NA
Approved by:	Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe Extended Management Team (exMT)
Date (original) approved:	27.11.2024
Applicable for:	All Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe staff and partner organisations
Policy Code:	POL-K-Roles as Humanitarian Actor_2024_EN_V1
Other DKH related documents:	Our understanding of collaborative partnership at Brot für die Welt and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (Policy)
Next Review period:	2026
Revision History:	N/A

Summary

This policy lays the foundation for the current and future roles of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe as an actor in humanitarian assistance. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe staff globally must be aware and well briefed on this policy. It lays the foundation of better understanding who Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe is, how Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe works, and sets a binding framework for how Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe interacts with partners, peers, in Evangelisches Werk für Diakonie und Entwicklung (EWDE) and relevant stakeholders.

The identified roles are:

1. Humanitarian expert
2. Intermediary roles:
 - Funding coach and Fundraiser
 - Interpreter and Gap-bridger
 - Knowledge Broker and Co-learner
 - Convenor and Ecosystem Builder
 - Advocate and Amplifier
3. (Multi-stakeholder) Partnership broker.

Introduction

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH) has been providing humanitarian assistance for almost 70 years. Humanitarian assistance has changed significantly during this time. The World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 served as a catalyst for change relating to localisation and partnership. This has on the one hand been an enabler and drive for change, and on the other hand made the gaps and issues in the humanitarian architecture and ways of working painfully visible. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe has been engaged in the localisation and decolonisation discussion since 2014 when the preparations of the World Humanitarian Summit (2016) started.

During the last 15 years, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe has moved from a model where self implementation was an option to an operational model by either international, national or local partners; and continues on its journey to implement programs exclusively with local and national organisations. Furthermore, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe has enhanced local determination and lead by moving its humanitarian assistance from merely in-kind contributions to increased cash transfers, by moving from a controlling Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) approach to coaching and mentoring. The approach in capacity sharing has also shifted from training of individuals to capacity exchange and demand-led institutional strengthening of partner organisations.

In order to harmonise, structure and provide a clear understanding of the roles of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe which is applicable to all Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe teams and offices around the world, this policy will support the continued dialogue within Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and Evangelisches Werk für Diakonie und Entwicklung (EWDE) - mainly with colleagues from Brot für die Welt (BfdW) in Berlin and in offices abroad-, with peers, partners, member networks (like ACT), donors and other relevant stakeholders.

This policy is embedded in a series of guiding and regulating documents around partnership and localisation Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe has foreseen in the upcoming 1,5 years. Concrete projections will be included in DKH crisis/country and regional strategies and in the setup of the DKH respective offices.

It is also linked to the Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe/Brot für die Welt Policy “Our understanding of collaborative partnership at Brot für die Welt and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe” (April 2018) which focuses on the principles of partnership.

The operationalisation of the policy will be accompanied by a forthcoming guidance document.

Background

Humanitarian Funding Gap

Looking at the last few decades, the needs of people suffering from wars and disasters have risen steadily, but humanitarian funding has not increased accordingly. As a result, the humanitarian funding gap continues to widen. Few countries provide the vast majority of humanitarian funding (with the US, EU and Germany in the lead).¹

Changing Humanitarian Landscape and System

The humanitarian landscape is changing and evolving. The traditional humanitarian system with its humanitarian ecosystem (based on global coordination, specialised UN-agencies, respective cluster system and INGOs) is often perceived by local/national actors as a top-down approach that does not value and build on the capacities of the people and communities affected by crises; does not promote their independence and co-determination. So, there are actually two streams of responding to these voices: the inclusion of local/national actors in the existing humanitarian system and the fundamental transformation of the humanitarian system to better adapt to local actors².

More and more calls from the global south for direct funding and direct donor dialog, safeguarding problems, declining funding, but also criticism of the “colonial mindset” (reluctance to give control of programs to local communities in the global south) combined with a different self-image of non-traditional donors (who are not necessarily linked to the UN-led humanitarian system) will lead to a change in the role of international non-governmental organisations in the coming years.

Increasing Donor compliance

In addition, donors are making ever greater demands, requiring international organisations to have an ever-greater structure and systems. It is therefore becoming increasingly urgent for INGOs to consider why they were founded, what values and ideals their work is based on and how they can position themselves for the future to best serve the most vulnerable.

Existing Studies and Guiding Frameworks

An increasing number of publications concern themselves with the changing roles of INGOs and thereby make an important contribution to the discourse. They identify obstacles in cooperation with local/national actors, provide tools for analyzing and overcoming them or initiate change processes. Whilst these are very valuable at those areas, they do not delve further into the role and self-image of international actors. The Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe’s Policy is based on a few existing typologies that international intermediaries can play, and include the “9 roles intermediaries can play” by Peace Direct and “Who do you think you are (Nuffield College)”. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe has used them as a starting point and

Key documents and Normative & Legal Framework

IASC guidance on intermediaries

Peace Direct: The nine roles that intermediaries can play in international cooperation, January 2023

Nuffield College and Arts and Humanities Research Council, INGOs & the long humanitarian Century Project, “Who do you think you are? The past, present, and future of international NGOs”

Partnership Brokering Association: definition of partnership brokering

through self reflection, further developed and adapted them to our and our partner's understanding of what our future role as an intermediary must look like.

Status Quo at Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (Analysis Findings)

An analysis carried out by the Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe Humanitarian Advisor for Partnership and Localization in 2023, found that the role(s) of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe were not always clear, expectations towards the roles of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe varied and the added value of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe was not clear and differentiated sufficiently. Overall, a clear framework was lacking at organisational level to harmonise Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's understanding of the terminology and the common future vision.

Participatory Development Process

This policy is the final product of a highly consultative and participatory dialogue within Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe staff globally (two workshops with the Global Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe Management Exchange Team, consultations with senior management and Evangelisches Werk für Diakonie und Entwicklung e.V. (EWDE), meetings of the Executive Board of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and Brot für die Welt and other key stakeholders). Most importantly, however, several workshops, conversations, surveys and consultations with local/national partners have helped inform and shape the policy and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's vision on localisation and partnership.

Policy purpose

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe is committed to ensuring that all stakeholders, both internal and external, have a clear and unified understanding of the organization's roles and areas in need of further development. This policy clarifies Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's strategic functions and responsibilities serving as a foundation for defining, prioritizing, and executing roles within the relevant context, office structure, and current and future portfolios and partnerships. Ultimately, it will enhance collaboration, set clear expectations with partner organisations, align Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's competencies with its objectives and sharpen Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's organisational profile.

Policy Key Definitions

For all roles related to local/national actors (including communities), Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe aims to be the critical friend and become the sidekick for local and national actors. Therefore, the identified roles are not treated as separate roles as they represent a fundamental attitude. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe understands them as follows:

Critical friend:

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe fulfils the role of a critical friend by nurturing long-term partnerships with local/national actors based on mutual respect and trust, serving as a sounding board for ideas, challenges and opportunities, by offering support, guidance, and in solidarity without dictating terms or exploiting power dynamics.

Sidekick³

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe supports the partners in all matters, but not exceeding the support role.

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's vision of its role of a sidekick is to support local/national partners by adopting only a supportive position that balances the power relations in a way that the local/national partner organisations are recognised as the primary drivers in the partnership dynamic and its activities. In this way, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe would not overstep boundaries but foster a collaborative environment that prioritises the needs of local/national organisations.

The main seven roles are defined as follows:

1. Humanitarian expert:

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe provides partners, staff, peers, and internal/external stakeholders with expertise in principled humanitarian action, in terms of codes, standards, procedures, approaches, technical aspects, etc.

As a humanitarian voice with a vast experience in and a strong commitment to principled humanitarian action and localisation, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe utilises its standing in the public and political realms to pursue humanitarian advocacy efforts, namely focused on humanitarian system change, safeguarding principled humanitarian action, and crisis-specific protection, access and programming concerns. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's role as a humanitarian expert can be fulfilled both within and outside a project/programmatic relation.

2. Intermediary function with five sub roles:

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe follows the definition of an intermediary as formulated by the GB Intermediary Caucus (explained in detail in chapter Terms and Definitions”).

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe relates its role as an intermediary to its programmatic/project relations involving local and national actors, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and donors.

The five sub roles are defined as follows:

a. Funding coach and fundraiser

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe acquires donations/third-party funds and accompanies (preferably local and national) project partner organisations and other stakeholders in the implementation of the agreed humanitarian programs and projects.

b. Interpreter and gap-bridger

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe facilitates communication and understanding between different levels of the system by translating global and political (from donor countries, the humanitarian system and donors) strategies as well as donor guidelines/regulations into a language that is comprehensible to local/national actors, and conversely translating community needs, the conditions/opinions of local actors and “advocacy” concerns into a language that is comprehensible to international actors, donors and the humanitarian system in general.

c. Knowledge Broker and Co-learner

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe facilitates collaborative learning initiatives between local and national actors by leveraging diverse capacities through various partnerships, providing the necessary training and coaching, promoting inclusive co-learning among stakeholders, incorporating past project learnings into future efforts, and utilizing digital solutions to enhance cross-organisational learning opportunities according to partnership agreements.

d. Convenor and Ecosystem Builder

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe fosters collaboration by offering a secure environment for local and national actors to engage jointly in reflection, planning, and learning both in-person and online, empowering them to drive the agenda; they facilitate horizontal and vertical connections among all actors and support exchanges and visits through convening, facilitation, and funding.

e. Advocate and amplifier

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe advocates for and/or on behalf of local and national actors by using its power to influence policy makers and creates opportunities for direct advocacy by local/national actors, while using networks to strengthen and amplify the expertise of them. The advocate/amplifier ensures that local and national actors receive recognition, platforms and visibility for their work and achievements both domestically and internationally; and closely monitors political and humanitarian trends to support civic and humanitarian space for local/national actors.

3. (Multi-stakeholder) Partnership broker

Partnership brokering is the intentional, proactive and effective management of the partnering process. A Partnership broker creates and promotes a favourable environment for the development of successful and effective partnerships between different stakeholders. A partnership broker brings (potential) partners together and guides, facilitates, negotiates, supports and challenges them to develop solutions that are necessary for the common goal they promote. A partnership broker promotes creative, innovative, adaptive and transformative approaches and provide instruments and tools for co-led, co-created and collaborative arrangements between partners along the “partnering cycle”.

Policy Statement

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe engages in all these roles to strengthen humanitarian action in a collaborative, principled, and sustainable manner. This policy outlines the core roles of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, the implementation framework, and establishes clear expectations for stakeholders. It applies to all Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe employees and partners.

Interdependent and Contextualised Roles

The diverse roles assumed by Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe are interdependent and require contextualisation. The level of involvement will vary according to specific contexts, office setups, portfolios, partnerships, and identified needs and opportunities among diverse stakeholders. It is essential for Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe employees and offices to remain adaptable and apply these roles as necessary to promote effective partnerships and achieve humanitarian outcomes. Further details will be covered in the subsequent chapter titled "Approach."

Stakeholder Integration and Planning

It is expected that all roles will be discussed collaboratively with partners, peers, and other local, national, and international stakeholders. These discussions should be integrated into strategic, annual, and action planning by the responsible Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe key staff.

Workshops and Assessment

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the roles and establish the status quo, workshops will be conducted with each office. The workshops aim to:

- Determine relevant roles and associated activities.
- Consult with partner organisations and peers related to each office to assess current performance of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe in each role and jointly identify specific needs at the activity level.
- Develop an action plan, agreed upon by partner organisations and offices, to enhance Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's performance in the context of these roles.

Based on the analysis and resulting action plan, all offices are expected to outline their country/crisis and regional strategies. These strategies should detail how various roles will be executed, set specific targets, identify necessary resources and capabilities, outline required activities and milestones, and define methods for measuring performance.

Additional Implementation Considerations

This policy will also be disseminated to the Public Relations and senior management teams at EWDE. Methodological guidelines will be summarised in a concise guidance note.

Future Revisions

The policy is scheduled for revision in 2025/2026 as part of a broader vision-building exercise, considering where Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe sees itself in the next 15-20 years, and will align with the 2026+ strategy development process.

Implications

Adherence to this policy is mandatory for all staff, as its effective implementation is essential for maintaining clarity regarding Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's performance in the humanitarian sector. Non-compliance may result in misunderstandings and could adversely affect Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's reputation. Therefore, all employees are required to fully embrace and integrate this policy into their work practices.

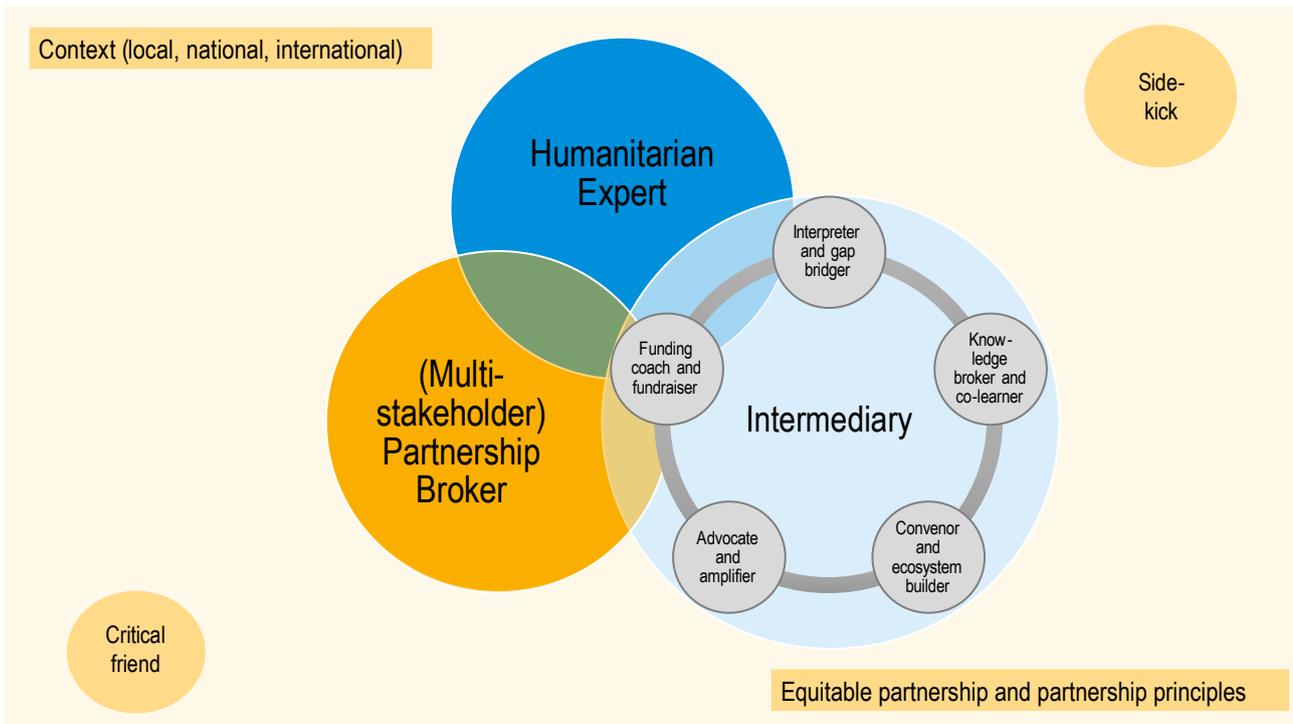


Figure 1: The roles of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe

Approach

Since not all roles are always requested to the same extent, it is not a question of deciding which roles Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe should perform, but what Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe should take into consideration in order to strengthen or sharpen these roles.

Above all it is important to pursue them more intentionally and systematically, to put them into practice jointly and based on consultations and prioritisation with partners and other stakeholders, and to embed them in the respective local, national, regional and/or global context.

The three roles of humanitarian expert, intermediary and partnership broker may overlap when working with local and national partners and other local/national stakeholders. Therefore, the staff of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe must be careful not to take on roles or tasks that partner organisations and other local/national actors can take on themselves but carry them out in a complementary and institutionally strengthening manner.

In specific it is important to define what skills and knowledge Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe staff requires and to reflect the exercise of the planned roles in job descriptions.

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe should systematically look for funding for Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe-related costs so that the tasks related to the roles (which go beyond the traditional support of donations/third-party funding projects) can also be financed.

The following description includes a glance at the actual practice of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and provides an insight on overall identified and measures to be concretised in the remaining time of the overall Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe strategy period.

Humanitarian expert:

The role is performed towards partner organisations, within EWDE (mainly towards Brot für die Welt), with peers and context specific stakeholders, in technical, lobby & advocacy working groups and networks (ACT, VENRO, VOICE, etc.) as well as towards societal, political and religious stakeholders in key contexts. This role is performed within, and outside project or programming relationships and the target audience is broad and diverse.

Within the Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, humanitarian expertise is provided by the Technical Unit, including specialised staff (in DKH Offices), the Finance & Procedures Department and externally conducted by Country and Regional Representatives, specialised staff in offices, Senior Leadership, Communication and Fundraising staff, Advocacy & Lobby staff, Regional Liaison Managers, Country Representatives, and Technical Unit.

Focus areas to strengthen:

- Provide the required expertise/advice to partner organisations and other key stakeholders (needs based and strategically).
- Make better use of the role in the organisation in sudden-onset crises for Brot für die Welt-funded measures.
- Clarify and harmonise the roles of Brot für die Welt and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe within the Nexus.
- Realise and expand role in networks and working groups more strategically at German, European and worldwide level.
- (Re-)Establish Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe as one of the leading voices on humanitarian action in the German political and media discourses.
- Influence political and media narratives, with a strategic focus on Germany and Europe, impacting principled humanitarian action using evidence-based, thoughtful and strategic arguments.

Intermediary function:

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's role as intermediary is mainly directed towards local and national partners and other stakeholders/communities/affected population as well as donors in the context of its programming and is carried out as a facilitator of processes.

In general, it is important that the activities (and results) related to Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's intermediary role are more systematically included in the projects (and the corresponding costs budgeted) so that the local and national partner organisations have the certainty and perspective that these activities will be carried out.

Funding Coach and Fundraiser

This is the classic role of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and includes tasks of Communication and Fundraising and all the Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe offices (Berlin and abroad).

Although the survey of partners showed that they often (high variance among partners) perceive Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe in this role as a coach/mentor and co-decision-maker, it can be observed that Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe - depending on the partner organisation and office involved - also tends to perform this role in a controlling and leading/deciding manner (e.g. in the formulation of third-party funded project applications, donor discussions) - especially in the case of smaller/weaker partners and complex third-party funded projects/consortia.

Focus areas to strengthen:

- Diversify funding resources (institutional, governmental and private sources) in order to match them better with partners' plans (and local requirements/needs).
- Ensure that Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe works in equitable, collaborative partnerships so that local/national partners are increasingly taking the lead in developing and steering programs and projects. This is particularly important in consortium projects (several local/national partners with Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe or international/national/local partners and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe). Lessons learned should be gathered and incorporated in the partnering strategy (under development) and related consortia guidance.
- Revise, measure jointly and adapt the decision making within the Project cycle (more equitable, partner lead) and incorporate context specific partner outcomes and recommendations.

Interpreter and Gap-bridger

As for the funding coach this is a traditional role of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and requires Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe to be constantly aware of (continuously changing/transforming) donor requirements and the specifics of respective funding sources. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe must pay attention to political and religious sensitivity.

Focus areas to strengthen:

- Focus more on the practical aspects (proper roll-out of policies/guidance, etc.), disseminate information (from the humanitarian architecture/donor landscape Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe is involved with) to local/national actors and communities in the locally spoken and in a user-friendly language.
- Develop documents which communicate concisely comprehensive policies in user friendly language and in the language spoken by local/national partners and communities.
- Feed targeted and systematic feedback/consultation of local/national actors' findings to the global/donor system, to ensure that the views and perspectives of local communities and populations are transmitted to the wider international/donor system in which Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe participates.
- As part of the reorganisation process: create positions in the Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe regional structure to support offices and partners in quality review and translation of relevant documents and procedures into local and user-friendly language; ensure that Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe staff in dialogue with partner organisations speak the local language of their partners and the language of donor/humanitarian architecture they are dealing with.

Knowledge Broker and Co-learner

The sharing of capacities is a core concept of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe to strengthen partners. Currently, efforts are focused on organising trainings, learning and exchange events, courses and visits of local/national partners from one country to another; joint piloting and learning of new approaches with partners (like supporting community-led response and anticipatory action); deploying of experts from the offices to other offices; promoting studies and research.

Priority areas to be strengthened and further developed:

- Build on existing skills/knowledge in the South and strengthen South –South exchange.
- Base capacity sharing on clearly articulated requirements and jointly identified needs of partners and communities.

- Prioritise tailored support to partners and use various capacity sharing tools (such as mentoring, coaching, specialist advice).
- Support more systematic and deliberate joint learning and knowledge management between partners and between partners and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe offices.
- Utilise the regional multi-purpose fund for targeted capacity sharing.
- Build on and systematise existing (own and available) good manuals and guidance documents before developing new ones.
- Harmonise the various capacity sharing and knowledge management concepts that exist within Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe.
- Create an environment/conditions/trust for a learning culture (errors are part of learning.)

Convenor and Ecosystem Builder

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe currently fulfils this role in some individual programmes/projects or through some individual offices. For example, it supports/promotes access to and leadership of local and national actors (including communities) in working groups, clusters, humanitarian local and humanitarian country teams, the UN Flagship Initiative; the creation of a network of local/national organisations in Democratic Republic of Congo, facilitating institutional exchange between partner organisations and providing workshops/meetings on localisation, etc.

Focus activities to strengthen this role:

- Strengthen opportunities for exchange and dialogue between local/national actors, support them to become aware of their own role and potential within their own sphere of influence and the humanitarian system (for example to counteract shrinking space) and to fulfil localisation efforts in terms of leadership (for example meaningful engagement and leadership in clusters, Humanitarian Country Teams, advisory structures, etc.).
- Build trust and confidence of local/national partners so that they can speak on their own behalf.
- Conduct an in-depth analysis of local existing ecosystem and what Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe can do to support the transformation to a locally led ecosystem.
- Strengthen networks and coalitions.
- Integrate and prioritise it intentionally and systematically in Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe's strategies, job descriptions, annual plans and projects/budgets with partners and offices.

Advocate and Amplifier

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe has tended to work in the background (e.g. by facilitating bilateral discussions) to amplify the voices of partner organisations in advocacy matters. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe has tended to speak publicly on specific issues such as localisation and humanitarian principles; and capitalises on positive experiences.

Some good experiences have been generated in working in coalitions (such as I/NGO Fora, working groups, C4C; ACT, VENRO, VOICE); co-branding and visibility of its partners (logos, photos, local/national players in publications, website, communication plans in third party funded projects); and organising events and/or enabling partners to engage and interact in the global (humanitarian) system.

Priority areas to be strengthened and further developed:

- Listen more to the partners of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and develop jointly advocacy messages.
- Develop a Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe advocacy strategy on global level and support efforts on regional/national level.
- Support local/national partners in various areas, like developing their own advocacy plans, training on advocacy/messaging, identifying and participating in advocacy spaces, platforms, networks and targeted funding.
- Strengthening leadership on local/national level (partners, civil society) and their participation in regional and global spaces.
- Identify opportunities for research and studies.
- Make local and national actors more visible in communication.
- Discuss roles, channels, target groups, messages (communications and fundraising unit in Berlin) so that Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe truly amplifies the voices of local and national actors/affected people in a decolonised/locally led way.

(Multi-stakeholder) Partnership broker

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe acts as a partnership broker both internally (when Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe is involved in the partnering process) or externally (Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe is not involved as partner of the partnering process). Therefore, the role aims both at managing partnerships between the Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and local, national and international partners in the respective humanitarian context, and the collaboration of a broader range of actors in a specific context (like communities, private sector, authorities, authorities, donors, UN agencies, international organisations, local and national interest groups, etc.).

It is important that Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe staff fulfilling the partnership broker role act as a multi-partial third party in the best interests of all parties to the process. This implies that (mainly in an internal partnership brokering process) the respective brokering person should not be line-managed by the Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe person(s) who take decisions regarding the partnership and respective funding of the involved office.

So far, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe has focused on project partnerships and related PCM/MEAL activities (financing role), less on other partnership models and little systematically in its partnership approach and dialogue.

Some examples of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe fulfilling partnership brokering role include participating in and leading multi-stakeholder consortia and partnerships; coaching and mentoring partners in their organisational development; mediating between local community, project partners, government agencies and donors, supporting local/national partners' access to direct donor funding (while retaining an expert supporting role) and participating in or leading working groups.

As the awareness of this role is quite new, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe must invest in strengthening and/or developing the following areas:

- Create, explore and harmonise a common understanding on partnership brokering within Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, backed up by a guidance document/SOP, training, accompaniment and lessons learnt guided by SOP.
- Embed the concept in its partnering strategy and strengthen partnership models,
- Develop partnering approaches and skills in consortia (urgent - with local/national and international actors), cooperation with government agencies, the private sector and other actors.
- Define required skills respective Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe staff should dispose of or develop to play a brokering role in (multi-stakeholder) partnerships (beyond project PME/MEAL), including required training for staff (and partners) in multi-stakeholder partnership brokering.

Terms and Definitions

The intermediary role as defined by IASC and the Humanitarian Advisory Group⁴

Intermediaries are organisations, networks or mechanisms, which act as an intermediary between funding partners/donors and national or local organisations through the provision of funding or other support. This includes international intermediaries such as the United Nations or International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), National Organisations, pooled funding and network mechanisms. Organisations acting as intermediaries also play a critical role in supporting local leadership and effective response. This function is carried out by INGOS, UN agencies, private companies/contractors, and some national organisations. This role is neither static nor fixed. Organisations, networks or mechanisms may sometimes act as intermediary, as well as directly implement. Thus, the term 'Intermediary' refers more to a function than a predetermined role delivered by predetermined actors⁵.

Partnership Brokering as described by ed. Leda Stott and the partnership brokering Association:

Partnership brokering: providing and nurturing an enabling space for the development of successful partnerships⁶.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships:

A successful sustainable development (here humanitarian) agenda requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society. These inclusive partnerships built upon principles and values, a shared vision, and shared goals that place people and the planet at the center, are needed at the global, regional, national and local level⁷.

An ongoing collaborative relationship among organisations who align their interests around a common vision, combine their complementary resources and competencies and share risks, in order to maximise value creation and deliver benefit to each of the partners (The Partnering Initiative).

Partnership brokers support partners and other stakeholder (among others) to:

- Build and maintain efficient, accountable and effective working relationships.
- Promote a principled and fair approach.
- Shape the partnership so it has impact and influence.
- Optimise the partnership's potential
- Ensure genuine added value for all.

Effective partnerships:

Include a clear understanding between the partners of what partnership means to them, an agreement on a shared vision and common purpose, account/allowance for individual partner's interests, co-creation of design, decisions and solutions, sharing risks and benefits, every partner contributes resources, partners share decision-making and leadership responsibilities, partners commit to mutual/horizontal accountability, partner develop a principled approach to their partnering journey, attention to partnering process as well as the partnership's projects (Partnership Brokering Association, brokering better partnerships).

Multipartiality

Multipartiality is a concept from (peace) mediation: It replaced the concept of impartiality (not in the humanitarian sense but meaning „neutrality“) and assumes that a mediator is on the side of all conflict parties equally.

„The multi-partial or balanced mediator supports both parties through the process and considers both parties' interests and needs, empowering them to reach their own outcome“⁸⁹.

Definition of local/national and international actors¹⁰

1. Local and national non-state actors are “Organisations engaged in relief that are headquartered and operating in their own aid recipient country and which are not affiliated to an international NGO”.

Note: “A local actor is not considered to be affiliated merely because it is part of a network, confederation or alliance wherein it maintains independent fundraising and governance systems”.

2. National and sub-national state actors are “State authorities of the affected aid recipient country engaged in relief, whether at local or national level” (text endorsed by GB signatories).

No national and local actors:

- Internationally affiliated organisations: Organisations that are affiliated to an international organisation through inter-linked financing, contracting, governance and/or decision-making systems. This category does not include local and national organisations that are part of networks, confederations or alliances wherein those organisations maintain independent fundraising and governance systems.
- Southern international NGOs: NGOs based in aid recipient countries that are not OECD member countries, carrying out operations outside of the aid recipient country in which they are headquartered and not affiliated to an international NGO. The same organisation can be classified as a national NGO/CSO when carrying out operations within the country in which they are headquartered.
- International NGOs: NGOs not based in an aid recipient country and carrying out operations in one or more aid recipient countries.
- Multilateral organisations: Agencies of the United Nations (UN) and other international organisations.
- International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), as well as Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies operating outside of their own country.
- International private sector organisations: Organisations run by private individuals or groups as a means of enterprise for profit, that are not based in an aid recipient country and carrying out operations in one or more aid recipient countries.

Grand Bargain:

An agreement endorsed by member states, donors, UN-agencies and Civil Society Organisations from the Global North and Networks from the Global South aiming at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the humanitarian action, in order to get more means into the hands of people in need.

Localisation (Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe’s vision):

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe understands localisation as a joint process of all actors who support people affected by or at risk to crises/disasters in a dignified way and by adhering to the humanitarian principles.

A key objective of localisation is to transform the humanitarian system in such a way that local actors (be they communities, local governments, local and national non-governmental organizations) have access to the humanitarian system and are at its center and also perceived in this role.

The leadership role and decision-making authority of local/national actors is recognized, respected and strengthened; power imbalances in the humanitarian delivery chain are recognised and balanced.

The main role of intermediaries is to support local/national actors and, depending on the context, they take on complementary tasks that local actors cannot (yet) perform themselves.

Pooled funds:

Co-mingled contributions to multi-entity funding mechanism not earmarked for a specific UN entity.

Funds are held in trust by the UN fund administrator and fund allocations decisions are taken by a UN-led governance mechanism. Resources are transferred to participating entities by the Fund Administrator using a pass-through modality¹¹.

Principles of Partnership (according to UN 2007)¹²

The organizations participating in the Global Humanitarian Platform agree to base their partnership on the following principles: Equality, Transparency, Result-oriented approach, Responsibility and Complementarity

Global south¹³

As a meta category, the ‘Global South’ has taken on a variety of meanings. It refers not just to landmasses and waters south of the equator, the strictly defined hemispheric south.

Instead, the term has been a general rubric for decolonised nations roughly south of the old colonial centres of power. The first references to the 'South' at the United Nations can be traced back to the 1960s. After the Cold War, the qualifier 'global' began to be added. This underlined interconnectedness in a global(ised) context. It also highlighted the expanding economic and political clout of players across Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Three understandings of the 'Global South' have been particularly prevalent in the analysis of world politics.:

First, people generally take the 'Global South' to refer to poor and/or socio-economically marginalised parts of the world. Second, the 'Global South' has stood for cross-regional and multilateral alliances with references to the 1955 Bandung Conference, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 at the United Nations.

Third, the 'Global South' has been presented as a space of resistance against neoliberal capitalism.

Moving beyond country-based perspectives, this has reframed the 'Global South' as a marker for anti-hegemonic engagement that can happen anywhere.

Global North

Mainly refers to OECD countries which more economic resources and power.

List of Abbreviations

AA	Auswärtiges Amt = German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO)
ACT Alliance	Action by Churches Together
BfdW	Brot für die Welt
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
C4C	Charter for Change
DG ECHO	Directorate-General European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
DKH	Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe
EWDE	Evangelisches Werk für Diakonie und Entwicklung
GFFO	German Federal Foreign Office = Auswärtiges Amt (AA)
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross
INGO	International Non-Governmental organisations
L & A	Lobby & Advocacy
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, Learning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
NNGO	National Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PME	Planning Monitoring and Evaluation
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
UN	United Nations
VENRO	Verband Entwicklungspolitik und humanitäre Hilfe
VOICE	Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies

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Imprint

Publisher

Evangelisches Werk für Diakonie und Entwicklung e.V.
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Layout / Design

sinnwerkstatt

November, 2024