



**FIELD READY**

**Technical Brief #1**

# **Disasters & Humanitarian Emergencies**



January 2017

## **Purpose**

Field Ready has put together of documents, called Technical Papers, on a variety of issues and topics that relate to our work. These serve as “white papers” to clarify our approach, form the basis of policy, elucidate challenging subjects and serve as one of several ways we lend thought leadership to our sector.

## **Specific Purpose of this Technical Paper**

The purpose of this Technical Paper #1 is to establish Field Ready’s understanding and way of working in disasters and humanitarian emergencies.

## **Outline**

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## 1. Overview

At its heart, Field Ready is a humanitarian aid organization. Our aim is to save lives and alleviate human suffering. We respond to both disasters and humanitarian emergencies (defined below in Section 5) and work through the recovery and reconstruction. It is our approach to these situations that sets us apart from other organizations that provide assistance.

When catastrophes happen, an entire set of complex dynamics occur involving not just the hazard itself but also the pattern of suffering and influences of power, resources and the like. The response to these pathologies are equally varied. Therefore, Field Ready understands that disasters and humanitarian emergencies must be approached with a deep appreciation of these complexities. Instead of jumping at the first sign of international attention to a disaster, we follow the well-established practices of our sector and consider the long-term impact of our work from the start.

It is with this understanding that we apply our unique approach and blend an intervention that uses making, training and innovation tailored to the context in which disasters humanitarian emergencies happen. This may involve a rapid deployment of our RED team but will more than likely consist of a methodical approach that keeps Field Ready engaged in helping people for a number of years.

## 2. What countries/contexts is Field Ready likely to work in?

Given the nature of disasters and humanitarian emergencies, and the realities that face non-profit organizations, there is no pre-determined list. With little to no warning, a new catastrophe could take place. Our planning, preparation, systems and mindset allow us to respond.

Keeping this in mind, our mission and approach does allow us to focus geographically (most typically specific countries but it may also be contexts in the sense that an area without a clear legal entity or an entire geographic region could experience a catastrophe). A number of sources are used to track and anticipate ongoing and future areas of concern. For example, [ACAPS](#) has identified ten countries where humanitarian needs are likely to be highest in 2017. These are:

1. Afghanistan
2. CAR
3. DRC
4. Iraq
5. Libya
6. Nigeria
7. Somalia
8. South Sudan
9. Syria
10. Yemen

ACAPS also highlight four countries that merit attention as they face a potential spike in needs. These are Burundi, Mali, Venezuela and Zimbabwe. We also consider the humanitarian situation in the northern triangle region of Latin America, where the wide-ranging humanitarian impact of pervasive gang violence is chronically underreported. Situations of long-term displacement (e.g., as found in Gaza and Kenya) are also a concern.

## 3. How are decisions to deploy to new countries/contexts reached?

Field Ready will fulfil its mandate only by assisting people in numerous areas but it cannot respond everywhere there is need. Therefore the final decision is made by the Executive Director in each

instance based on the best available information and backed by a set of internal criteria. The following criteria will be used for entering a new country or context:

### ***Essential Criteria to be Evaluated***

- An emergency or major programming gap has been identified that leaves affected-persons, refugees or displaced persons underserved and where Field Ready can make a significant program impact
- Field Ready’s technical strengths match the specific needs identified in a displaced community
- Funding for initial programming and likely sources of sustained funding have been identified to support the new country program for a period of two years or more in the case of longer term opportunities
- Field Ready has previous experience and a track record with donors identified as likely to support the new country program (or, if a new donor, a high likelihood exists of receiving continued support over the long run)
- The security environment does not pose an unmanageable risk to Field Ready staff members

### ***Additional Criteria to be Evaluated***

- Field Ready has established relationships (e.g. with World Vision, Oxfam, Communitere, etc.) in the country or context or that would otherwise facilitate our entry
- Field Ready currently has a presence in an adjacent country or a country in the region that is also affected by a crisis
- Field Ready globally and/or nearby Field Ready country team has the available capacity to support the establishment of a new operational presence
- Local, regional or global funding mechanisms exist that will enable Field Ready to leverage a current country program for expansion into a neighboring country and attract other long-term funding prospects
- Current or potential partner INGOs have a presence in the country and have requested Field Ready to join a project team for complementary programming

New country entry and timely emergency response requires readily available resources for assessments and program start up and we are committed to growing these resources for Field Ready.

- Option 1:** Field Ready will not respond. The decision will be documented by e-mail.
- Option 2:** An assessment is required to gain more information and will be organized as soon as possible.
- Option 3:** An assessment and initial response is required and will be organized. In this option, a robust response is highly likely and the Board will be informed by the Director who will consider the “New Country Entry Criteria” below.

The type and composition of the response (i.e., whether 1-2 staff are deployed or an entire RED team) will depend on a number of circumstances sorted out at the time of deployment. Further details are provided in the Field Ready policy document: “New Country Entry and Disaster Response Criteria Roles and Responsibilities.”

## 4. What is a “deployment”?

In the simplest terms, a deployment is any occurrence in which Field Ready staff go to a country or context where there is not already an ongoing presence with the intent to assess the situation or launch a response (i.e. an activity, project or program).

As a starting point, when considering emergency response, Field Ready staff keep the following in mind during a deployment:

- Identifying an emergency: If a situation threatens the life or wellbeing of people unless immediate and appropriate action is taken, that situation should be considered an *emergency*.
- Identifying vulnerabilities, needs and capacities: Emergencies affect individual people, families and communities very differently, depending upon the nature of the emergency and the resources available to affected groups to cope with the threats. If Field Ready decides to intervene in an emergency, Field Ready staff must assess vulnerabilities, needs and capacities within the local social, cultural, political and economic context.
- Identifying community strengths: Affected communities often display creativity and strength in their adaptation to emergency situations. Field Ready staff must build these strengths into the design of their assessments and programs, to support local initiatives and capacities for recovery.
- Field Ready’s potential role and comparative advantage vis-à-vis other groups. A key part of our mission is to support aid workers who help affected communities.

To accomplish the above, there are three types of “deployment” as outlined here:

### 1. Rapid assessment

Following Option 2 described above, an initial rapid assessment will be carried out by a minimum of one staff member (ideally, 2-4 staff members should be present on such an assessment). This is done when there is little information immediately available about the situation and it is deemed necessary to have an exploratory trip to gather this information.

### 2. Quick response

This type of deployment includes assessment as well as the capability to provide direct assistance. In cases such as a rapid/sudden on-set disaster, it is likely that overwhelming need is clearly evident before a rapid assessment is made by Field Ready that a combined information gathering with quick response is called for. When sufficient resources are available, Field Ready will deploy sufficient staff (at least two but ideally 3-5 staff members) to both perform a rapid assessment and some sort of activity such as making (local manufacturing), training or other innovative response. In a limited number of situations, a quick response may include a short-term project may be carried out in a particular geographic presence which may or may not constitute a “one-off” activity.

### 3. Country Program launch

When there are both sufficient information and adequate resources are available, Field Ready may launch a “country program” with the intention to stay in a particular geographic location for at least 3-5 years. This may initially resemble a quick response and have all the elements of a “start-up” but



the planning horizon will be longer and the set of activities will likely be more complex (i.e., as several projects may be underway at one time and there should be sufficient resources and support activities that occur concurrently). In most cases, this will likely occur on carefully planned situation.

After the initial launch and set-up, a “country program” is no longer considered a “deployment.”

In all three types of deployments, a heavy emphasis on program development (i.e., fundraising) will remain paramount. The level of external communication will likely be minimal in the first instance but increasingly more relevant in the second and third type of deployment described above.

## What are disasters and humanitarian emergencies?

The following, excerpted from Eric James’ *Managing Humanitarian Relief, Second Edition* (Practical Action, 2017), answers this question in depth.

Definitions are debated because different people and organizations understand the concepts differently. In everyday language, an emergency is an event or set of circumstances that requires urgent action. The term ‘emergency’ is synonymous with catastrophes that result in the loss of life, human suffering, and the destruction of property or environment. For most, ‘emergency’ can be used interchangeably with ‘disaster’. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) considers an emergency a situation which ‘demands an extraordinary response and exceptional measures’ to be resolved.

Defined here, an emergency is a situation where the members of a population are suffering or threatened to a point that exceeds the local capacity to respond or cope, and recover. Emergencies take on a humanitarian dimension when many lives are affected by hazards (discussed below) and immediate needs are alleviated, at least in part, through assistance provided by groups outside the affected population. Humanitarian emergencies are ultimately about the failures of development and often involve people’s ability to cause harm to other people through violence and the corresponding effort to intervene.

In contrast to an emergency, a ‘crisis’ is a serious or dangerous event or series of events faced by an organization which requires significant resources to resolve, such as economic collapse or the abduction of a staff member. It often proceeds or is part of an emergency but tends to be localized and is sometimes a matter of perception.

Humanitarianism is a broad concept that is based on the ethic of empathy and aid given to those affected by an emergency. Its focus is on people, it is human-centric. Because the notion of humanitarianism is so expansive, in the context of emergencies it is used more narrowly, focusing on the assistance provided before, during and after disasters worldwide.

The goals that underlie humanitarianism are critical to its understanding. The goal of humanitarianism is to save lives and reduce suffering in the short term. In contrast, development focuses on long-term alleviation of poverty and charity is about giving, sometimes simply in the form of donating resources. With this focus on survival, humanitarian relief is not about political transformation, establishing human rights or fixing the errors of ‘pre-disaster’ development, although these may occur as a by-product of or simultaneously with relief. The follow-on phases toward development are known as recovery, rehabilitation, reconstruction and reintegration (sometimes called the ‘Rs’).

In many instances, the main principles, methods and approaches of development are applicable to emergencies. Reflecting on the similarity between emergency response and development, one relief

worker advises to ‘do what you do in development, only faster’. Yet there are several important distinctions. First, lives are at stake so aid must be provided urgently. Second, there is an imperative to perform multiple tasks at once (e.g. delivery of aid may be needed before a full assessment is complete). Third, the contexts in which emergencies occur are filled with unknowns and ambiguity. Finally, unlike development, relief takes place within a set of international laws (discussed further later) in which humanitarian assistance is a protected right. Another way to think of these is as a spectrum of intervention, as shown later in Table 1.5, although the lines between the areas are often blurred or overlapping.

The immediate causes of emergencies are hazards. Hazards are familiar as they occur in all parts of the world. Many are natural in origin including earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, landslides, volcanoes, pandemics, drought and severe weather such as tropical storms. While these are often thought of as ‘natural disasters’, when understood as social phenomena and the concept of vulnerability (discussed below) is applied, the ‘man-made’ (anthropogenic) element of disasters becomes apparent. Man-made hazards stem from a complex of underlying sociological factors. Once violent conflict reaches beyond the scale of civil disturbance, the resulting inter-communal violence, civil war, international war and genocide can be major contributing factors to humanitarian emergencies. Man-made technological hazards also cause emergencies, including fires, spillages and industrial accidents, but these do not always have a humanitarian dimension because they can be dealt with at a local level. Hazards can combine, such as an earthquake that causes fires and tsunamis, tropical storms that lead to flooding and landslides, and drought that ends in famine.

While not always distinctly separated in reality, there are commonly understood differences between ‘natural disasters’ and humanitarian emergencies, and the responses they generate, which are shown in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1 Natural disasters compared with humanitarian emergencies**

**Table 1.1** Disasters and humanitarian emergencies

	<b>Disasters</b>	<b>Humanitarian emergencies</b>
Causes	Vulnerability to hazards such as floods, landslides, earthquakes, tsunami and drought	Man-made events may be exacerbated by natural causes: war (including conflict and ethnic cleansing) and acute political crisis (including revolution)
Typical locations	Anywhere vulnerable populations exist but focused on areas where geographic fault-lines (earthquakes), arid regions (drought), volcanic areas and flooding are most prevalent	Areas of high underdevelopment, political transition, social exclusion and/or presence of inter-communal conflict
Scope of emergency	Differs by disaster. Often includes disruption and destruction of social services usually limited to disaster zone. Immediate threats to survivors posed by increased public health risks, shortages of food (except earthquakes), contaminated (especially floods) or lack of (especially drought) water, as well as political, economic and social instability	Destruction of social infrastructure, massive human displacement and state failure usually countrywide. Immediate and long-term threats to all but the most advantaged people

Time frame	Weeks to months (although reconstruction can take much longer): Short-term focus on response phases of (in order) rescuing of victims, relief for survivors and rehabilitation. Usually possible to link relief to development	Years to decades: Usual medium-and long-term nature of emergency situation makes linking relief to development unrealistic. Different approaches needed such as developmental relief, discussed below
Safety and security	Limited safety concerns such as aftershocks or further flooding. Pillaging/looting possible depending on severity and disruption to government structures	Range of security problems including gunfire, shelling, landmines and increased crime
Typical response	Local government and voluntary sector the first to respond, where they exist, followed by international assistance where agreed upon. Incident Command System (ICS) used in locations with well-developed emergency response systems	Periods of high insecurity can delay and/or hamstring response. While local government and voluntary sector may respond, they may contribute to the causes of the emergency. International organizations may respond where and when possible
Role of NGOs	Supporting existing system in phases of response. Specific sector projects that compliment or fill gaps in response. NGOs may raise significant private funds outside official assistance. NGOs may take on a limited disaster preparedness and mitigation role	Range of possible roles from supporting (as an implementing partner of a donor agency, including the UN system) to acting as the sole mechanism for alleviating and mitigating suffering

*Note:* Man-made disasters also include industrial accidents such as the Chernobyl nuclear meltdown and transportation disasters such as plane and train crashes. However, NGOs rarely respond to such disasters.

Probably the greatest challenge faced is complex emergencies. A complex emergency is caused by more than one hazard, event or condition such as political and economic failure and a breakdown of social systems leading to war. The UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) (1994) defines a complex emergency as:

A multifaceted humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires a multi-sectoral, international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency.

Since at least the 1990s, complex emergencies have become a fixture where political, social, economic, and often environmental failures lead to widespread human suffering. Describing emergencies as complex can be problematic because it implies that some emergencies are ‘simple’ and caused by a single factor, such as economic or political failure. While some are short term in nature, other complex emergencies are chronic in that they continue for decades in what are sometimes called ‘permanent emergencies’. The phrase ‘situations of chronic political instability’ has also been created to describe better the political, cyclical and long-term nature of complex emergencies.

The consequences of these hazards are known as risks. Common risks include mass displacement, famine, environmental degradation, destruction or loss of property, economic or political collapse, increased or excessive sickness (morbidity) and death (mortality). Perhaps counter-intuitively, emergencies can also present areas or countries with opportunities. For instance, new assistance,



changes in behaviour and certain types of reconstruction (and, following good practice, efforts to ‘build back better’ when feasible) may reduce vulnerability and increase resilience. Further, the collective action needed to survive and rebuild following a disaster may lead to political dialogue and reconciliation that would otherwise have not been possible before the emergency.

Emergencies occur following several patterns. Some, such as earthquakes, take place quickly and are known as rapid or ‘sudden onset’ disasters, while emergencies that take time to develop, such as droughts, are described as ‘slow onset’ disasters. Conflict-related emergencies may occur quickly as sudden onset disasters or develop slowly through political strife. As emergencies evolve, they follow a cyclical pattern of (sometimes distinct) phases where a before, during and after model is sometimes evident. Before a disaster, early warning, preparedness and mitigation can take place. During an emergency, relief is necessary and afterwards there are a number of steps towards development. The term ‘acute emergency’ is used to represent the lowest point in this model. An acute emergency can occur as a brief point in time or in wave-like episodes where insecurity, human suffering and other conditions are at their worst. The phrase ‘post-emergency’ is often used in a generic sense to refer to the recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction phases that follow a disaster. These phases and levels are shown in Figure 1.1.

Understanding the impact of risk is important in considering the sequencing of relief activities, particularly in relation to sudden onset disasters. For example, flooding, perhaps the most pervasive hazard, causes destruction of water supplies leading to waterborne illness. Earthquakes can cause extensive damage to shelter and other infrastructure, particularly in urban areas. Neither of these hazards, however, is likely to cause malnutrition significant or prolonged displacement, and they only temporarily disrupt economic activity. Conflict, as another example, may lead to massive displacement and a range of associated risks including destruction of infrastructure, disruption of market systems and various forms of morbidity (illness) and malnutrition. Excess mortality (death) may occur as a result of any hazard but the pattern is different for each disaster. Flooding may cause relatively few deaths initially but the follow-on impact of waterborne illness may pose a considerable risk. Earthquakes may cause a significant number of deaths but only during the event itself. Conflict will likely have a varied or episodic pattern of mortality based on the impact of military operations.

The severity of an emergency may be difficult to determine. To quantify and further define what constitutes an emergency, commonly used indicators are shown in Table 1.2. Situations involving human suffering may appear to be ‘bad’ but they may not meet the criteria of a humanitarian emergency. The ISAC has also developed a three-tier framework for categorizing the severity of an emergency and the resulting response. The largest emergencies are declared ‘Level 3’ and require a system-wide activation (particularly within the UN) of key resources such as funding mechanisms and activities such as the Cluster System and systematic assessments.

Understanding how the elements of emergencies are linked and progress from their causes to their outcomes is a necessary first step in designing and implementing effective programmes. For this reason, it is helpful to have a closer look at several of these elements: conflict, vulnerability and poverty.

**Table 1.2** Emergency indicators

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Rate/Indicator</b>
Crude mortality rate (CMR)	Normal rate among a settled population	0.3–
	Emergency programme under control	0.5/10,000/day
	Emergency programme in serious trouble	<1/10,000/day
	Emergency: out of control major catastrophe	>1/10,000/day >2/10,000/day

Mortality rate among children under 5 years old (U5MR)	Normal rate among a settled population	1.0/10,000/day
	Emergency programme under controls	<2.0/10,000/day
	Emergency programme in serious trouble	>2.0/10,000/day
	Emergency: out of control	>4.0/10,000/day

Cause	Category	Rate/Indicator
Lack of clean water	Survival need	7 litres/person/day
	Maintenance allocation	15–20 litres/person/day
	Waterborne disease	25% people with diarrhea
Lack of food	Survival need	1,900 kcal/person/day
	Maintenance	2,100 kcal/person/day
Malnutrition of children	Severely malnourished	>1% population <5 years old
	Moderately malnourished	>10% population <5 years old
Nutrition-related disease	Presence of oedema, pellagra, scurvy, beriberi and vitamin A deficiency	
Poor shelter	Minimum shelter area	3.5 sq.m/person
	Minimum total site area	30.0 sq.m/person
Lack of sanitation	Latrines	<1 latrine cubicle per 100 persons
Disease	Measles	Any reported cases
	Hemorrhagic-related fevers	Any reported cases
	Acute respiratory infections (ARI)	Pattern of severe cases

*Source:* Data from Noji and Burkholder (1999); UNHCR (2000). Basic standards are also presented in the Sphere Standards section (pp. 377–80)

## Humanitarian principles

Humanitarian principles are fundamental in giving direction and purpose to emergency programmes. The ‘Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross/ Crescent’ provide a foundation on which the NGO community operates and largely subscribes to. Elements of these principles can be found in individual NGO mission statements and in the Code of Conduct. Before discussing some of their implications, the key principles are summarized here.

**Humanity** To seek ‘to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found’.

**Impartiality** Each activity ‘makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class, or political opinions’, and gives priority to the most urgent cases.

**Independence** Organizations rely on their own organizations’ autonomy, especially from government. Independence is seen as necessary to fulfil the other principles.

As the first and most basic principle, humanity receives probably the most wide-ranging application and is rarely if ever contested. Impartiality, too, is widely accepted and forms the basis of most organizations’ work, even those with a religious leaning. Because it is much more difficult to preserve in emergencies, neutrality presents more of a dilemma for many relief workers. On a basic level, most organizations do not have a problem with impartiality or neutrality, but may find it difficult to achieve both. Selecting one group as beneficiaries (e.g. working in rebel-held areas but not in government-controlled areas or vice versa) can leave another group out and thus not be neutral.

Independence can also be seen as controversial. If an organization receives the majority of its operating budget from a government or other single source, some feel it cannot claim genuine autonomy. Close association with military forces – through proximity, perceived alignment or actual coordination – is also seen as a major dilemma (see Chapter 20). Organizations and activities that are

primarily motivated or driven by political, security, religious or economic concerns are generally not considered genuinely humanitarian.

**Table 1.5** Spectrum of interventions

	<b>Emergency relief</b>	<b>The Rs: Rehabilitation, Reintegration, Recovery and Reconstruction</b>	<b>Development</b>
Goals	Relieve human suffering Protect people from abuse Mitigate the effects of disasters	Re-establish the conditions necessary for development Reorganize social services	Alleviate poverty Improve social services Increase choice and freedoms
Methods and examples	Provision of life-sustaining supplies Provision of basic social services (e.g. health and water) Advocacy of protection	Rebuild social infrastructure Re-establish economic activity Social integration of refugees, ex-combatants and other groups Upgrade skills of social services professionals	Build social capital Support civil society and good governance Enhance economic and fiscal activity

Adherence to principles is not absolute or easily implemented in practice and so organizations frequently combine and adapt their approach. To help guide humanitarians through the difficult ethical choices associated with their work, several schools of humanitarianism have developed in response to specific contexts and then applied more widely. These include classical humanitarianism, neo-humanitarianism and solidarist approaches.

Classical humanitarianism was first advocated by Henri Dunant, a founder of the Red Cross movement, and stresses neutrality and meeting basic needs even in the face of human rights abuses. Sometimes known as the Dunantist or ‘minimalist’ approach (Weiss 1999), it is based on a deontological ethical position first conceived by Immanuel Kant. In a nutshell, this holds that there are universal moral obligations that exist regardless of the circumstance. As an organization, the Red Cross typifies the classical approach. Although technically an international organization, the Red Cross has a strongly neutral operating policy and it has at times drawn sharp criticism for this (e.g. by not speaking out more forcefully about war crimes).

In contrast, neo-humanitarianism stresses humanity over neutrality. Also known as the Wilsonian or ‘maximalist’ approach (Weiss 1999), neo-humanitarianism is based on consequentialist ethics originally formulated by Jeremy Bentham. This stresses that a positive outcome following a particular course of action determines if it is ethically correct. In situations where human life is threatened, proponents of this approach hold that there is a ‘right to intervene’ (e.g. against state sovereignty) because of the potential humanitarian outcome. With its emphasis on human rights, however, comes the possibility of jeopardizing access to people in need. Certain aspects of programming can be difficult to operationalize and may quickly result in suspension of activities, either voluntarily or because local powers no longer tolerate an organization’s outspokenness. Neo-humanitarianism depends on an astute understanding of the situation and readiness to handle potential fallout.

A third solidarist approach adopts a clear partisanship with those being served. Instead of emphasizing independence and neutrality, organizations that follow this approach closely align themselves with disaster-affected people. Their support may integrate an outspoken position about humanitarian and political issues with their advocacy and assistance activities. In this way, an organization may be formed solely to assist particular groups or causes, such as an independence or rebel movement.

Another way to look at humanitarian principles is by different options for intervention. With the difficult situations faced when providing relief, having alternatives is critical. Under different circumstances, NGO managers decide between these difficult courses of action. For this reason, relief workers should be aware of these problems and dilemmas and be able to navigate through them as they arise. While humanitarian principles have been around since the start of modern humanitarianism and considerable ink has been spilled on refining them, (as discussed in this Chapter), major problems have arisen for those managing emergency relief. Before discussing this, it is important to briefly mention the legal aspects of humanitarian relief.

International humanitarian law (IHL), the set of rules, treaties and customs intended to protect civilians in times of armed conflict, provides a means by which relief workers can carry out activities in emergencies. While many treaties constitute IHL, the main parts are found in the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and its two Additional Protocols of 1977. IHL extends to all parties of conflict and holds special protection for humanitarian relief workers and free access for relief supplies (e.g. when there are blockades). Additionally, the Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court in 1998 makes it a war crime to intentionally direct attacks against civilians in an internal armed conflict, including the staff, offices, supplies or vehicles used in providing humanitarian assistance.

Like IHL, human rights law is founded in rules, treaties and customs, including the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 which places obligations on governments to respect the dignity and worth of every person. Human rights law extends to times of both war and peace. Because of their unique status, refugees are additionally covered by several conventions and protocols. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are also covered in the UN Secretary General's Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement of 1998. Summaries of relevant international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law are provided in the Appendix.

### ***Code of Conduct***

Originally created by five international NGOs and the Red Cross in 1994, the Code of Conduct is described thus in the Sphere Code:

This Code of Conduct seeks to guard our standards of behaviour. As such, it is not about operational details, such as how one should calculate food rations or set up a refugee camp. Rather, it seeks to maintain the high standards of independence, effectiveness and impact to which disaster response NGOs and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement aspire. It is a voluntary code, enforced by the will of the organization accepting it to maintain the standards laid down in the Code (Sphere Project, 2004).

### ***The Sphere Project***

The Sphere Project is a multi-organizational effort that developed the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in which organizations commit to quality and accountability. Until the Sphere Project, there were few concrete standards with which to guide assistance, set values and measure performance. As the Sphere Project describes it:

The initiative was launched in 1997 by a group of humanitarian NGOs and the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, who framed a Humanitarian Charter and identified Minimum Standards to be attained in disaster assistance, in each of five key sectors (water supply and sanitation, nutrition, food aid, shelter and health services). This process led to the publication of

the first Sphere Handbook in 2000. Taken together, the Humanitarian Charter and the Minimum Standards contribute to an operational framework for accountability in disaster assistance efforts (Sphere Project, 2004).

The Sphere Project produces a book of standards which are summarized in the Appendix. This book was updated in 2011 and in so doing highlighted protection. Sphere has a number of companion or complimentary standards including the International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), the Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) and the minimum standards for economic recovery produced by the SEEP Network.

### **Core Humanitarian Standard**

The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) provides a set of commitments, criteria, actions and responsibilities to guide humanitarian response. The CHS describes the essential elements of principled, accountable and high-quality humanitarian action. Humanitarian organizations and individuals can use the CHS to improve the quality and effectiveness of the assistance they provide. The CHS places communities and people affected by crisis at the centre of humanitarian action and promotes respect for their fundamental human rights. It is underpinned by the right to life with dignity, and the right to protection and security as set forth in international humanitarian law.

NGOs can use the CHS as a voluntary code with which to align their own internal procedures. It can also be used as a basis for verification of performance. As such, it facilitates greater accountability to communities and people affected by crisis: knowing what humanitarian organizations have committed to will enable them to hold those organizations to account. The CHS is structured as follows:

- ‘Nine Commitments’ that provide the basis for an effective response
- Supporting Quality Criteria

- Key Actions to be undertaken in order to fulfil the Commitments (i.e., covering what staff should do to deliver high-quality programmes consistently and to be accountable to those they seek to assist)

- Organizational Responsibilities to support the consistent and systematic implementation of the Key Actions throughout the organization (i.e., the policies, processes and systems organizations need to have in place to ensure their staff provide high-quality, accountable humanitarian assistance)

The contents of the CHS structure is provided in the Appendix of this book.

The CHS evolved out of the Joint Standards Initiative (JSI) in which the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) International, People In Aid and the Sphere Project joined forces to seek greater coherence for users of humanitarian standards. This was joined by Groupe URD who integrated the Quality COMPAS reference framework into the CHS.