Global trends and their potential impact on the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement

Localisation and the resurgence of sovereignty

In today’s emergencies humanitarian architecture and tools are increasingly being called into question as the right way to address the multi-faceted needs. Perception of humanitarian work suggest that the formal, Western ‘system’ is not doing a good job...

Who interprets what is needed for humanitarian response and how it is to be provided will be one clear demonstration of a resurgence of sovereignty.

Governments are more insistent on determining whether or not external assistance is required. Governments are increasingly inclined to resist unwelcome though well-intentioned external intervention. If help is needed, what will be provided, by whom, when, where, and how.

For traditional humanitarian actors the consequences of more assertive sovereignty means that there will be even less receptivity to arguments about rights of access.

Alternative providers (i.e. non-traditional actors, including the private sector) might be preferred ‘humanitarians’.

The free-wheeling nature of international non-governmental organisations will be less and less tolerated.

INSIGHT QUESTIONS

HOW DOES the resurgence of sovereignty affect the access of the IFRC/ICRC on the ground?

HOW DOES it affects (positively or negatively) the operations of the National Societies, their funding?

WHAT IF we can’t deploy ERUs to India, China, Thailand, Indonesia or the Philippines?

WHAT IS the implications of China’s no-strings attached aid (at least transparent strings that we know about)?

WHAT IT will mean for the IFRC approach where demands for transparency and accountability is increasing?

WHAT ARE the opportunities to strengthen National Societies as major local actors?

HOW ARE National Societies carrying out international programs being impacted by southern-based NGOs (see the decentralisation of Oxfam International to Nairobi, Kenya), as well as its international structures and operations?

IF THE push for humanitarian financing to flow directly to recipient partner National Societies, what impact does this have on sister National Societies who traditionally act as a broker or intermediary with donor governments?

www.ifrc.org
Saving lives, changing minds.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies