



SOLIDARITÉS
INTERNATIONAL

OUR EXPERTISE

EMERGENCY RESPONSE MECHANISMS



Several regions of the world are now facing acute or chronic humanitarian crises that create situations of extreme vulnerability, including complex population displacements. Humanitarian actors need to respond quickly and accordingly, and their effectiveness is usually based on extensive coordination and collaboration between them.

With 37 years of experience in emergency response, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL is part of and has initiated several national response mechanisms to localised and recurrent crises in Afghanistan, Myanmar, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and South Sudan. The main objective of these mechanisms* is to improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of interventions in changing contexts, while relying on the will for rationalisation and flexibility. They endeavour to deliver rapid and integrated rapid assistance to vulnerable populations affected by crises (conflicts, natural disaster, epidemics); they cover basic needs in terms of water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH), shelter, non-food items, food, health, protection and sometimes education. This is made possible by teams prepared and trained to be deployed quickly if necessary, pre-positioned material and financial resources, and very short time frames for needs assessment and response.

* These mechanisms are commonly referred to as *Rapid Response Mechanisms (RRM)* or *Emergency Response*

STEP 1

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In order to provide an immediate response to crises, an important preparation phase is necessary to pre-position teams and equipment. The humanitarian actors work in collaboration with the support of financial partners to maintain a humanitarian watch and set up alert networks that will allow for quicker and more fluid synergy and communication between members of the humanitarian community.

1 | PRE-POSITIONING OF ASSISTANCE EQUIPMENT

Quick responses to crises particularly depend on logistical capacity and the location of contingency stocks. Emergency mechanism partners therefore collaborate upstream to strategically procure and pre-position assistance equipment, as close as possible to theaters of conflict; storage areas and warehouses are often shared. Donors provide dedicated and flexible funding without too much time constraints to finance these stocks, and they allocate additional funds in case of an emergency.

In Afghanistan, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL operates within the ERM to respond to the urgent needs of displaced populations in Wardak, Khost and Bamyan Provinces. ERM partners set up a collective procedure for the provision of emergency shelters and non-food items, which allow for the harmonisation of equipment designs and of the amount of cash distributed to household. Common stocks are built up at the beginning of the programme.



2 | A HUMANITARIAN MONITORING AND ALERT MECHANISM

The communication and enhanced coordination of humanitarian actors ensure a continuous humanitarian watch with rigorous monitoring of population movements. This mechanism relies on a wide range of informants (United Nations agencies, focal points within government and communities, local NGOs, etc.). Mechanism partners can train early warning “whistle blowers” in communities and/or local organisations. The reliability of the alerts is then verified, either through an exploratory mission or by cross-checking the information with other actors on site.

In CAR, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL is responsible for humanitarian watch in four sub-prefectures in the North-west of the country. If the teams or focal points notice a shock in these areas, an alert is sent to the CAR's RRM steering committee, which then decides whether or not a diagnosis should be carried out for a better analysis of the situation. In South Sudan, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL teams serve as focal points for the Emergency Preparedness & Response (EP&R) partners to monitor humanitarian needs in the Malakal region.



STEP 2

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The key to emergency mechanisms is the speed with which teams are able to assess the situation and react accordingly. In order to have a good analysis of the needs of populations fleeing a crisis or disaster, assessments must be made to identify their vulnerabilities. The results of these multi-sectoral assessments are shared within a week with all partners to coordinate a common multi-sectoral response. Different assessment tools and methods are developed and teams are trained to use them.

3 | TRAINING AND SENSITISATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

The mode of intervention for this type of emergency is specific: data collection methods are adapted and the teams of SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE must be trained to them upstream. These people have to know the various tools in order to be as reactive and effective as possible: they must be able to make an assessment within a few days. In addition, awareness-raising and training sessions are organised with local authorities on humanitarian monitoring techniques to strengthen the network of informants and make the process participatory.

In Myanmar, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE has been working since late 2015 within the RRM in the states of Kachin and Shan to cover displaced peoples' needs for water, hygiene, sanitation and shelter. Local teams are trained to carry out an emergency diagnosis, using both a participatory approach and direct observation.



4 | CONSIDERATION OF VULNERABILITIES

ERMs are more likely to provide assistance to highly vulnerable populations regardless of their status (displaced, returned or host community). The level of vulnerability of populations affected by crises is therefore systematically measured.

This approach was adopted very early on by the *Réponse Rapide aux Mouvements de Population* (RRMP) in the DRC, with the implementation of a multi-sectoral assessment tool for a standardised needs analysis based on vulnerability scores in different sectors (health, WASH, food security, education, shelter), thus making it possible to make more than 400 assessment reports available to organisations each year.

In CAR, the teams are sensitised to gender and protection mainstreaming in emergency responses. The most fragile people by virtue of their disability, age, health, or pregnant and breastfeeding women, are for example served first during distributions.



STEP 3

A RAPID AND COMPLEMENTARY RESPONSE

ERMs/RRMs are flexible in order to address challenges of access and of responding quickly to multi-sectoral needs. The speed of the response and the collaboration of the local actors make it possible, on one hand, to increase the geographical coverage. On the other hand, the integration of mechanisms into humanitarian coordination enable the coverage of needs not dealt with by the mechanism, as other actors in the humanitarian community are mobilised to meet them. In certain countries, the RRM is only used a last resort if no other actor is able to respond.

5 | GEOGRAPHIC COMPLEMENTARITY

In many mechanisms, consortium partners choose to divide potential areas of intervention according to their ability to access them. This allows the geographic coverage of the response to be broadened to reach more people.

In the DRC, the synergy between the five RRMP partners supports displaced people, returnees, host populations and also those affected by cholera. The actors each operate in different areas of eastern DRC and are thus able to cover half of the country's needs due to displacements.



6 | SECTORAL COVERAGE

Partners can also intervene together in the same area, but providing different types of assistance. The multi-sectoral intervention modalities vary according to the context, to the needs identified during the assessment and to the expertise of each partner.

In Afghanistan, ERM actors are implementing standard assistance to cover the immediate needs of displaced populations over a month, through multi-purpose cash transfers, the distribution of NFI kits and emergency shelters. This assistance is accompanied, depending on the identified vulnerability of households, by additional WASH and/or protection assistance. SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE's WASH expertise, coupled with the protection expertise of its partners, allows for a greater capacity to respond to needs.

