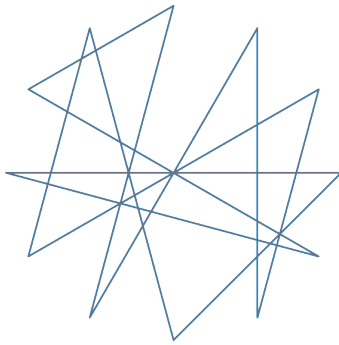


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EISF Forum Summary Berlin | September 2015

This summary document highlights key information and learning points from the EISF Forum which was held in Berlin in September 2015.

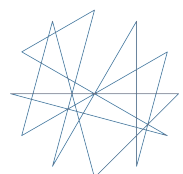
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1. Civil Military Interaction and Humanitarian Security

There is an increase in deployments of military assets in humanitarian assistance (HA) operations. However, while the military is developing capacity and understanding on civil military interaction, humanitarian organisations are not engaging in the same way. Given that humanitarian organisations and military forces often share the same spaces, can, or should, the relationship between the two actors be strengthened?

Common Issues when Engaging in Civil-Military Interaction

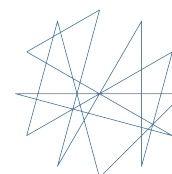
- There are security implications related to perceptions when humanitarians and security personnel are working in the same context.
- Many of the issues on the ground stem from a lack of understanding on both military & NGO sides.
- Humanitarian organisations need to develop a greater understanding of civil military interaction.

The Need for Efficiency

- Governments and organisations need to provide more assistance with less funding. Efficiency is key as the frequency of disasters increases.
- Each crisis response is different and no two disaster-responses are the same. Information, knowledge and good coordination are needed; cultural understanding must come into play and the humanitarian space must be protected.
- Humanitarian organisations work with, or in the presence of, militaries in different ways, from cooperation to coordination to co-existence. The more complicated the situation becomes, the more efficient dialogue is needed between humanitarian organisations and militaries.

How Can Humanitarian Organisations Engage Effectively?

- The blurring of lines and mandates among actors is an issue, which needs to be addressed, particularly where humanitarian action is subordinated to a political agenda, e.g. stabilisation operations. Integration of humanitarian action into military strategies, particularly in counterinsurgency operations (COIN), bears the risk that humanitarians will be associated with specific military and political objectives.
- High security risk operating environments have become the new “normal” and humanitarians must engage more systematically with all actors. Analysis at the global, regional and local level must work to anticipate future risks.
- The use of existing information-sharing platforms and tools should be promoted and institutionalised within the civil-military and humanitarian security communities.
- Principles and pragmatism can coexist. Humanitarian principles are here to enable action. Decisions on acceptable or unacceptable compromises must be considered and analysis of the potential impact of the compromise, from a security, reputational, economic and political perspective is required.
- Good dialogue is the most important factor in deconfliction, whether by phone or face to face. Non-state armed groups often pose a challenge to deconfliction. Deconfliction arrangements ensure that military operations do not jeopardise the lives of humanitarian personnel, impede the passage of relief supplies or implementation of humanitarian activities, or endanger beneficiaries.



2. Dealing with Emerging Threats

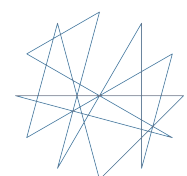
One of the important questions currently being asked: are we living in a more dangerous world? Risk is today an unavoidable reality, and many current dynamics are inevitable due to widespread instability, particularly when authoritarian regimes speedily fall.

Global geopolitical overview

- **Geo-strategy/price nexus:** Any major political risk strongly relates to fluctuations in oil prices. It is important to identify changes in geographies (for example price dynamics) as it is a strong indicator for risk. In political issues, a key decision factor is the question of whether countries can afford to re-arm themselves. It is an indicator for conflict.
- **Economic Impact of Syrian Conflict:** The conflict in Syria is losing the US one million dollars per day, and the growth rate in Syria is pushed back by 8 years with each year the crisis continues. The decrease in Syria's growth rate strongly relates to the percentages of growth rates in Lebanon and Jordan due to the refugee influx. It also relates to the notable growth rates in other countries in West Asia.
- **Will Iraq and Syria still exist in the near future?** The presence of Islamic State (IS) might mean their ending. The Sykes-Picot border between Syria and Iraq has already been bulldozed by IS. It is also likely that the Kurdish will gain an independent state. Besides that, there will be considerable risks in terms of conflicts of ethnicities (Turks, Kurdish, Iraqis).
- **Non-state actors have increasing dominance in global crises.** When conflicts erupt they are no longer state versus state, but rather state versus non-state actors. How do we operate in these countries when non-state actors do not follow international rules and agreements on humanitarian law?
- Despite mounting humanitarian needs in Iraq, **access for international aid agencies is extremely limited.** Some humanitarian assistance is getting through to areas held by IS, suggesting that the group is not completely indifferent to the suffering of civilians. Engagement with IS is critical to efforts to reach populations in need, though it will only be possible if conditions improve and there is greater clarity around the legal and reputational risks. Aid agencies should continue an open dialogue with donors regarding counter-terrorism measures and their very real implications for humanitarian work on the ground.

How to Address Emerging Threats | Mitigation and Risk

Through risk modelling, organisations can create internal learning. Staff in NGOs need to be engaged with this modeling process in order to fully understand the risks in the contexts where they are operating. The modeling process has many advantages; staff take issue ownership rather than succumbing to informational impotence, essential internal learning is undertaken inexpensively and staff actively explore and adapt mitigation strategies. NGOs should use the Peace and conflict impact assessment tool and CIPF/FEWER Risk Assessment Template. For more information, please contact the EISF Secretariat.



3. Challenges of Getting Security Training to the Right People at the Right Time

Challenges to the provision of security training

- **Identifying exact learning needs** and being selective regarding training objectives
- **Balancing** appropriate hard/technical skills with soft **skills**
- **Time and budget**
- **Finding real experts**, especially on sensitive topics (e.g. gender training)
- Finding the right **facilities** and hardware
- Ensuring delivery of **sustainable training** in the long run (turnover of staff, complexities in which we work, different deployment types)

Training opportunities and successes

- **Effectively** delivered training which equips staff
- **Economically** delivered training
- Training which is **comprehensively delivered**
- **Learning which is done on the job**; more attention needs to be paid to these types of learning experiences in order to gain from them. Training is only one component of the learning environment.

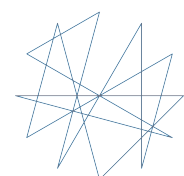
Recommendations Identified

- Organisations need to **have stronger post-training evaluations** and also look at the longer term learning outcome. Ongoing support must be given and time for refresher opportunities allocated. There needs to be engagement on this at different levels.
- In rapidly changing contexts, small organisations find it difficult to react and provide sufficient training. It is important to include a training budget in the project proposal. Not only should organisations implement a training which is suitable for their staff but also for their implementing partners.
- **Integrating security training with physical and psychological stress management training** is useful.

4. Abduction and Kidnap Training: To Stress Or Not To Stress

What is the best way to prepare staff for operations in hostile environments and what is the psychological impact of various training types? Do staff benefit from simulation exercises?

- For training purposes it is acceptable to simulate a certain level of stress, but it is not appropriate to harm people; **traumatising** trainees is not helpful in achieving learning objectives. Have an external therapist available to staff both during HEAT training and after training is key; having the opportunity to speak to a trained individual can assist in achieving the aimed learning objective.
- The **practice skills** in a HEAT training are very useful; they can help trainees to learn to think and make choices in a very high stress environment. It is very important that the trainer is close to the trainee throughout the training and monitors their progression and experience the whole way through the training.



- Old fashioned training methods only included a cognitive exercise (information on paper, briefing etc.), however in the field this may not be of assistance. **Consider if there is a middle ground between a cognitive exercise and a potentially harmful simulation exercise?**
- **Screening** may assist to better focus training. It is important to find out what people have been through personally and professionally prior to running a simulation. It helps trainers to better understand the trainee's needs and also their probable reaction in stressful situations.
- Don't forget to focus on **team training**, as in the field staff frequently deal with problems together as a team.
- In training, the focus is often on **external factors**. However, much stress is caused by internal issues within the organisation (for example working hours, the attitude of management, etc.) Staff should be equipped for how to deal with this stress that comes from internal elements of the organisation.

5. Issues Faced When Building the Capacity of Local Partners and National Staff

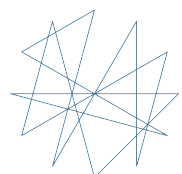
How can INGOs successfully build the security risk management capacity of local partners, diaspora organisations or local staff?

Challenges in Training from a Safety and Security Perspective

- Different **languages, cultures** and attitudes can prevail
- Local organisations may not know the **applicable rules** are surrounding transportation of aid, donor requirements, cross border operations, etc. so large knowledge gaps need to be filled quickly.
- Many new organisations do not have any **security procedures**, they start with a blank sheet and add procedures during operations. This should be identified in advance of the training.
- Collaboration can only be successful if INGOs **listen to local partners and their needs**. This also means that local partners need to communicate and justify their needs.

Useful Approaches to Training Local Partners

- When organising security training for local partner organisations, it is important to **manage expectations** on all sides. The exact role of the training provider should be clearly defined.
- Training providers have to be aware of **culture** and the issues of intercultural communication between the INGO and the local partner.
- The training and **learning methods** of local staff might differ from perceptions of what constitutes a good training.
- Use **jargon-free language**, avoid reference to the global north, allow organisations to translate terms into their local language.
- **Local problem solving shouldn't be dismissed**. Present theoretical problems to national organisations and let them develop solutions, be open to ideas and solutions.
- **Communicate clear red lines** issued by organisations and donors; mention the consequences of crossing these lines.
- **Stay involved in the learning process** that the organisation is going through. Follow up, give advice and then repeat. Training is not finalised after one week.



6. Travel Safety for Women

Do female travellers need different security training to their male colleagues? Is training which integrates both male and female needs preferable to segregated training?

- All staff need to know how to make themselves, and also each other, safe when traveling. Each staff member's **decisions**, irrespective of gender, might impact the situation of others around them. Gender security is not just about women, it is much broader.
- In giving any training, it is also very important to consider the context of the country and the implications that has on each gender. Conduct a risk assessment of the local context related to gender and give that special consideration.
- If travellers want to feel more secure, **self-defense exercises** may give a feeling of safety. This can be combined with other gender security training; it does not have to be isolated.
- Whether it is better to have separated or mixed groups depends on the expected outcome of the session.

7. New Technologies for Security Training

This session looked at some recent innovations in technology for security training, including new game-based approaches and virtual reality.

Principles and challenges related to game-based security training:

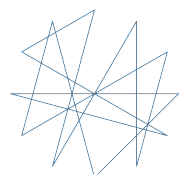
- Immersive, compulsive & cost effective
- Conducive for group learning
- Off-line solution is necessary where there is no good internet connection
- One challenge is the lack of absolutes in teaching safety and security (there are so many grey areas, and a lot of 'what if...' will be unanswered).
- Game-based training should never replace face-to-face learning methods.
- Some platforms require internet access.
- Global tools cannot be easily adapted to the local context.

New technologies for security training – Virtual Reality (VR)

Working with virtual reality (VR) can be very useful for high risk/high cost environments that cannot be simulated in reality. 3D views of cities can be helpful for emergency deployment orientation and context orientation. VR is mainly used by first responders and medical response teams, and is best used in blended learning, e.g. a workshop with elements in virtual reality.

Questions security managers should ask themselves before employing new technology to train staff in safety and security:

- Will the technology be available for all staff?
- What is the added value?
- Is the technology already being developed?
- Is there a possibility of collaboration or creative commons?
- Budget (+100%), time consuming.



8. Human Factors in Security Risk Management Training

What are the human factors that affect an aid worker's capacity to manage security effectively? Despite having SOPs, guidelines and contingency plans in place, in some high insecurity contexts, decisions cannot be effectively made due to pressure and stress. How can this be addressed? Trainings that address the following may be of assistance:

- **Keeping the norm in the right place:** Norms (i.e. when information is collected, analysed, and a prediction and plan are made based on this) are balanced with the human factors (i.e. values/competencies/feelings). Norms are useful in addressing a certain number of mistakes that could be made when making a decision, as experience cannot cover everything. When individuals use their own capacity, there will be bias involved, therefore norms help to moderate capacity. Norms 'serve the decision'.
- **Accepting Uncertainty:** When a decision must be made, we first gather as much information as possible. Individuals often want to be sure of the facts, and so are not able to accept uncertainty. Accepting that mistakes can be made and that not all the elements to make a decision are present can be difficult. However, the imperative here is not to make the 'good' decision, it is to avoid making the 'wrong' decision.
- **Self-questioning (and questioning others on the team):** Self-questioning is another safeguard against making the wrong decision. Anyone can be a victim of bias, so questioning counterparts on a team is key. People cope better with very stressful situations when they share more (including their doubts) with others.
- **Time management:** This is an impacting element, as a good decision is a decision that is taken at the right time. Delivering a decision when it is timely is a key element to whether it is a good or an incorrect decision.
- **Mirroring Effect:** Finding someone to mirror judgment can help individuals to think about their decision-making. This is a role which involves pushing people to have their own thoughts rather than trying to take them along to reach a decision which appeals to the listener.
- Are NGOs training their managers to do **emotional fist aid**? Staff are often exposed to incidents of longer, protracted stress than to short-term events.
- There is a common misconception that 'the more you do, the easier it gets'. This is a myth that can be very harmful, and it is promulgated in the military, emergency services and hospital wards and within NGOs. NGOs must make sure they are **looking after experienced staff and thinking of their training needs**.

