



30th ALNAP Annual Meeting

Working together in the field for effective humanitarian response

Concept Note

3 – 4 March 2015, Berlin

+ ALNAP members' day
5 March



Why are ALNAP members meeting to discuss this topic?

Next year's Annual Meeting will consider the role of collaborative and inter-organisational approaches in achieving effective humanitarian response at field and country level.

Humanitarian responses often involve large numbers of national and international actors, often working with only limited coordination and collaboration. This failure to collaborate can lead to gaps in coverage and to duplications and inefficiencies in emergency response

The issue of coordination has become more pressing as the number of humanitarian actors has increased and a combination of factors – climate change, urbanisation and population growth among others – have led to responses becoming larger and more complex. On the one hand, many emergencies are now of a size and complexity where no single agency can meet all needs, even within a specific sector. On the other, the number and diversity of actors can make coordination seem an almost impossible task.

The last decade has seen a variety of approaches to improved coordination and collaboration. Starting in 2005, the Humanitarian Reform Agenda introduced the cluster approach and the Humanitarian Country Teams, aimed at improving coordination at a country level. Many countries have active NGO coordination bodies as well. In addition, several organisations work in partnership when planning and executing relief operations, both with one another, and – increasingly – with non-traditional humanitarian actors, such as the private sector.

Among these initiatives, there are many success stories outlining the benefits of collaborative approaches. However, there have also been a number of significant challenges. Coordination and collaboration are not easily achieved. Competing organisational interests can pull agencies in different directions; differing languages and cultures can impede rapid communication and understanding; coordination can compromise organisational independence; and the time and energy required to allow successful coordination can prove daunting, particularly to smaller organisations.

While some of these experiences of coordination have been addressed by research and evaluations, many have not. With the projected growth in humanitarian needs, coordination and collaboration can be expected to become even more important in the years ahead. For this reason, the ALNAP network has decided to meet to take stock and share experiences and best practice on the topic of collaboration for effective humanitarian response at field level.

What will the meeting cover?

In collaboration with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ALNAP will convene a two-day conference on the theme of **Working together in the field for effective humanitarian response** in Berlin on the 3 and 4 March 2015. The Meeting will be open to all interested parties, with priority allocation of tickets for ALNAP member organisations.

The Meeting will be an opportunity for the different ALNAP members to consider alternatives, opportunities, challenges, what has worked and what needs to be refined when it comes to collaborative approaches for effective humanitarian response in the field.

Some of the questions that we expect to discuss are

- What are the various **types of collaboration** in humanitarian response at field and country level?
- What are the **potential benefits and costs** of collaborative approaches in humanitarian response settings?
- Are certain types of collaboration better adapted to different contexts?
- What factors affect / determine the success or failure of the various types of collaboration?
- How can the **success or otherwise of collaborative approaches best be measured and evaluated?**

The conference will be preceded by a meeting of evaluators from the ALNAP Network, and will be followed by a 'Members' day', for discussion of other topics of interest to the ALNAP membership. This third day is open to ALNAP members organisations' individuals only.

Day 0 | Monday 2 March

Pre-Meeting day: evaluators' day

By invitation-only workshop to validate feedback on the pilot version of the ALNAP Evaluation of Humanitarian Action (EHA) Guide

Day 1 | Tuesday 3 March

Main conference: Working together

Day 2 | Wednesday 4 March

Main conference: Working together

Day 3 | Thursday 5 March

Full Members' day

For individuals from the ALNAP member organisations



The Meeting will include:

- Presentations and workshops led by practitioners, policy makers and researchers on approaches to inter-organisational coordination and collaboration
- Intensive plenary and small group discussions that explore ways to support effective inter-organisational work.
- Hands-on planning sessions for integrating these concepts into the work of delegates' organisations

Key themes might include:

- **How to collaborate: Formalised structures** – strengths, weaknesses and success factors: HCTs, Clusters, Partnerships, alliances and consortiums
- **How to collaborate: Alternative (non structural) approaches:** Standards, funding mechanisms and informal mechanisms of coordination and collaboration
- **Sectors and themes to collaborate on:** advocacy, climate change adaptation, market and cash – based interventions, security management
- **Measurement and evaluation of collaboration**

How can I take part?

The Meeting will be open to all staff of ALNAP member agencies.¹ Limited numbers of places will also be available for external participants. Participants will be requested to pay a conference fee: these conference fees partially defray the costs of the Meeting. Presenters and workshop facilitators will pay a reduced conference fee.

ALNAP has limited funding available to assist members from agencies headquartered in the global south to attend the Meeting.

Registration for the Meeting will open to ALNAP member organisations in November.

Based on feedback from the 2014 Annual Meeting, ALNAP will be decreasing the number of panels and workshops at this year's Meeting. To ensure that as many member organisations as possible are able to share their experiences and learning, we will, for the first time, host a 'market place', and will shortly be requesting proposals for it.

Want to keep up to date with our Annual Meeting updates?

We will soon share information on registration and submission of proposals for the 'market place' on Twitter (**#alnap2015**) and Facebook, on the ALNAP website, and through our email updates.

If you have any questions about the evaluator's day, please contact our Research Fellow Francesca Bonino (**f.bonino@alnap.org**).

We look forward to seeing you in Berlin!

www.alnap.org



¹ As places at the Meeting are limited, each ALNAP member agency will be guaranteed at least two places. The Secretariat will attempt to accommodate members who wish to send more than two people.





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