

2018 NOHA Advanced Training in Humanitarian Mediation

COURSE SUMMARY

How to prevent and decrease tensions between host and displaced communities in conflict contexts? How to reduce violence against civilians, prevent forced displacements and facilitate voluntary returns? How to engage with communities and armed groups to increase acceptance and access in high-risk areas? How to facilitate inclusive dialogue processes to promote a greater participation of communities in project design, planning and implementation? How to foster accountability and promote constructive dialogue between international actors and communities when disagreements arise?

The aim of the Humanitarian Mediation course is to provide humanitarian aid workers operating in conflict contexts with practical knowledge, tools and skills to design, plan and conduct humanitarian mediation and dialogue facilitation processes aimed at:

- Preventing or mitigating episodes of violence
- Preventing forced displacement and facilitating returns
- Improving humanitarian access and acceptance
- Enhancing respect for affected populations' basic rights

The processes presented during the training will also be useful for personnel involved in safe and good quality programming activities such as:

- Protection mainstreaming
- Participation and Community-based approaches
- Communication with beneficiaries and Community Engagement
- Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) processes
- Do No Harm

Participants from previous sessions of the course reported that it is also very useful in their daily management of tensions arising between colleagues at work, or at home within family, as well in their overall social life.

While tools and approaches covered in the training may effectively contribute to longer-term social cohesion, stability and inclusive governance processes in divided communities, this proposed training is not a peace-building training. It does not cover political mediation processes but rather focuses on community based pro-active protection approaches in humanitarian contexts.

Mode of delivery:

- The training draws on principles of adult education. It is mostly experiential and based on peer learning with a focus on the development of skills and aptitudes,
- 70% of the training is practical and participative and involves skill-based exercises and role plays,
- No PowerPoint.

Course length:

- 5 days (40 hours)
- Follow-up on the training, such as on the job coaching and mentoring and Training of Trainers can be discussed and agreed upon following the completion of the course.

Dates and location

December 17 – December 21, 2018 (5 days), Brussels, Belgium

Award received:

NOHA Certificate

Audience:

The course is designed for humanitarian workers with over 5 years of experience managing or involved in the following activities and programs involving but not limited to:

- Protection,
- Participatory approaches and Community development,
- Communication with beneficiaries, accountability and AAP,
- Social cohesion, community-based protection, stabilization and peace building.

Civil personnel for the Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO) involved in protection of civilians and civil affairs are also encouraged to apply.

Language:

English

OVERVIEW

Protection and access

Protection and humanitarian access are current humanitarian challenges. While humanitarian actors are increasingly investing in efficient assistance provision to people who have been affected by conflict, they are to a much lesser degree active and effective in pro-actively preventing populations from being harmed, which is at the core of protection

Problems and concerns in protection and humanitarian access have various causes and take different forms, from imposing legal and administrative burdens on civilians and humanitarian actors, to the bombing of hospitals. Armed violence conducted by governments, non-state armed groups and communities are among the most important challenges humanitarian organisations are facing. Improving protection and access therefore requires engaging with those actors, with the specific aim of improving access to life saving relief and assistance and reducing the level of violence between and towards civilians, as well as towards humanitarian actors.

Protection and access also imply improving the quality of humanitarian programming from a "do no harm" perspective, as well as fostering acceptance of humanitarian actors through improved participation and accountability towards beneficiaries.

Humanitarian mediation and dialogue facilitation

While humanitarian organisations are faced with access, acceptance and protection challenges on a daily basis, they are often not equipped to appropriately address them. By mainly focusing on providing relief and assistance, they have not necessarily developed the tools and capabilities needed to tackle these specific challenges, which include advocacy, negotiation and mediation. While humanitarian negotiations are common practice within the humanitarian sphere, the field of humanitarian mediation, and of mediation carried out by humanitarian actors in emergency contexts, long overlooked, is also gaining momentum.

Humanitarian mediation, understood as *a voluntary and inclusive process addressing humanitarian concerns in emergency context, by which a neutral, impartial and independent actor assists conflicting parties to establish or re-establish communication so that they can find a solution to their problem by themselves*, is a proven methodology that contributes to the reduction of violence, and therefore to improved protection. One striking fact is that the four humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence, which the large majority of humanitarian actors abide by, are similar to the principles of third party mediation. In theory, this may lead to the conclusion that humanitarian organisations should potentially excel at mediation and perform better in some circumstances than political bodies such as states or the United Nations, whose political identity and mandates may affect their capacity to be perceived, and sometimes act, as neutral third parties in mediation processes. Not only has the similarity between neutral third-party mediation principles and humanitarian principles largely remained unnoticed, its potential for new applications in the field of protection and access are unexplored.

In a recent working paper on protection in Central African Republic, the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) emphasised the relevance of these types of humanitarian interventions: "Emergency mediation and social cohesion have opened the way to a closer engagement with armed groups and helped to prevent and proactively reduce violence and protect civilians. This contrasts with standard approaches of monitoring, referral systems and services to victims, that focus only on the consequences of violations".

Moreover, humanitarian mediation has also been put forward to ensure principled action and promote protection mainstreaming. Indeed, third party neutral mediation and dialogue facilitation represent practical ways to operationalize the core humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. They are also processes allowing humanitarian partners to set into practice the protection mainstreaming pillars of do no harm, effective access, accountability and community participation.

ORGANIZERS

The NOHA Network on Humanitarian Action is an international association of universities that aims to enhance professionalism in the humanitarian sector, by promoting humanitarian values and providing certificated high-level courses.

Training Facilitator:

Jérôme Grimaud is a humanitarian worker. He devoted his first missions to protective accompaniment in Central America and to frontline negotiations in the Middle East before becoming a psychosocial support delegate of the International Movement of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. He gradually specialized in the field of protection, conflict sensitivity, humanitarian access as well as humanitarian mediation and dialogue facilitation, both as a practitioner and a trainer. His humanitarian negotiation and mediation experiences range from negotiating access of medical agencies and civilians at check points in the Palestine territories to facilitating humanitarian mediation processes in the Central African Republic. For the last four years he has developed and piloted third party neutral humanitarian mediation initiatives aiming at improving protection of civilians and humanitarian access for various NGOs, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Red Cross. He is currently collaborating with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Danish Red Cross and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) as a roving humanitarian negotiation and mediation adviser. He is affiliated as a research fellow with Harvard University's Humanitarian Initiative (HHI) focusing on Humanitarian Mediation. He also provides training with the NOHA Network on Humanitarian Action.

TRAINING CONTENT

1. **Key concepts:** definition, specificity, objectives of humanitarian mediation and dialogue.
2. **Understanding conflicts:** Sources, drivers, dynamic and layers.
3. **Mediator and facilitator's self-awareness:** challenges and dilemmas of neutrality and impartiality.
4. **Essential skills in humanitarian mediation and dialogue:** communication and facilitation competencies.
5. **Humanitarian mediation and dialogue facilitation:** process, steps and stages.
6. **Challenges, risks and limits of humanitarian mediation:** 'Do No Harm' Perspective.

TRAINING OUTCOMES

By the end of the training, participants are expected to be able to:

- Identify when and how to integrate humanitarian mediation and dialogue in their daily practices in humanitarian work,
- Design and plan a humanitarian mediation process,
- Identify their mediation and facilitation abilities and skills as well as the ones they would like to further develop,
- Gain confidence in their capacity to facilitate humanitarian mediation processes, initially with the support, coaching and mentoring of more experienced mediators,
- Assess risks and limits of humanitarian mediation,
- Design humanitarian mediation programs,
- Identify risks and challenges of humanitarian mediation and how to ensure Do No Harm.

TRAINING ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The assessment pattern reflects the training's learning outcomes and is intended to demonstrate that participants possess the skills and knowledge required in practice.

Knowledge will be tested through a pre- and post-test. Participants will also receive feedback and guidance throughout the course which will enable them to make progress and develop their confidence and practical skills.

HOW TO APPLY

Candidates should fill in the **registration form**. Upon registration candidates should also upload their CV and motivation statement indicating how they intend to use humanitarian mediation tools and skills in the future.

- Maximum 24 participants.
- Prospective students are responsible for their visa arrangements and all their expenses for attending the training (e.g. travel and accommodation).

Key dates:

Pre-registration until **20 October**

Selected applicants will be notified by email by **31 October**

Final payment deadline: **20 November**

Registrations will become effective only after payment of the course fee.

Course Fee:

Course fee (inclusive of all course materials): 700€. A limited number of grants (50% of the fee) are available upon motivated request.

Cancellations:

The fee will be fully reimbursed for valid reasons if requested before 30 November (a 50% cancellation fee will be retained from 1 December onwards).