

Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation

Annual Meeting of Frontline Humanitarian Negotiators
5-6/12/2017, Geneva, Switzerland



“Access Constraints in the Lake Chad Basin: A Humanitarian Perspective”

Tuesday December 5th, 2017 – Duration: 1h30

Objective: Many Humanitarian agencies working in the Lake Chad basin describe an excessive reliance on political and military actors. Examples include the inclusion of humanitarian activities within a ‘stabilization agenda’ and subsequent insistence that these activities take place in communities that serve that agenda. In other cases the objective is not overtly political but security-related such as an insistence on military escorts or on a prioritization of activities based on security and not on needs. The combination of reliance on military and political authorities, regional and international pressures in terms of security response and an insistence by officials that humanitarian aid form part of a stabilization agenda mean that agencies have conditions put on their access and presence that run counter to needs-based humanitarian action.

Invited panelists:

- **Florent Mehaule**, Head of Office for Chad, OCHA
- **Serah Timothy**, Site Facilitator for Nigeria, IOM
- **Ann Reiner**, Deputy Head for Nigeria, ACF
- **Beat Armin Mosimann**, Head of Sub Delegation for Maiduguri, ICRC
- **Ruth James**, Humanitarian Coordinator for Northeast Nigeria, Oxfam

- Facilitation: **Peter Lundberg**, Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, OCHA

Format of the discussion: During this panel session, the six panelists are invited to make a short intervention (5-7 minutes each) that outlines the challenges and opportunities that frontline negotiators face in the Lake Chad Basin. The panel aims to trigger a rich discussion among practitioners present in the audience regarding their specific needs, dilemmas and challenges when negotiating in this context. The discussion should also aim at reflecting on the possible tools and policy instruments that could be developed in order to support frontline negotiators.

Expected outcome: A critical debate among practitioners from different contexts and institutions on the practical challenges in the Lake Chad Basin. The discussion shall also focus on the identification of possible tools and/or policy instruments, that the Centre of Competence might support.

Suggested questions for the discussion:

- ➔ What are the main access constraints that you face in your daily operations?
- ➔ What role do political or military actors play in these constraints?
- ➔ What are the key challenges and dilemmas you face in engaging political and military counterparts in dealing with these constraints?