

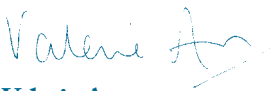
FOREWORD

Human rights don't disappear the moment an earthquake, a hurricane or a tsunami strikes. We witnessed after the Indian Ocean tsunami, the earthquake in Haiti and many other disaster situations that during relief and recovery efforts the protection of human rights gains in importance as it can safeguard the dignity of those affected. People are at their most vulnerable in times of crisis so preventing discrimination and abuse is vital.

To promote and facilitate a rights-based approach to disaster relief, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) adopted Operational Guidelines on Human Rights and Natural Disasters in 2006. The Guidelines are a major contribution to the promotion of a rights-based approach in situations of natural disasters. Following the feedback from the field-testing of the guidelines we have incorporate lessons-learned from the field into a revised version of the Guidelines. This revised version also expands the rights-based approach to include preparedness measures. Small steps in preparedness can have a major impact once a disaster strikes.

This document is the result of collaborative work over several years. We would particularly like to thank the members and partners of the IASC who helped formulate the Guidelines, as well as the individuals who put so much time and effort into seeing them come alive. We would also like to thank the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement for the generous support provided in the process.

The Guidelines are short and easy to read. We hope that they will be a helpful tool for international and non-governmental humanitarian organizations as well as governments to use human rights as a framework in disaster preparedness, response and recovery activities.



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