The Advisory Group on Access

Obstructed or denied humanitarian access is one of the most prominent challenges facing WFP and its partners. In response to demands for greater support from the field, in mid-2015, WFP established an inter-functional Director-Level Advisory Group on Access (or Advisory Group), including the Policy & Programme (OSZ), Field Security (RMQ), Emergency Preparedness & Support Response (OSE), and Supply Chain Divisions (OSC).

The Advisory Group aims to: provide support to interested regional bureaux (RBs), country offices (COs) and partners; lead corporate efforts to strengthen WFP’s knowledge and capabilities on access, and; promote a more systematic approach on access within the organization. The Advisory Group is supported by the Technical Access Cell (or Access Cell) comprised of divisional representatives with operational field experience on access.

Access Support Options

Interested RBs and COs, WFP cooperating partners (CPs) and members of WFP led or co-led clusters, can draw on the following options for support from the Advisory Group/Access Cell:

Remote advice and guidance

The Advisory Group can respond to a range of remote requests for information and support, including:

- Answering questions on the relevance of humanitarian or legal principles to access issues;
- Conducting desk reviews and/or analyses on access related issues; or
- Assisting with preparing and updating access maps.

If further guidance is required, the Advisory Group can help ensure the issue is elevated to the appropriate level for action.

ACCESS MAPPING

Led by OSE’s GIS Unit, the Advisory Group is supporting the use of GIS software to compare programmatic data with information on areas of control by different actors and other physical access concerns (e.g. road / port / crossing / checkpoint accessibility, security levels, seasonal weather conditions and partner presence) to enhance operational awareness and decision-making.

For examples of existing access maps, contact: HQ.GIS@wfp.org
Access Support Options
Continued

Access Field Support
The Advisory Group can facilitate field deployments of experienced access practitioners to augment in-country capabilities and/or provide on-the-job training and mentoring, including on:

- **Context analysis**: applying tools for context analysis, establishing key informant networks, actors mapping and SWOT analyses.
- **Access mapping**: mapping programmatic and access data to enhance operational planning and decision-making.
- **Strategy development**: supporting the development of country-specific access strategies, risks and mitigation measures, and action plans for strategy implementation.
- **Acceptance**: building engagement strategies to enhance WFP’s acceptance with local stakeholders.
- **Humanitarian negotiations**: assisting with planning and preparation, establishing negotiation cells and negotiation techniques.

Training
The Access Cell has developed an access training that both familiarizes participants with the tools and skills for designing an access strategy and conducting negotiations, and facilitates their application through group exercises, either based on a specific context or tailored scenarios. Each training is customized with participants to ensure the level, length and content meets their needs, including for either WFP or inter-agency groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Available Training Modules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Humanitarian Access 101</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Humanitarian Principles</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International Law</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Norms</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context / Conflict Analysis</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actors Mapping</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access Strategy Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access Action Plan</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overcoming Dilemmas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tactical Negotiation Skills</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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PAST SUPPORT MISSIONS

The TAC access training was first piloted in **Ukraine** with WFP and humanitarian partners.

The training was later jointly delivered with the **Global Logistics Cluster** in Rome.

Over two missions to **northeast Nigeria**, the TAC assisted with the development of an access strategy, access mapping and guidelines on the use of armed escorts.

In **Iraq**, the TAC supported the Logistics Cluster and partners to develop and operationalize an access strategy for the Mosul response.

Together with the Centre of Competence, the TAC delivered an access negotiations workshop for WFP’s field access teams in **Afghanistan**.

It is recommended the training be incorporated into field missions to support implementation of the resulting strategy.

The Access Cell is also developing a training of trainers package so that the training could be delivered by trained staff from RBs and COs.
Community of Practice

Through its field missions, trainings and outreach to WFP and other organizations’ field personnel, the Access Group is developing a database of information and practitioners that can allow field staff to link with stories and/or resource people with insights and support on their particular topic of concern.

Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiations

In order to both learn from and contribute to wider efforts within the humanitarian community to strengthen our approach to access challenges and dilemmas, the Advisory Group has supported the establishment of the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiations. The Centre is the result of a partnership between WFP, UNHCR, ICRC, MSF and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. The Centre will create an extended network of practitioners in frontline negotiations that can share and learn from each others experience, come together to develop tools and resources on humanitarian negotiations, and provide peer-to-peer support.

The Advisory Group both facilitates WFP’s input into the work of the Centre as well as informs WFP staff of the Centre’s initiatives and activities.

How to Engage

RBs and COs interested in support from the Advisory Group, or would like to be kept informed on access related activities and initiatives, should contact:

- For the Advisory Group, contact Zlatan Milisic: zlatan.milisic@wfp.org
- For the Technical Access Cell, contact Antonio Galli: antonio.galli@wfp.org or hq.oszph@wfp.org

WFP CPs should seek support via the relevant country-level WFP office. Members of WFP led or co-led clusters seeking support should do so through their relevant global support cell.