

ADVOCACY CONTACT

Madrid: **Belen Paley** bpaley@daraint.org (t)+34 915310372

Geneva: **Alexandre Le Breton** alebretton@daraint.org (t)+ 41 22 797 40 30 (m) + 41 22 797 40 31

MEDIA CONTACT:

Fiona Guy fguy@daraint.org (t)+34 915310372 (m)+34 678 826 197

PRESS RELEASE

The organisation celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2013 with a renewed leadership and strategic focus, and a strengthened Geneva base

DARA steps up its advocacy to make humanitarian response more effective

- **On the eve of its 10th anniversary DARA strengthens its outreach to Governments and the humanitarian sector by adding advocacy to its mission**
- **Belén Paley** becomes DARA's new Advocacy Manager
- **Ed Schenkenberg**, former Executive Director of ICVA, is DARA's new Chief Executive since January 2013

Geneva, 23rd July 2013:- DARA, an independent organisation that seeks to improve the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian action, has decided to step up its role in advocacy.

For the past ten years, DARA's focus has been on humanitarian aid research and evaluations. The organisation has pushed humanitarian agencies and governments to reflect on their policies and practices, calling for step changes in the way they conduct their work **and to address ongoing gaps in the way aid is delivered**. DARA's strength has been its analyses and recommendations, which are based on evidence and extensive field research in over 60 crisis countries.

As part of a new strategic direction the organisation is now undertaking, advocacy will become a central part of DARA's work. The focus of DARA's Advocacy activities will be with the international humanitarian community- NGO partners, UN Agencies, and donors- in Geneva, where the organisation launched its Humanitarian Response Index report last year.

Belén Paley has been appointed Advocacy Manager to lead the organisation's new Advocacy department. Ms. Paley will be based in both Madrid and Geneva, where DARA has an office.

“We aim to enhance the influence of our policy studies, evaluations, and other publications, so that our findings and recommendations can have more impact. By pursuing an advocacy strategy we hope to push for the change we think needs to happen in the humanitarian sector” says Ms. Paley.

Ed Schenkenberg, DARA Chief Executive, adds: *“The humanitarian landscape is undergoing rapid change and facing a range of complex challenges. We aim to continue bringing the real picture of the situation on the ground to the attention of policy and decision-makers, and for this, we need advocacy presence in Geneva.”*

DARA looks forward to participating in current debates and briefing sessions, as well as challenging stakeholders by raising important issues and sharing key messages from our research.

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ABOUT DARA

DARA is an independent organisation committed to improving the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian action for the benefit of vulnerable populations who have been affected by armed conflict or natural disasters. In particular, DARA seeks to strengthen accountability and learning in the humanitarian sector. Working with partners, DARA conducts research and evaluations on humanitarian policy and practice. DARA actively promotes humanitarian principles, assesses performance, and supports innovative approaches.

DARA IN GENEVA

Alexandre Le Breton

alebreton@daraint.org

7-9 Chemin de Balexert 1219 Chatelaine Geneva, Switzerland

Phone: +41 22 797 40 30

Fax: +41 22 797 40 31

gva@daraint.org