**IASC REFERENCE GROUP FOR RISK, EW AND PREPAREDNESS**

**WORKSTREAM UPDATE – RISK, EW AND EA SUB-GROUP – THU 13 OCT 2016**

**OVERVIEW – WHO, WHAT & WHY**

**WHO ARE WE?**

* An inter-agency group of early warning analysts drawn from the following IASC partners:  ACAPS, FAO, IOM, OCHA, OHCHR, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women, WFP and WHO.
* WFP traditionally provides staff to coordinate the group (scheduling, calling notices, agendas, minutes, chair). WFP also facilitates the EW, EA & Readiness (EWEAR) Report process and compiles the written text.
* There has been a proposal from OCHA to widen membership to include more NGOs. I also briefed the START network in August on the IASC EW group’s activities and production of the EWEAR Report – Luke Caley was keen to join the EW group.

**WHAT DOES THE EW SUB-GROUP DO?**

* Monthly network calls to share analysis and discuss risks from an IA perspective.
* Produce the 6-monthly EWEAR Report for the EDG on behalf of the Reference Group, which is a mandated requirement on the Reference Group.

**WHY DO WE PRODUCE THE EWEAR REPORT?**

* The subject of an ongoing discussion, in an attempt to clarify and prioritise the customer and determine what they want so that the product can be tailored to meet that requirement.
* Primary client is the EDG, who then distribute up (to the ERC) and down (to RCs, HCs and field staff) as well as across respective agencies.
* The EDG use the report to prioritise their activities through the 6-month outlook period.
* Feedback from ERC and EDG is that they value the objective, impartial, secondary check and balance on established existing conventional reporting chains.
* Also informs (via OCHA) the CERF/underfunding mechanism.

**OUTPUTS**

**JUNE EWEAR REPORT – LESSONS LEARNED**

* Positive – great feedback from EDG and ERC.
* Positive – agreed criteria for including risks. Each country or region includes a risk analysis followed by an analysis of IASC response capacity and preparedness. In an effort to support concerted early action to the situations of most concern, the initial list of risks provided by the different agencies was prioritised to highlight only those risks assessed as having the most acute gap between the potential humanitarian impact and existing capacity and preparedness levels. Countries were divided into three ‘tiers’ based on the assessed gap between the **seriousness** of the risk and the level of preparedness and response capacity. The report only includes situations: ***where risks are assessed as having a very high, high or moderate likelihood/humanitarian impact; where there is low national willingness and capacity to respond and/or where in-country humanitarian capacity and preparedness were felt to be insufficient to respond to the projected risks; and where a coordinated inter-agency and multi-sectoral response would be required***. The Index for Risk Management (InfoRM) was used as part of the analytical process and relevant risk values are shown in the Report.
* Positive - Greater emphasis on gap analysis between risk and preparedness ***(but to what extent should EW group be assessing preparedness?)***
* Negative - Expectations have evolved as the Report’s profile has grown in last 2 years. Corresponding increase in resources/input required to produce a sufficiently robust and ***professional*** product to meet these evolving expectations and more stringent requirement.
* Negative – need for DofE endorsement to ensure rigour, oversight as well as accountability and support for risks throughout the process.
* Negative - Lack of clarity on purpose, reflected in the consultations and final staffing (to EDG as draft for approval) and final distribution (donors, Reuters).
* Negative – Field consultations exposed sensitivities which removed risks from final report. Management challenge – group objectivity and impartiality versus consensus with the field (who often rely on host governments who may be parties to a conflict).
* Outcome - Need clearly defined ToRs to formalise and refine the process & product. More below.

**NOVEMBER EWEAR REPORT - PROGRESS**

* On track – 60% draft for the F2F analytical meetings in Rome/FAO next week. Rolls into 100% draft by Fri 28 Oct which goes back to the group for quick endorsement and final comments, then to both co-chairs on Thu 3 Nov for onwards staffing to the EDG Secretariat for the EDG on Fri 11 Nov.
* Risk – tight deadlines remain subject to late inputs and spoilers from 1) non-active participants at early stages and/or 2) field sensitivities.

**ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

**Terms of Reference (ToRs) Discussion – Thu 29 Sep**. The last EWEAR Report confirmed a need for clearer direction and consensus on 1) DEFINING THE REQUIREMENT (intent, purpose and format of the Report); 2) DEFINING THE RESOURCES REQUIRED TO MEET THAT REQUIREMENT and 3) DEFINING THE FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH THE RESOURCES ARE ORGANISED AND COORDINATED TO MEET THAT REQUIREMENT - the PROCESS behind compiling and finalising the Report, and CLARIFICATION ON overall roles, responsibilities and accountability (internal and external).  It was agreed that a more sustainable, effective framework is required to 1) meet and manage the expectations of an increasingly broad range of Reference Group stakeholders and 2) streamline and harmonise group inputs on a sustainable and more equitable basis.

**External Consultations (Field/Operations Staff).** Previous consultations with RCs/HCs and field staff had exposed concerns at the inclusion of certain risks in the last EWEAR Report, which resulted in late adjustments.  Tony agreed to consider and raise at this Reference Group meeting. It was acknowledged that extensive field consultations may be at odds with objectivity and independence from conventional reporting chains.  Hence the need to consult with the EDG and ERC.

**EW Group Membership – Expansion Proposals.** Advantages – broader perspective**.** Risks – consensus, value added for EW group and EDG (global or regional coverage), coordination burden, leaks (LIMDIS EWEAR Report). Needs EW group consensus based on a pragmatic assessment of the added value measured against outputs and client needs (still work in progress). For group discussion in Rome next week.