**IASC PRINCIPALS AD HOC MEETING**

**PHILIPPINES / CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC / SOUTH SUDAN**

9 January 2014

**Final Summary and Action Points**

**Level 3 Emergency: Typhoon Haiyan, Philippines**

The ERC asked for a decision on when to deactivate the system-wide Level 3 response and to agree on measures to ensure a successful transition.

The Chair of the Emergency Directors Group (EDG) reported that in the meeting between donors and the Emergency Directors on 7 January, donors reiterated their support for the system-wide humanitarian response, which was also reflected in the good level of funding of the appeal. A main factor in the success of the humanitarian operation had been the quick scale-up of capacity through the L3 activation. Given the high reliance on the surge capacity, the EDG recommended keeping the L3 activation until the end of the three-month period.

The Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator (DHC) backed this assessment, adding that the needs in shelter, early recovery and livelihoods remained very high. Only 20 per cent of shelter needs could be covered with current funds. The HC remained in close dialogue with the Government to ensure a smooth transition to early recovery and rehabilitation. The Government had increased its recovery plan from USD 3.2 to USD 8 billion. The additional coordination capacity on the ground was still needed to facilitate the transition to longer term development efforts.

All participants agreed that the L3 should run for the full three months, and many noted that the Operational Peer Review (OPR) would inform the exit strategy. FAO stressed the importance of the upcoming rainy and planting season, which increased the time-criticality of specific interventions.

WHO said that the majority of foreign medical teams were leaving the country although the risk of communicable diseases remained high and stressed that the vulnerability of the health sector should be highlighted. UNDP reinforced the point about the need for a smooth transition to Government-led recovery and reconstruction efforts, and the importance of the Early Recovery Cluster in this regard. UNDP also noted that donors still did not pay sufficient attention to early recovery as a key element to successful transition. It was recognised that donors will also measure the success of the response in terms of gender, and that this should be included in the OPR.

DSS reported that they were closely monitoring the situation in conflict areas and that the situation in other affected areas remained stable. DSS had scaled-up its staff capacity in the field.

The IASC Principals:

*1. Agreed to maintain the L3 activation until the end of the three- month period (11 February).*

*2. Asked the HCT to develop a transition plan with a focus on shelter, livelihoods and early recovery, as well as any other key issues identified during the OPR.* ***Action by:******HCT by
5 February.***

*3. Asked that the EDG and HCT receive the outcome of the OPR as soon as possible, and include gender in the Terms of Reference of the review.* ***Action by: OPR team by the end of January.***

*4. Requested the EDG to develop common messages to communicate the stand-down from the L3 to the public and to donors at the end of the activation period, noting that there will still be a range of serious issues to be addressed in the Philippines.* ***Action by: EDG to provide a draft to IASC Principals by 5 February.***

5. *Agreed to meet before 11 February to decide upon the de-activation of the L3-emergency, discuss the outcomes of the OPR and common messages.* ***Action by: IASC Secretariat to organize the meeting by 10 February.***

**Level 3 Emergency: Central African Republic**

The ERC said that since the L3 declaration, much work had been done to scale-up the response, despite the major operational challenges resulting from the unstable security and political situation.

**Political and Human Rights Situation:** At the regional conference in N’Djamena the stagnation of the political transition was discussed. It was critical to improve security immediately and find a political solution broadly accepted within the country and in the region.

The OHCHR fact-finding mission returned on 24 December. A summary of the findings would be made available internally in the next few days and the full report will be presented to the Human Rights Council for the discussion on CAR on 20 January 2014. OHCHR asked IASC organizations to provide inputs to the Commission of Inquiry that would be established.

On the proposal to hold early elections to solve the political crisis, some felt that the conditions were not in place for fair and transparent elections and this might even increase tensions. Several feared that the conflict situation would last months or even years.

**Security situation:** DSS was very concerned about the growing tensions within the communities and throughout the country. DSS was trying to balance security measures with critical humanitarian programming. Good humanitarian planning was crucial for security planning. The security of national staff remains of concern, but so far internationals have not been directly targeted.

WFP explained the ‘truck incident’ ˗ a food truck headed for a distribution at the Bangui airport was attacked with hand grenades when it broke down. WFP underlined the tense sectarian situation, which makes it essential to communicate the impartiality and neutrality of needs-based humanitarian action, and that it is not based on ethnic or religious considerations.

**Humanitarian situation and response:** Needs were escalating, with 940,000 IDPs and 240,000 refugees registered in neighbouring countries. IDPs had currently no intention of returning home. Many people were vulnerable to attacks and had no access to communication, media, food stocks or education. The MIRA would be finalized by the HCT by 10 January, with a particular focus on basic survival assistance (food, NFI, shelter, WASH, and health) and communication with communities (CwC). There were gaps in the humanitarian response capacity.

Participants voiced concern that the **security and funding situation** were undermining the response, despite the L3 activation. It was agreed that IASC organisations needed, together, to increase efforts to raise international attention and funding for CAR.

**Bangui Airport:** The IDP situation at the Bangui airport was of great concern. IDPs had again threatened to block the runway. A blockade of the airport would be disastrous for humanitarian operations, migrant evacuation, security of staff and the military contingents. Participants underlined the importance of keeping the airport operational and raised concerns about plans to separate men, women and children for evacuation purposes. The need to exercise extreme caution in this respect was emphasised. The distributions of food and NFIs at the airport, in addition to WASH and health services, had been scaled-up in a coordinated approach by UN agencies and NGOs. However, the numbers helped were small in proportion to the overall number of people at the airport.

**Surge Capacity:** Participants underlined the value of the empowered leadership and L3-scale-up, and appreciated the good coordination. However, many felt that the **system-wide scale up** was not as high as it should be in an L3 emergency. The situation for national staff in CAR was especially hard, given that they were directly affected by the conflict. This resulted in high reliance on international staff.

**Additional comments:**

**Advocacy:** The ERC announced three visits to CAR in the coming months: (1) OCHA’s Emergency Director on 9 January; (2) Anthony Lake Executive Director of UNICEF in mid-January; and (3) the ERC in mid-February.

**NGO response:** ICVA, InterAction and SCHR underlined the consequences of the security and funding situation on NGO response, hindering some NGOs from starting operations in the country. ICVA appreciated the good coordination, but said that the sharing of security updates with NGOs could be improved. InterAction said they were focused on supporting NGOs already in-country. Some agencies added that there was a need for additional NGOs to work in WASH, child protection, health and education.

**Population movements and migration:** UNHCR said that the crisis was expanding to the region and they expected an increase in refugees in neighbouring countries. There were also 20,000 refugees in CAR. IOM reported that they had 60,000 requests for evacuation of third-country nationals from CAR.

**Protection of civilians:** UNICEF made the point that the whole UN system needed to work closely together on an integrated strategy for the Protection of Civilians and implementing the Rights up Front agenda. UNDP added that the system needed to look into security at the community level and promote reconciliation initiatives. Participants reiterated the importance of communicating the readiness of humanitarian organizations to stay and deliver. ICRC and WHO both reported that there were high numbers of attacks against medical facilities and staff.

**OCHA and ECHO high-level conference on the humanitarian situation in CAR,
20 January 2014, Brussels:** While there were expectations by participants that the conference would help raise international attention and funding, the ERC reminded the meeting of the brevity of the conference (half a day) and large numbers of participants which would curtail the time available for individual statements. UNDP and UNICEF said that beyond a focus on the immediate humanitarian response, a number of other issues should form part of the agenda and be part of the UN narrative, such as the need to re-establish essential services, consider early recovery and stabilization, community security and social cohesion.

The IASC Principals:

*1. Decided to meet again for a report on John Ging’s visit to CAR.* ***Action by: IASC Secretariat to organize the meeting before 20 January.***

*2. Recognizing the complexity of the situation in CAR and its regional impact, requested a paper analysing political developments and other areas of fragility that could have humanitarian implications in the coming months.* ***Action by: OCHA and the Working Group to draft analysis of political and other developments in CAR and the region (including South Sudan) and their implications for humanitarian response by end of February.***

*3. Committed to continue to scale-up their response and to report staff and capacity to OCHA for inclusion in messaging.* ***Action by: IASC organizations by 15 January.***

*4. Asked the HCT to develop a contingency plan, particularly for an airport shut-down, considering the impact on IDPs, logistics, security of our staff and evacuation of migrants assisted by IOM.* ***Action by: The HCT by 12 January.***

*5. Asked the HCT to assess the challenges for national staff and the implications on scale-up of operations.* ***Action by: The HCT by15 January.***

*6. Asked the Senior Humanitarian Coordinator to ensure involvement of NGOs in security discussions and updates.* ***Action by: The SHC, HCT and DSS immediately.***

*7. Agreed to increase efforts to mobilize funding for the response.* ***Action by: IASC organizations immediately.***

*8. Asked the ERC to include the importance of neutrality and impartiality for humanitarian operations in her key messages.* ***Action by: The ERC by 11 January.***

**South Sudan**

**Political and security situation:** The political situation is grim, with tensions expected to last for months, if not years. Reconciliation efforts had failed and the mandate of UNMISS would need to be adapted to the new circumstances.

The number of IDPs was soaring and soon likely to reach the estimated figure of 400,000 used in the Strategic Response Plan. Calling from Bentiu (Unity State), the HC reported that the whole town had emptied due to high levels of violence. The violence was not seen throughout the country, but was localized in towns in Upper Nile State, Unity State and the capital region. Development gains had been lost and the recent violence would undermine oil production, receipt of state revenues, development aid and private investments.

Negotiations on access were ongoing with both sides of the conflict.

Security clearance was being provided to critical staff. DSS was concerned about the recent attacks on UNMISS helicopters delivering humanitarian assistance and an incident in which two NGO vehicles were stolen by armed groups dressed as police officers.

**Funding:** the humanitarian appeal launched in December included life-saving activities and capacity building. Since 15 December, the HCT had shifted its focus to immediate life-saving activities and launched an appeal to cover immediate needs from January to March. The appeal was over 50% covered. Participants agreed to update the Strategic Response Plan to reflect increasing needs.

**PoC and humanitarian access:** The UN presence and UNMISS had saved thousands of lives and greatly contributed to the protection of civilians (PoC). UNMISS was supporting crowd control and disarmament in IDP camps. UNMISS presence was also needed in areas where refugees are located. One participant cautioned against humanitarian actors becoming too dependent on military actors and peacekeepers to secure humanitarian access. The WASH and SGBV situation in the UN bases were areas of serious concern. In addition to assessing current needs and providing assistance where needed, contingency planning and pre-positioning was necessary, as areas might become inaccessible in the rainy season. A **human rights** strategy had been developed to implement the ‘Rights up Front’ agenda. In addition, ASG Simonovic from OHCHR would be in South Sudan from 14 to 17 January to take stock of the situation and send a strong message against impunity for perpetrators of human rights violations. UNDP said that a lot more needed to be done on peacebuilding and reconciliation to promote inter-communal cohesion.

**Surge Capacity:** The HC was clear that qualified staff were needed to work in field locations. He also stressed that the coordination taking place in Nairobi was extremely taxing for those working in South Sudan where the capacity was required. Participants reiterated their commitment to maintaining and enhancing field presence and coordination capacity. The lack of staff accommodation in Juba was raised as a challenge. In a communication after the meeting, the HC indicated that there is space in Juba and has offered rooms to agencies in various compounds.

**Health:** WHO announced the Ministry of Health’s decision to conduct a cholera vaccination campaign in IDP camps.

**Civil society:** Development activities needed to be repurposed and focus on peacebuilding, community reconciliation, civil society, and constitutional reform.

**NGO response:** There was a high NGO presence in the country. However, the pressure applied by the US Government to evacuate American citizens had forced many NGOs to suspend programmes. The ERC mentioned that in the Emergency Directors meeting with donors on 7 January 2014, the US had clarified that American NGO staff had not been ordered to leave South Sudan and that NGOs could continue to operate in South Sudan based on their own risk assessments.

**Livelihood:** FAO stressed that livelihood activities needed to start immediately to prepare for the planting season in March.

The IASC Principals:

*1. Reiterated the importance of neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian actors, especially in light of UNMISS being increasingly perceived as taking sides in the conflict.*

*2. Committed to further scale-up their response and staff presence in South Sudan.* ***Action by: All IASC organizations immediately.***

*3. Asked the HCT to develop contingency plans, taking into account the political situation and anticipating new challenges that could impact the humanitarian response. These plans needed to be linked to the regional situation and take into account programme criticality and necessary measures to allow programme and NGO staff to continue to operate.* ***Action by: The HCT by end of January.***

*4. Agreed that the Strategic Response Plan is a ‘ living’ document which would be updated based on changing needs.* ***Action by: IASC organizations to share information on capacity and needs with OCHA and the HCT.***

*5. Asked the HC to solve the gaps in accommodation to facilitate the deployment of additional aid workers.* ***Action by: The HC immediately****. In a communication after the meeting, the HC indicated that there is space in Juba and has offered rooms to agencies in various compounds.*

*6. Committed to support the cholera vaccination campaign.* ***Action by: IASC organizations immediately.***

*Prepared by the IASC Secretariat*

*Circulated on 18 January 2014*