

INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE
WORKING GROUP

IASC Subsidiary Bodies

**Report on Reference Group for Meeting Humanitarian
Challenges in Urban Areas - Activities in 2011**

[31/12/2011]

1.1 Achievements in line with the 2011 workplan

The Reference Group has made excellent progress this year in implementing the IASC Strategy and Action Plan for Meeting Humanitarian Challenges in Urban Areas. Meetings of the RG MHCUA, chaired initially by UN-HABITAT and subsequently co-chaired with UNFPA, were regular and well-attended with the active participation of implementing agencies as well as global cluster, NGO and other IASC subsidiary bodies' representatives. The RG served as an effective platform of a community of urban practitioners for peer reviews of products developed by agencies implementing the MHCUA Action Plan. Implementation outcomes achieved during this first year include the following:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Develop Operational Strategies early-on that ensure multi-stakeholder partnerships for enhanced coordination, impact and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance in urban areas

A. A joint initiative of OCHA-Kenya and UN-HABITAT resulted in the formation of the Kenyan National Consultative Forum on Urban Vulnerability for improving multi-stakeholder partnerships and capacities for emergency responses in Kenya. The participation of 76 Kenyan representatives from NGO, national and local governments facilitated development of a Multi-hazard Urban Response Plan including mapping of stakeholders in urban areas, strengthening coordination between Kenyan and international humanitarian actors and mainstreaming community groups into disaster response and preparedness in urban areas. This pilot experience in Kenya serves as a model for multi-stakeholder engagement with potential replication in other country and city settings.

B. A joint UNICEF-IFRC initiative resulted in step-by-step guidance in a draft *Handbook for Capacity Development of Displaced and Host Communities for Humanitarian Action in Urban Areas* to ensure cohesiveness in urban community-based humanitarian programming. Good practices and gaps in recent responses were assessed, including from post-earthquake Haiti, for clarification of the roles of urban host communities, local governments and international humanitarian workers. The *Handbook* incorporates 'Host Families Guidelines' developed by the Haiti Shelter Cluster. Once finalized, the Handbook will be disseminated broadly throughout the IASC and to HCTs.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Strengthen Technical Surge Capacity for Emergency Response in Urban-based Challenges

A. UN-HABITAT is developing TORs for urban technical expertise in emergencies in land management, tenure and spatial planning issues involving resettlement of displaced populations; water and sanitation rehabilitation; urban strategies development; shelter and housing rehabilitation; and multi-stakeholder partnership-building. TORs are being developed in consultation with global clusters. UN-HABITAT continues to update its roster of urban technical advisors available for emergency responses.

B. Partnerships among IASC agencies and other humanitarian actors have been strengthened to share urban expertise including: (a) Collaboration on Land Issues: UN-HABITAT made presentations to the RG and clusters and disseminated new Guidelines on Land in Conflict and in Natural Disasters, based on field projects in Haiti, DRC, Sudan and Liberia, to strengthen inter-agency capacity; (b) UN-HABITAT strengthened its technical leadership on HLP issues in the Protection Cluster HLP Sub-group; (c) UN-HABITAT, NRC and other RG members participated in joint trainings on land issues for agencies' capacity building; and (d) RG MHCUA and the IASC Group on IDPs Outside of Camps continue to share information.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Develop or Adapt Humanitarian Approaches and Tools for Urban Areas

A. RG MHCUA members actively participated in the IASC Needs Assessment Task Force's development of '*Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises.*' The Guidance provides over a dozen critical indicators for assessing and identifying vulnerability including for urban areas. UN-HABITAT continues to advocate for common needs assessments to identify specific urban vulnerabilities to inform design of higher impact responses.

B. UNHCR, with the Protection Cluster and RG MHCUA input, developed the Initial Rapid Protection Assessment (IRPA) which incorporates preliminary assessments of community vulnerability and coping mechanisms. It will be critical for the IRPA to be implemented so as to identify urban-specific vulnerabilities and coping mechanisms.

C. To disseminate information broadly, the MHCUA RG posted key technical documents on the IASC Secretariat website. The Shelter Center has also uploaded RG MHCUA products on its website.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: Promote Protection of Vulnerable Urban Populations against Violence and Exploitation

The IRPA will strengthen capacities to identify and assess vulnerable populations affected by emergencies. UNHCR and its Protection Cluster partners are finalizing guidance for IRPA implementation and adaption in specific field contexts. RG MHCUA will continue to advocate for a differentiation of urban populations from other affected groups.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: Restore Livelihoods and Economic Opportunities in the Emergency Phase for Expedited Early Recovery

WFP and FAO is forging a partnership of UN and NGO partners to provide more effective, harmonized food and nutrition security guidance regarding assessment, targeting, monitoring, contingency planning and collaboration in urban areas. Draft guidance and its pilot field testing will be finalized in the coming year.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6: Build Preparedness into Humanitarian Assistance Policies for more Effective Emergency Responses and Save More Lives in Urban Areas

Improved urban preparedness, including assessment of good practices, has been mainstreamed in inter-agency preparedness initiatives including: (a) With the recommendation of the IASC WG, the IASC SWG on Preparedness will include one urban pilot in its five-country (CADRI-funded) preparedness activity; and (b) urban assessments are planned by Preparedness Group of SWG Humanitarian Financing in phase two of its financing analysis.

1.2 Opportunities and constraints faced by the subsidiary body

- A. Concern about upcoming elections in Kenya has stimulated donor interest and potential funding for the Kenyan Multi-Hazard Urban Response Plan and multi-stakeholder partnerships. Negotiations are underway for donor funding in Kenya.
- B. Given the growing priority for preparedness among donors, prospects are improving for potential funding of an urban preparedness pilot as part of broader preparedness initiatives of the IASC SWG on Preparedness and the Preparedness Group of SWG Humanitarian Financing.
- C. RG MHCUA seeks to create an urban-specific webpage in the HumanitarianInfo.Org website to make its products more accessible to the broadest possible international humanitarian community. Unresolved technical issues around the HumanitarianInfo.org website are holding this up.

II Status Update with Reference to Objectives Set in the 2011 Work Plan

Objectives	Activities	Focal point(s)	Timeframe	Status/Results
Strategic Objective 1: Develop Operational Strategies early-on that ensure multi-stakeholder partnerships for enhanced coordination, impact and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance in urban areas	1.1 Develop a simple framework to: (a) map stakeholders and (b) strengthen coordination and partnership with humanitarians in a crisis	1.1 OCHA Kenya and UN HABITAT	2 years: 2011-2012	1.1 Completed replicable model framework for strengthening multi-stakeholder public/NGO partnerships for urban preparedness and emergency response through <i>Kenyan National Consultative Forum on Urban Vulnerability</i>
	1.2 Pilot the framework in at least two at-risk cities/countries including a review of synergies and gaps and opportunities for capacity building.	1.2 OCHA Kenya and UN HABITAT		1.2 Donor Funding being negotiated for Nairobi and Kenya-wide implementation
	1.3 Compile good practices, identify gaps and develop guidance for community-based support and capacity-building in urban areas, including host families' support, displaced and not displaced to deepen the impact of humanitarian assistance.	1.3 IFRC and UNICEF		1.3 Completed-Guidance Developed and Vetted with RG: <i>Handbook for Capacity Development for Displaced Populations and Host Communities in Urban Areas</i> to ensure cohesiveness in community-based urban response programming

<p>Strategic Objective 2: Strengthen Technical Surge Capacity for Emergency Response in Urban-based Challenges</p>	<p>2.1 Build stand-by technical capacity, by revising existing or developing templates of technical TORs and rosters of qualified consultants in key urban technical areas</p> <p>2.2 IASC agencies and other humanitarian actors consider strengthening inter-agency partnerships to share urban expertise</p>	<p>2.1 UN HABITAT</p> <p>2.2 UN HABITAT</p>	<p>Two years: 2011-2012</p>	<p>2.1a Draft TORs for technical assistance on key urban issues in crises under development</p> <p>2.1b Rosters at UN Habitat being updated for enhanced urban response capacity</p> <p>2.2a IFRC-UN Habitat Partnership strengthened through joint actions in El Salvador flood response</p> <p>2.2b UN-Habitat technical support to Protection Cluster Sub-Group on HLP strengthened</p>
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<p>Strategic Objective 3: Develop or Adapt Humanitarian Approaches and Tools for Urban Areas</p>	<p>3.1 Develop a methodology with indicators for understanding and identifying urban vulnerability and resilience in crises</p> <p>3.2 Broaden the <i>Rapid Protection Assessment Toolkit (RPAT)</i> under development to incorporate urban vulnerability analysis</p> <p>3.3 Promote improved knowledge management of urban tools and methodologies by creating a repository of useful tools and supporting data</p>	<p>3.1 IASC Needs Assessment Task Force and UN Habitat</p> <p>3.2 UNHCR and Protection Cluster</p> <p>3.3 UN HABITAT and NGOs</p>	<p>Two years: 2011-2012</p>	<p>3.1 Generic indicators identified with applicability to urban vulnerability assessment from <i>Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises</i></p> <p>3.2 Completed</p> <p>3.3 Info sharing on-going inc through IASC Sect website</p>
<p>Strategic Objective 4: Promote Protection of Vulnerable Urban Populations against Violence and Exploitation</p>	<p>4.1 Ensure that protection assessment methodologies created by the Protection Cluster, among them the Rapid Protection Assessment Toolkit, include the ability to identify and address concerns of affected populations in urban areas and broadly disseminate tool in the humanitarian community.</p>	<p>4.1 UNHCR</p>	<p>Two years: 2011-2012</p>	<p>4.1 Completed</p>
<p>Strategic Objective 5: Restore Livelihoods and Economic Opportunities in the Emergency Phase for Expedited Early Recovery</p>	<p>5.1 Develop guidance on supporting food and nutrition security in post-crisis urban and peri-urban areas</p>	<p>5.1 FAO and WFP</p>	<p>Two years: 2011-2012</p>	<p>5.1 FAO-WFP-NGO Consortium established and guidance outline under development</p>

<p>Strategic Objective 6: Build Preparedness into Humanitarian Assistance Policies for more Effective Emergency Responses and Save More Lives in Urban Areas</p>	<p>6.1 Prepare an implementation plan for the strategic objective, including an assessment of urban preparedness tools and approaches to identify existing good practices.</p>	<p>6.1 UN HABITAT</p>	<p>Two years: 2011-2012</p>	<p>6.1 Urban preparedness site inc in IASC SWP Preparedness work plan and urban assessments planned under Preparedness Group of SWG Humanitarian Financing</p>
	<p>6.2. Pilot test the implementation plan in one or two at-risk cities with national and municipal authorities and multi-stakeholder partnerships to contribute to contingency planning and complement the planned five-country national preparedness strengthening activity of the Sub-Working Group on Preparedness.</p>	<p>6.2 UN HABITAT</p>		<p>6.2 Urban/city pilot test agreed by IASC WG/Principals for SWG Preparedness 5-country program</p>