Inter-Agency Information Management Meeting
Palais des Nations – Room IX
31 May 2006

MEETING SUMMARY

1. The Chair, Brendan McDonald, Manager of OCHA's Field Information Services Unit, opened the meeting by thanking participants for their attendance, as well as their ongoing commitment to improving information management within the cluster approach.

Review actions arising from previous meeting

2. The Chair reviewed the draft summary of the previous meeting. Key points raised in response to the previous meeting summary discussion included:

   a. HIC stakeholder consultation was postponed until the end of July pending availability of participants;

   Action: in consultation with participants a new date will be set for the consultation

   b. Initial feedback from clusters on Guidance note #5 on information management, indicated that substantial revision is required. It was noted that guidance note needs to be redrafted and that OCHA will provide an opportunity for comments to be integrated in the revised guidance note.

   Action: OCHA will circulate the revised "*Guidance Note on Information Management In Major New Emergencies"* to the IA WG for comment before it is disseminated amongst the Cluster Leads. Comments from partners most welcome.

   c. An IM component was introduced during the recently held cluster lead training Lynette Larson presented workshop.[1]

Briefing on outcome of 16 May Meeting of the IASC Task Team on Cluster Implementation and Needs Assessments

3. During the IASC Task Team meeting on 16 May there was a discussion on the Terms of Reference for a Sub-Group on Rapid Needs Assessment. The salient aspects of the discussion were as follows:

   a. The OCHA proposal to establish a sub group on a common rapid needs assessment framework was rejected by the participants. Overall the cluster leads endorsed the necessity for a framework, however there were very different opinions what the process should be to achieved the desired outcomes. Agreement was reached at the meeting that this issue was to be deferred for the next few months to allow time for OCHA and the clusters to identify commonalities and move forward on those.

   b. Additionally it was agreed that the onus was on OCHA to lead the process and to identify how to move forward on the development of a RNA framework. OCHA's Field Information Services Unit (FIS) will act as process owner for RNA, with

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[1] For more information on the training see:
http://www.humanitarianreform.org/humanitarianreform/Portals/1/cluster%20approach%20page/training/CSLT%20March%2007/07%20PILOT%20CSLT%201_final%20workshop%20report.pdf

OCHA's Policy Development Studies Branch (PDSB) providing over-arching policy guidance to FIS and the clusters.

Action: Pending internal discussions, OCHA will identify a focal point to assume leadership of the RNA task team

Update on stock-taking exercise

4. Discussion was held on the status of the IM stocktaking exercise, as well as identifying a way forward to enable the completion of the exercise and to ensure that the results will inform cluster leads on existing systems and identified gaps. It was acknowledged that several stocktaking initiatives were already underway including the UNDP led early recovery stocktaking. In the interest of completing this exercise in a timely manner, while ensuring that the results of the IM stocktaking exercise remain relevant, it was agreed that there is a need to be identify practical solutions that can be implemented quickly. Additional points discussed include;

    a. The Cross-Cluster Information Management Framework (CCIM) model (developed by Neil Bauman and Lynette Larson) was presented. Although most acknowledged that the framework was a good starting point, further revision is required (e.g. to include host governments and other elements that were not included within this framework).

    b. WHO presented a table based on the Cross-Cluster Information Management Framework detailing exiting systems and processes as well as identifying gaps within the health cluster. WHO proposes that this matrix can be distributed to all cluster leads for them to complete and compile prior to the next meeting.

    c. Proposal for OCHA to fill in matrix with 'proposed' solutions.

Action: OCHA will circulate the Cross-Cluster Information Management Framework model for comment by the IA IM WG members

Action: IA IM WG members to review the WHO matrix in regards to applicability of the framework and potential adaptation as a conceptual framework for all clusters to complete

Action: OCHA will circulate the matrix for completion by IA IM WG members

Action: OCHA will produce a stocktaking report by the end of June

Presentation of OCHA Who Does What Where database v 2.0 and discussion on its potential adoption within the cluster approach

5. A presentation was conducted by OCHA on their Who, What, Where (3W) database, which is currently being used by OCHA and other partners in the field to support coordination.[2] It was noted that the 3W is currently being used in 22 Countries and is available in all OCHA offices. In addition, other non-OCHA entities are using the tool (Yogyakarta, UNAMI Afghanistan). A governance framework of the tool was presented, where it was proposed that OCHA remain the custodian of the tool and be committed to the hosting, data entry and report generation in the field, while the expectation of the clusters would be to encourage

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[2] The OCHA Who, What, Where database (3W) developed in 2005 and used extensively throughout every OCHA emergency response; tracks key information that is critical to assess and ensure that humanitarian needs are met and gaps are identified in any emergency are. Specifically the reporting of the database will identify, which organizations (Who) are carrying out what activities (What) in which locations (Where); Additionally the 3W has an integrated Contact Management Directory which complements the 3W information. http://3w.unocha.org/WhoWhatWhere/

partners to supply information to the 3W, coupled with commitment to use the 3W as a Who does What Where Database and Contact Management Directory. Clusters would also support quality assurance of cluster data received. Additional comments made in regards to the 3W include:

a. WHO informed the group that they regretted not knowing about the 3W previously as they had recently recruited a consultant to develop a health cluster stakeholder mapping database. WHO has stated that they do not wish to duplicate efforts and will explore ways in which the identified consultant can collaborate with OCHA.

b. OCHA is committed to continued support and development of the tool both at HQ and in the field.

Action: OCHA will post the 3W database, related documentation and scheme on the IA IM Google group forum.

Action: Members of the IA IM WG to canvass opinion within their respective clusters on the applicability of the tool to support intra and inter cluster coordination.

Action: At the next IA IM WG meeting decide on whether or not to recommend to the cluster leads to endorse the 3W as a standard cluster tool for inter/intra cluster coordination

Formation of Task Teams

6. The meeting discussed the draft IA IM Working Group Proposed Task Teams document dated 16 May. The document outlined a proposal to form five task teams to address key IM areas and to support completion of the IASC IM recommendations of June 2006. This approach was designed to ensure that concrete solutions are derived from the proposed task teams[3]. In the ensuing discussions, the meeting emphasized participation within the particular tasks teams would be voluntary and should not to be too onerous a task. In addition the levels of support to the task teams need to defined and adequate resources allocated.

7. Additionally the IA IM WG made the following comments;

a. WHO suggested that there should be strategic brainstorming discussions on the prior to formation of task teams.

b. UNICEF stated that they fully support the proposed tasks teams approach

c. UNOSAT submitted a list of task teams and activities they can support

Any other business

8. The meeting discussed the need for continued discussions on a way forward to resolve the issue of a common rapid needs assessment including;

a. Further discussion on rapid assessment framework;
b. Need to identify what RNA tools are in development;
c. Suggestion of one page note identifying existing assessment tools; and
d. An inventory of the IM tools needed, recognizing that there is not sufficient information sharing between cluster;

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[3] Based on the revision of the framework at the next IA IM WG and determine whether or not to proceed with the task team proposal

<u>Action: OCHA will host a one day meeting on IM on cluster specific assessment tools in order to identify practical common synergies.</u>

Next Meeting

9. The meeting requested that OCHA convene the next meeting of the Information Management Working Group on or about 21 June in Geneva. After the meeting it was recognized that the date may potentially conflict with other planned meetings but due to tight deadlines it is imperative that the meeting be held in late June. Therefore a new date has been proposed for either 28 or 29 June 2007.

Concluding remarks

10. The Chair concluded the meeting by thanking participants for their attendance.

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