

IASC Sub-Working Group on Leadership and Humanitarian Coordination
(Proposed new name IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership)
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Date established: July 2011

End of mandate: Ongoing

Background

Following the IASC Working Group retreat of September 2005, the IASC Working Group at its November 2005 meeting set up an ad hoc group (the “HC Group”). A long-term strategy for strengthening the Humanitarian Coordinator system was developed and endorsed by the IASC Working Group in March 2006, and by IASC Principals in April 2006. At its March 2006 meeting, the IASC Working Group formally established the IASC HC Group.

In March 2009, OCHA presented to the IASC Working Group the strategy paper “Strengthening the HC System: the Unfinished Agenda”. The Working Group “took note with appreciation of the frankness and quality of the analysis and the strategic directions” provided by the paper, and “requested the HC Group take the analysis into account in its forward planning.”

In July 2011 the IASC Working Group established the Sub-Working Group on Leadership and Humanitarian Coordination to replace the HC Group.

At its November 2011 meeting, the IASC Working Group agreed to rename it “Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership”.

Purpose

The overall objective of the Sub-Working Group is to strengthen the humanitarian coordination leadership function, whether it is performed by RCs, RC/HCs, HCs, or DHCs, as well as the functioning of Humanitarian Country Teams. To achieve this objective, the Sub-Working Group may also address broader issues relating to humanitarian leadership.

Chair

The Sub-Working Group is currently chaired by OCHA/HLSU. The Chair can be changed at any time by majority voting. Any member of the Sub-Working Group can request that an election for a new Chair or Co-Chair be held and can present his/her candidature as Chair or Co-Chair.

Participation

The IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership is currently composed of representatives of the following IASC agencies: FAO, ICVA, InterAction, NRC, OHCHR, OXFAM, UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, and WHO. UNDOCO participates as an observer.

Participation is open to interested humanitarian organizations. The Sub-Working Group brings NGOs, UN, and other international organizations together on equal footing. Participants are expected to be at the senior adviser level. Experts and donors may be invited as observers to provide technical input or to discuss certain relevant issues, when needed. Operational NGOs are encouraged to participate actively.

Secretariat

OCHA functions as the secretariat of the group and, under the direction of the chair, coordinates the substantive implementation of the work plan. With information provided by representatives to the IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership, the secretariat drafts the annual work plan (for discussion and agreement by the membership), a progress update, and annual report to the IASC Working Group; convenes regular meetings/provides venue arrangements; drafts and distributes the agenda and minutes; monitors progress of the implementation of the work plan and action points from IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership, IASC Working Group, and IASC Principals meetings; maintains an email distribution list of participants and keeps participants lists for each meeting; prepares materials for distribution to the group; facilitates the flow of communication; and updates the subsidiary body's webpage on the IASC website.

Meeting Schedule and Agenda

The IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership will meet as needed. The agenda is determined by the chair through consultation with members, and will reflect the priorities of the workplan but also have the flexibility to respond to urgent issues.

Work Plan

The IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership prepares an annual work plan based on the standard template, prepared by the IASC Secretariat, which includes specific objectives, prioritized activities, indicators, and deadlines. Focal points are identified for each activity listed in the work plan, and are accountable for ensuring the implementation of the specific tasks and for reporting on progress on a regular basis. Work plans should be submitted to the IASC Secretariat by the deadline (usually end of October) for the IASC Working Group to review, and subject to agreement, endorse before the end of the year.

Reporting and Public Information

The IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership provides an annual report to the IASC Working Group against progress toward meeting the objectives of the work plan. This annual report should be prepared in accordance with the standard template and is due by the deadline (usually end January), in order for the IASC Working Group to take stock of progress and performance of the group. The subsidiary body is also required to submit a brief progress update (2-3 paragraphs) to the IASC Secretariat by the deadline (usually end of October) for consolidation and presentation to the Working Group before its November meeting.

The IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership maintains a webpage on the IASC site, and will post regularly all relevant meeting notes, background papers and other documents on that site.

IASC Products

The IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership will ensure that any IASC products developed by the group are in line with the IASC guidelines on product development available from the IASC Secretariat.

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Relationship to the Working Group

The IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership prepares background papers and recommendations on salient topics and broader policy/operational issues in support of effective field-based action at the request of the IASC Working Group or Principals. The IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership can propose agenda items for the IASC Working Group via the IASC Secretariat as part of the agenda setting process.

The IASC Working Group will review the performance and relevance of the IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership periodically. At that time, the mandate and the continuation of the IASC Sub-Working Group on Humanitarian Leadership will be assessed. The IASC Secretariat supports the IASC Working Group in monitoring the performance of IASC subsidiary bodies.