

**INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP  
56th MEETING**

**11-12 February 2004  
Auditorium  
WFP Headquarters, Rome**

**Follow-up to the IASC External Review: Draft IASC Implementation Plan**

**Circulated: 6 February 2004**

The External Review of the IASC proposed 43 recommendations to increase the relevance, value-added, effectiveness and sustainability of the IASC. The final report of the External Review was discussed among the IASC members at the working level in three meetings held on 19 December 2003, 13 January 2004 and 26 January 2004. Some of the recommendations included in the review were considered already implemented. All other recommendations were reviewed and discussed by the IASC agencies in terms of their relevance and follow-up. The following document is the result of the review process and proposes the appropriate follow-up by the IASC members to the principal recommendations of the review.

In addition to the actual action points reflected in the matrix, the IASC members opted to highlight a number of core issues as part of a preamble to the Implementation Plan. The Core issues are in the following areas: strengthening the IASC by defining better the relationships with other bodies; reasserting the ownership of the IASC by its respective members; acknowledging that it was the responsibility of IASC members to ensure that coordination works; reinforcing the capacity for impartial action through advocacy and policy development; supporting inclusive field coordination; and improving the effectiveness of the IASC through strengthening its procedures.

## **Preamble:**

### **The IASC members:**

- Agreed on the need to further invest in their own capacities for participating in and supporting the IASC both in the field and at headquarters level. Emphasized the need to implement policies and guidelines developed by the IASC. Underlined the importance of mutual cooperation between all members of the Country Team and the critical role of the Humanitarian Coordinator. The IASC members encouraged the ERC to ensure that OCHA

provides adequate support to the Humanitarian Coordinators for the implementation of the Terms of Reference.

- Underlined the need to ensure full understanding by all actors at the field and headquarters level of the relationship between OCHA offices in the field and the Humanitarian Coordinator as specified in the terms of reference of the OCHA offices.
- Recognised that the IASC should propose practical solutions to identified mandate and capacity gaps which remain unresolved.
- Stressed the importance of accountability, and the need for enhanced mechanisms to support the Humanitarian Coordinators, and encouraged the ERC to communicate to all Humanitarian Coordinators that one of his top priorities was the performance and accountability.
- Welcomed the efforts of the ERC to engage with regional humanitarian organizations as part of a strategy to achieve a more representative geographical image of humanitarian action.
- Encouraged increased linkages between the IASC members at the level of the operational sections/desks and called for continued proactive role by OCHA to ensure this.

Proposed Action by the IASC	Responsible for execution	Timeframe
<b>I: Role of the IASC and its relationship with other coordination mechanisms</b>		
<p><b>Defining responsibility for addressing mandate gaps at field and HQ</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cognizant of the work already undertaken, an action plan for revitalizing the collaborative approach should be prepared for approval by the IASC Principals. [Refers to Recommendation No. 06]</li> <li>• Promote inter-agency joint evaluations and lessons learned as a means to identify structural gaps and capacity issues. [Refers to Recommendation No. 13]</li> <li>• Promote practical solutions to identified mandate and capacity gaps for the ERC and IASC Principals' consideration.</li> </ul>	<p>IDP Unit Senior Network</p> <p>IASC Members</p> <p>IASC Members</p>	<p>April 2004</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>Relationship between IASC and other coordination mechanisms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ERC should ensure improved complementarity between IASC and ECHA, utilising the respective committees' comparative advantages. [Refers to Recommendations 36, 37, 42]</li> <li>• The non-IASC members (e.g. UNSECOORD on security, DPA/DPKO on political and military related issues) should be invited to contribute to issues under discussion in the IASC requiring their input and expertise. [Refers to Recommendations 38, 39, 40]</li> </ul>	<p>ERC</p> <p>IASC members</p>	<p>May 2004</p> <p>N/A</p>



Proposed Action by the IASC	Responsible for execution	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy development involving outside actors should be structured through the establishment of a mechanism for interaction with those actors – either through a co-chaired group, interaction with an existing body such as the HLWG, use of the ECOSOC report, or similar; [Refers to Recommendation No. 04a]</li> </ul>	IASC-WG	N/A

Proposed Action by the IASC	Responsible for execution	Timeframe
<b>II: Enhance Inclusive Field Coordination Mechanisms and Support to the Field</b>		
<p><b>Field Coordination Mechanisms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the Humanitarian Coordinator in the implementation of the Terms of Reference including ensuring inclusive coordination process by consulting with the broader humanitarian community in the field.</li> <li>• Continue efforts to develop field-based or field-oriented coordination mechanisms, principally through the sub-working groups on the CAP and Contingency Planning; IASC-WG to recognize the importance of moving contingency planning past the stage of scenario planning and into real operational planning, and provide the necessary support to the SWG on Contingency Planning [Refers to Recommendation No. 1]</li> <li>• Encourage the use of regional offices or regional processes where they add value</li> <li>• Make greater use of inter-agency missions to tackle field-based problems. Refine the process, by limiting the number of participants and by ensuring relevance of participants by using criteria of operational presence. Humanitarian Coordinators should have a stronger role in deciding on the relevance, the terms of reference, and the timing of the missions [Refers to Recommendation No. 09]</li> </ul>	<p>OCHA IASC members</p> <p>IASC-WG IASC SWG on Preparedness and Contingency Planning IASC SWG on CAP</p> <p>IASC members</p> <p>OCHA IASC members</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>September 2004</p>

Proposed Action by the IASC	Responsible for execution	Timeframe
<p><b>Selection and Appointment of and Support to the Humanitarian Coordinators</b></p> <p>Renew efforts to improve the Humanitarian Coordinator system – in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognizing the relationship between Resident Coordinator selection process and the appointment of the Humanitarian Coordinators, encourage members to forward names from non-UN IASC members for RC assessment using the existing mechanism; and encourage OCHA to consult with and request the views of the broader IASC membership on the RC selection process. This should assist in ensuring that the consultation process regarding the selection and appointment of Humanitarian Coordinators is meaningful and fully takes into account the views provided by the IASC members.</li> <li>Identify appropriate mechanisms for accountability for Humanitarian Coordinators. [Refers to Recommendation No. 02]</li> <li>Develop mechanisms to support Humanitarian Coordinators in discharging their Terms of Reference, through for example the creation of a peer support mechanism (e.g. roving team of 2-3 former HCs or field directors, to meet with HCs and country teams and provide suggestions for application of policy, improvement of coordination mechanisms with NGOs and donors, etc.). This could also be used to provide ‘surge capacity’ at HC level when departure of RC/HC creates a vacuum. [Refers to Recommendation No. 03b]</li> </ul>	<p>IASC members OCHA</p> <p>OCHA</p> <p>OCHA</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>May 2004</p> <p>September 2004</p>

Proposed Action by the IASC	Responsible for execution	Timeframe
<p><b>Improve Dissemination, Awareness and Policy Application of IASC Decisions and Policies at the Field Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require any subsidiary body to include in its plan of action (i) identification of 1-2 countries of particular salience for the policy issue, (ii) a distribution plan, including possible inclusion of the policy outcome in the CAP, and harmonized with field planning and training time frames; and (iii) a follow-up mechanism, either through country reporting, independent assessment, etc. [Refers to Recommendation No. 11a]</li> <li>Make consistent use of Humanitarian Coordinators, IASC members at the field level and OCHA Offices as instruments for the distribution and in-country application of policy instruments; Make more consistent use of the CAP workshop as a mechanism through which to introduce policy outputs; [Refers to Recommendation No. 11b]</li> <li>Provide support to the field, as necessary, in the implementation of guidelines. Establish a mechanism to monitor the application of agreed policies and guidelines and identify bottlenecks and problem areas in the application [Refers to Recommendation No.11c ]</li> </ul>	<p>IASC Subsidiary Bodies IASC Secretariat</p> <p>OCHA IASC members</p> <p>OCHA IASC members</p>	<p>May 2004</p> <p>June 2004</p> <p>September 2004</p>



<b>III: IASC Procedures</b>		
<p><u>IASC Membership:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership criteria should be established, which would provide a basis for determining whether applicants should be invited to join the IASC.</li> <li>• The IASC should consider the membership of and/links with regional humanitarian organizations as a vehicle for ensuring more balanced geographical representation, including from the South. [Refers to Recommendation No. 30/31/32/35]</li> <li>• Encouraged the ERC to have a dialogue with the World Bank about their membership in the IASC.</li> </ul> <p><u>IASC Meetings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The IASC Principals Meetings should focus on providing guidance on strategic orientation and to review core policy issues; [Refers to Recommendation No. 19d]</li> <li>• Regular and ad-hoc IASC WG meetings should consider coordination mechanisms, operational challenges and application of policy to specific country contexts</li> <li>• Encourage all IASC members to be represented also by operational people in country specific discussions in the IASC-WG meetings</li> </ul> <p>[Refers to Recommendation No. 12/15/16]</p>	IASC Secretariat	November 2004
	IASC members	May 2004
	ERC	July 2004
	ERC IASC Secretariat	Ongoing
	IASC members IASC Secretariat	Ongoing
	IASC members	Ongoing

<p><b>IASC Subsidiary bodies</b></p> <p>The IASC Secretariat to refine the mechanisms for managing the subsidiary body process as it relates to policy issues, by flexibly applying the proposed guidelines. The IASC Secretariat to produce a separate guide on all IASC procedures.</p> <p>[Refers to Recommendation No. 10]</p>	<p>IASC Secretariat</p>	<p>June 2004</p>
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