

**INTER – AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE – WORKING GROUP
48th MEETING**

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at

**WFP Headquarters, Rome
Green Tower, Room 6G19**

**Internal Displacement Unit: Draft Terms of Reference for Senior Inter-Agency
Network on Internal Displacement (for discussion)**

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Background

In July 2000, the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) decided that there should be increased efforts by all concerned agencies and governments to bring about concrete improvements in the delivery of assistance and protection to internally displaced populations at the field level. To this end, the IASC agreed to establish a Senior Inter-Agency Network on Internal Displacement, comprising senior focal points in all concerned organizations, to carry out reviews of selected countries with internally displaced populations, and to make proposals for an improved inter-agency response to their needs.

A Special Coordinator on Internal Displacement was appointed within the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), to chair the Network. He reported to the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and OCHA served as the Secretariat of the Network. All members and Standing Invitees of the IASC were invited to appoint Senior Focal Points to the Network at their headquarters to ensure participation in, and follow-up to the review process.

From October 2000 the Network undertook a series of country reviews, including in Ethiopia and Eritrea, Burundi, Angola, Afghanistan and in Colombia.

The Network was also tasked with making proposals for future inter-agency approaches to strengthen the international response. In April 2001, the Network's Special Coordinator presented a report to the ERC on ways to strengthen the international response to internal displacement. In particular, he recommended strengthening the response capacity at the headquarters level by establishing a small, non-operational unit within OCHA with core staff seconded by the IASC agencies. This recommendation was endorsed by the Secretary General in May 2001. The Unit for Internal Displacement began its activities in January 2002.

In November 2001, the IASC decided that the Network should continue to exist as a support and advisory mechanism for the Unit on Internal Displacement. However, in light of the establishment of the Unit, the terms of reference of the Network required a re-evaluation.

The Role of the Network

In discussions with the Network, two important areas have been identified where the Network should play a role. The Network should:

- i) act as an advisory and consultative body, and,
- ii) function as a conduit for information-sharing between the Unit on Internal Displacement and the respective agencies.

Advisory/Consultative Function

The Network will serve as the inter agency advisory group for the Unit. The Network will be called upon to review on an ongoing basis the activities of the Unit and to provide advice with regard to policy issues, particularly with regard to protection, to support field missions, training and capacity building activities, arrangements for inter-agency coordination, and the development of additional inter-agency policies on internal displacement. It will provide guidance on setting priorities and will bring new concerns to the Unit's attention. In this light, Network members will continue to be called upon to participate in country assessments, as and when appropriate.

A major focus of the Unit's activities will be enhancing the accountability of the international community, vis à vis the IDPs. Network focal points will be responsible for promoting follow up within their agencies of recommendations stemming from the Unit and the Network's missions, studies and evaluations.

Network members will also be invited to focus on specific thematic issues, such as training or protection, and to collaborate in a series of initiatives in this regard. In such cases ad hoc sub-working groups will be established, i.e. the training advisory group and the protection coalition. Participation to such sub-working groups will be open to all interested and concerned Network members. The sub-working groups will report to the Network on their activities.

Liaison/Information Function

Members of the Network will also have the primary responsibility for liaising with their respective agencies and disseminating information and documentation on the work of the Unit to their agency. Likewise, the members will be expected to provide the Unit with information on their Agencies' activities and concerns regarding specific IDP situations, especially at the field level.

The Network will also continue to maintain a formal liaison with the IASC-WG.

In order to fulfill the above-outlines roles, the Network should continue to comprise senior-level officials designated by the various IASC agencies because of their experience, expertise and interest in IDP issues. To be effective the Network should have, to the extent possible, continuity in membership.

The Network shall meet on a regular, possibly monthly, basis. Responsibility for calling meetings, setting agenda and reporting on meetings will rest with the Unit on Internal Displacement. However, extraordinary meetings may be called at the request of members of the Network to address critical issues

