Second background document on agenda item: Follow up to the Kobe
Conference/Hyogo Framework for Action

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INTER–AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP

61 st MEETING

22-23 June 2005

IOM (Geneva)

Follow up to the Kobe Conference/Hyogo Framework for Action:
The roles of the IASC and IATF mechanisms
in the area of natural hazards [1]

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1.   At the IASC Working Group's 60th meeting on 21-22 March 2005 in Rome, following a discussion on follow-up to and implications of the Kobe Conference, the Working Group requested the Secretariats of the IASC and the IATF "to analyse their respective work programmes and determine where they coincide". Both Secretariats were also asked "to produce a briefing and a glossary of relevant (natural disaster related) inter-agency mechanisms"[2].

2.   The documents listed below were used for a comparative analysis of the two bodies' work programmes. In order to compare similar areas of activity, this paper focuses – in the case of the IASC – on the work plan of the IASC Sub-Working Group on Preparedness and Contingency Planning and not on the work plan of the entire IASC mechanism, taking however also into account certain recommendations of the IASC Task Force on Natural Disasters (TFND) – which would conclude its work in 2005. The Work Programme of the IATF for 2005 is referred to on a provisional basis, as its implementation is conditional upon approval at the IATF's 11th session.

   a.   <u>IASC</u>: IASC Principals Meeting, Draft IASC Work Plan 2005 (revised), circulated on 7 December 2004, Annex I: Work plan of the *IASC Sub-Working Group on Preparedness and Contingency Planning*; and Chairperson's Summary Notes, *IASC Task Force on Natural Disasters (TFND)* meeting, 8 April 2005; and

   b.   <u>IATF/DR</u>: Tentative Work Programme for 2005, submitted to the IATF/DR's 11th session, 24-26 May 2005.

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[1] The "Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters" provides the following definition of a "hazard": "A potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity that may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation. Hazards can include latent conditions that may represent future threats and can have different origins: natural (geological, hydrometeorological and biological) or induced by human processes (environmental degradation and technological hazards)".
[2] Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group, 60th Meeting, 21-22 March 2005, WFP-Rome, Final Summary Record and Action Points.

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3.   Work programme components focusing on similar but not necessarily fully comparable activities are presented in the following table[3]:

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[3] Wording reflects as much as possible the original text of the reference documents.

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Work Programme of the IATF/DR		Work Plan of the IASC Sub-Working Group on Preparedness and Contingency Planning (and of the IASC Task Force on Natural Disasters where marked as TFND)
Tasks defined in the Framework	Expected Outcome (tentative) (of the 24-26 May 2005 IATF/DR Session)	
1. Development of a matrix of roles and initiatives	Identification of existing/potential partnerships for follow-up, to assist in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action	Broadening the range of partnerships and interactions with specialised institutions and other bodies, including regional bodies, working in the area of emergency preparedness and response; during 2005 further efforts to strengthen such links and to establish dynamic networks of collaboration among different institutions
2. Facilitating the coordination of effective/integrated action with UN system organizations, and other international and regional entities, inclusion of such coordination into international/agency agendas	a. Full endorsement/commitment at principal levels for the ISDR and the implementation of the Framework within each Task Force member institution; b. Identification of gaps in the implementation of the Framework; c. Consultative processes for the development of guidelines/policy tools for each priority area, with national, regional and international expertise; d. Policy clarity and guidance, joint information products for stakeholders for major international conferences	Support and advocacy for those institutional efforts aimed at strengthening the emergency preparedness and response capacities of individual agencies and the inter-agency system as a whole; strengthening its own ability to deliver assistance and support

3. Assessment mechanism consultation with UN agencies/ organizations, regional/multilateral organizations, technical/scientific institutions, interested States and civil society	Development of a process to define and update generic, realistic, measurable indicators (these should be appropriate for assessing progress in the Hyogo Framework for Action's implementation and in conformity with internationally agreed development goals), working with a "bottom-up" approach in consultation with States and NGOs, but also drawing from the expertise of the international community	
4. Following completion of task # 3, further follow-up at the State level	Development/refinement of indicators at the national level, drawing on generic indicators and reflecting individual disaster risk reduction priorities	
5. Articulation of the role/value added of national platforms for disaster reduction and regional coordination	a. Support to national platforms, to advocacy and policy priorities; b. Strengthened linkage/coordination with regional secretariat/Task Force facilities	
6. Strengthening the overall UN system capacity to assist disaster-prone developing countries in both humanitarian and development sectors	a. Integration of actions into the UN Development Group and Inter-Agency Standing Committee coordination mechanisms, at the national level through the Resident Coordinator and UN country teams (UNCTs); b. Integration of disaster risk reduction considerations into Common Country Assessments (CCAs), the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and poverty reduction strategies	Direct facilitation, support and technical assistance to priority situations at risk of acute crises, so as to provide guidance on how to enhance the UNCTs' overall ability to operate; sharing of knowledge and lessons learned among IASC partners, strengthening of the existing guidance material, including a review of the inter-agency contingency planning guidelines and supporting tools; development of standard training materials and workshops; Preparation of a "menu" of all disaster response preparedness (DRP)-related activities to serve as a checklist of what activities and

		mechanisms should be put in place for the minimum standards of DRP to exist at country level [TFND]
7. Coordination of the Task Force's follow-up with the secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development	Partnerships contributing to the Framework's implementation are registered in the Commission's sustainable development partnership database	
8. Assisting the ISDR secretariat in an advisory role in performing as an international information clearing house	a. Exchange, compilation, analysis, summary, dissemination of best practices, lessons learned, available technologies and programmes; b. Maintenance of a global information platform on disaster risk reduction; c. Maintenance of a web-based register portfolio of disaster risk reduction programmes/initiatives	Refinement, improvement, further development of new tools and systems introduced in 2004, i.e. the EW-EA report and HEWSweb, continued leadership in the development of systems aimed at enhancing the IASC capacity to anticipate and prepare for new emergencies
9. Performance as an intermediary for the supply of information from national platforms, regional/inter-national organizations, other stakeholders, to UN policy fora	Periodic progress reports on the achievement of the Framework's objectives/priorities for UN conferences/summits, the General Assembly and other UN bodies, as mandated by the General Assembly	

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4. Please note:

- The work plan of the IASC Sub-Working Group on Preparedness and
Contingency Planning was set up prior to the adoption of the Hyogo
Framework for Action. It therefore does not contain references to requests for
IASC follow-up (that were subsequently articulated in the Framework).

- The Hyogo Framework for Action refers specifically to the IASC in para. 32
(e) by requesting under the heading "Implementation [of the Framework] and
follow-up" by international organizations that actions in support of
implementation be integrated into relevant coordination mechanisms,
including the IASC "on humanitarian action" (also mentioning in the context
of coordination the UN Development Group, the Resident Coordinator system
and the UN country teams).

- Hence the IASC was identified in the Hyogo Framework for Action as an
instrument for follow-up under the Framework's priority # 5 ("strengthen
disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels"), specifically as a
partner agency in (a) the development of a matrix of roles and initiatives,
(b) facilitating the coordination of effective and integrated action, (c) the
identification of gaps in implementation, (d) the development of guidelines
and policy tools, and (e) the development of generic, realistic and measurable
indicators.

- The IATF/DR members were invited – in preparation for the IATF/DR's 11th
session – to review their segment of the above table (which shows the essential
elements of the IATF/DR work programme) and to agree on the setting-up of
work modalities. The ISDR secretariat recommended that these modalities be
flexible, that the tasks be given, for example, to time-bound working groups,
thematic platforms or *ad hoc* discussion groups communicating between
themselves via electronic means.

- In deciding on the follow-up mechanism, the IATF/DR members were asked
to specify the delineation of the work scope, time-frames and the priority-
ranking for each task, taking into account the resources likely to be available.

Prepared by: ISDR Secretariat

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Glossary/Brief

1.   ISDR Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR)

Chair (ex officio): Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs
Secretary (ex officio): Director, ISDR Secretariat

Current membership:

UN Agencies, Organizations and Programmes

Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

International Telecommunications Union (ITU)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)

United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

United Nations University

United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

World Bank

World Food Programme (WFP)

World Health Organisation (WHO)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) – membership requested

UN Dept of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) – membership requested

Regional Entities

African Union (AU)

Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC)

Asian Disaster Reduction Center, (ADRC)

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Interstate Council

Council of Europe (COE)

European Commission Directorate General - Joint Research Centre (EC/ DG-JRC)

Ibero-American Association of Civil Defence and Civil Protection

Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction, Organization of American States (OAS)

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New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Secretariat

South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC)

African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP) – membership requested

Civil Society Organizations (including private sector)

CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

Drought Monitoring Centre (DMC), Nairobi, Kenya

Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), Freiburg, Germany

International Council for Science (ICSU), Paris, France

International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), Geneva, Switzerland

Munich Re, Munich, Germany

The UN General Assembly confirmed the mandates of the Task Force and the secretariat in 2001 as the institutional mechanisms for the implementation of the Strategy. It reaffirmed the following five major functions of the Task Force, specifically emphasizing functions (a) and (c) of those listed below:

(a) to serve as the main forum within the United Nations system for devising strategies and policies for the reduction of natural hazards;

(b) to identify gaps in disaster reduction policies and programmes and recommend remedial action;

(c) to ensure complementarity of action by agencies involved in disaster reduction;

(d) to provide policy guidance to the secretariat; and

(e) to convene meetings of experts on issues related to disaster reduction.

2. ISDR Inter-Agency Secretariat

Functions and responsibilities

The ISDR secretariat was established as a flexible structure with a small core staff of substantive officers, managed by a Director under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs. The employment of staff additional to the core staff is financed through special allocations for specific activities to be carried out by the Secretariat in connection with its key functions. The ISDR Secretariat is funded exclusively from voluntary contributions.

Functions and responsibilities as per the UN Secretary General's report A/54/497:

- to serve as the focal point within the United Nations system for the coordination of strategies and programmes for disaster reduction, and to ensure synergy between disaster reduction strategies and those in the socio-economic and humanitarian fields;
- to support the inter-agency task force in the development of policies on disaster reduction;

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- to promote a worldwide culture of reduction of the negative effects of natural
  hazards, through advocacy campaigns;
- to serve as an international clearing house for the dissemination and exchange
  of information and knowledge on disaster reduction strategies; and
- to backstop the policy and advocacy activities of national committees for
  disaster reduction.

3. ISDR Support Group

An informal ISDR Support Group is chaired by the Government of Switzerland and
composed of Geneva-based representatives of member governments, both donors and
non-donors. It is instrumental in ensuring a steady policy-level dialogue between the
ISDR secretariat and stakeholder governments and thus helps to bridge the time-gap
between deliberations at the bi-annual Task Force meetings. Participating government
representatives also regularly review ISDR's resource position and assist in the
mobilization of resources.

4. UN/ISDR Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction

The management of the UN/ISDR Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction is supervised by
the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. Its resources are used to
finance the operations of the ISDR Task Force and the ISDR secretariat.

5. Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC)

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) was established in June 1992 in
response to United Nations General Assembly Resolution 46/182 on the strengthening
of humanitarian assistance. Its purpose is to serve as the primary mechanism for
inter-agency coordination relating to humanitarian assistance in response to complex
emergencies and major natural disasters. The IASC is one of the main coordination
tools of the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), together with the Executive
Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA).

The current membership of the IASC is consisted of following agencies: FAO, ICRC,
ICVA, IFRC, InterAction, IOM, OCHA, Office of the Representative of the
Secretary General on the Human Rights of IDPs, OHCHR, SCHR, UNDP, UNFPA,
UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, and the World Bank.

The IASC Principals (Heads of Agencies) meetings, chaired by the United Nations
Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), meet at an executive level twice a year to
discuss broad policy issues. The ERC can then effectively bring decisions and
recommendations stemming from the IASC Principals to the attention of the
Secretary-General and the Security Council if necessary.

The IASC-WG, composed of senior representatives of the agencies, meets four times
a year to recommend policy options to the IASC and resolve the more technical and
strategic challenges of day-to-day operations on the ground. The IASC-WG is
chaired by the Assistant Emergency Relief Coordinator (AERC).

6.   IASC Subsidiary Bodies relevant to natural hazards

The IASC Subsidiary Bodies assist in developing policy or operational guidelines for humanitarian assistance. Their work often forms the basis for lASC-WG discussions and, ultimately, for IASC decisions.

The IASC SWG on Preparedness and Contingency Planning was established in 2000 to strengthen and mainstream inter-agency contingency planning processes and approaches across the UN system and to develop other preparedness and early warning approaches and methods of the IASC partners.

The IASC Task Force on Natural Disasters was established in 2003. Drawing on the previous work of the Reference Group on Natural Disasters, the IASC Task Force on Natural Disasters aims to conduct a critical evaluation of the status of preparedness of the IASC system to responding to natural disasters at field level.

7.   IASC country teams

The work of the IASC is guided by the needs of humanitarian operations on the ground. As such, the IASC cooperates with the Humanitarian Coordinators and the Country Teams in countries in crisis. The IASC encourages that the principle of inclusive coordination is implemented at the field level through replicating and adapting the IASC ("IASC country teams") at the field.   The members of the "IASC country teams" include key operational actors and should also reflect the membership of the headquarter-based IASC.