

INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP

XIXTH MEETING

27 September 1995 FAO, Rome

FOLLOW-UP TO ECOSOC RESOLUTION 1995/56 ENTITLED "STRENGTHENING OF
THE COORDINATION OF EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE OF THE
UNITED NATIONS"

1. At its substantive session of 1995, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 1995/56 entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations" (Annex I).
2. The Council noted the differences and limitations in the capacity of agencies, organizations, programmes and funds of the United Nations system to address effectively and in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, in accordance with their mandates, in the following areas:
 - Prevention
 - Preparedness
 - Humanitarian Response
 - Rehabilitation
 - Recovery and development.
3. The Council recognized the need to review and strengthen the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, on the basis of a comprehensive and analytical report of the Secretary-General, with options, proposals and recommendations. The precise timing for such a review will be decided by the Council in 1996.
4. In the meantime, in order to facilitate the process, the Economic and Social Council decided on the following measures:
 - (a) To encourage **Governments** to ensure coherence in the direction given to the governing bodies of relevant agencies, organizations, programmes and funds of the United Nations system with the aim of improving coordination and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance in the United Nations system;
 - (b) To urge the **governing bodies of relevant United Nations system**, to review, during the period 1995 to 1997, issues concerning the role and operational responsibilities as well as the operative and financial capacities of their respective organizations to respond, within their mandates, in the context of broad and comprehensive humanitarian programmes, bearing in mind section VII of the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/182 and the indicative list of issues listed below:
 1. Specific measures to strengthen local capacity and coping mechanisms;

2. Role and operational responsibilities of each specific organization in humanitarian situations, in regard to prevention, preparedness, humanitarian response, rehabilitation, recovery and development, as applicable;
3. Impact of the allocation of resources on the relationship between life-saving needs, prevention, preparedness and recovery;
4. Development of operative memoranda of understanding between different organizations to ensure interlinkages between, and coherence of, the operational activities of relevant actors;
5. Operational and financial capacity of each organization to act timely and effectively in relation to their role and mandate;
6. Practical implications for each agency of participating fully in Department of Humanitarian Affairs coordinated programming and in related consolidated appeals;
7. Development of strategies for comprehensive staff development, including inter-agency training modules;
8. Reporting (both operational and financial) and evaluation of programmes undertaken;
9. Administrative and other procedures which provide flexibility and facilitate rapid response;
10. Levels of delegation of authority to the field level.

- (c) To request the **Secretary-General**, relevant agencies, organizations, programmes and funds of the United Nations system to include in their reports to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1996, a section on the progress achieved in the review of these issues as well as on the full implementation of GA resolution 46/182.

5. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs was called upon to convene regular, informal and open information meetings with Member States, observer States and relevant intergovernmental and other organizations on the review of the above issues, in order to ensure they were coherently addressed and appropriately reflected in the report of the Secretary-General.

FOLLOW-UP ACTION:

6. In order to provide ECOSOC with the requested inputs, including the outcome of the deliberations of the relevant governing bodies, it is suggested that the following schedule be considered.

August 1995

7. (a) DHA addressed letters to Governments drawing their attention to the provisions of paragraph 2(a) of Council resolution 1995/56;
- (b) DHA addressed letters to Executive Heads of relevant organizations of the UN system, requesting them to invite their respective governing bodies to address, in particular, paragraph 2(b) of Council resolution 1995/56;

September 1995

8. Inter-agency consultation on the indicative list of issues and on the consideration of same issues by relevant governing bodies, for a possible common inter-agency and inter-governmental approach.

October 1995

9. DHA will convene an informal meeting with Member States and relevant Organizations. The purpose is to brief Member States on follow-up actions and the planned schedule of activities leading up to the regular session of ECOSOC in 1996.

December 1995

10. DHA will circulate an annotated outline of the report of the Secretary-General, focussing on the request of ECOSOC contained in operative paragraph 3 for comments by IASC members. On the basis of a revised outline, DHA will request inputs from Agencies.

October 1995 - May 1996

11. Consideration by relevant governing bodies of the ECOSOC resolution:

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| (a) UNDP Executive Board | 15 - 19 January 1996
25 - 29 March 1996
20 - 31 May 1996 (annual session) |
| (b) UNICEF Executive Board | 22 - 26 January 1996
08 - 12 April 1996
03 - 07 June 1996 (annual session) |
| (c) UNHCR Executive Committee | one week in October 1995 |
| (d) WFP Committee on Food Aid
WFP Executive Board | 13 - 17 November 1995
to be determined 1996 |
| (e) FAO Council | 17 - 19 October 1995
19 - 28 November 1995 |
| (f) WHO Executive Board
World Health Assembly
WHO Executive Board | 15 - 24 January 1996
20 - 25 May 1996
27 - 28 May 1996 |
| (g) UNESCO Executive Board | May/June 1996 |

February/March 1996

12. DHA will circulate a first draft of the report of the Secretary-General for comments by Agencies.

13. DHA will convene a second informal meeting with Member States and relevant Organizations. DHA will brief Member States on progress made so far, while representatives of Organizations of the system will report on the status of the consideration of their respective governing bodies.

April 1996

14. DHA will circulate a final draft of the report for comments, incorporating to the extent possible, the outcome of the deliberations of governing bodies.

May 1996

15. DHA will convene a third informal meeting with Member States and relevant Organizations. DHA will brief Member States on the report of the Secretary-General. Organizations will report on progress of the deliberations of relevant governing bodies.

June 1996

16. DHA will convene a fourth informal meeting with Member States and relevant Organizations. DHA will update delegations on deliberations of governing bodies and will exchange views of possible action by ECOSOC.