

*Inter-Agency Standing Committee/Working Group  
14-15 September 2000, New York  
PROPOSAL (3<sup>rd</sup> Revision, September 11 2000)*

**SENIOR INTER-AGENCY NETWORK  
TO REINFORCE THE OPERATIONAL RESPONSE TO SITUATIONS  
OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT**

Introduction

1. On 6 December 1999, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) adopted its *Policy on the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons*, and on 4 April 2000, the *Supplementary Guidance to Humanitarian/Resident Coordinators on their Responsibilities in relation to Internally Displaced Persons*. These policy instruments reaffirm that the response to crises of internal displacement must be based on a collaborative approach in which each humanitarian/development/**human rights** organisation contributes to a joint effort, and that this requires strong and unified in-country coordination.
2. The IASC determined furthermore that renewed efforts must be directed towards improving joint action in the field. These efforts include longer-term initiatives on the issue of internal displacement, such as the dissemination and implementation of policy instruments, improved targeting of activities through the Consolidated Appeals Process, joint training of field personnel, and increased use of the country missions of the Representative of the Secretary-General on IDPs.
3. Moreover, there was general agreement on the need to pursue with added energy the process of reviewing country-specific operations, to come up with recommendations as to necessary improvements, and to implement them in an expeditious manner.

The Network

4. It is therefore proposed that a Senior Inter-agency Network be established in order to conduct reviews of a selection of critical situations of internal displacement and ensure that the UN system has **an effective response to the protection and assistance needs of IDPs** and a coherent coordination structure in place. In order to set up the Network, the IASC has agreed on the following actions:
5. A Special Coordinator on Internal Displacement will be appointed within the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), to chair the Network. He/she will report to the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC). OCHA will serve as the Secretariat of the Network.

6. All members **and Standing Invitees** of the IASC are invited to appoint Senior Focal Points to the Network at their headquarters to ensure participation in, and follow-up to the review process. Where adequate, IASC members may wish to assign this function to their existing focal points on IDPs.
7. The Network will reinforce the operational response to critical crises of internal displacement by assessing field operations and recommending follow-up action as appropriate, **by UN country teams and agency headquarters as well as the wider humanitarian community on the ground. Recommendations may also be made regarding the activities to be undertaken by concerned governments and, where appropriate, non-state actors.**
8. In doing so, the Network will provide support to the UN Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator<sup>1</sup> (HC/RC) and the Country Team in further developing an effective response to **both assistance and protection** needs of the displaced. The HC/RC remains the responsible official in the field for system-wide response to situations of internal displacement<sup>2</sup>.
9. The Network will work according to a tight schedule so that its work can be brought to conclusion within eight to nine months. After this period, the Special Coordinator will recommend to the ERC appropriate arrangements to ensure follow-up to **the review process, including longer-term initiatives, such as training and capacity building efforts and the development of additional inter-agency policies on issues relating to internal displacement. The Special Coordinator may also make recommendations on arrangements for the continuation of the review process if necessary.**
10. **Preliminary inter-agency consultations have resulted in an initial list of countries that should be focused on, with priority being given to reviewing the response to the crises of internal displacement in Eritrea, Ethiopia and Indonesia, as well as Angola, Burundi and Colombia, subject to the political and security situation in each country.**
11. **The Guiding Principles developed under the direction of the Representative of the Secretary-General on IDPs (RSG) are fundamental to a comprehensive response to the protection and assistance needs of IDPs in all phases of displacement and provide an important framework of reference for the review process.** In view of his global advocacy function and expertise, the RSG has a special role within the Network. The Special Coordinator will seek his advice with regard to all activities of the Network **and closely liaise with him in view of the close linkage between the review process and the RSG's country visits.**
12. Members **and Standing Invitees** of the IASC, **as part of the Network**, are called upon to participate in the country reviews as and when appropriate. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the reviews,

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<sup>1</sup> ... or, where a Humanitarian Lead Agency has been designated, the Country Director/Representative of this agency.

<sup>2</sup> See Supplementary Guidance to HC/RCs on their responsibilities in relation to IDPs, IASC, 4 April 2000.

participation in field missions should be limited. The Special Coordinator, in consultation with the chair of the IASC-Working Group and concerned Humanitarian/Resident Coordinators, will ensure that participation is tailored to the profile of the specific country/operation under review.

13. **The Network will closely work with ICRC and IFRC as appropriate** in view of the critical role of the International Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in crises of internal displacement.
14. In each country under review, the HC/RC will designate field-based staff of agencies on the ground to constitute the in-country counterpart of the Network. **The country review teams will consult with National Red Cross/Red Crescent societies and the Federation (IFRC) as appropriate. The Special Coordinator and HC/RCs will also ensure that NGOs actively participate in the review process, in particular through adequate representation of field-based NGOs, including local/national NGOs.**
15. The Special Coordinator will consult with the IASC-Working Group and its chair on the progress of the reviews and on the follow-up at field level by the HC/RC and the Country Team.

#### Requirements

16. The cost of the Special Coordinator will be covered through project funding by OCHA.
17. Existing structures at OCHA, in particular the “IDP unit” in PAID, will be used to support the Network. These structures will be reinforced as necessary.