

**INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP
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HIC: Statement of Intent

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Humanitarian Information Centers (HIC) support the co-ordination of humanitarian assistance through the provision of information products and services.

The HIC supports the decision-making process at headquarters and field level by contributing to the creation of a common framework for information management within the humanitarian community.

Background

Accurate and timely information is crucial to the effective provision of humanitarian assistance.

HICs aim to ensure that individuals and organizations at field and strategic level have access to the benefits of information management tools to assess, plan, implement and monitor humanitarian assistance.

HICs are an inter-organizational resource, reporting to the Humanitarian / Resident Coordinator, whose products and services are available to the entire humanitarian community.

HICs provide surge capacity to the humanitarian community, and particularly to the co-ordination function, in emergencies.

Role of the HIC

- **A space where the humanitarian community can share and access information resources** in order to improve the planning and delivery of humanitarian assistance.
- **A provider of information products and services** that enable the humanitarian community to deliver assistance more effectively, following principles of good practice in information management.

Second background document of HIC

- **A focal point for data collection, analysis and dissemination** in support of the provision of humanitarian assistance, developing and supporting data standards.
- **A facilitator for initiatives and activities related to information management in the field**, particularly in collaboration between other humanitarian actors in support of existing co-ordination structures.
- **An advocate for a culture of information-sharing in the humanitarian community**, generating awareness of good practice and making it possible for agencies to develop common standards and practices in the field.

Characteristics of the HIC

- HICs are a **common resource of the humanitarian community**.
- HICs must be **an integral part of the co-ordination structure**, seeking to avoid duplicating existing initiatives and maximizing resources.
- HICs must **work in partnership with specialized agencies** to support, if required, sector-specific work.
- HICs must be **demand driven**. They must serve operational and strategic needs and seek feedback from users to ensure that products and services meet the needs of customers, and adapt those outputs accordingly.
- HICs must be **service oriented, open access projects** that create a link between technical staff and non-technical users.
- HICs should **encourage participation** by local, national and international actors.
- HICs and its partners will **develop a phase out and transition strategy** from the onset of its operation to link with reconstruction, rehabilitation and development activities.

Activities of the HIC

The HIC's work may include, but will not be limited to, the following activities:

- **Provide orientation material** to humanitarian actors, either in written, graphic and/or verbal form
- **Provide a range of information services** such as maps, contacts lists, meetings schedules etc
- **Develop and promote standards** to facilitate data and information sharing
- **Collect and maintain data on Who's doing What Where** in the humanitarian community
- **Collect, maintain and make available a range of data sets** from all sources, processing and disseminating this data as appropriate to support humanitarian operations
- **Collect and maintain data for a Survey of Surveys** to develop a master list of assessments planned, underway and completed by all partner agencies
- **Establish document management and archive facilities** for the storage and retrieval of relevant documentation relating to the emergency and the humanitarian response

Second background document of HIC

- **Create a framework and strategy for information management** in the field, liaising with other organizations
- **Advise other organizations on information management issues**
- **Provide technical support** to improve of the information management capacity of the humanitarian community, including working with key partner organizations
- **Provide physical space** for the humanitarian community (include meeting space, mailboxes, notice-boards and connectivity for humanitarian actors)
- **Engage with local actors** to support and develop existing information infrastructures