IASC SECOND ACTION PLAN FOR MEETING HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES IN URBAN AREAS 2015-2017 (REVISED), v.0

I.   BACKGROUND

At the request of the IASC Working Group, a Second Action Plan to implement the IASC's Strategy for Meeting Humanitarian Challenges in Urban Areas (MHCUA) for the period 2015-7 was developed by the IASC Reference Group for MHCUA. This Action Plan attempts to incorporate three game-changing practices for higher response impacts and to improve leadership, coordination and accountability to affected populations in urban emergencies which were endorsed by the IASC WG and Principals during late 2014.

(1)   Adopt Area-based Approaches: Higher impacts are possible if activities are designed and coordinated through spatial, community-city-based and inter-sectoral approaches which better link where people live and work and markets, basic services and availability of social safety nets.

(2)   Surge IASC Assistance within Local Governments and Partners: A first response should be to assess gaps in existing local and national institutions and viability of surging through them to fill gaps rather than creating parallel systems. The role of the HCT as the primary interagency coordination platform should be more strategically aligned with the host government.

(3)   Facilitate Affected Communities Direct Engagement: Heightened accountability to affected populations could be achieved by engaging local communities, including refugees and displaced, in all aspects of the humanitarian response including in the delivery of services and goods through local providers, carrying-out the response and monitoring performance of all humanitarian actors.

II.   HIGHLIGHTS OF MHCUA STRATEGY ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING THE FIRST ACTION PERIOD 2011-2014

Progress in implementation of the IASC MHCUA Strategy and First Action Plan 2011-2014 was been highly satisfactory, as perceived by IASC agencies and partners. Most IASC agencies produced results and specific deliverables, consistent with the six objectives of the MHCUA Strategy and Action Plan. These had positive outcomes in improving the effectiveness of their responses in urban areas. Some of the key accomplishments include: (1) models and approaches for urban stakeholder partnerships and enhanced coordination, including with host communities; (2) strengthened urban technical capacity among various agencies, including senior urban advisors; (3) new urban humanitarian tools, including for protection; (4) new approaches and coordination mechanisms to address urban livelihoods; and (5) new urban and coordinated approaches to preparedness and resilience strengthening.

However, the humanitarian community is still not 'fit for purpose' and substantial additional work is required by the IASC agencies to address the challenges of these urban crises, in terms of maximizing response effectiveness and saving more lives, ensuring accountability to affected populations, reducing vulnerabilities, managing risk and strengthening cooperation between development and humanitarian partners.

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There is general consensus among IASC agencies for a need for a shift in mind-set and to reconsider the current humanitarian and development paradigms in order to adapt thinking and programming in line with the challenges faced in urban environments.

There are two main areas of gaps in the IASC's effectiveness in urban responses: (1) inadequate understanding of the risks and complexities of urban areas and populations and failure to identify lessons learned to forge effective and game-changing urban approaches; and (2) inadequate institutional adaptation of agencies' humanitarian responses to urban realities, capacities and opportunities. Some of the noteworthy recommendations to address these gaps include: (1) Need for Urban Strategies; (2) Field Urban Expertise Early-on in Relief to Understand Urban Complexity; (3) Enable Host Country Partners Leadership; (4) Undertake Inter-sectoral, Area-based Urban Responses for Higher Impact; (5) Ensure Meaningful Consultation and Participation by the Affected Populations in the Response; (6) Develop New Tools and Solutions in Cities; (7) Enhance Protection against Violence and Exploitation of Affected Populations; and (8) H Foster Humanitarian-Development Linkage in Cities.

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	INTERVENTION AND INTENDED RESULT/PRODUCT	EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF INTERVENTION	IMPLEMENT-ING AGENCIES
Strategic Objective 1. Develop Operational Strategies early-on that ensure multi-stakeholder partnerships for enhanced coordination, impact and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance in urban areas	1.a. World Humanitarian Summit Urban Segment: Enhanced coordination	1.a. New norms and guidelines for support to humanitarian agencies to improve humanitarian operations in urban areas through better coordination with critical urban partners at community, local government, private sector and external development partner levels	1.a.UN-Habitat (lead), IASC, WHS Secretariat
	1.b. Community Outreach and Coordinated Service Delivery in Urban Responses	1.b. Pilot a new operational approach for community outreach to facilitate assistance and protection of affected urban populations through community engagement, coordination and service delivery.	1.b. UNHCR, gCCCM Cluster
	1.c Settlement strategy guidance	1.c Guidance to country clusters on enabling an area/settlements approach through the cluster-related tools and mechanisms incl. SRP's, the intercluster coordination process, cross-cluster interventions etc.	Global Shelter Cluster
Strategic Objective 2. Strengthen Technical Capacity for Emergency Response in Urban-based Challenges	2.a. Improved Post-Disaster Urban Informal Housing Responses	2.a. Recommendations of Good Practices and Increased Awareness of humanitarian actors in disaster response and prevention in urban informal housing	2.a. IDMC
	2.b Online self-learning on post disaster shelter & settlements	2.b No fee self-learning course widely available on different platforms to raise awareness and understanding of post disaster shelter & settlement issues including in urban areas	2.b Global Shelter Cluster

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Strategic Objectives 3. *Develop or Adapt Humanitarian Approaches and Tools*	3.a. Housing Policies and Practices in Support of Durable Solutions for Urban IDPs	3.a. Best Practices to support achievement of durable solutions for urban internally displaced persons by making available to policy-makers and practitioners comparative analyses of approaches, policies and practices that have improved tenure security and housing and can guide the design, funding and implementation of housing policies/programs in urban settings	3.a IDMC with MIT-DRAN (Displace-ment Research and Action Network)
	3.b. Rapid City and Neighborhood Profiles (Syria)	3.b. Rapid Multi-Sectoral Urban Assessment Methodologies to assess up-to-date impacts of crisis on cities, developed in Syrian context for Homs, Aleppo, Dara'a and Latakia and neighbourhood profile for Old Homs	3.b. UN-Habitat
	3.c. Systematic sharing and uptake of good urban refugee program practices	3.c. Ensure the systematic sharing and uptake of new ideas, approaches, tools and good practices through the promotion and maintenance of the Urban Good Practices website (www.urbangoodpractices.org) as a rich resource of good practices from urban settings targeting practioners.	3.c. UNHCR and Urban Refugee Task Team
	3.d. Indicator Development for Surveillance of Urban Emergencies – Next Phase	3.d. New set of thresholds established to determine the earliest point of entry of humanitarian assistance to avert crises and to graduate urban communities in Kenya. Indicators and thresholds to be determined with potential replicability to other urban areas with potential	3.d. Concern Kenya; Kenya , Somalia and Ethiopia Red Cross; World

		crises	Vision; UN-Habitat
	3.e. CMAM Surge in urban settings	3.e. Adaptation of the community management of acute malnutrition surge model in the urban context of Kenya	3.e. Concern Kenya
	3.f. Shelter recovery/urban planning surge support	3.f Inclusion of dedicated technical capacity/expertise in shelter recovery/urban planning in country cluster coordination teams	3.f Global Shelter Cluster
	3.g. Revised Health Equity Assessment Response Tool (HEART)	3.g. Set of validated, standardized core indicators (health and non-health as determinants of health) for urban officials to identify and monitor inequities at neighorhood level. New health emergency management module will be added. *http://www.who.int/kobe_centre/measuring/urbanheart/en/*; *http://www.who.int/kobe_centre/en/* ; *http://www.who.int/kobe_centre/measuring/en/*	3.g. WHO Kobe Center
Strategic Objective 4. Promote Protection and Conflict Mitigation among Vulnerable Urban Populations against Violence and Exploitation	4.a. City Labs for Safer Cities: Towards an Integrated Approach to Urban Safety and Peacebuilding	4.a. Pilot Program to: establish locally-led innovative policies and practices to prevent and reduce violence and crime in 10 urban areas and to build lasting relationships between residents and authorities and facilitate exchange of best practice/learnings across urban safety and peacebuilding expert communities in pre/post/current crisis contexts	4.a. UN-Habitat, UNOG and Geneva Peacebuilding Platform
	4.b. Addressing Displacement due to Urban Violence	4.b. New tools and guidance for adapting operational responses to populations displaced by urban criminal violence based on analyses in Mexico and other Central American cities	4.b. IDMC

	4.c. Peace-building through Youth-led Development Activity	4.c. b. Pilot program building on early youth intervention led by UN-Habitat (One Stop Youth Resource Centers) and new research underway by World Bank and UN-Habitat , the pilot will identify modalities for youth to be catalytic agents of positive change, with initial focus on internally displaced youth and urban youth refugees fleeing protracted conflicts	4.c. UN-Habitat, World Bank, UNICEF
Strategic Objective 5. Restore Livelihoods and Economic Opportunities, including Food/Nutrition Security, in the Emergency Phase for Expedited Early Recovery	5.a. Adapting to an Urban World	5.a. Proposed new activity by the gFSC: 'Adapting to an Urban World' to develop a toolkit of vulnerability indicators, food security assessment tools and guidelines and an early warning system specific to urban settings. The tools will be piloted to enhance food/nutrition security and preparedness in urban contexts: in Harare, Zimbabwe (November 2014) and in Lebanon and Jordan, focusing on the food security context of urban refugees (March, 2015)	5.a. gFSC, WFP, UNHCR, IFRC, ALNAP, WVI, Sammaritan's Purse, Oxfam, World Animal Protection
	5.b. Enabling Sustainable Livelihoods	5.b. Roll-Out of the Graduation Approach as a proven approach to building sustainable livelihoods to graduate affected populations out of extreme poverty through time-bound, sequenced interventions to meet basic consumption needs, build savings and develop livelihood assets. Approach enhances economic opportunities for displaced but also host communities. Based on pilots in Cairo and San Jose.	UNHCR
Strategic Objective 6. Strengthen Preparedness and Resilience into Humanitarian Assistance Policies and Programs for more Effective	6.a. Building More Resilient and Sustainable Cities in Post-Crisis Contexts	6.a. Program of pilot projects to provide advisory/technical support and capacity building to partners and local authorities on urban risk reduction, preparedness, contingeny planning,	6. a. UN-Habitat (lead) with World Bank,GFDRR,

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Emergency Responses and Save More Lives in Urban Areas		resilience, settlement rehabilitation and reconstruction by addressing immediate needs of land and tenure, shelter/permanent housing, environmental remediation, basic infrastructure rehabilitation and immediate economic recovery and restoration of livelihoods.	UNOCHA and IFRC
	6.b. City Resilience Profiling Project	6.b. More effective humanitarian-development planning and delivery based on verifiable assessments of resilience capacity and production of urban resilience action plans through addressing gaps/weaknesses in urban systems, and capacity constraints with partners and local authorities.	6.b. UN-Habitat (lead) with World Bank/GFDRR, Rockefeller, IADB, C4o, UNISDR, ICLEI, UCLG
	6.c. Fragile Cities Program	6.c. Improved humanitarian-development delivery effectiveness by introducing new mechanisms for linking humanitarian and development actors through an urban systems resilience framework.	6.c. UN-Habitat (lead) with Rockefeller Foundation, World Bank and others (TBD)
	6.d. Preparedness Guidance for Economic Security	6.d. Develop and field-test preparedness guidance for food and security and livelihoods responses to conflict in urban areas.	6.d. British Red Cross and partners