**IASC PRINCIPALS AD HOC MEETING**

**YEMEN**

**Final Summary and Action Points**

1 July 2015

**Introduction**

The IASC met on 1 July 2015 to decide on the activation of the System-wide Level 3 (L3) Emergency response in Yemen. The discussion was informed by a thorough analysis of the crisis by the Emergency Directors Group circulated before the meeting and summarized as follows: the humanitarian situation in Yemen is deteriorating at an alarming rate. More than twenty one million people are in need of some form of humanitarian assistance and security and access restrictions are a significant concern. The scale, complexity, and urgency of the crisis are extreme and there are increasing expectations that the level of aid needs to be scaled up throughout the country.

The Humanitarian Coordinator asked the IASC to support a six-month scale-up, focused on redeploying capacity into the sub-regions: moving the centre of operations to Sanaa and deploying staff to re-established sub-offices supported by common services in security management, ETC, storage, fleet management, and evacuation capacity. He highlighted the need to increase the ceiling up to 200 people including an increase of the national staff.. He also called for supporting NGOs and having a united approach, in particular on security management and in relations with donors. He further stressed the need for coordination, leadership and delivery capacity as well as technical expertise to match the scale of the crisis.

**Emergency classification**

There was unanimous support for the activation of an IASC System-Wide Level 3 Emergency Response in Yemen for six months. While acknowledging the security, access, and funding constraints, the IASC Principals are determined to work with key stakeholders to overcome them. The Principals committed to reviewing progress achieved within 2-3 months.

The security risks are high and the L3 surge must be accompanied by improved security managementand a commitment by the UN and NGOs to deploy security personnel. UN DSS was willing to support the L3 surge but would need additional resources and personnel. Security management would be particularly important given the desire to decentralize operations and establish field hubs.

On funding, there was progress in the negotiations to secure the funding pledged by Saudi Arabia giving hope that resources would be available to scale up operations. Several organizations face major funding issues and stressed the need to redouble efforts to mobilize resources from traditional donors for operations in Yemen. The flash appeal funding deficit was noted (so far the revised 2015 HRP is just 10% funded.

Many suggested that the ERC considered additional CERF funds and organize efforts to mobilize funding for the operational scale up. It was noted that CERF already released more than US$28 million to the Yemen crisis in 2015. The UK and others pledges were noted and welcomed from the High-level event in Geneva recently.

**Benchmarks for the response**

Many participants welcomed the new approach presented by the EDGs and the effort to propose benchmarks against which the IASC could measure the success of the L3 surge. The paper demonstrates a universal approach and intent to deliver humanitarian support to the most affected people. It was highlighted that protection needs to be central.

There were some suggestions to sharpen the benchmarks including a more realistic target population, stronger focus on food security, (pregnant) women, the need to collect sex and age disaggregated data, and the importance of strengthening the resilience of the Yemeni people with early interventions in the area of economic recovery and social inclusion. There were suggestions to discuss the proposed benchmark paper with the HCT, in particular NGOs in Yemen. One participant requested a stronger gap analysis as the basis for effective response and coordination.

UNHCR highlighted the regional dimension of the crisis and called for a regional response plan. It also announced that it had appointed a Regional Refugee Coordinator to manage refugees’ issues across the region.

Many asked the ERC to take advantage of this L3 declaration to provide clarity on the coordination mechanisms, roles and responsibilities, and lines of accountability (including empowered leadership). The ERC’s offer to coordinate the coordinators was welcomed and accepted.

**Common advocacy priorities and key messages**

The international humanitarian response to the crisis in Yemen is subject to intense scrutiny including from parties to the conflict. It is critical that humanitarian partners agree on common messages so as to reaffirm principled humanitarian action and avoid the politicization of the response.

A few participants noted that that the L3 would not resolve the main issue, namely that parties to the conflict violate international humanitarian law, impose blockades and block humanitarian access including to Houthi controlled regions. This issue was deemed particularly sensitive in light of the funding situation and may require further dialogue among Principals. Advocacy to continue the political process was also stressed to address this root cause – both continued negotiations for humanitarian pauses as well as the peace process itself

**AOB**

The ERC announced two planned ad hoc Principal meetings:

1. Security briefing by UN DSS on 18 August 2015.
2. Review of L3 response in Iraq, South Sudan and Syria. The date will be communicated by the secretariat.

**Action Points:**

1. *IASC Principals agreed to activate an IASC System-Wide Level 3 Emergency Response for six months with a review in September.* ***Action by:*** *Immediate activation by IASC members. Review prepared by EDG for Principals by Mid-September 2015.*
2. *IASC Principals requested the EDG to finalize the set of benchmarks in consultation with NGOs and key donors.* ***Action by:*** *EDG by 7 July 2015.*
3. *OHCHR suggested looking at ways to improve sharing of sensitive information with regard to protection issues.* ***Action by****: OCHA and OHCHR by end of August.*

IASC secretariat 14072015