

IASC Humanitarian Financing Task Team – Meeting Notes

24 July 2015

Co-Chairs: Cecilia Roselli (ICVA), Darla Silva (UNICEF)

Agenda

1. Update on donor conditions (UNFPA and WFP)
2. Theory of change for possible preparedness fund (FAO and WHO)
3. Future of the Task Team in 2016 (co-chairs)
4. Update from Pooled Fund Working Group meeting (ICVA)

Other business

5. Readout from meeting with GHD donors (FAO)
6. Update on High-Level Panel (HLP secretariat)
7. Action points from mid-year retreat (secretariat)
8. Task Team membership (ICVA)
9. Next Task Team meeting (secretariat)

1. Update on Activity 2.1 on donor conditions

Caterina Galluzzi, WFP, gave an update on the research on donor conditions, which has been refined with further inputs, especially from NGOs. Earlier findings had been presented at the 27 May 2015 meeting of the Task Team.

The research focuses on donor conditions for which aid agencies categorized the severity in the top quartile, as having either a significant or large impact. Eight UN agencies and five NGOs have provided inputs. With the new inputs, the top conditions have slightly shifted. The top-five conditions with a high (i.e., significant or large) impact are now:

1. Financial restrictions
2. Earmarking
3. Reporting
4. Risk management
5. Due diligence

Due diligence and counter-terrorism (ranked sixth with medium impact) have moved up on the ranking. The next five conditions, with medium impact, are:

6. Counter-terrorism
7. Limited predictability
8. Disclosure/transparency
9. Value for money
10. Anti-corruption, fraud, misuse of funds

There is little difference in the ranking of donor conditions between UN agencies and NGOs, with the exception that NGOs see conditions around disclosure and transparency as being more severe. Thus,

the activity leads, UNFPA and WFP, suggest not disaggregating the findings and expand messages including all conditions regardless of the ranking. The presentation lists the top-three conditions for each of the top-ten donors plus CERF.

Marina Skuric Prodanovic, UNFPA, explained that CERF had been added as a donor even though it was not ranked in the top ten (for overall contributions to UN agencies), as it constitutes a major source of humanitarian funding for most UNOs and plays a critical role as a catalyst for other funding and in kick-starting humanitarian action. Ms Skuric also sought the group's agreement in developing messaging for the top 10 conditions (rather than just the top 5 as had been initially envisaged) due to the very small differences in overall grading between the top 5 and top 10.

The activity leads have prepared draft key messages, on which they seek feedback from the Task Team. They suggest not too focus too much details of the ranking but rather to collect concrete examples of the substantive impact of conditions. The messages should then be used for several key audiences: the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing (HLP), the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), and the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative (GHD). The success of the exercise will also depend on the willingness of HFTT members to provide concrete examples.

Messages could then be helpful in the framework of bilateral discussions with donors.

Brian Lander, WFP and former co-sponsor of the Task Team, briefed the Task Team on a recent meeting with the GHD on the donor conditions research. The meeting, with several aid agencies, the US, Canada, Germany, and Japan, followed an earlier meeting with a larger group of GHD members in New York. The GHD has a workstream on 'administrative and accountability requirements' and they would like to use the research on donor conditions to identify good practices. Thus, while the GHD is a large, diverse group with over 40 members, there is an opportunity to engage donors on conditions. The donors recognized the same issues that the Task Team's research had identified and they were optimistic about overcoming some of the conditions. Only major outlines of the studies were presented without entering into details. The Task Team will have a formal opportunity to brief the GHD on the details of the studies in September..

Nan Buzard, ICVA and co-sponsor of the Task Team, said it was important to keep the relatively small sample size in mind when interpreting the results. The GHD's plan to identify good practices is less than what many aid agencies hope for to reduce donor conditions. It is important to present details and concrete examples to the GHD, and to break down the current categories of donor conditions into components. Cecilia Roselli, ICVA and co-chair of the Task Team, said it was important to include the NGOs' perspective in the key messages, especially since only five NGOs had provided inputs to the research. Given the meeting with GHD will be held in September NGOs will have an additional opportunity to influence key messages building on results from Interaction and possibly VOICE studies and analysis. To this purpose ICVA and InterAction are crafting some compiled messages to be shared with the working group on donor conditions in the next weeks. David Matern, HLP secretariat, said that Panel members were very interested in the Task Team's work on donor conditions and that this was an important opportunity for the Task Team to provide inputs to the Panel before the end of July.

Action Convene another meeting of the Working Group on donor conditions before the end of August

Task Team members to provide comments on draft key messages

Task Team members to provide concrete examples of the effect of donor conditions by 1 September 2015

2. Theory of change for possible preparedness fund

Guillaume Simonian, WHO, presented a draft theory of change for a possible new global preparedness fund. WHO and the other activity leads found that there was a gap in the financing architecture for preparedness. There are two niches: hotspots and black spots. Hot spots are countries at high risk (as identified by, for example, IASC parameters for early warning and other parameters). Black spots are countries that are high on the InfoRM index because of high long-term vulnerabilities but where the immediate risk may be lower. They are often not on the radar for humanitarian organizations. In both cases, a preparedness fund could help. The fund should act as a catalyst by taking risks seriously and supporting early action, by promoting the creating of nationally-led emergency preparedness financing mechanisms, by complementing regional or country-level preparedness financing schemes, and by targeting underfunded areas of preparedness, among other things. The fund should be accessible to all. The activity leads have done what they can at the technical level, and the effort now needs to be taken further at a higher level.

Sandra Aviles, FAO, added that FAO and WHO have led this activity, and OCHA and UNDP had worked on a similar exercise. These two efforts were then brought together. The activity leads would like feedback on the documents that had been shared, and endorsement from the Task Team. The fund would support creative solutions for “ex-ante” activities more generally, not only preparedness. This would include early warning, early action, and others. There is some interest in such a fund, including from donors. Details of the fund, including governance, would still have to be worked out. The activity leads are seeking a stamp of approval from the Task Team to take the process further.

Antony Spalton, UNICEF, said it was appreciated that the fund would be broader than just preparedness. He mentioned the Sustainable Development Goals, the Financing for Development summit, the Sendai conference on disaster risk reduction, and climate change financing, and asked how these would be linked to the fund and how can we start a structured discussion with donors about these issues? Is there really enough appetite for such a fund? Ms Skuric asked about the specific steps that the activity leads anticipate to take the process further. Is there still space for comments? Ms Silva said that UNICEF is reluctant about pushing for a new fund if it is not clear that donors are ready to fund it. This should be clarified before the Task Team can endorse the idea of a preparedness fund. Mr Lander asked whether the Task Team on Preparedness and Resilience had discussed the idea of the fund. They had been consulted. Ms Roselli asked whether NGOs had been consulted. It would be good to add some concrete examples to the documents. Have other funds – existing ones and those being set up – been taken into account? Ms Buzard encouraged the activity leads to continue their efforts and if to sort through other UN agency concerns. She noted that there were lots of funds including with SIDA and USAID¹ () and that it was important to seek

¹ www.globalresiliencepartnership.org

complementarities among funds. Taija Kontinen-Sharp, UNDP, said that UNDP saw a lot of promise in a new preparedness fund.

Ms Aviles said the origin of the idea was from the 'Dare to Prepare' study. The theory of change had been circulated to the Task Team three times before this meeting. The activity leads have had discussions with donors about the idea of a fund over the past two years. The fund would address a gap on the side of UN agencies and NGOs. The fund would also address the capacity of national and local actors. There have been discussions with the World Bank but the Bank is not able to fund NGOs and thus it was decided that the Bank would not manage such a fund. The Bank does, however, have funds available for preparedness. Donors are interested in creative solutions for ex-ante financing. The fund would provide just the framework and it is important what kind of activities would be funded, how, and by whom. The Task Team should decide whether ex-ante funding is worthwhile. Mr Simonian said that discussions had also taken place with Yannick Glemarec, former head of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund office (MPTF) but it was not important which organization would manage the fund. There are some funds that address similar issues, such as the Peacebuilding Fund. The MPTF office has also issued a report about preparedness funding, and how to bring different funding channels together into a coherent framework. Ms Aviles said that comments were still welcome until early September. Then the activity leads, and anybody else who is interested could meet to discuss the way forward. A meeting with donors would likely take place in October. The activity leads would like to take advantage of the upcoming WHS global consultation in Geneva. The activity leads would like to develop two or three scenarios of how the fund could be set up, and present these to the donors. Inputs from the Task Team for this are important. Ms Buzard said that there was another Global Resilience Partnership by the Rockefeller Foundation, SIDA and others so it was important to connect the dots. Ms Roselli asked that the activity leads provide further updates and details in future Task Team meetings before presenting to the donors.

Action Task Team members to provide comments on the draft theory of change by early September

Activity leads to address the key issues raised during the HFTT meeting - such as donor interest, scope and governance of the proposed fund - and provide further information to the HFTT.

3. Future of the Task Team in 2016

Ms Roselli said that the Task Team had been asked to provide feedback to the IASC Working Group (via the IASC secretariat) earlier than initially planned. Thus it is important for the Task Team to discuss what has been achieved and what challenges it has encountered, the added value of the interagency group and whether and how it should continue to exist in 2016 and beyond.

Ms Aviles said, given ongoing processes such as the WHS and HLP, it was essential to have a Humanitarian Financing Task Team, with an inter-agency character. It should not just be a reference group. On the development side, there is a well-established architecture for coordination and especially financing, e.g., with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund office (MPTF). Something similar is needed on the humanitarian side. The Task Team has managed to increase NGO participation. The Task Team has worked both on the broader perspective (e.g., the 'Future Humanitarian Financing'

report) and on the nuts and bolts of humanitarian financing. The Task Team does not have to be time-bound, does not have to focus only on its workplan, and should instead be more flexible in responding to new requirements. Ms Roselli agreed that the workplan had sometimes restricted the Task Team's flexibility. Ms Buzard said that the IASC Principals had recognized the Task Teams well-functioning and productive. However, because of the IASC review, it was not the time to establish permanent structures. Ms Buzard suggested having a lighter workplan which would allow for more flexibility to take on new issues as they emerge.

Tanja Schümer, IASC secretariat, said that a Working Group meeting will take place on 12 October 2015. The Task Team has to submit a proposal to the WG in September but not a detailed workplan. The Task Team should also propose in which form it would like to exist, Task Team or Reference Group. Jordan Menkveld, IOM, agreed that it was important for the Task Team to continue to exist to respond to new requirements, e.g., from the WHS and HLP. Groups that work well should not just disappear, as happened to the CAP Working Group. Ms Kontinen-Sharp said it was important for the Task Team to continue to exist, and that it could discuss issues beyond *humanitarian* financing. The Task Team's workplan should be adjusted to respond to workstreams on the development side. Ms Skuric said there the need for the Task Team was evident (or a similar group with a similar scope even if it was decided that the overall IASC framework would be changed). While the energy and ambition of the Task Team was commendable, she felt that the HFTT was already stretched to the maximum of its capacity in terms of scope and volume. Thus further mergers that would expand the HFTT's scope might be detrimental to overall quality. Ms Galluzzi agreed with previous comments. Ms Roselli suggested that all Task Team members sent some inputs on the questions previously shared by 10 August, and the co-chairs would report back on the inputs at the next meeting.

Action Task Team members to provide inputs/feedback on questions shared on the future of the Task Team by 10 August

4. Update from Pooled Fund Working Group meeting

Fernando Hesse, OCHA/ Funding Coordination Section (FCS), gave a brief update on the 18-19 June meeting of the Pooled Fund Working Group (PFWG) which took place in the margins of ECOSOC in Geneva:

Global Common Humanitarian Funds (CHF) evaluation: Key recommendations focus on a better resource mobilization and communications strategy to ensure that country-based pooled funds (CBPFs) retain a critical mass and have an impact. OCHA will develop a management response plan by October, together with the country offices that manage the five CHFs included as part of the evaluation.

A study on improving access to funding for front-line responders was presented to the PFWG by its author, Lydia Poole. The study proposes a central facility which could respond to three types of crisis: sudden onset, cyclical emergencies, and protracted emergencies. OCHA, upon request from the PFWG will develop an 'operational paper' to describe how a pilot fund could be set up for the Sahel. OCHA will share the final report of the study soon.

A study on risk tolerance found that there was no space to adopt a risk tolerance policy. Donors are ready to support CBPFs in risky environments as long as strong residual risk management systems and practices are in place.

A study on partner capacity assessments commissioned by ICVA and OCHA, and presented to the Task Team at a previous meeting, was also presented to the PFWG.

At the PFWG meeting, OCHA/FCS gave an update on the implementation of the CBPF global guidelines, whose overall implementation are on track, including with regard to the risk management framework. OCHA FCS is working with UNDP on an annex to the guidelines for funds where UNDP is the managing agent (currently in four countries). UNDP will provide a one-page document to the PFWG on the specific modalities in these four countries.

ICVA provided an update on the Task Team, the Chief of the CERF secretariat provided an update on key funding trends and achievements in the last two years, and the Chief of the HLP secretariat an update on the Panel. Ireland will compile key messages and share a communique to the HLP highlighting the contributions of CBPFs. The next PFWG meeting is scheduled for October, with updates on the planned front-line response facility and the CBPF guidelines.

Ms Roselli said NGOs had appreciated the opportunity to interact with OCHA on CBPFs at the CBPF-NGO Dialogue Platform meeting in Geneva prior to the PFWG meeting. FCS will meet with UN agencies and NGOs separately in September to discuss on the implementation of the guidelines, among several issues.

Other Business

5. Readout from meeting with GHD donors

Ms Aviles gave an update on a meeting of several agencies with the UK and Germany, the co-leads of the GHD humanitarian financing workstream on the recommendations from the 'Future Humanitarian Financing' report. The GHD would like to send key messages to the HLP and would appreciate inputs from the HFTT. A summary note of the meeting will be shared with the Task Team. The GHD donors would like to meet again with the FHF activity leads.

6. Update on High-Level Panel

Ms Matern gave an update on the High-Level Panel. He said that the Panel and secretariat were shifting gears from process to content. The Panel had identified 17 topics, ranging from open data to remittances to faith-based funding. The panel was identifying bold ideas that could be recommended to improve humanitarian financing. Panel members may propose a 'grand bargain' in which each side would have to make some commitments to gain something, e.g., less reporting requirements if aid agencies provide more open data. Task Team members are invited to provide written inputs to the Panel, via the secretariat. Anybody interested in a more detailed update is invited to contact the HLP secretariat. Written updates from the Panel will be shared, including a list of the 17 identified topics.

Action HLP secretariat to share list of the Panel's 17 issues

7. Action points from mid-year retreat

Nicolas Rost, OCHA/CERF and secretariat of the Task Team, gave update on action points from the Task Team's mid-year retreat in June. Activity leads should submit any changes to the workplan in writing. Other pending action points have scheduled for discussion at upcoming meetings (see separate list for more details).

8. Task Team membership

Ms Buzard said that Sophia Swithern of Development Initiatives, the author of the annual Global Humanitarian Assistance report, had asked to join the Task Team. Since the IASC task teams are not exclusive bodies and should be flexible in inviting external actors to participate, she suggested that Ms Swithern should be invited to join the Task Team. The Task Team endorsed the idea. Ms Schümer said that the IASC task team terms of reference may be revised to be clearer on membership.

9. Next Task Team meeting

Mr Rost said the next meeting was planned for 19 August 2015, World Humanitarian Day.

Ms Roselli said this was her last meeting as co-chair of the Task Team, as Ms Pitotti will be back from maternity leave in early August.

Participants

Location	Name	Agency
New York	Hiroko Araki	HLP secretariat
	Fernando Hesse	OCHA/FCS
	Michael Jensen	OCHA/CERF
	Taija Kontinen-Sharp	UNDP
	David Matern	HLP secretariat
	Ekaterina Papaioannou	HLP secretariat
	Nicolas Rost (secretariat)	OCHA/CERF
	Darla Silva (co-chair)	UNICEF
	Marina Skuric Prodanovic	UNFPA
	Geneva	Sandra Aviles
Nan Buzard (co-sponsor)		ICVA
Brian Lander		WFP
Kate McGrane		NRC
Jordan Menkveld		IOM
Cecilia Roselli (co-chair)		ICVA
Tanja Schümer		IASC secretariat
By phone/Webex		Monika Brühlhart
	Caterina Galluzzi	WFP
	Elena Garagorri-Atristain	ICRC
	Christelle Loupforest	IASC secretariat
	Caroline Nichols	InterAction
	Antony Spalton	UNICEF