

IASC Reference Group on Meeting Humanitarian Challenges in Urban Areas Progress Report 2011-2014:

Overall Goal

The MHCUA Reference Group serves as a repository of knowledge for urban humanitarian response and lessons learned exchange as well as substantive support to important urban responses.

Tasks

As per IASC Principals recommendations, The RG is working on:

1. Adopting Area-based Approaches: with activities designed and coordinated through geographical/spatial, community-city-based and inter-sectoral approaches, better linking people's settlements with their livelihoods and city services
2. Surging IASC Assistance within Local Governments and Partners fitting for purpose. Entering into more operational support and collaborative analysis to make sure local efforts are not duplicated rather empowered, and to ensure a coordinated evidence-based approach
3. Facilitating Affected Communities Direct Engagement for Enhanced Accountability

TOP ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2011

Progress in implementation of the IASC MHCUA Strategy and First Action Plan 2011-2014 was perceived as highly satisfactory by IASC agencies and partners.

Although many initial members of the group have changed over the implementation period, there is a consistent number of agencies and organizations that continue to attend, giving continuity to the work plans and showing interest in the achievements. Most IASC agencies produced results and specific deliverables consistent with the six objectives of the MHCUA Strategy and Action Plan and improving the effectiveness of their responses in urban areas.

Some of the key accomplishments include:

- Models and approaches for urban stakeholder partnerships and enhanced coordination, including with host communities;
- Strengthened urban technical capacity among various agencies, including senior urban advisors;
- New urban humanitarian tools, including for protection, profiling and assessments;
- New approaches and coordination mechanisms to address urban livelihoods;
- New urban and coordinated approaches to preparedness and resilience strengthening.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES UNTIL THE END OF 2015

- The RG is nominating a co-chair to further strengthen its outreach and capacity;
- The RG will initiate an outreach process to organizations and individual experts involved in urban humanitarian responses, in order to enlarge the capacity of the RG to respond to humanitarian crises in urban areas and linking this to longer-term solutions. This will also foster collaboration between city, humanitarian and development actors so that all can play a role in shaping more resilient cities.
- The RG will enlarge its body of knowledge and expertise to respond to humanitarian situations in urban areas: creating linkages with national, regional and international rosters of deployable urban leaders and other relevant experts who can transfer knowledge and complement reference group members' expertise.
- The RG will engage into more operational discussions and support, extracting lessons learned and replicating successes in order to maintain knowledge of good practices in responding to humanitarian situations in urban settings. These will particularly look at most at risk cities, where local actors are leading positive change, and international actors play a supportive role.
- A decision from the IASC was taken in using the World Humanitarian Summit, Habitat III as well as other opportunities to emphasise the importance and improve the protection and assistance to displaced populations in urban settings.