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IASC News Update - December 2014   <u>View this email in your browser</u>

IASC News

Inter-Agency Standing Committee

News and Highlights from the IASC Community

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Welcome to the fourth issue of IASC News. We welcome your feedback and input to <u>iasccorrespondence@un.org</u>.

IASC Principals Meeting, 9 December 2014. Credit: UNOG - Jean Marc Ferré.

LATEST NEWS

IASC Principals Meeting

The IASC Principals Meeting was held on 9 December 2014 in Geneva, hosted by IOM. Principals discussed the challenges and opportunities affecting the current humanitarian context. The increasing politicization of humanitarian response was identified as a key area of concern, including challenges of mobilising support for humanitarian action by political leaders and from a public increasingly desensitized to extreme violence and suffering from intensive media coverage. Preliminary results from a survey on the impact

of integration on humanitarian action were shared, as well as an analysis of learning from IASC Level 3 (L3) System-wide Emergency Declarations. The imperative of bridging relief to development to ensure a "seamless continuum" of activities was stressed, as well as the need to break out of the 'boxes' imposed by existing terminology, and conceptual and organisational frameworks. 'Game-changing' practices for the urban agenda were presented to address gaps in the system, while an evaluation of the challenges and opportunities of protection highlighted the emerging issues of data protection and cyber security.

Findings of the IASC review reaffirmed the value of the IASC, while highlighting options to reinforce decision-making, ownership and working practices. In a series of updates on key areas of activity, the PSEA Champion noted some achievements in this area since the Principals' commitment three years ago to firm collective action, but that 'more needs to be done'. The key achievements of the Task Teams in 2014 were shared, including their plans for 2015 and findings of the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) on the Response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines were highlighted. The next IASC Principals meeting will be held in May 2015.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

During December, the IASC bi-annual *Early Warning Report* for the period December 2014 - May 2015; the *Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) of the Typhoon Haiyan Response* and the *Inception Report for the Whole-of-System Protection Review* were released. Highlights from these are as follows:

A Somali woman holds her severely malnourished baby in Mogadishu. Credit: UN IST PHOTO / Stuart Price.

Early Warning Report, December 2014 - May 2015

The bi-annual *IASC Early Warning Report* highlights twelve serious risk scenarios, either identified by the Emergency Directors Group (EDG) as being of particular interest or identified by the IASC Task Team on Preparedness and Resilience (TTPR) Analysts Group as having the highest combined probability and impact. Particularly highlighted in the report is a high likelihood of a very high impact for drought in the coming six month period in Somalia. The report also identifies the potential for economic and institutional collapse in West Africa extending beyond the countries currently affected by the Ebola Virus, the possible impact of moderate to heavy rains in Peru, Ecuador and Colombia, as well as the potential deterioration of the conflict and humanitarian situations in Libya, Nigeria and Yemen. In most cases, the IASC TTPR recommends Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) actions of updating/verifying contingency planning and other appropriate advanced preparedness activities. Read the full Early Warning Report for December 2014 - May 2015 here.

IASC Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Typhoon Haiyan Response

On 8 November 2013, Typhoon Haiyan (locally known as Yolanda) made landfall in the Central Visayas region of the Philippines, killing over 6,000 people and leaving 4 million homeless. A system-wide level 3 (L3) emergency response was activated. The inter-agency humanitarian evaluation (IAHE) conducted between months 9 and 12 after the Declaration, offers an independent assessment of the achievement of the collective response objectives. It reviews the extent to which response mechanisms of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle and the Transformative Agenda successfully supported the response. The evaluation found the inter-agency humanitarian response effectively contributed to emergency needs being met through the timely and relevant response provision. It also identified a number of good practices and innovative activities. To continue to improve the impact of the collective humanitarian response, the report also makes recommendations in the areas of transition and recovery, preparedness and planning and needs assessments. It highlights the need for the international response system to adapt and understand national ones. Read the full IAHE Report here.

Whole-of-System Protection Review Inception Report

The first phase of the independent "Whole-of-System Review" ended with the release of the Inception Report on 16 December 2014. The review itself is focused on the performance of the humanitarian system's achievement of protection outcomes in disaster, complex emergency and armed conflict settings. The inception report provides an overview of the evolution of protection in the context of humanitarian action, and places the review in the context of other studies conducted. The report explains the purpose, scope and methodology of the review, clarifying the way forward. The consultants have now entered into the desk review phase and arrangements for field missions to eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar, South Sudan and Syria are under way and will begin in mid-to-late January 2015.

IASC EVENTS IN GENEVA IN DECEMBER

IASC Events are organized on an ad hoc basis by the IASC secretariat in Geneva and New York

The Humanitarian Situation in South Sudan

03 December, Geneva: In December 2013, over a 72-hour period, the security situation in South Sudan dramatically deteriorated, the effects of which were felt by local communities almost instantaneously. Since then, some 2 million people have fled their homes and many more lives and livelihoods have been shattered. Toby Lanzer, DSRSG/HC/RC for South Sudan, gave a briefing on the current situation. He noted some accomplishments in 2014: 3.5 of the 3.8 million people in need have been reached; 75% of requested funding was obtained; unprecedented access by air was
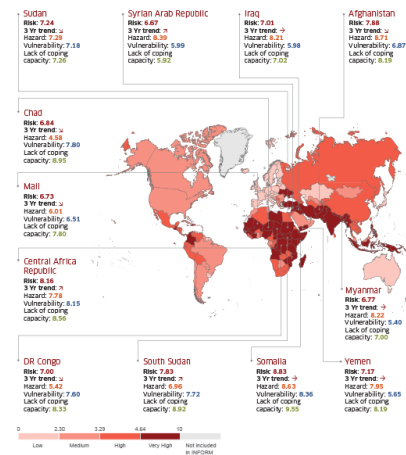
Upcoming Events

January 2015 (date TBC), New York: Planning Meeting for the 2015 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment.

PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

INFORM - The Index for Risk Management

achieved and access by barges improved significantly. However, a stark humanitarian situation was also presented: humanitarian needs continue to grow faster than the response; protection issues remain a challenge, particularly in relation to high levels of gender- based violence; and the political and security situation remains fragile. Read the 2015 Humanitarian Response Plan and latest situation report for South Sudan.

Lessons Learned From the 2011 Famine in Somalia

4 December, New York: Famine in Somalia was declared in July 2011 and over 4 million people were affected, half a million children were malnourished and a quarter of a million people lost their lives. Many factors contributed to the crisis, including a major drought which caused production failure, while increased food prices caused contributed to market failure. Despite accurate and timely early-warning, the response itself was late, with factors such as the conflict and rule of Al-Shabaab, counter-terror legislation and restricted humanitarian access affecting the ability to respond on time. Dan Maxwell, Nisar Majid and Janet Kim presented some key lessons which include recognition of the need for a greater sense of shared risk, there were issues of fragmentation, and the challenging of identifying trusted delivery partners for implementation. At the same time, cash operations worked well and have provided models for future application. Read the Lessons Learned review here.

Briefing on the Humanitarian Situation in Occupied Palestinian Territory

17 December, New York: Ramesh Rajasingham, OCHA Head of Office, Occupied Palestinian Territory, presented some of the key challenges facing the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Significant restrictions for movement and access; forced displacements; demolition orders on residential and livelihood-related structures; unemployment; poverty; food insecurity and an increase in settler violence, are all key concerns in the West Bank. In the Gaza Strip, a broken health-care sector; lack of respect for human rights and protection of civilians; as well as the highest levels of IDPs since 1967 and limited access to water and sanitation present long-term challenges. Read more about the humanitarian situation here.

Meeting with the High Level Independent

The Index for Risk Management (INFORM) is a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters. It can support decisions about prevention, preparedness and response by identifying where and why crises and disasters are likely to occur so that we can reduce the risks, build people's resilience and prepare and respond better. Read the 2015 Report here.

Niger: FAO provides emergency assistance to small herders to help protect surviving livestock build resilience against future crisis. CREDIT: FAO/Issouf Sanogo.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Other developments of interest in December in the humanitarian field include the following:

Publication online of the World Humanitarian Data and Trends 2014.

Launch of the Global Humanitarian Appeal 2015 on 8 December. The consolidated

Panel on Peace Operations

17 December, Geneva: On 31 October 2014, the UN Secretary-General announced the establishment of a High-Level Independent Panel of senior experts with detailed knowledge of peace operations and diverse expertise, to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the state of UN peace operations and special political missions, as well as the emerging needs for the future. The Panel invited IASC partners to a briefing in Geneva in order to gain a better understanding of the types of challenges faced by humanitarian actors where peace operations are deployed. The discussion covered, *inter alia*, challenges around the speed of deployment, for the relationship between humanitarian and peace operations, and on ensuring access for humanitarian actors. IASC members have been invited to make written submissions to assist the Panel in developing its thinking. Submissions can be sent to Mike Yuin (yuin@un.org) by 15 January 2015.

appeal requests $16.4 billion to support 57.5 million people affected by disaster and conflict.

Statement by the ERC to the Security Council on Syria, which stressed the on-going severity of the crisis and called for immediate action. This was followed by the release of the Syrian Arab Republic Strategic Response Plan 2015 (SRP) and Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan 2015-2016 (3RP).

Launch of the Core Humanitarian Standard in Copenhagen on 16 December. The CHS aims to promote greater coherence in humanitarian standards in order to contribute to better humanitarian responses.

IASC SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Some of the key planned activities for the IASK Task Teams and Priority Clusters in 2015 are as follows:

Accountability to Affected Populations and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (AAP/PSEA): The Task Team will focus on strengthening the implementation of AAP-PSEA. A Help Desk will be initiated; practical guidance prepared; AAP/PSEA missions will take place in emergencies; increased linkages of AAP/PSEA and disaster preparedness at community level in Pakistan and Kenya; establishing stronger linkages with clusters; working with the WHS Secretariat and placing special attention and focus on PSEA issues to ensure increased compliance. See the revised 2015 workplan.

Humanitarian Financing (HFTT): The Task Team will continue advancing its objectives, for instance on reducing the humanitarian-development divide and decreasing burdensome donor conditionalities. The Task Team will hold

Revitalizing Principled Humanitarian Action (RPHA): The Task Team will finalize the Counter Terrorism toolkit; review the impact of UN integration on humanitarian action (with a focus on implementation); and develop a guide for operational Risk Management across IASC organizations. See full workplan here.

Preparedness and Resilience (TTPR): The Task Team will roll out the Emergency Response Preparedness Plan (including piloting in 3 countries), as well as the Common Framework for Preparedness and will develop guidance on humanitarian contribution to resilience while also contributing to stronger integration of resilience in Humanitarian Programme Cycle guidance and tools. See full workplan for 2015 here.

Global Protection Cluster (GPC): The

a retreat in January to refine its 2015 workplan, including elements to link to the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative; the 2015 High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing; and the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit.

GPC will continue the independent whole-of-system review on protection; develop an IASC policy on protection; and promote awareness and implementation of the UN Human Rights Up Front Plan of Action.

For more information or to join the groups, please visit the IASC Subsidiary Bodies webpage.

Thank you all for the support given to the IASC in 2014, and we look forward to continuing engagement in the year ahead. Wishing you all a very peaceful 2015.

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The IASC was established under General Assembly Resolution 46/182 (1991) as the primary inter-agency coordination mechanism for humanitarian action in complex and major emergencies. It is a unique forum which brings together UN operational agencies and other humanitarian organizations and is supported by the IASC secretariat. Email: iasccorrespondence@un.org

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