

## News and Highlights from the IASC Community

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*Providing safe water is a major challenge for aid agencies in Yemen. Credit: UNICEF*

### NEWS

## Joint Statement on Syria – ERC, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and WHO

Emergency Relief Coordinator/USG OCHA Stephen O'Brien, WFP Executive Director Ertharin Cousin, UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake, WHO Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan and UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi issued [a joint statement on Syria](#) on 16 January. In the statement they noted that: "While efforts to fully implement a ceasefire in Syria continue, we again appeal for immediate, unconditional, and safe access to reach the children and families who are still cut off from humanitarian aid across the country." They reminded of the bleak situation in Syria today: there are 15 besieged areas where up to 700,000 people, including an estimated 300,000 children,

...still remain trapped. The IASC Principals noted that: "Children are at heightened risk of... infectious diseases, and injury. Many need support... after being exposed to traumatic events, violence and other violations. Tragically, far too many children have known little but conflict and loss in their young lives. The horrors of the siege of the eastern districts of Aleppo have disappeared from the public consciousness – but we must not let the needs, the lives and the futures of Syria's people fade from the world's conscience." They concluded the statement by saying that: "We must not let 2017 repeat the tragedies of 2016 for Syria."

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## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

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## ERC's Statement to the Security Council on the Humanitarian Situation in the Lake Chad Basin

"Now is the time to act decisively to expand humanitarian assistance and protection" the Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O'Brien told the Security Council on the humanitarian situation in the Lake Chad Basin on 12 January. In his [statement](#), he noted that the humanitarian crisis across North-East Nigeria and parts of Cameroon, Chad and Niger, triggered by the horrendous, violent and inhuman campaign of Boko Haram, is deepening. Civilians face violations of humanitarian and human rights law, every day, including death, injuries, sexual and gender-based violence, arbitrary detention, disappearances, forced displacement, and forced recruitment. He noted that what started as a protection crisis has also become a major food and nutrition crisis – today one of the largest humanitarian crises in the world. "Despite these worrying trends, there is hope that 2017 will yet prove to be a turning point for the people affected by this crisis", said ERC O'Brien.

## Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs stakeholder meeting

The Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of internally displaced persons, Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, convened a stakeholder meeting on 25 January to present her vision and priorities for the next three years. The panel comprised the Austrian Ambassador to the Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva, the two previous mandate holders, Walter Kälin and Chaloka Beyani, and subsequent Q&A was moderated by Nina Schrepfer, Chief of the IDP Section at UNHCR. The Rapporteur stressed the continuity of her work from that of her predecessors and stated that, in the course of her mandate, she will emphasize on ensuring IDP participation; the inclusion of IDPs in

her country priorities for 2017, and will continue to convene the San Remo course on internal displacement.

## STAIT Webinar on Protection

The Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team (STAIT) held a webinar on 13 December, 2016 “*Humanitarian field leadership on Protection: Why it matters? How to do it?*” Panellists were Eugene Owusu, DSRSG, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in South Sudan and Volker Türk, Assistant High Commissioner for Refugees – Protection, UNHCR. The speakers discussed leadership responsibilities of HCs and HCTs on protection and capitalising on the complementary roles of HCs and HCTs, via the Protection Cluster and Inter-Cluster Coordination groups. Practical steps on how to advocate with different stakeholders in-country, to maximise protection outcomes, were also outlined. The recording of the webinar and webinar summary can be accessed [here](#).

## UNHCR Releases New Review on Cash for WASH Programmes in Refugee Settings

UNHCR is undertaking a review on cash for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programming in refugee settings with the aim to help humanitarians determine when and how to provide refugees with cash to meet their WASH needs. As part of the organisation’s on-going efforts to implement its [Policy on Cash-Based Interventions](#), the review provides an overview of Cash-Based Interventions (CBIs) in the WASH Sector, emerging best practices and lessons learned, key recommendations and a consolidation of tools and guidance on cash for WASH programming. The findings suggest augmenting the use of CBIs to support refugees’ access to a number of WASH commodities and services outside of camps, where refugees have to pay for water and sanitation services.

Until now the best practices and lessons learned have been from WASH interventions in Gaza, Philippines, Lebanon and Jordan – ranging from vouchers to multi-purpose grants.

Download the review [here](#). Please find more information about UNHCR and cash-based interventions in general on the [UNHCR website](#). For any questions, please contact Murray Burt at [burt@unhcr.org](mailto:burt@unhcr.org), Senior WASH Officer at UNHCR Headquarters.

## Launch of 2017-2018 3RP ‘Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan in response to the Syria crisis

United Nations agencies and NGO partners have appealed for US\$4.63 billion in new funding during 2017 to continue vital work in addressing the growing needs of refugees from Syria and communities hosting them in neighbouring countries. The UN and over 240 partners formally launched the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) at the Helsinki Conference on Supporting Syrians and the Region on 24 January. The plan aims to assist over 4.7 million refugees from Syria and 4.4 million people hosting them in

humanitarian needs of 13.5 million people within Syria this year. Read more: <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/>

## WFP's Integrated Road Map (IRM)

The World Food Programme (WFP) is embracing the 2030 Agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals and the new ways of working, through a transformative approach. The organization's Integrated Road Map (IRM) will equip WFP to achieve Zero Hunger by 2030 at the country level. Endorsed by WFP's Executive Board in November 2016, implementation of the four-pronged 'package' focuses on maximizing results in the field, and aims to strengthen WFP's core business of saving lives in an emergency response. The IRM embeds WFP's Strategic Plan (2017-2021), Country Strategic Plans, the Financial Framework Review and the Corporate Results Framework. It allows WFP to design and deliver coherent portfolios, instead of the current project-based approach. WFP's Country Offices will now be better positioned to support the countries in which the organization operates through an increased emphasis on measuring performance, and demonstrating outcomes within the framework of country strategic plans, whilst also driving down costs.

## The Global Cluster for Early Recovery Annual Plenary

The [Global Cluster for Early Recovery \(GCER\)](#) Annual Plenary meeting took place on 24 January in Geneva. 60 participants from UN Agencies, NGOs, Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and Permanent Missions reviewed the GCER achievements in 2016 and discussed potential paths for the future of Early Recovery.

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## IASC PRIORITIES

### IASC Task Team on Humanitarian Financing

The Humanitarian Financing Task Team (HFTT) held its 2017 retreat on 25-26 January in Geneva, focussing on advancing implementation of HFTT's 2016/2017 work plan, mapping the interlinkages between HFTT and other fora, ensuring that HFTT's activities remain on track vis-à-vis the Grand Bargain processes and strengthening interaction between HFTT and the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative. The retreat was broadly attended by representatives of NGOs, UN Agencies, ICRC/IFRC and the World Bank (close to 60 participants in total). In addition, guest speakers for selected sessions included six representatives of the Grand Bargain Facilitation Group and five representatives of GHD donors. At the core of the retreat were six well-attended two-hour sessions on specific technical issues, helping advance activities and agreements on

document will be available on the IASC website within the coming days.

## IASC Task Team on Accountability to Affected Populations and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (AAP/PSEA)

The IASC AAP/PSEA Task Team, OCHA and DEMAC will hold a discussion on “Strengthening collaboration with Diasporas in humanitarian response” during the Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Week. Following a previous Task Team meeting with a special focus on Diaspora, the session will explore the strengths, challenges and opportunities of collaborating with diaspora organisations and their roles as a bridge with national actors in humanitarian action. The panellists will also exchange ideas around the role diaspora organisations can play to increase Accountability to Affected Populations. The discussion will be facilitated by the IASC Secretariat. The event will take place in Room 18-CICG Geneva on Thursday 9 of February from 9.00 to 10.30. The Task Team will summarise the key outcomes and circulate them through the IASC website.

## IASC Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings

The Reference Group has finalised and released the [Inter-Agency Referral Guidance Note and Form](#) for MHPSS programmes. The Reference Group is also collaborating with the Education Cluster and INEE to support the development of Operational Guidance on Psychosocial Support and Socio-emotional learning (PSS-SEL). IASC RG Coordinator and MHPSS.net are pleased to have been accepted as participants in the Global DRR Platform meeting in Cancun in May 2017. Furthermore, the South Sudan MHPSS WG held their first meeting in Juba in January 2017. The new MHPSS Working Group (a merging of the PSS Taskforce and the MH Platform) was a key recommendation from a support mission conducted by the IASC RG Coordinator in summer 2016. The RG will engage with WHO Technical Consultation to develop a toolkit for the Care of People affected by Complications Associated with Zika Virus Disease.

## IASC Reference Group on Principled Humanitarian Action

The Reference Group convened a meeting on 31 January to further develop and agree on their work plan, drawing on the retreat discussions. Participants shared comments on the draft Reference Group workplan and are seeking lead organisations for respective areas of this, by 6 February. The workplan will be available at the Reference Group’s website: <http://www.iasc.ch/revitalizing-principled-humanitarian-action>.

## Updated information at the IASC website: <http://iasc.ch/>

We have been updating the IASC website, our primary channel of information sharing within the IASC, available at: <http://iasc.ch/> The IASC website includes information on the [IASC Principals](#), including the new Principals, and their policy decisions. The outcomes from the meetings of the [IASC Working Group](#), which are chaired by the [DERC](#), are also available on the website. [The IASC Subsidiary Bodies](#) (Task Teams and Reference Groups) post policies and products – and there are over 100 [IASC products!](#) – in their pages. In addition, each IASC agency has appointed an [IASC Focal Point](#) to coordinate ongoing IASC activities in relation to the IASC Principals, IASC Working Group and IASC subsidiary bodies, as well as their respective agencies' follow up to IASC decisions and developments. Our IASC secretariat colleagues' contact details are also available on [the website](#).

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### IASC Meetings & Events

2 February: AAP/PSEA Task Team meeting

2 February: IASC Event on 2017 Report of the Secretary-General on "Strengthening of the Coordination of Emergency Humanitarian Assistance of the UN and planning for the forthcoming 2017 ECOSOC HAS (NY and Geneva)

3 February: [IASC Event on Colombia](#) (Geneva)

3 February: IASC Event on the PACT reporting system for WHS (NY and Geneva)

7 February: Advancing the Development of the IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action (Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week) (Geneva)

8 February: [Making Humanitarian Action Inclusive: How to Engage in the Development of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#) (Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week) (Geneva)

8 February: [IASC Principals luncheon](#) (Geneva)

8 February: STAIT Webinar: Joint Needs Assessments: Doing it right? The role of senior humanitarian leaders in the field.

9 February: Diaspora event (Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week) (Geneva)

16 February: Meeting of the IASC Senior Focal Points on PSEA

emergency response in Syria, Yemen and Iraq

7-8 March: [IASC Working Group Meeting](#), hosted by FAO (Rome)

26-30 March: [IASC Emergency Team Leadership Programme](#) (ETLP) (Montreux)

## Other Events

6-10 February: [Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Week \(HNPW\)](#)

11-12 February: [Hackathon for Humanitarian Aid](#), taking place on in the Netherlands.

28 March: [ICVA Annual Conference 2017](#)

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We welcome your feedback and input to [iasccorrespondence@un.org](mailto:iasccorrespondence@un.org).



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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](mailto:iasccorrespondence@un.org)

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