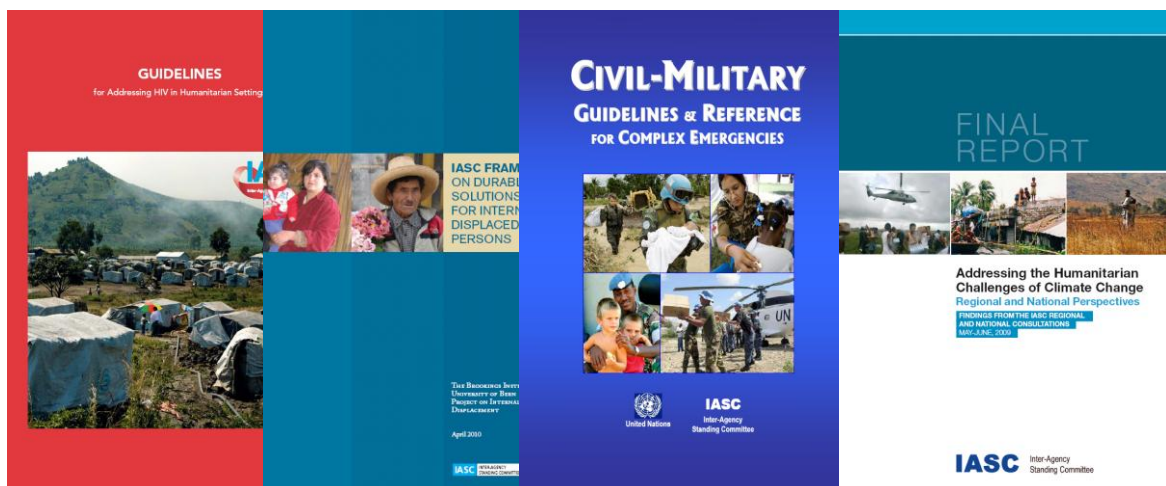


# IASC PRODUCT GUIDELINE

*Ensuring IASC Products are of high quality, well targeted, widely distributed, and effectively implemented.*



## **Contact Information:**

In case there are any further questions/feedback regarding this guide or the development of new products, please contact the IASC Secretariat: [iasccorrespondence@un.org](mailto:iasccorrespondence@un.org)

## **Acknowledgements:**

This guide was drafted by the IASC Secretariat in 2011 drawing on the report of the review of IASC products [Ferretti, 2009] and contributions from IASC organisations.

© Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) 2011

## What are IASC products?

Since 1992, the humanitarian organisations represented in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) have agreed several policy statements, working tools, guidelines, or manuals, which help to set the normative frameworks, common standards and good practice for the humanitarian community. Given the inclusive membership of the IASC, these products carry a broad consensus within the humanitarian community and guide the work of many UN and non-UN humanitarian partners.

**Guidelines:** Guidelines, handbooks and manuals set out detailed steps and make specific recommendations on how to address a certain topic. Guidelines are usually written documents made available in printed form. Soft-copies are shared widely by email and through websites.

**Training and materials:** The content of trainings is usually based on guidelines or manuals and are a means to build capacity or communities of experts around a specific topic. One or more IASC organisations take the lead in providing these trainings on behalf of an IASC subsidiary body.

**Strategies:** Strategy documents set specific objectives for the IASC as a whole and propose actions of how to reach them.

**Advocacy Papers:** These papers include key advocacy messages are developed with the goal of raising awareness on a certain topic.

These guidelines, tools and documents are referred to collectively as IASC products. They are developed by Subsidiary Bodies of the IASC (Subworking Groups, Task Forces or Reference Groups).

These bodies are established by the IASC Principals or IASC Working Group to assist the Principals and the Working Group with addressing issues that require additional time, capacity, and technical expertise to take forward. IASC Subsidiary Bodies submit their products to the IASC Principals or the Working Group for discussion and/or endorsement. Once endorsed by either of these two fora, a product becomes an IASC Product. IASC Products are mostly developed to be used by humanitarian actors in field or policy work.

While this guide cannot be equally relevant for all IASC products, it nevertheless poses important questions and makes critical suggestions applicable to a wide range of products.

## Why yet another guide?

This guide has been developed at the request of the IASC Working Group.<sup>1</sup> It provides tips and advice on the development, publication and distribution of IASC products with the aim of increasing their relevance and use in the field.

This guideline targets those intending to develop IASC products; authors or expert groups - the 'product originators'.

---

<sup>1</sup> Decision by the 79<sup>th</sup> IASC Working Group meeting: Welcomed the Product Development Guideline and requested that both the Guidelines and the follow-up Action Plan be revised through IASC consultation to reflect the discussion of the Working Group, with the aim of subsequent electronic endorsement. **Action by: IASC Secretariat, revised draft by 30 September 2010**

**IMPORTANT**

Generally, the product originators need to show that the good practice in this guideline has been followed before the IASC Principals or the IASC Working Group will consider the endorsement of a product.

**This document follows the following structure:**

- (1) Thinking Ahead
- (2) Product Development and Technical Guidance
- (3) Endorsement of the Product by the IASC
- (4) Distribution of the Products and its Application
- (5) Monitoring and Revision

Attached to this guideline is a **checklist** for product developers and those distributing the final product. It should be read together with this guidance.

**Before getting started:**

Before embarking on the long and resource intensive process of developing a new product, consider the following questions. If the answer to any of these following questions is 'no', it is unlikely that the product will be endorsed by the IASC.

| QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE STARTING    |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | What is the value added of our new product? Do we know what other products already exist on the same theme? Have we considered if they are already good enough for our purpose? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Can we demonstrate demand for the new proposed new guidance from a range of field actors? Is there really a need for a new product?   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Do we commit to the long-term process of developing and distributing the product?   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Do we have sufficient resources for the whole process (drafting, consulting, printing, distribution, monitoring and review)?  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Do we know anyone who can share with me his/her experience in developing a product? Do we have a network we can use?  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Do we have sufficient agency and inter-agency support and buy-in to develop and use the product? Is the new product in line with current priorities?                            |

## I Thinking Ahead

The responsibility for ensuring the quality, distribution and monitoring the use of IASC products throughout the process lies with the inter-agency group which develops it.<sup>2</sup>

### TO ENSURE HIGH QUALITY

- ☑ Draft a detailed plan for the development, distribution and implementation monitoring.
- ☑ Identify required resources and obtain commitment for support from agencies.
- ☑ Identify, assess and integrate available information and evidence.
- ☑ Plan the effective distribution and roll out of the product.
- ☑ Monitor the use of the IASC product subsequent to endorsement.

Please keep in mind that even when a product is developed and endorsed by the IASC Working Group, there are additional responsibilities to undertake related to the distribution and monitoring of implementation of the product. These responsibilities should be taken up by a ‘custodian group’.

The IASC Working Group or Principals might decide to discontinue an IASC group that has developed a product. Such a group may decide to continue as an informal network outside the formal IASC mechanism to

distribute, roll out and monitor the use of the respective IASC Product(s), and to make technical enhancements. In case the group will not continue, a custodian of the product would need to be identified. Generating quality products depends on identifying, assessing and integrating the evidence available.

### CUSTODIAN GROUP

The custodian group assumes the responsibility for ensuring the distribution, implementation monitoring and revision of the product, if needed. If the group’s mandate expires, a new custodian needs to be found within the IASC mechanism, ideally an IASC organisation with a special interest in the subject and the capacity to take up the necessary responsibilities.

## II Product Development and Technical Guidance

Developing an IASC product requires careful planning.

### (1) Planning the process

Product originators are encouraged to write a plan at the inception of a product development process, guided by the following questions:

---

<sup>2</sup> Decision by the 79<sup>th</sup> IASC Working Group meeting: Agreed that a proposed quality assurance functions for IASC products be carried by the product developers (normally IASC subsidiary bodies) responsible for development and updating, with quality assurance functions reflected in the Guidance. **Action by: *Subsidiary Bodies to assure product quality, IASC Secretariat to reflect quality assurance functions in guidance***

- What are the purpose and expected impact of the product?
- Are similar products already available? Is this one necessary?
- What inputs are needed to ensure a relevant and comprehensive product? How should other organisations, technical experts, and field staff be consulted to achieve this?
- Who is the target audience and how can the new product address their needs and be successfully distributed to them?
- What financial and staff resources are needed to develop, distribute and monitor the implementation of the product.

**PLAN the PROCESS**

The product development plan should address the following issues:

- Purpose and expectations
- Identification of need
- Consultation approach
- Target audiences and general strategy for distribution
- Resources

**(2) Linking with other IASC and inter-agency efforts**

**LINK WITH**

- Sphere Project
- IASC SWGs
- Humanitarian Accountability Partnership

Before developing a new product, consider establishing links to other relevant inter-agency efforts and documents such as other IASC Subsidiary Bodies, or other standard setting initiatives, the Sphere Project, Interagency Network on Education in Emergencies, or the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership in order to incorporate or refer to these humanitarian standards in the new product and avoid duplication. The new products should make explicit reference to existing standards and other interagency initiatives or products to provide the target audience with an overview of relevant initiatives and to put the new product into context.

**(3) Expertise of originators group and external consultants**

Assess available internal resources and expertise within the product originator group to work on the product; and only as a second step hire an external consultant to do the main development work. An external consultants’ perspective may justify the costs of hiring them. However, the work of consultants should be overseen closely by the product originator to achieve the highest level of organisational ownership, and to ensure that nuances of IASC organisational policies and practices are captured in the product.

**(4) Quality Assurance and Consultation**

All products must meet high quality standards in terms of content – capturing current accepted standards and best practice – and in terms of production – writing, editing, translation, and where appropriate, design and printing. The product originators are responsible for quality assurance through consultations amongst all/relevant IASC organisations and other relevant organisations/institutions. Feedback from field staff is encouraged at all times, and in most cases, a product designed for field application will only be endorsed after field testing. External professional editing and design are useful to present a high quality product. Editing is an essential part of the publishing process and its

**QUALITY ASSURANCE**

- Reviews
- Field consultations
- Field testing
- Professional editing

impact on the professional clarity of a product should not be underestimated. The product originator group also needs to clarify the accountability for printing/publishing erroneous material.

**(5) User-friendly format and design of products**

All IASC products should be user-friendly. Versions for non-specialists, in particular, should be as simple and short as possible and with minimal jargon. Avoid dense text and small fonts. Products can be made more effective and user-friendly by including diagrams and pictures, section summaries for easy reference, setting out minimum requirements, information boxes, checklists of practical do’s and don’ts, and best practice examples. Review some of the existing more frequently used IASC products to see what approaches they have used. While products need to be user-friendly they also should be cost-effective. Glossy publications are not always required. If the aim is to distribute the final product electronically, limit the size of the product file and make it possible to download using low bandwidth.

**(6) Supporting material**

After completing the ‘main product’, a variety of supporting materials may be required to reach different target audiences and support application of and learning of the ‘main product’. It is likely that such enhancements will take time to develop after the initial product is released. Taken together these materials are referred to as the ‘product family’. *Note that the first product that is being developed – the ‘main product’ – does not need to be a printed document.* It might just be a poster or a power point presentation, which will later be supported by other materials.

| SUPPORTING MATERIAL   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electronic download</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CD-ROM / USB Stick</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Video</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wall posters</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training packages</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E-learning tools</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dedicated web pages or website</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Power Point Presentations</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pocket booklet or card formats</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Templates</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Checklists</li> </ul> |

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>PRODUCT FAMILY</b> | To reach different audiences more effectively, product originators need to develop supporting materials for a product. This means in effect, a ‘family’ of products. |
|-----------------------|--|

**(7) Structure of written documents:**

While there is no set structure for IASC products, each product should include:

- Foreword,
- Acknowledgements including a list of contributing organisations,
- Table of contents,
- List of acronyms,
- Lists of references and materials for further reading,
- List of supporting materials (if applicable),

- Contact information for queries, feedback and requests for copies of the product,
- Date published/finalized,
- Owner of copyright, picture credits,
- Name of IASC organization or subsidiary body responsible,
- Contact information,
- (if relevant: Date of review/revision of product).

### **(8) French, Russian, Hindi? Translations of IASC Products**

All IASC Products must be produced in English as the common language of the IASC. It is recommended that the final product be translated into other languages to reach a wider audience, including field-based humanitarian workers and partners. Translation of the products, including funding for professional translation services, should be considered from the outset depending of the target audience and the regions where the product will be used. It is recommended that translations are carried out by professional translators, and that the quality of the translation is checked by a group of mother-tongue staff with humanitarian experience. Product originators should explore whether a product can be translated within organisations' translation departments or if external translators need to be contacted. Only translations with the official languages of the UN can be submitted for endorsement. If the translated product has not been endorsed by the IASC Working Group, it cannot be considered a formal ISAC publication and the following disclaimer must be included.

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>DISCLAIMER</b> | “This translation was independently produced by [...]. This is not a formal IASC publication”. |
|-------------------|--|

### **(9) Local adaptation and reproduction of the final product**

In order to reach a wider audience in the field, consider the specific circumstances, culture, environment and history of a target area to encourage local adaptations of products. Local staff can take the lead in contextualizing products, or develop supporting materials in the local language, while the product originators must ensure the consistency with the official main product.

This will encourage the establishment of local ‘communities of practice’ - a group of professionals that actively supports the implementation of a specific product. Such a ‘community of practice’ could also assist in monitoring the implementation. Contextualization and adaptation of products is vital for the wide use of the standards that they contain. However, only the original version (i.e. the ‘main product’) will be presented to the IASC for endorsement as an IASC product. As described above, contextualised products are not IASC products as such, since most likely a local NGO, civil society organisation or government department will take the ownership of a local product.

In case of adaptation, the document needs to acknowledge both the source of the new document and the authorship of the original (IASC). The IASC logo should not be used on any adapted products both because the content may have changed from what was endorsed and because the adaptation may in any case be released by another entity, such as a government department, or by a non-IASC group.

**The adapted product should acknowledge the original publication as follows:**

“This <language/format> edition of <title> is published by <publisher> of <address> in 20xx. This is <a graphic version/poster/translation etc> from the <title of original IASC product>, first published in 20xx by the IASC”.

**(10) Printing and storage**

While online or electronic versions ensure wide distribution of products at little cost, it is recommended that the product be printed for key users after endorsement by the IASC Working Group or Principals. Feedback from country operations show that local partners and government officials in particular like hard copies. Different options for printing products should be considered to reduce cost, including printing locally in a field or regional office where it may be less expensive. Consideration should also be given to “printing-on-demand” to avoid having to find a location to store printed products. Storage is not only a question of space, but it costs money and takes staff time to manage the inventory of stock. It may be beneficial to consult the target audience on the number of copies required prior to printing to ensure appropriate supply for the demand. One version of a final product needs to be submitted to the IASC Secretariat electronically and, if applicable, as a printed version. The Secretariat will make these products available on the IASC website.

**(11) Attribution**

All reproductions of maps, figures, tables, photographs and pictures used in a product need to be attributed to the source. If maps are used, their accuracy needs to be ensured and they should only be taken from a reputable source. The quality of all illustrative material needs to be ensured. It is recommended that if a product is printed, the quality of the illustrative material is tested.

**(12) Copyright**

Once endorsed by the IASC Working Group or Principals, the copyright is with the IASC. The following statement should be included in the IASC Product: © Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) [year]. If organisations develop their own guidance material based on the IASC product, this needs to be acknowledged by stating the original source.

**(13) ISBN numbers**

IASC Products are generally not numbered and no ISBN number is needed. However, if considered appropriate and essential, product originators might consider requesting an ISBN number for certain products to allow for more efficient marketing and sales or identification of the product. Consider the legal requirements of products with ISBN numbers and in whose name the ISBN number would be requested. This has to be one of the IASC organisations, as the IASC is not a legal entity.

**III Approval of the Product by the IASC**

The final product, once agreed by the group of originators, will be presented to the IASC Working Group (or IASC Principals as relevant) for endorsement.



In addition to the final product, the product originators should also present the following for WG consideration:

- ☑ Has the demand for the product been researched and established;
- ☑ Links with other initiatives;
- ☑ Distribution and roll-out strategy, including agency responsibilities in facilitating roll out, costs, and detail who will take responsibility for storage, shipping, and, where relevant, training;
- ☑ Plan for monitoring and evaluation, and for the custody of the product;
- ☑ List of or plans for developing supporting materials.

### **IASC Logo and Branding:**

The IASC logo is exclusively reserved for products endorsed by the IASC Principals or Working Group. Where products carry the IASC logo, this indicates that there is a wide agreement and support for the product across the organisations of the IASC. Without exception, therefore the IASC logo shall only be used on publications or other materials if the IASC Product or a related group of products has been developed through a consultation process amongst IASC organisations, with the product having been endorsed by the IASC Working Group or the IASC Principals.

The official IASC logo/graphic can be requested from the IASC Secretariat. The colour and text of the logo should not be altered. On paper/printed products, the logo needs to be placed prominently on the cover page. In electronic versions, the logo needs to appear on the first page.

### **Scenario 1: Product developed by IASC Subsidiary Bodies**

Products developed by IASC Subsidiary Bodies need to be endorsed by the IASC Working Group and Principals in order to carry the IASC logo. If products are not put forward for endorsement by the IASC Working Group or Principals, the relevant Subsidiary Body may release the product carrying the name of the IASC Subsidiary Body in plain text without the IASC logo.

### **Scenario 2: Product endorsed by IASC with disclaimer(s)**

Where one or more IASC organisations are not involved in the development of an IASC product, they may accept endorsement of the product by the IASC Working Group or Principals without qualification. Alternatively, such organisations may ask the product originators to indicate in the product that they were not involved in the product development. The exact wording of any disclaimer should be agreed with the respective organisations.

### **Scenario 3: Product not endorsed by the IASC**

In general, where there is broad consensus amongst IASC partners in favour of product endorsement, individual organisations should not block its release. However, where any IASC organisation has serious reservations about a product, it should not be presented for endorsement until any disagreements have been resolved. There is no fixed rule for dealing with such cases, each of which needs to be decided on its merits, with guidance from the Chair of the Working Group. If not endorsed due to the objections of one or more organisation but still released, the product should carry the logos of those organisations which developed the product.

## Scenario 4: Product developed by interested organisations

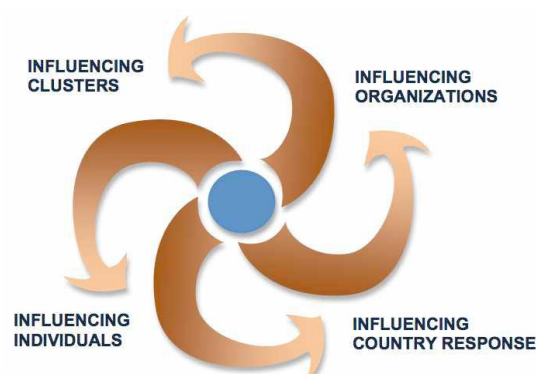
Where a small group of IASC organisations develops a joint product on their own initiative, it should be published with their own logos rather than seeking IASC Working Group or Principals endorsement. If these organisations decide to nevertheless seek IASC endorsement because they believe the product is of value to the wider humanitarian community, the product should be subject to a consultation process among all IASC organisations before being discussed in the IASC Working Group or IASC Principals. Such cases would be exceptional. The Chair of the IASC Working Group would need to agree that the product is likely to gain broad support before a consultation amongst all IASC organisations begins.

## IV Distribution of the Product and its Application

Getting the product and its messages to the end-user is the key that will largely determine the success of a product. And it takes time! Product originators should develop, at the inception of the product development

**Don't forget to include monitoring and evaluation in the planning process!**

process, a plan for how the product will reach its audiences, including distribution and roll-out activities such as launch events, guidance notes to accompany the product, trainings or similar. The product originators need to submit a comprehensive distribution and roll-out strategy at the stage of final IASC endorsement.



*Graphic by Silva Ferretti, Report: Review of IASC Products, 2009*

### Distribution and roll-out Strategy

As part of the development plan, the target audience has already been identified. Ideally, ideas to reach this target audience have already been included in the development plan. These ideas might be further developed in the process of writing the product. At the latest, once the product is finalised, a **strategy** should have been developed that provides for a path of how to reach the target audiences and how the application of the product can be facilitated.

A distribution and roll-out strategy includes, at a minimum, the following categories:

#### (1) Entry Points

Entry points are people in key positions who can themselves distribute and/or promote a product to a wide network and who can assist in its implementation. Possible entry points that should be considered by the product originators are senior management, policy specialists at headquarters levels, clusters, Humanitarian/Resident Coordinators, Humanitarian Country Teams and OCHA offices.

It is important that global clusters ensure that all relevant IASC products are reflected in cluster guidance and procedures. For this to happen, clusters need to be involved/consulted both in the production and distribution phase of IASC products.

Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams are key stakeholders to ensure that products are known and used in countries, applied in contingency plans and Consolidated Appeals, and are presented to local organizations. OCHA also plays a major role in ensuring IASC products are known.

## **(2) Modalities of distribution and roll-out**

Standard distribution modalities such as mailings, electronic distributions, and launch events should be accompanied by long-term distribution and roll-out strategies such as coaching of individuals, e-learning, on-line forums, and communities of practice.

## **(3) Audience**

The target audience(s) should have been identified prior to the development of the product. In the distribution phase, focus on the ***special needs with regard to the product*** of the audiences such as management, specialists, generalists, field practitioners, local staff, and external actors. What and how much information do these groups need and how is this information best communicated? What supporting material is most appropriate for each of these groups?

## **(4) Timing – when is the target audience most receptive?**

When is the best time to distribute the product? Distributing a product at the ***peak of an emergency*** is unlikely to gain much attention.

The ***preparedness phase*** is better suited to giving visibility to a product and ensuring its application, in contingency planning or capacity building before an emergency strikes.

There are also opportunities in the ***aftermath of an emergency*** to use guidelines as a tool to develop lessons learned and best practices. Field staff should be consulted about when is the most appropriate time for the distribution of a product and in which form (handbook, CDROM, electronic copy, checklist etc.).

## **(5) Successful implementation: create or use existing networks**

IASC products that are systematically promoted by experts (e.g. GenCAP for the IASC Gender Handbook) reach their target audiences faster and more effectively and are consequently more widely applied. These experts are able to advise on the application of the products and encourage their use. Networks of experts are an important entry point for distribution and roll-out strategy of the product; many of these experts would also be involved or consulted in the development process and as such have a sense of ownership of the product.

Successful products  
have a network of  
experts who  
promotes their use.

## **V Monitoring and Revision**

Once the product is rolled-out and distributed, its implementation needs to be monitored also to ensure development of relevant/needed supporting materials. Otherwise, how can it be understood whether the products have an impact?

### **(1) Feedback Mechanisms**

Product originators should establish feedback mechanisms to monitor the use and impact of the products. This could be done through e.g. continuous monitoring, periodic reviews, electronic surveys, email groups, feedback focal points, contact with communities of practice or collection of best practices.

### **(2) Distribution targets and monitoring of achievements**

Looking back: what were the initial objectives at the outset of developing a product? Did the product itself as well as its roll-out and distribution reach these objectives? What has been achieved at this stage?

Should it be the case that the desired impact is not achieved, the product originators need to reconsider the distribution strategy and the quality of the product itself. Consider simplified versions. Audience penetration is often limited by over-sophistication which technical specialists may not see as a barrier.

**Be ready to adapt the product and the distribution strategy to evolving situations.**

Maybe ‘soft enhancements’ or ‘supporting material’ of the products, as described above, are be more appropriate to reach the target audience and achieve the desired outcomes/impact.

### **(3) Collection of Best Practices**

IASC Organisations and product originators should collect information about local adaptation and implementation/use of their products as well as examples of best practices as part of the monitoring and evaluation. In an appropriate format, this information should be shared with other product originators and the IASC Secretariat to create a body of best practices.

### **(4) Communities of Practice**

It is recommended that product originators establish a community of practice around a product. In this community, different users are linked and encouraged to share their information and experiences. This will allow the product originators to monitor the use and local adaptation of a product and flexibly respond to needs that might be identified by the community of practice. This community could either be organised through an email list or internet platform. Members of this community of practice can be asked periodically to provide feedback on the availability and the use of the product.

*Endorsed by the IASC Working Group, November 2011  
Prepared by the IASC Secretariat, November 2011*

For further reference about producing an IASC product, consult the IASC homepage ([www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc](http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc)) under ‘Product Guidance’, where the IASC Secretariat has collected relevant documents on product development and distribution. Product originators are encouraged to also consider the final report of the Review of IASC Products, which makes recommendations that are reflected here, but which also identifies some other areas of concern and improvement.

***For more information, please visit the IASC Website at:***

[www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc](http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc)

## **Annex: Checklist for Product Originators**

This checklist summarizes the main points of the guideline and provides an overview of key recommended steps for producing and distributing products. It can be printed out in order to check the boxes for each key recommendation.

### **PHASE 1: Before you get started!**

- Ensure there is a pressing need and a clear mandate to develop a new product
- Verify the need and demand for the proposed new product and clarify its purpose
- Map out the target audience(s) such as management, specialist, generalists, local or government staff, external actors, and their special needs for products and distribution
- Map relevant existing products and review option of updating existing product as a means of closing the gap identified in IASC policy and guidance
- Establish clear linkages with existing IASC products, agency specific products, and other interagency initiatives (e.g. Sphere Project)
- Establish clear ToRs of the product originator group
- Define individual responsibilities for the development of the product
- Scale your efforts and expenditures to the level of support expressed
- Develop a budget and capacity plan for production/distribution/monitoring of the product, including the ensured commitment on human resources by all member organisations
- Fund-raise if IASC organisations cannot meet the budget
- Draft a product development plan that includes: (a) purpose and expectation, (b) needs analysis, (c) consultation strategy, (d) target audiences, (e) distribution and roll-out strategy and (f) required resources.
- Inform IASC Organisations' senior management of the product development proposal and obtain their support and resources for all phases of product development and distribution.

### **PHASE 2: Production of the Product**

- Follow the product development plan

#### **During the consultation process**

- Balance need for inclusive consultation with need for efficiency of process:
  - Ensure inclusion of field staff and smaller organisations
  - Consult donors and academics, as appropriate
- Engage effectively with participants in consultation process through realistic timeframes, varied consultation mechanisms
- Look for best practices that are evidence-based
- Check coherence with existing products and standards

- Decide whether sufficient internal expertise is available or if external consultants should be included in the process

### **Format and content of guidelines**

- Aim for simple and user friendly products
  - Use simple language, avoid jargon
  - Adopt short and user-friendly structure
  - Include visual diagrams
- Use clear content /summaries such as “do’s and don’ts”, minimum requirements
- Complement product with checklists
- Consider alternative formats/supporting materials including:
  - Print copies (user-friendly design, can be printed locally, balance quality and cost)
  - Electronic copies (limit size to facilitate download, format on CDROM for better navigation, USB sticks)
  - Video/Multimedia (producing low cost presentations of Products, document practices and lessons learned, use internet for video distribution)
  - Posters
  - ‘Portable’ Products (cards, pocket format, checklists)
- Make sure that all tables, figures and flow-charts are accurate, of high quality, from a reliable source and attributed to their source
- Ensure that the product meets quality standards in terms of accurate content, writing style, editing, translation, design and printing. Consider external professional editing.
  - Consider different options to print guidelines and other products
  - Is local printing feasible and effective?
    - How many copies do I need for the initial stock?
    - Can print-on-demand be a valuable alternative?
  - Clarify accountability should erroneous material be published.
- Identify, assess and integrate available information and evidence.

### **PHASE 3: Approval of the Product by the IASC**

- Submit the final draft product to the IASC Secretariat for further processing and submission to the IASC Working Group or IASC Principals
- The Product will either be presented at a meeting of the IASC or submitted electronically for approval
- Ensure to demonstrate the relevance of the product, links to other initiatives, a distribution strategy and a plan for monitoring and evaluation, and for the custody of the product
- Ensure adequate use of the IASC logo

## **PHASE 4: Distribution of the Product and its Application**

### **Entry Points to be considered by Product Originators**

- Influencing country response
  - Briefing of HCTs
  - Presentation of IASC products at HCs annual retreats and induction events
  - Identify in-country experts (deployed advisor, cluster coordinator and cluster participants, local professionals etc) who can promote products.
  - Identify contact points for key products in country teams
  - Negotiate with interested organisations modalities for releasing of staff for advocacy work on products
  - Enshrine products into country-level inter-agency policies, fundraising instruments and directives as well as CAPs and other planning and funding instruments/processes
  - Engage with organisations at the regional level to promote products in countries in their region
  
- Influencing Organisations
  - Encourage organisation's management to issue statements of support of a product and actively promote the use of a product
  - Promote agency training on the product
  - Support focal person in production phase in becoming champions for distribution
  
- Influencing Individuals
  - Support networks of experts and communities of practice around a product that can support individuals regardless where and for whom they work
  
- Influencing Clusters
  - Engage with global clusters to harmonise products with cluster guidance
  - Engage with clusters at country level for distribution and mainstreaming in country policy and practice
  - Engage with sub-clusters to provide direct support to implementation practitioners

### **Modalities of distribution and roll-out**

- Indirect distribution:
  - Encourage absorption of products in organisational policies
  - Consider when it is important to promote the product as a whole and when it is best to adapt and share only its key content
  - Link a Product to ancillary resources such as manuals, translations, flyers, presentations

- Training courses/workshops
  - Interagency training courses/workshops
  - Intra agency training courses/workshops
- Presentations to introduce the Product
  - Piggy-back training on Products to events that might involve their use
- E-learning
- On-line distribution
- Ensure that a Product page is available and up-to-date on the IASC site
  - Consider establishing an additional dedicated website for a Product
  - Facilitate on-line engagement and not just file sharing
- Focal Points based in the field
- Make use of the network and expertise of selected Focal Points in the field for distribution of the Product within agencies, clusters and working groups

### **Distribution per audience**

Identify the target audiences and their specific needs. Elaborate how different product formats can address those needs.

- Management
  - Secure commitment of top management, ask statements of support, ensure that product is part of the induction packages
  - Guide integration of products in organisation policies
  - Mainstream product in agencies' multi-year plans, and monitoring and evaluation plans.
- Specialist
  - Focus on examples of best practice
  - Provide detailed checklists
- Generalists
  - Focus on providing effective summaries
  - emphasise linkages and connection of the product with other issues
- Local staff and government staff
- External actors (media, academics, general public etc)
- Distribute proactively with tailor-made presentations relevant for them

### **Contextualization/local adaptations of Products**

- Create local versions, including translations, communities of practice, appoint local champions

### **Timing for distribution**



- Preparedness
  - Link Product to contingency planning
  - Build capacity / awareness of Product
- Peak of emergency
  - Need for strategic application, not major distribution
- Aftermath
  - Encourage M&E processes building on Product
  - Derive lessons learned on Product use

### **PHASE 5: Monitoring and Revision**

- Establish clear targets for distribution / roll-out and monitor achievements
  - Support agencies in monitoring use and relevance of products through their own monitoring system
  - Strengthen feedback mechanisms for agencies to custodians
  - Set up periodic light reviews of implementation
  - Demand accountability by custodian to IASC Working Group
- Build capacity and structures to collect local adaptations and examples of practice
- Foster global and local communities of practice around a Product
- Collect examples of best practice for the management of the Product as well as its use

*Endorsed by the IASC Working Group, November 2011  
Prepared by the IASC Secretariat, November 2011*