

IASC Reference Group on Meeting Humanitarian Challenges in Urban Areas Progress Report, April 2016 – February 2017:

Objective:

The IASC RG MHCUA aims to promote more efficient and integrated responses to humanitarian crises in urban areas, through knowledge sharing, development of new approaches and creation of systemic-change within the IASC Structure and its Members.

Tasks

As per IASC Principals recommendations and in line with the IASC MHCUA Strategy, the RG focuses on:

1. Adopting Area-based Approaches
2. Surging IASC Assistance within Local Governments and Partners fitting for purpose
3. Facilitating Affected Communities Direct Engagement for Enhanced Accountability
4. Other Priorities, including urban violence, social and gender inequality, urban resilience, urban governance and systems; and strengthening the link between humanitarian and development actions

ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE APRIL 2016

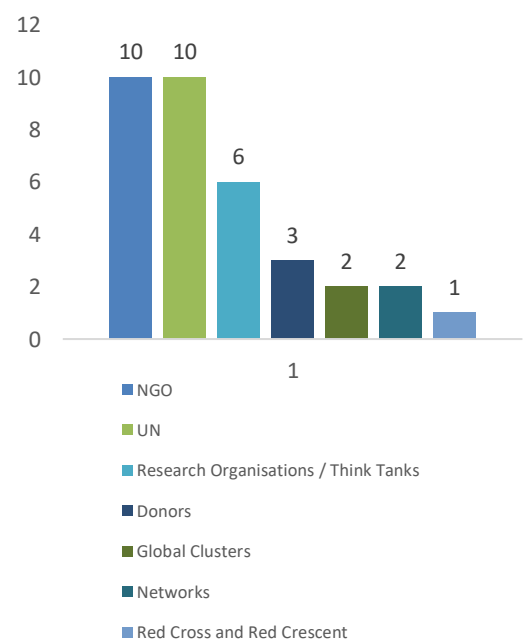
Through regular meetings and coordination, the IASC RG Co-Chairs and its Members have ensured a successful implementation of the action plan, with the following key achievements:

- The RG has played an active role in organizing **urban related events during the WHS, Habitat III and the Humanitarian Network Partnership Week**, with high attendance and fruitful discussions on urban issues;
- The RG prepared **key messages for the IASC Principals within the framework of Habitat III**, ensuring humanitarian language and messages related to fragile cities were included in the New Urban Agenda approved during Habitat III;
- The RG has been highly involved in the creation of the **Global Alliance for Urban Crises (GAUC)**, which was a key activity in the RG action plan, and was officially launched during the WHS. The RG has attended all GAUC meetings and contributed to shaping its strategy and priorities resulting in the RG hosting GAUC Secretariat in its UN-Habitat Urban Resilience Programme offices in Barcelona;
- The RG has finalized a first draft of the **Guidance Note for improving coordination and responses to Urban Crises in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle through the IASC and its Cluster System**, which will serve as a basis for a participatory consultation within IASC bodies in 2017 to bring key systemic-changes for humanitarian responses in urban areas. This Guidance Note will support WHS Commitments related to a “New way of working”, providing concrete guidance on how to respond in more efficient and integrated ways to urban crises;
- The RG has pro-actively created **linkages with other IASC Bodies**, namely the IASC Task Team on Humanitarian / Development Nexus in Protracted Crises and the IASC Task Team on AAP/PSEA, launching joint work-streams for 2017;
- As part of the RG, partners have continued to **implement the action plan** leading to the creation of new approaches

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES FOR 2017

- Lead the revision of the **IASC Urban Strategy** (next period: 2018 – 2020) and the related **IASC RG MHCUA Action Plan**, to be endorsed by IASC WG and IASC Principals by end of 2017/early 2018;
- Lead a consultative process within the IASC bodies (Members, Clusters, Inter-Cluster, Reference Groups and Task Teams) on how to improve coordination and aid delivery in urban areas. The outcome will be reflected in a **Guidance Note for improving coordination and responses to Urban Crises in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle through the IASC and its Cluster System**, to be endorsed by IASC WG and IASC Principals by end of 2017;
- Promote **joint initiatives with IASC Task Teams**, with a specific focus on AAP in Urban Areas and Humanitarian/Development Nexus;
- Continue supporting post-WHS and post-Habitat III processes and commitments for action, including through continuous engagement with and support of the Global Alliance for Urban Crises as per the MHCUA Action Plan;
- Continue the implementation of the overall Action Plan through RG Partners in support of delivering SDGs (especially target 11), NUA and other global international agreements.

MEMBERSHIP OVERVIEW*



*Members include: NGOs (SCI, NRC, WVI, ACTED, WHH, Samaritans Purse, IRC, InterAction, Concern, ICVA), UN Agencies (UNHCR, WFP, UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, UN-Habitat, IOM, WHO, FAO, OCHA), Donors (ECHO, OFDA, World Bank), global Clusters (global Shelter Cluster, global Food Security Cluster), Networks (Global Alliance for Urban Crises, United Cities and Local Governments), Research Organisations / Think Tanks (IMPACT Initiatives, JIPS, MIT, Graduate Institute Geneva, ALNAP, Sphere Project)