

Background

- In furtherance of Action Point 3 from the IASC Principals Meeting held in Rome on 13 December 2012 which calls for an Emergency Directors group (EDG) to be instituted starting in 2013, the following sets out a Terms of Reference for the group to act as the operational forum within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).

Purpose

- The purpose of the EDG is to support humanitarian operations by advising the ERC and IASC Principals on operational issues of strategic concern, and by mobilizing agency resources to address operational challenges and gaps, in support of HCs and HCTs.

Objectives

- **Consider and advise on operational issues of immediate concern, including all operational issues placed on the agenda of the IASC Principals.** The EDG will provide a forum where operational issues of immediate concern to the IASC Principals are considered. The EDG will advise the Principals on priority actions that require their discussion and decision-making. This will include advising the IASC Principals on the need for and operational requirements of a Level 3 system-wide humanitarian response, utilizing the five criteria set out in the Transformative Agenda protocols. The EDG will also advise on common operational positions, advocacy and messaging for consideration by the ERC and the IASC Principals. Furthermore, the EDG will provide support to HCs/HCTs to help address operational challenges and to ensure that the IASC system is providing optimal support to the HC and HCT at the country-level. During Level 3 emergencies, this may include supporting the country team of the implementation of the L3 Protocols, while awaiting the decision and deployment of the enhanced leadership model.
- **Consider future high-risk scenarios and determine appropriate early actions.** The EDG will consider early action required to prepare for future high-risk country/regional scenarios and key cross-cutting issues, as well as to respond to systemic issues of operational concern that are linked to early action. The early warning/early action (EA) report produced by the IASC SWG on Preparedness will continue to be used to identify the scenarios to be discussed. The Chair of the EDG will communicate recommendations to the HC/RCs in countries for their action.
- **Assure the roll-out and operationalization of the Transformative Agenda at the country-level.** The EDG will oversee the operationalization of the IASC Transformative Agenda by monitoring and supporting the implementation of agreed protocols developed in relation to

leadership, coordination and accountability. Particular attention will be paid to empowered leadership in Level 3 contexts, IARRM deployments, changes in country-level cluster arrangements, and application of the humanitarian programme cycle guidance. The EDG will be responsible for ensuring quality control in applying the Transformative Agenda to operations, and for providing feedback on its implementation. They will also be responsible for identifying priority countries to receive IASC monitoring and mentoring missions in support of TA implementation and for clearing the Terms of Reference for such Missions.

- ***Undertake the regular monitoring and review of emergency operations.*** The EDG will regularly review emergency operations with the aim of supporting HCs and HCTs, as well as enhancing mutual accountability. An annual review of the performance of HCs and an informal annual review of humanitarian operations will be undertaken. Performance will be measured against agreed strategic priorities and in relation to the mechanisms utilized to coordinate the humanitarian response (e.g. clusters, as agreed by the IASC Principals). Consideration will also be given to individual agency and/or cluster activities as they relate to the overall operational response. Consideration will also be given to thematic issues, affecting multiple operations, which merit detailed analysis.

Composition and Structure:

- Participation in the EDG will be limited to the Emergency Directors (D-1 or equivalent) of IASC members (UN, NGOs and IOM), plus one resource person. The ICRC and IFRC are invited to nominate their Emergency Directors for participation as observers. The three NGO Consortia (ICVA, SCHR, and InterAction) will nominate two operational NGOs from their membership, for on-going participation in the EDG. In the interests of optimal efficiency, NGOs selected should be available to participate in the EDG for a minimum of twelve months, with the possibility of rotation thereafter. The secretariats of the NGO Consortia may also participate in meetings to represent the operational concerns of their members, and to support information dissemination to the broader membership.
- The EDG will be chaired by OCHA and will report to the IASC Principals, through the EDG Chair. OCHA will provide Secretariat support to the Group, and will coordinate the development and presentation of the agenda. The EDG will share key operational policy questions with the IASC Principals as they arise, for their consideration and eventual onwards tasking to the IASC Working Group.
- The EDG Chair may invite key partners to discussions on specific topics, even if they are not formally part of the composition of the EDG.
- The EDG will be supported by *Global Cluster Coordinators* with a focus on providing support to country-level Clusters in the case of a major response.

Frequency and Organization of Meetings:

- Regular meetings will be convened, as operationally required and always in advance of ad hoc Principals meetings having an operational agenda. They will be conducted by telecom, to consider future operational challenges, and to review/advise on operational issues of immediate concern. Agenda items will be prepared in advance so that discussions can focus on exploring options and making decisions.
- Two annual in-person meetings will be convened. The first will take place in the first quarter of the year to conduct appraisals of HCs and a second in the last quarter of the year to informally review the performance of humanitarian operations worldwide. A mid-year review of the status of action points from the Annual Operational review will also be conducted in the regularly scheduled June teleconference.
- Meeting invitations will be extended to Emergency/Operational Directors of participating agencies, plus one support staff. If the Emergency/Operational Director is not able to participate, he should be replaced by his/her Officer in Charge.

Emergency Director Joint Field Missions:

- In order to better support the work of HCs and HCTs in particularly challenging contexts, the Emergency Directors will undertake joint field missions as needed. Such missions will have the objective to create a shared understanding of challenges and to identify solutions to address operational gaps.