

**INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE
PRINCIPALS MEETING**

**Summary Record and Action Points
31 May 2018, New York
Host: UNICEF**

Opening Remarks

The Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) welcomed new IASC Principals, including Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director, UNHABITAT, Mr. Anoop Sukumaran Chair, ICVA Board (ACT Alliance), and Mr. Ignacio Packer, ICVA Executive Director.

Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Aid Workers (SHA)

The ERC noted the sought the endorsement of the Principals for a number of key recommendations, namely: the sharing of good practices; preventing perpetrators from moving through the sector; and strengthening the investigation capacity of agencies that needed it through collaboration among investigators and the establishment of a fund to support these efforts. He proposed a statement to announce these measures, which he would issue as Chair of the IASC. The Principals supported these recommendations.

He extended appreciation to Mr. William Lacy Swing, IOM Director General, for his tenure with the IASC Principals and for his leadership as the IASC Champion for Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). The ERC also thanked Ms. Lindsay Coates, InterAction President, and Ms. Kate Gilmore, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights for their efforts as Co-Champions to address Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Aid Workers (SHA), as they step down from this role. The ERC announced that Ms. Henrietta Fore, Executive Director, UNICEF, would take on the role of Champion for the IASC on PSEA and SHA for one year followed by Mr. Filippo Grandi, the High Commissioner for Refugees.

Mr. Swing reflected on his tenure as PSEA Champion since 2011, noting that progress had been made in establishing community-based complaint mechanisms, a set of minimum Operating Standards for PSEA, and a network of PSEA senior focal points. However, more needs to be done both to help victims recover from such abuses and prevent transgressors from moving through the humanitarian system.

Ms. Jane Connors, Assistant Secretary-General for Victims' Rights, , noted four key priorities for the UN, namely: the need to prioritize the rights of victims, combatting impunity, building a multi-stakeholder network and reorienting the approach ot be able to address this critical issue. She referred to the creation of a UN-wide electronic reference system to prevent perpetrators from being employed again. Ms. Connors also stressed that, beyond material and legal assistance, it was critical to provide a voice to victims. She encouraged the appointment of victims' rights advocates in IASC organizations and HCTs. Ms. Connors welcomed more engagement between the UN Working Group on PSEA and the IASC Task Team on AAP/PSEA.

ICVA shared the initial findings of its review of Safeguards, which consolidates the views of national and local NGOs. Some of the key main findings from this review included the need to fight against inequality, promote horizontal relations, and mitigate negative impacts.

Recognising that the system is experiencing a transformative and disruptive moment, Principals emphasized the need for a holistic sector-wide approach that addresses root causes and tackles issues linked to organisational culture. They recognised the underlying culture of power as a contributing factor to incidents of abuse and to impunity and underscored the need for a fundamental cultural and behavioural shift to address this issue. While strides are being taken for technical change, the Principals noted that more investment was needed in support of adaptive change approaches.

IASC Principals also agreed to take a more prominent and substantive role in tackling PSEA and SHA throughout the humanitarian system, and welcomed the Executive Director of UNICEF and the High Commissioner for Refugees willingness to take on the role of IASC Champions for SEA and SHA. The ERC, PSEA and SHA Champions would coordinate closely to recommend a way forward to the Principals with respect to the role of the Champion, particularly in terms of advocacy. It was also recognized that the IASC Champion would need to provide sustained leadership to ensure cultural changes within the work place.

The IASC Principals agreed to:

1. Circulate the compendium of good practices and ensure that it is regularly updated;
2. Take a sector-wide and coordinated approach to Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment and Abuse.
3. Add PSEA and SHA as a standing agenda item in IASC meetings, including the upcoming one planned for late-2018.
4. Issue a statement from the ERC as Chair of the IASC on progress to date.
5. Take forward the proposals on referencing to prevent the re-employment of transgressors across the sector, specifically to integrate self-certification, screening questions, consent provisions and the verification of references into each organization's recruitment processes to allow better sharing of available information within the sector, and make it easier to deal appropriately with transgressors. Each organization would work out how to implement these commitments independently, considering their own governance and accountability frameworks.
6. Take forward the proposals to improve investigations capacity by establishing a \$1 million fund, financed and managed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), to provide rapid grants to IASC entities to support investigations into SEA and SHA allegations, as required.
7. Convene a meeting later this year of the heads of the investigatory bodies for all IASC members to discuss the challenges in this area, address gaps and further strengthen investigatory capacities across the humanitarian sector.
8. Follow-up to the proposals made by the Victims' Rights Advocate for the United Nations, including closer linkages with the IASC Task Team on AAP/PSEA and appointing victims' rights advocates.
9. Draw a forward agenda to define the role of the ERC, UNICEF Executive Director and UNHCR High Commissioner as Champions of PSEA and SHA.

Review of Humanitarian System-Wide Emergency Activation Procedures

The ERC outlined proposals to replace the L3 system developed in response to a decision by the Principals at the December 2017 meeting, noting the necessity of two separate systems: a sudden-onset *Scale-Up* and *Sustain/Severe* categorization.

IASC Principals expressed support for the ‘Scale-Up’ proposal, noting that the mechanism should be finalised and implemented swiftly. Principals requested that the Scale-Up protocol should clearly address how it is different from the previous L3 system, in messaging to affected states and in assessing existing capacity.

Principals agreed that a Sustain/ Severe category was required, although further discussion was required to refine the concept.

The IASC Principals agreed:

10. The ‘*Scale Up*’ response activation protocol, with supporting documents and protocols to be finalized and circulated as a matter of urgency, and the new system to be introduced forthwith.
11. The adoption of a Sustain/Severe category, with details to be further discussed through bilateral consultations between the ERC and Principals.

Strategic Priorities

The DERC briefed on progress since the December Principals’ meeting and presented the proposed IASC strategic priorities for 2018-2019. The proposed strategic priorities were developed by the informal IASC Deputies Forum during their first meeting, and were later consulted and refined by IASC members, including during a joint Working Group and Emergency Directors Group meeting in late April 2018. The set of proposed IASC strategic priorities were grouped under five areas, namely: humanitarian financing; inclusion and accountability; collective advocacy; humanitarian-development collaboration; and operational response. They represent the basis for planning IASC activities. Deputies also recommended strengthening the IASC secretariat, including through a call for secondments from IASC members, and ensuring that the work of the Task Teams and Reference Groups was closely aligned with the strategic priorities. A suggestion was also made to transition the Subsidiary bodies to time-bound Results Groups. An options paper, which would outline two configurations for the IASC structures beneath the Principals, would be developed on the basis of the 2018-2019 strategic priorities to ensure that form follows function. The paper would be discussed among the Deputies Forum and then be put forward for decision by the Principals later in the year.

Principals supported and endorsed the strategic priorities and advised that a concerted effort needs to be made to sequence the IASC’s attention and work on these issues to ensure that progress is made on the various areas. They also emphasized the need to ensure achieving field-focused solutions. The IASC secretariat would work on developing a detailed workplan including an outline of expected outcomes, deliverables, timelines and benchmarks, and map these towards the appropriate levels of responsibility. Principals also welcomed the DERC’s proposal to develop and discuss an options paper to rationalise structures under the IASC Principals accordingly, while ensuring that support to field operations is maintained.

The IASC Principals agreed to:

12. Endorse the Strategic Priorities for 2018-2019. Further development of outcomes, timelines, and sequencing, as appropriate.
13. Rationalise structures below the Principals, recognising the need to maintain the operational support as provided by the Emergency Directors Group and consider various options and configurations for the effective functioning of the IASC. The Deputies Forum to present a recommendation to the Principals meeting later this year.
14. Further develop actions on collective advocacy, including a dedicated discussion on humanitarian diplomacy led by the ICRC.

Internally Displaced Persons

The session, presented by the UNHCR High Commissioner of Refugees, sought to address gaps in protection and assistance by proposing more dynamic responses to the increasingly complex needs of IDPs and host communities. With progress made with the Global Compacts for Refugees and Migrants, the IASC needed to refocus attention on internal displacement. The principal areas of focus include: (1) ensuring that protection was at the centre of response and was owned by the HCT to ensure all actors contributed to its implementation – this included developing clearer strategies and ensuring adequate funding for activities that further protection goals; (2) a clearer focus on solutions, including more equitable funding in situations of protracted displacement that require investments beyond the humanitarian response; (3) collaboration on data collection and analysis; (4) ensuring that the cluster response was more efficient and less process heavy, (5) leveraging the 20th anniversary of the GPs to highlight the situation of IDPs and ensure forward-leaning collaborative action so that it remained high on the agenda of Member States.

The background paper presented was unanimously supported by the Principals. In addition, Principals noted that gender issues and broader access to services required further attention. Furthermore, the increasingly urban nature of displacement and displacement as a driver of urbanisation required tailored approaches to coordination.

Principals agreed on the need to create a ‘leadership moment’ where new strategies reflect progressively adaptive solutions to respond to IDPs in conflict environments and other hybrid situations of violence. Innovative solutions must be context-specific, and involve non-traditional partners given that the issue of IDPs was a cross-disciplinary issue. Greater clarity with Member States on the IASC collective response was needed to ensure there were no gaps.

Principals also agreed that collaborative efforts are integral to develop novel approaches, including bringing in development actors. These efforts must include data-sharing among agencies (as well as complementarity of efforts to gather and analyse data), engagement with local and national governments, and better financing of protection activities. Accurate data on developing situations must be integrated at an early stage.

Initiatives needed operational plans which would translate into sustainable, progressive action on the ground and protect the most vulnerable, often victims of gender-based violence and children. Principals agreed on the need for a common agenda, commitment to elevate protection work, and forward leaning approaches.

The IASC Principals agreed to:

15. Endorse the background paper, recognizing that in addition, gender, urbanization, and access to services, need to be considered to ensure a more comprehensive response.
16. Endorse the GP20 Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People, support its implementation and engage in collective action.
17. Conduct a review of coordination structures that enables the system to move forward effectively. Actively incorporate collective insight from IASC partners for faster, more collaborative and dynamic solutions; to be facilitated by the IASC Secretariat.
18. Seek opportunities to further data collaboration to address policy issues, and find ways to work more collaboratively on data even beyond the IDP sphere.
19. Ensure measures to elevate protection in line with the 2013 IASC Principals' statements, including through advocacy for better resource mobilisation to enhance protection and further solutions.
20. Constructively engage with Member States on the proposed High-Level Panel on IDPs to ensure that it garners broad-based support and is focused on practical solutions.