IASC Inter-Agency Standing Committee

IASC's Operational Policy and Advocacy Group (OPAG) Meeting
7-8 November 2019, Geneva

Summary Record

INTRODUCTION

The Operational Policy and Advocacy Group (OPAG) of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) held its second meeting hosted by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) on 7 and 8 November 2019 in Geneva.[1] The primary objective of the meeting was to examine progress made by the IASC Results Groups on the OPAG-agreed priority areas of work in 2019, and agree on their proposed priorities for 2020.

The meeting was also an opportunity to hear from Ms. Najat Rochdi, Director of the P2P Project, and discuss key systemic issues for consideration by the OPAG and the IASC, building on an overview of findings and recommendations of recent Operational Peer Reviews (OPRs). Ms. Rachel Scott of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) also joined the meeting to discuss concrete and practical opportunities and risks in the implementation of the humanitarian-development-peace collaboration in crises settings and in contexts where humanitarian and development action and/or funding is constrained. A brief session to discuss the status of the IASC Associated Entities and parameters with regards to their accountability to the OPAG was also included.

In welcoming the OPAG Members, the OPAG co-Chairs, Ms. Valerie Guarnieri and Mr. Geir Olav Lisle, expressed a special welcome to the newly nominated representatives of local non-governmental organizations, namely, Mr. Rezaul Karim Chowdhury from the Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (COAST), Mr. Azmat Khan from the Foundation for Rural Development (FRD), and Ms. Fiona Gall from the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR).

SESSION 1: RESULTS GROUPS - UPDATE ON CONCRETE DELIVERABLES

In introducing the session, the OPAG co-Chairs noted that the past six months since the first OPAG meeting, the Results Groups (RGs) have been working very hard to deliver on the IASC's decisions and priorities. At the same time, this has been a critical transition and adaptation period to the new structures, members and working methods. Against this backdrop, the OPAG co-Chairs commended the RGs and their respective co-Chairs for the tremendous effort and the progress made in realizing the IASC's priorities and decisions. There was broad recognition by the OPAG on the need to demonstrate relevance and value of the RGs by delivering concretely in support of field effectiveness. In that regard, it was critical for the RGs to remains focused and ensure the prioritization of work to ensure steady progress is made, while at the same maintaining the progress in engaging systematically with key non-IASC stakeholders.

Results Group 1 – Operational Response

The co-Chairs of Results Group 1 on Operational Response (OCHA and InterAction) briefed on progress made in delivering against the OPAG-agreed priority areas for 2019 (*please see the RG's Progress Report here*). These included: 1) the revision of the Humanitarian Needs Overview and Humanitarian Response

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[1] The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants are contained in annexes I and II.

Plan templates (*completed*); 2) a mapping of bureaucratic impediments facing NGOs (*completed*) and the planned provision of normative guidance for the Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) and Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) to support efforts to mitigate the effects of such impediments; 3) analysis of protection concerns and suggested actions in preparation for the IASC Principals' Horizon Scanning discussions as well as the Emergency Directors Group (EDG)'s Annual Review of Operations; 4) analysis of lessons learned through country-level reflections on the IASC Protection Policy to inform the development of indicators to measure the level of protection mainstreaming; 5) the revision of the *2015 Introduction to Humanitarian Action: A Brief Guide for Resident Coordinators*; 6) a communication and outreach campaign to identify potential candidates to expand the High Potential Pool; 7) the review of guidance on the life-cycle of the Deputy Humanitarian Coordinators (DHCs) to ensure a clear accountability framework between the HCs and the DHCs as well as between the DHCs and the HCTs. In addition to continuing to focus on delivering on these priorities during the course of 2020, the RG co-chairs also identified operationalizing localization as a priority to be delivered upon – this would include enhancing the representation of national and local organizations in coordination structures, as well as stepping up collaboration with Grand Bargain Workstream 2 on support and funding for local and national responders.

OPAG Members welcomed the group's proposal to continue focusing on delivering on the priorities already identified as well as the suggestion to add localization to the areas of focus in 2020. It was acknowledged that localization goes beyond including national and local actors in coordination structures, while this could be the RG's focus as a first step. In taking forward the protection agenda, they advised RG1 to build synergies and strengthen collaboration with other RGs. Members also highlighted the good work of the Early Warning, Early Action and Preparedness (EWEAR) group; however, they requested better alignment with other Disaster Risk Reduction and IASC preparedness mechanisms and an adjustment of the timing of the report's publication in line with the IASC Principals and EDG meetings. Members welcomed the work around the development of Guidance for DHCs. Furthermore, they advised incorporating quantitative and qualitative localization elements into the ongoing revision of the *2015 Introduction to Humanitarian Action: A Brief Guide for Resident Coordinators*.

During the deep-dive discussion on mainstreaming protection, the RG1 co-Chairs sought the OPAG's feedback on how a strengthened evidence base informs protection outcomes and why HCT protection strategies have not been sufficiently operationalized and contributed to the successful delivery of collective protection outcomes. OPAG Members noted the absence of a holistic approach to mainstreaming protection; they also requested the RG to review the report from the 2018 Stock-take exercise organized by the Global Protection Cluster and identify areas that can be taken forward to support a transformation in fulfilling the Centrality of Protection in practice. They underlined that protection is inseparable from the localization agenda, noting the need to include local communities in all aspects of the humanitarian response. Members expressed regret that developing a protection strategy tended to be a ticking-the-box exercise and fell short of making the required transformations and prioritization of protection in practise. Given the critical role that the HCs play in mainstreaming protection, Members stressed the need for protection to be a key element in the HC Appraisal process being carried out by the EDG.

Results Group 2 – Accountability and Inclusion

Co-Chairs of Results Group 2 on Accountability and Inclusion (UNHCR and UNICEF) briefed on progress made in delivering against the OPAG-agreed priority areas for 2019 (*please see the RG's Progress Report here*). These included: 1) Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP): contributions to improved overall responses through improved communications and community engagement approaches and improved access to guidance and capacity; 2) Local networks: links made to a number of local networks in Asia and Africa to further understand their coordination needs; 3) Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA): development of generic inter-agency terms of references for PSEA Coordinators and a standardized capacity building package, inter-agency support missions in eight countries and development

of a self-reporting tool; 4) Global Platform: survey completed to inform design of website; and 5) Standards: the finalization of the *Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action*, the *Gender Accountability Framework Report* and the *Guidelines on Working with and for Young People* (nearing completion).

RG2 Co-Chairs proposed the following Priority Areas of Work to be pursued in 2020: 1) better, more accountable, inclusive humanitarian action and more accountable aid workers; 2) better approaches and processes to accountability and inclusion including PSEA/Sexual Harassment; and 3) better access to, quality of, and adherence to standards, guidance, tools and resources.

OPAG co-Chairs and members welcomed the progress made with the conclusion of the *Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action* and called for the timely dissemination and rollout of the Guidelines. On the suggested Priorities for 2020, the OPAG members requested the RG to further refine the priorities to ensure that they are clearer and concrete in terms of what they aim to achieve. They requested the RG to focus on two to three specific activities/deliverables that would benefit and support field colleagues and improve field effectiveness, including work on Complaints and Feedback Mechanisms (CFMs). OPAG members underlined the need for strengthening policy support to protect whistleblowers as part of CFMs and ensuring that CFMs were made available in local languages. Members reiterated the importance of the work around the enhanced Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC), including efforts to integrate community-feedback into response-wide monitoring. They stressed the need to standardize these efforts globally and secure predictable funding in this regard.

During the deep-dive discussion on AAP, RG2 co-Chairs sought the OPAG's feedback on how to ensure community influence at all levels of humanitarian decision-making; how to scale success on CFMs to solicit perspectives of affected people; and how to institutionalize changes to humanitarian organizations and practices in line with IASC commitments. OPAG Members agreed that donor engagement is essential both to drive and enable AAP through flexible funding which would facilitate course correction to support adaptive programming and to integrate AAP needs at every stage of the HPC. A number of participants suggested capitalizing on the Grand Bargain platform to step up engagement and the support of donors on AAP. Members suggested the need for stronger representation of local actors in HCTs and that commitments to AAP need to go beyond the establishment of hotlines. A member noted the significant positive impact of a dedicated Champion on PSEA/Sexual Harassment, suggesting the identification of a Champion on AAP to bring the required level of attention to this critical area of work. Finally, they pointed to the need for a cultural shift to ensure the prioritization of AAP at all levels.

Results Group 3 – Collective Advocacy

The Co-Chairs of Results Group 3 on Collective Advocacy (Save the Children and UNFPA) briefed on progress made in delivering against the OPAG-agreed priority areas for 2019 (*please see the RG's Progress Report* [here](#)). These included: 1) addressing the impact of counter-terrorism (COTER) measures on humanitarian action through the gathering of evidence on the impact of these measures to support advocacy efforts, a lessons learned exercise around the advocacy effort that took place on the proposed listing of Al-Shabaab under the ISIL sanctions regime, as well as the sharing of best practices and lessons learned that resulted in minimizing or mitigating the impact of such measures on humanitarian action; 2) developing best practices guidance on the engagement with Non-State Armed Actors, including the engagement with Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation (CCHN) and Geneva Call as part of a stock taking exercise to develop guidance; 3) developing a humanitarian diplomacy strategy on specific contexts; and 4) developing common narratives through the sharing of messages around special events and anniversaries. RG3 co-Chairs proposed to focus on delivering on these priorities during the course of 2020.

OPAG Members requested the RG to be more ambitious regarding their deliverables, particularly on addressing the impact of COTER legislation on humanitarian action. Regarding context-specific advocacy/humanitarian diplomacy efforts, Members welcomed a focus on Syria. A number of members suggested to also focus on the situation in Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh, particularly with regards to what the IASC can do to address plans by the Government to relocate the Rohingya Refugees to the remote Island; however, other OPAG members noted that it was important to be aware that this issue had already been extensively addressed by the HCT and non-governmental organizations at the national level and raised by some Principals in their meeting with the Government. A few Members further requested the Group to be nimble and proactive and provide real time advocacy advice, particularly in reaction to emerging or rapidly evolving situations (such as that of the Al Shabab listing), and be in a position to provide rapid recommendations to the Principals; however, a few members challenged that proposition in light of the normative nature of the RG. On the common narratives, Members emphasized the need for reinforced broad IASC engagement and a clear focus on collective advocacy rather than communication.

There was general agreement on the need to further strengthen the RG's work on collective advocacy around climate change. While appreciating the work of the RG, one of the frontline organizations, sought practical ways to support the field on engaging with non-state armed groups. In that regard, there was general agreement on the need for normative guidance produced by all RGs to include a component that clearly lays out where the field can go for further guidance or technical support.

During the deep-dive discussion on the impact of COTER measures on humanitarian action, the RG3 co-Chairs noted that this was an issue that the IASC's EDG had requested the OPAG's support with and should be treated as a priority. They noted that the humanitarian community had failed to institutionalize processes to minimize/mitigate the impact of COTER measures on humanitarian action and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and that the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) do not engage sufficiently with humanitarian actors. OPAG Members agreed on the need for humanitarian organizations to better document the impact of COTER measures on humanitarian action to better inform advocacy efforts. Members further emphasized the need for coordinated and coherent advocacy at all levels targeting key stakeholders at various levels to enhance the chances of success, noting the good example in that regard with the community's efforts around the listing of Al Shabab. They noted the importance of reaching an agreement on a standing exemption for humanitarian actions in sanctions regimes. Members also underlined that HCs/HCTs need to be both engaged and supported when COTER measures or restrictive donor agreements hamper humanitarian operations. The RG3 co-Chairs were requested to reinforce collaboration with other IASC structures, in particular with RG1 on Operational Response and RG5 on Humanitarian Financing in taking forward this area of work.

Results Group 4 – Humanitarian-Development Collaboration

The co-Chairs of Results Group 4 on Humanitarian-Development Collaboration (UNDP and Oxfam) briefed on progress made in delivering against the OPAG-agreed priority areas for 2019 (*please see the RG's Progress Report* here). These included: 1) the ongoing development of the light *Guidance on Collective Outcomes* to ensure a common understanding of analysis, funding and financial strategies and effective coordination initiatives; 2) the finalization of the *IASC Key Messages on the Humanitarian-Development Nexus and its Linkages to Peace* to inform leaders and practitioners of why humanitarian-development collaboration is vital and how to reflect on the peace element; 3) the continued nurturing of the triple collaboration Community of Practice, a platform for exchanging experiences and practices from the field; 4) the provision of collective inputs to the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and Common Country Analysis guidance (*completed*); and 5) the development of *Joint Key Messages on Quality Funding* in collaboration with RG5 on Humanitarian Financing (*completed*). The RG4 co-Chairs proposed to deliver in 2020 on finalizing the light *Guidance on Collective Outcomes*; maintaining the Community of Practice; streamlining country support; strengthening the articulation of the peace element in the triple

collaboration; and strengthening the collection and dissemination of information or good practices on implementing the triple collaboration.

OPAG Members welcomed the unique composition of RG4, bridging humanitarian, development and peace actors, and maintaining close collaboration with actors beyond the IASC. They agreed on the direction of the proposed priority areas for 2020. They strongly welcomed focusing on the completion and roll out of the light *Guidance on Collective Outcomes*. Members encouraged RG4 to continue close collaboration with RG5 and to create linkages with RG1 to build synergies between the roll-out of the *Guidance on Collective Outcomes* and needs assessment. Finally, a number of members asked for a concrete deliverable around field support; however; given the normative nature of the RGs, they suggested that the RG focus on collating information regarding IASC members' capacities that can be pooled to respond to requests for technical support from the field.

Members noted the importance of concluding the endorsement of the *IASC Key Messages on the Humanitarian-Development Nexus and its Linkages to Peace* in light of the level and duration of consultation, including with key development partners. They noted that this was a legacy piece of work of the previous IASC Task Team on Humanitarian-Development Collaboration, and that it should be viewed as a living document that would be updated following the conclusion of the *Guidance on Collective Outcomes*. The OPAG Co-Chairs expressed appreciation for the considerable work and effort of the previous Task Team and the extent of the consultation. They clarified that the feedback provided to strengthen the document are editorial in nature and, as such, requested the RG to consider the feedback and share a revised document for a speedy endorsement by the OPAG co-Chairs. There was no consensus on this proposal and several Members queried the roles of OPAG co-Chairs and Members in endorsement procedures. Against this backdrop, it was agreed to discuss endorsement procedures during the session reflecting on the OPAG's working method at the end of the day (see outcomes of the Session 5 below).

During the deep-dive discussion on collective outcomes, the RG4 co-Chairs sought the OPAG's feedback on how agencies could ensure flexibility in defining and supporting the implementation of collective outcomes. They reiterated tensions around the articulation of the peace element within the humanitarian-development-peace collaboration and safeguarding humanitarian principles, highlighting the need for the triple collaboration to be context specific. Members requested the RG4 to develop guidance specifically on the conditions under which the triple collaboration approaches are appropriate or not. Members further noted the need to differentiate between the "big P" (peacekeeping) and the "small p" (local capacity, peacebuilding, support for local governance) and the need for collective efforts to establish precise baseline indicators when operating in this "grey zone". Members also put forth the importance of strengthening country-level ownership around collective outcomes and the roll-out of the triple collaboration.

Results Group 5 – Humanitarian Financing

The co-Chairs of Results Group 5 on Humanitarian Financing (OCHA and ICVA) briefed on progress made against the OPAG-agreed priority areas for 2019 (*please see the RG's Progress Report here*). These included: 1) mapping and promoting financing instruments supporting humanitarian interventions with development co-benefits through publication of the study *Financing the Nexus: Gaps and Opportunities from a Field Perspective* (*completed*); 2) producing a business case showing the contribution of multi-year humanitarian planning and unearmarked funding to more cost-effective humanitarian assistance through delivering several products that promote the provision of quality funding, delivered in collaboration with relevant Grand Bargain workstreams, and advocating with key donors; and 3) simplifying and harmonizing UN systems to reduce burdens and free additional resources for humanitarian operations. They highlighted their successful collaboration with other IASC structures, in particular with RG4, and with key stakeholders beyond the IASC (e.g. OECD, Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) and Grand Bargain). In 2020, RG5 plans to conclude the priority areas of work agreed in 2019. In addition, in collaboration with the OECD, RG5

will convene regulators around compliance and risk issues with the objective to identify and overcome barriers to quality funding. RG5 also plans to convene a crisis financing roundtable in collaboration with the GHD and the World Bank to explore opportunities and advocate for scaling up quality funding and financing instruments for humanitarian-development programming in crises contexts.

OPAG members welcomed RG5's delivery of key products on quality financing and the promotion of financing instruments supporting humanitarian interventions with development co-benefits through the *Financing the Nexus* study. Members acknowledged the Group's effective collaboration with key stakeholders and processes beyond the IASC (stressing the essential collaboration with the Grand Bargain and the OECD). One OPAG Member proposed a merger of RG4 and RG5 in order to ensure better integration and more focus of activities; however, there was no agreement on this proposal and no formal decision was taken on this proposal. Members requested RG5 to continue and accelerate work on financing mechanisms for joint humanitarian-development programming, focusing on specific country contexts. Members called upon RG5 to complete developing a concrete business case for efficient and effective quality financing (in particular flexible multi-year and unearmarked funding and cascading benefits to local actors). Members noted that, to be successful, high level advocacy with key donors (which they deemed an essential RG5 deliverable) depended upon provision of evidence drawn from country contexts. It was suggested that these two deliverables could reinforce one another by being targeted on concrete country contexts. RG5 was furthermore requested to strengthen and accelerate its work advocating for the harmonizing of cost classification and reporting systems to reduce burdens and free additional resources for humanitarian operations.

During the deep dive discussion on innovative financing, the RG5 co-Chairs questioned the likelihood of identifying new humanitarian funding sources. They urged OPAG to advise on what success would look like under this priority area of work. Members discussed the need to deepen and diversify the funding base, while at the same time working towards decreasing need. Members suggested RG5 to focus on financing the humanitarian-development collaboration. They also suggested increasing collaboration with the private sector. Members also noted the need for development actors to step up engagement in fragile contexts and protracted crises and that the IASC needed to determine avenues to facilitate this engagement.

Follow-Up Actions:

1. RG co-Chairs to share with the OPAG the revised concrete deliverables for 2020 taking into account the feedback provided in their respective sessions – noting the following parameters: focus on a few concrete deliverables (2-3 max), being mindful of support to the field and field effectiveness, and continuing to promote inclusivity in engagement [*RG co-Chairs, via the IASC secretariat - 18 November 2019*]

2. RG4 co-Chairs to update the *Key messages on HDN and Links to Peace* addressing the editorial feedback received from the OPAG co-Chairs [*RG4 Co-Chairs – as soon as possible*]

3. Where support is required on how to translate IASC policies and guidelines into action, RGs to advise on how field support can be provided, including by pooling resources/capacities of IASC members [*all RGs*]

SESSION 2: HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT-PEACE COLLABORATION

Ms. Rachel Scott, Head, Crises and Fragility, OECD shared practical opportunities and risks in implementing humanitarian-development-peace collaboration in crises setting. Her presentation addressed several myths or public perceptions that have challenged the community around strengthening humanitarian-development-peace collaboration. One such myth is that fragility can be solved by development actors addressing its root causes. Another is that it is neither necessary nor constructive to include peace actors in joint or collaborative programming. Instead, Ms. Scott argued that fragility is multidimensional in nature - an interaction between

political, societal, economic, environmental factors and security risks – all having a direct impact on the level and of the needs of affected people. Therefore, actors working across the triple (humanitarian-development-peace) collaboration have critical roles to play to effectively address fragility. They need to learn to better understand each other's language and ways of working.

Contrary to common perception, Ms. Scott noted that development funds greatly exceed humanitarian funds in most fragile contexts. The triple collaboration approach furthermore does not divert humanitarian funding nor undermine humanitarian principles. Instead, she argued that it offers opportunities for collectively achieving the commitments of the Agenda 2030 and "leaving no-one behind". Humanitarian actors should step away from taking responsibility for responding to longer-term development needs and instead highlight the need for development actors to step in and scale up. Ms. Scott underlined that collective outcomes have to be articulated beyond aligning Humanitarian Response Plans and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF). Triple collaboration is not undermined by donor funding silos nor are pooled funds the best way to finance triple collaboration. Ms. Scott highlighted that 77 per cent of development budgets are spent bilaterally. Financing joint programming in fragile contexts has to bring together domestic and international public and private financial flows. Ms. Scott further highlighted that triple collaboration is more than a buzzword, noting growing commitment to this agenda, as shown by the adoption of the *OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus* at its Senior Level Meeting in February 2019.

OPAG members recognized a lack of engagement with national non-governmental organizations, community leaders and local governments by many humanitarian and development actors. They highlighted a need to strengthen ownership of collective outcomes processes, including donors and national governments. Participants called for enhanced efforts to make use of the framework of the triple collaboration to empower local leadership. Members also urged further thinking on how to address donor conditionalities and to advocate for donors to be less risk-averse. Participants queried what actions and instruments were required to deliver on collective outcomes in fragile contexts, as well as what key enablers and barriers are present at country level. Members noted a need to strengthen incentives for collaboration around resilience, particularly to bring development actors on board. Responding to a question on whether country teams could call on the OECD INCAF Secretariat to get support in coordinating with in-country donors for establishing programmes and coordination mechanisms on the nexus, Ms. Scott agreed that the contact of her team could be provided to field colleagues for this type of support.

Ms. Scott confirmed the critical roles played by the local leadership. She stressed the need to work with Governments to enable flexible financing. She reiterated that the localization message resonates well within development spheres and that political will was growing in its support. She noted that communications across donors, national authorities and Agencies was most important at country rather than headquarters level to promote coherence. She reiterated that the DAC recommendations reflected the importance of preserving humanitarian principles. Efforts should continue to push back on some of the donors and development actors who may inadvertently infringe on humanitarian principles, while promoting a better understanding on humanitarian work and culture of complementarity and collaboration. She also stressed that collective outcomes should not be applied comprehensively or generically but rather adapted to subnational contexts. Risk-intolerance was cited as a significant barrier for progressing collective outcomes and implementation of the humanitarian-development-peace collaboration.

SESSION 3: UPDATE FROM PEER-2-PEER

OPAG Co-Chairs welcomed the opportunity for OPAG to be briefed by Ms. Najat Rochdi, Director of the Peer-2-Peer project (P2P). P2P, an initiative under the guidance of the IASC Emergency Directors Group (EDG), plays an important role in providing direct support to Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams to support their efforts to address operational challenges faced on the ground. P2P also

plays a critical role in conduction Operational Peer Reviews (OPRs) in the event of an IASC Scale-Up declaration. Benefitting from over 26 P2P missions undertaken by the project since 2013, the objective of the session was to hear from Ms. Rochdi regarding findings and recommendations of recent OPRs and P2P mission and discuss key systemic issues for consideration by the OPAG.

Ms. Rochdi underscored the significantly changing and complex operating environment. In that regard, she noted the need for the humanitarian response to be quick to adapt to the challenges posed by the multi-dimensional nature of crises. As a result, she added that making progress on a stand-alone issue may not translate into substantial improvements of the overall response. She stressed that only collective action tailored to the nature of the crisis and working with local actors has the capacity to have a better humanitarian response. Looking back at the results of the P2P missions, she noted the recurrent need to address the following: effective delivery of aid (in terms of scale, speed, relevance and quality), centrality of protection, fit-for-purpose arrangements, strengthened preparedness, increased capacity building for local actors, comprehensive AAP, PSEA and Gender Based Violence, access and risk management, navigating the humanitarian-development (and peace) collaboration, effective communication, addressing the funding gaps, and maintaining principled humanitarian action.

Participants appreciated the value of P2P's direct engagement and support to the field and the added value of the OPAG-P2P-EDG engagement. OPAG members noted the importance of streamlining P2P reviews and Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations. Members inquired on how P2P can support transmitting policies and normative work of the IASC to the field. Participants queried how the work of OPAG can support localization. Risks are increasingly being outsourced to local partners.

Progress on due diligence measures for national humanitarian workers has required significant investment. More normative work that enables a real partnership with local partners is needed, with the appropriate risk mitigation measures, as well as addressing the specific challenges faced by NGOs. Strengthening localization and transformative change requires engaging with local communities throughout the humanitarian response. Humanitarian response can only be transformed when there is a shift to working as a collective, keeping the affected people at the center of the response. Members also sought practical recommendations for how to maintain a principled humanitarian approach amid increased politization and instrumentalization of aid.

In conclusion, Ms. Rochdi expressed appreciation for efforts of the OPAG/RGs to gear their work towards supporting field operations and effectiveness. She noted that P2P has the potential to become one of the platforms to raise awareness regarding critical IASC Guidance and Policies of direct relevance to the field and share feedback to the RGs and OPAG on the relevance and usefulness of these tools. She echoed members calls for stronger engagement with the IAHE while noting that they both served different purposes.

Follow-up Action:

1. Provide to OPAG quarterly updates on P2P on key findings from reviews being conducted to better inform the OPAG/RGs normative work [*P2P*]

2. Determine opportunities for P2P to support socializing IASC policies and guidelines to the broader humanitarian community [*IASC secretariat in collaboration with P2P*]

SESSION 4: IASC ASSOCIATED ENTITIES

OPAG co-Chairs introduced this session to discuss the focus and accountability lines of IASC Associated Entities (namely, the Global Cluster Coordination Group (GCCG), Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group (IAHE-SG), Humanitarian Programme Cycle Steering Group (HPC-SG), Gender Reference Group (GRG), and the Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support Reference Group (MHPSS-RG)). The Head of the IASC secretariat, Ms. Mervat Shelbaya, provided a brief overview of the entities and potential

areas for consideration with regards to strengthening the accountability to the OPAG. As indicated in the IASC Structures paper of January 2019, the Entities Associated with the IASC are accountable to the OPAG. Associated Entities differ significantly, including in ways of working and governance structures; many existed long before the recent IASC restructuring. All have delivered key products and fulfil critical roles.

There was broad agreement by the OPAG on the need for policy related work being produced by the Entities Associated with the IASC to be channelled through the OPAG for endorsement. There was also general agreement on the need to maintain the independence of the IAHE SG – while highlighting the value and importance of strengthening engagement/information exchange. An OPAG member called for a closer look at the workings of the Gender Reference Group, particularly with regards to field support. There were also a number of calls for the GCCG to focus efforts on field support and less on developing normative work, particularly in light of the new structures and the role of the OPAG/RGs in that regard. A number of members suggested revising the Chairmanship of the GCCG and encouraged co-Chairmanship arrangements similar to that of the OPAG – a point that the OPAG co-Chair welcomed. Separately, a number of OPAG members urged moving forward on the light review of the cluster system as it relates to IDP response which was decided by the IASC Principals. There were also questions regarding the status of the SUSTAIN to which OCHA indicated that this was work-in-progress and is being discussed at the Principals level.

Follow-Up Actions:

1. Follow-up with the respective entities to share the outcomes of this discussion [*IASC secretariat*]

2. Discuss the work as well as the co-Chairmanship arrangements of the GCCG at a separate OPAG meeting [*IASC secretariat to liaise with the GCCG to facilitate this session*]

3. Consider opportunities for the respective IASC Associated Entities to brief/ have an exchange with the OPAG regarding their respective work [*IASC secretariat in consultation with the IASC Associated Entities*]

4. *Follow-up on the implementation of the light review of coordination structures in IDP settings [IASC secretariat in consultation with the ERC]*

SESSION 5: OPAG WAYS OF WORKING

The OPAG co-Chairs introduced this item to the agenda to give an opportunity for the OPAG members to share their reflections on the working method of the OPAG and the Results Group at this critical juncture since the establishment of the new structures. A number of key issues were brought up by the OPAG members including balancing the need for time-bound and concrete deliverables with more strategic dialogue/discussion on critical issues that have an impact on the system and that require time to make progress on; the need to engage the OPAG more frequently during the course of the year; the process for the endorsement of IASC products, including the role of the OPAG Co-Chairs in that regard; and the role of the RGs with regard to the provision of technical support to the field on the normative work being produced.

OPAG member noted the need to continue to focus on delivering concrete and time-bound results to demonstrate relevance and ensure provision of timely normative support for field effectiveness, including through tapping on opportunities for further consultations with HC/RC (*notably through HC/RC annual retreat to ensure field focus and alignment of OPAG priorities with country demand*). They also noted the need to ensure more even participation and contribution towards workstreams of UN and non-UN members. There was also general agreement on the need for the OPAG to convene more regularly on a virtual basis – including to address complex or controversial issues that might arise from the Results Groups. There was also general agreement that while the RG's role is normative in nature (not to provide direct field support), there were opportunities for the RG to consider coordinating or mapping or pooling agency resources/capacities to provide much needed requests for field support. Equally there was a need for new

IASC policies/tools/guidelines to include a clear reference regarding where/how technical support can be made available to the field. There was also a suggestion to have a standing agenda item for the EDG Chair to brief the OPAG as well as a consideration for a joint OPAG-EDG meeting to strengthen engagement of both groups. Finally, on endorsement procedures, the OPAG agreed on the need to ensure a transparent and expedited process of endorsement by the OPAG.

Follow-Up Actions:

1. Results Groups to continue focusing on delivering maximum two to three concrete and time-bound deliverables [*all RGs*]

2. Share options regarding innovative ways for virtual OPAG meetings to take place in between the 2 OPAG face-to-face meetings, as well as issues/topics for discussion [*IASC secretariat in consultation with OPAG Members*]

3. Facilitate a transparent and expedited endorsement of products produced by the RGs [*OPAG co-Chairs and Members with the support of the IASC secretariat*]

4. Consider a follow-up discussion by the OPAG regarding the RG's role in facilitating the provision of technical support to field requests [*OPAG co-Chairs and Members with the support of the IASC secretariat*]

5. Include an update from the EDG as a standing agenda item in the OPAG meetings and consider a joint OPAG-EDG meeting [*IASC secretariat to follow-up with EDG*]

CONCLUSION

The co-Chairs thanked members for their engagement throughout the two-day meeting and their continued work in support of the normative work of the IASC.

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Annex I
Inter-Agency Standing Committee
Operational Policy and Advocacy Group (OPAG) Meeting

7-8 November 2019
Host: Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
Location: Starling Hotel, Geneva

Agenda

DAY 1: THURSDAY, 7 NOVEMBER

08:30 - 09:00 ARRIVAL

Coffee/tea served throughout the day

09:00 - 09:15 OPENING REMARKS

Ms. Valerie Guarnieri, Assistant Executive Director, WFP
Mr. Geir Olav Lisle, Deputy Secretary-General, NRC

SESSION 1: RESULTS GROUPS - UPDATE ON CONCRETE DELIVERABLES

Session objectives: Examine progress made by the Results Groups on the OPAG-agreed priority areas of work in 2019 and discuss priorities for 2020 to achieve the IASC Strategic Priorities.

09:15 - 10:45 SESSION 1.1: RESULTS GROUP 2 –
ACCOUNTABILITY AND INCLUSION

[Deep dive issue to be discussed: Accountability to Affected People]

Presenters: Co-Chairs of the Results Group 2

- Ms. Bernadette Castel-Hollingsworth, Deputy Director, Division of International Protection, UNHCR
- Ms. Meritxell Relano, Director, Office of Emergency Programmes, UNICEF

10:45 - 11:00 COFFEE

11:00 - 12:30 SESSION 1.2: RESULTS GROUP 5 –
HUMANITARIAN FINANCING

[Deep dive issue to be discussed: Expanding humanitarian funding through innovative finance]

Presenters: Co-Chairs of Results Group 5

- Ms. Marcy Vigoda, Chief, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Branch, OCHA
  - Mr. Jeremy Rempel, Head, Humanitarian Financing, ICVA

12:30 - 13:30 LUNCH

13:30 - 15:00 SESSION 1.3: RESULTS GROUP 4 –
HUMANITARIAN DEVELOPMENT COLLABORATION

[Deep dive issue to be discussed: Collective outcomes]

Presenters: Co-Chairs of the Results Group 4
- Ms. Marta Valdes Garcia, International Deputy Humanitarian Director, OXFAM
- Ms. Rekha Das, Inter-Agency Recovery Advisor, UNDP

15:00 - 15:15 COFFEE

15:15 - 16:45 SESSION 2: HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT-PEACE COLLABORATION

Presenter: Ms. Rachel Scott, Head, Crises and Fragility, OECD

Session objective: Discuss concrete and practical opportunities and risks in the implementation of the humanitarian-development-peace collaboration in crises settings and in contexts where humanitarian and development action and/or funding is constrained.

16:45 - 17:30 OPAG WAYS OF WORKING

17:30 - 17:45 AOB

DAY 2: FRIDAY, 8 NOVEMBER

08:30 - 09:00 ARRIVAL

Coffee/tea served throughout the day

09:00 - 10:30 SESSION 3: UPDATE FROM PEER-2-PEER

Presenter: Ms. Najat Rochdi, Director, Peer-2-Peer Project

Session objectives: Provide an overview of findings and recommendations of recent Operational Peer Reviews (OPRs) and discuss key systemic issues that need to be considered by the OPAG and the IASC.

10:30 - 10:45 COFFEE

10:45 - 12:00 SESSION 4: IASC ASSOCIATED ENTITIES

Facilitator: Ms. Mervat Shelbaya, Head, IASC secretariat

Session objectives: Discuss the status of Entities Associated with the IASC (GCCG, IAHE SG, HPC SG, Gender Ref Group, and MHPSS Ref Group), particularly in terms of their accountabilities to the OPAG.

12:00 - 12:15 GROUP PHOTO

12:15 - 13:15   LUNCH

13:15 - 14:45 SESSION 1.4: RESULTS GROUP 3 – COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY

[Deep dive issue to be discussed: Addressing the impact of counter-terrorism measures on humanitarian action]

Presenters: Co-Chairs of the Results Group 3
- Mr. Michel Anglade, Director and UN Representative, Geneva Office,

Save the Children

- Ms. Shoko Arakaki, Director, Humanitarian Office, UNFPA

14:45 - 15:00 COFFEE

15:00 - 16:30 SESSION 1.5: RESULTS GROUP 1 – OPERATIONAL RESPONSE

[Deep dive issue to be discussed: Mainstreaming of Protection]

Presenters: Co-Chairs of the Results Group 1

- Mr. Julien Schopp, Director, Humanitarian Practice, InterAction
- Mr. Ramesh Rajasingham, Director, Coordination Division, OCHA

16:30 - 17:00 RECACP AND CLOSING

Ms. Valerie Guarnieri, Assistant Executive Director, WFP
Mr. Geir Olav Lisle, Deputy Secretary-General, NRC

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[NOTE: The Co-Chairs of the Results Groups and the Chair of the EDG are invited to attend all sessions]

Annex II
IASC Operational Policy and Advocacy Group (OPAG) Meeting
7-8 November 2019

Participants List

OPAG Co-Chair	Ms. Valerie Guarnieri, Assistant Executive Director, WFP Mr. Geir Olav Lisle, Deputy Secretary-General, NRC
FAO	Mr. Dominique Burgeon Mr. Daniele Donati
ICRC	Ms. Clare Dalton
ICVA	Ms. Mirela Shuteriqi Ms. Emmanuelle Osmond
ICVA - FRD	Mr. Azmat Khan
ICVA - ACBAR	Ms. Fiona Gall
ICVA - COAST	Mr. Rezaul Karim Chowdhury
IFRC	Prof. Cecile Aptel (also representing ICRC)
InterAction	Ms. Kate Phillips-Barrasso Mr. Julien Schopp
InterAction - Care USA	Ms. Sheba Crocker
InterAction - Global Communities	Ms. Pia Wanek
IOM	Ms. Tristan Burnett Ms. Angela Staiger
OCHA	Mr. Ramesh Rajasingham
OHCHR	Mr. Roberto Ricci
SCHR	Mr. Gareth Price Jones
SCHR - Christian Aid	Mr. Michael Mosselmans
SCHR - Save the Children	Ms. Leah Finnigan
SR on HR of IDPs	Ms. Martina Caterina
UNDP	Mr. Bruno Lemarquis Mr. Roberto Paganini
UNFPA	Ms. Shoko Arakaki Mr. Ingo Piegeler
UN-HABITAT	Mr. Filiep Decorte
UNHCR	Mr. Arafat Jamal Ms. Annika Sandlund

	Mr. Nicolas Brass
UNICEF	Mr. Manuel Fontaine
	Ms. Segolene Adam
WFP	Ms. Marie-Helene Kyprianou
	Mr. Anthony Craig
WHO	Mr. Rudi Coninx
	Mr. Guillaume Simonian

Presenters:

Co-Chairs of RG1: Mr. Ramesh Rajasingham, Mr. Julien Schopp

Co-Chairs of RG2: Ms. Meritxell Relano, Ms. Bernadette Castel-Hollingsworth

Co-Chairs of RG3: Mr. Michel Anglade, Ms. Shoko Arakaki

Co-Chairs of RG4: Ms. Marta Valdes Garcia, Ms. Rekha Das

Co-Chairs of RG5: Ms. Marcy Vigoda, Mr. Jeremy Rempel

Ms. Rachel Scott, Head, Crises and Fragility, OECD

Ms. Najat Rochdi, Director of the Peer-2-Peer Project

IASC secretariat:

Ms. Mervat Shelbaya, Head, IASC Secretariat

Ms. Wendy Cue

Ms. Isabelle De Muyser

Ms. Tanja Schuemer

Ms. Cynthia Viveros Cano

Mr. Jonathan Brunggel

Ms. Christina Powell

Ms. Jione Park

Ms. Mirlinda Pasoma

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