

IASC RESULTS GROUP 3 ON COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY

5 May 2020
Summary Record

The IASC Results Group 3 on Collective Advocacy convened on 5 May 2020 to discuss the following **agenda**: (i) Collective advocacy and COVID-19; (ii) Update on Results Group 3 Workplan; and (iii) Upcoming OPAG meeting. The following is a brief summary of the discussion and action points agreed at the meeting.

COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY AND COVID-19

Co-Chairs tabled key possible topics/issues to develop collective positions around, as below:

- **Access** (constraints, UNSG call for a ceasefire) – *find attached the “IASC Key Messages to Fast track health and aid workers and supplies at borders and in countries” in the invitation*
- **EDG’s Task Team on Operational Practices** – *find attached “Maintaining Operational Continuity and Responding to New Threats” and on “examples of good practices in Covid-19 response” in the invitation*
- Funding and launch of the next iteration of the **GHRP** on 7 May – *find attached Results Group 5’s “Proposal for a harmonized approach to funding flexibility in the context of COVID-19” in the invitation*
- **Vulnerable people** and specific crises: potentially around hunger crisis developing in some regions as a result of COVID-19
- **Grand Bargain** and the COVID-19 response, particularly around localization and funding
- Increased **protection** risks in light of COVID-19, particularly against women and girls
- **Gender** dimension of COVID-19

Co-Chairs highlighted the importance of identifying gaps and specific value additions in advocacy efforts already in place and inter-agency narratives needed in light of the pandemic. Advocacy efforts should also support the recommendations of the IASC Principals meetings on COVID-19.

OCHA noted that an analysis was being compiled based on a survey to measure access constraints related to COVID-19, noting that relevant initiatives were in the pipeline to identify and track access constraints under COVID-19, including by Results Group 1 and the EDG. OCHA further stressed the need for the Group to consider what could be done once the analysis was finalized and what access message should be delivered building on the analysis. Challenges were also noted to grasp information on vulnerable groups for inclusion in the GHRP, while efforts were building to tell their stories better. All members were encouraged to support the UN Communication Group’s campaign against misinformation on COVID-19. IFRC suggested linking the campaign with the Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) working group. OCHA further highlighted the negative impact of sanctions regimes as a result of COVID-19 and the need to streamline the process for humanitarians, including through fast-tracking and license granting.

SCHR noted two elements related to access constraints: (i) constraints generated by genuine health concerns and (ii) constraints imposed by authoritative motives, acknowledging that advocacy had more roles to play in the latter.

InterAction shared that an internal tracker on operational challenges for NGOs was in the pipelines and suggested cross-analyzing what constraints are legitimate and what others are a cover for further marginalization of people in need. InterAction will also communicate with the heads of key INGOs and NNGOs across different regions to produce a paper on identified operational challenges, which can be shared with the Group when finalized.

GPC underlined that protection could be a good basis for collective advocacy, particularly in terms of human rights violation, exacerbating protection needs as a result of COVID-19, and continued attention to ongoing operations. GPC also noted the lack of guidance on exacerbating protection risks; ceasefire and the dynamics of armed groups. GPC is currently developing advocacy notes to address concerns on armed conflicts and COVID-19, as well as a template to lay out the roles of HCTs and other key actors to operationalize the Centrality of Protection on the ground. GPC further proposed that the advocacy notes could be taken forward as the Group's endeavor. Key protection concerns are highlighted in the [GPC COVID-19 Sitreps](#).

UNICEF stressed the lack of systematic evidence for effective advocacy on protection and importance of evidence-based analysis with data. It was noted that relevant discussions were also taking place in Results Group 1 on Operational Response, where it was agreed to use the GHRP as the first vector to ensure protection concerns were reflected in the COVID-19 response. UNICEF also suggested refining existing key messages to reflect evolving needs and realities. InterAction proposed common methodologies, which could benefit from the Group's support.

CONCERN drew the Group's attention to the longer-term projection, noting that next year would be the real worry as the secondary impact on ongoing crises unfold as a result of lost livelihoods and hindered vaccination campaigns, among others. CONCERN further noted that Oxford and ILAC were developing a paper on legal obligations surrounding COVID-related restrictions, which will be shared with the Group for feedback.

FAO highlighted the need to equally focus on the impending food crisis as the upcoming planting season could be missed due to COVID-19 and urged the Group to continue advocating for ongoing crises.

As next steps, co-Chairs encouraged members to share collective advocacy strategies on COVID-19 and other relevant materials under development by individual agencies to form synergies within the Group. Co-Chairs highlighted that the Group's added values were found in advocating for existing crises and bringing together fragmented advocacy efforts, and proposed developing practical narratives with evidence-based analysis for consideration of the EDG and the Principals. GPC volunteered to provide protection inputs to the document.

Action Points

1. Members to share resources being developed by individual agencies to feed into the Group's collective messages on COVID-19.
2. Co-chairs to share with the group ahead of the next call a draft narrative on advocacy and COVID-19.

UPDATE OF RESULTS GROUP 3 WORKPLAN

Co-leads of the COTER subgroup (InterAction and OCHA) noted that the work of the subgroup had slowed down due to COVID-19, however the momentum from the Principals meeting in December 2019 was still strong with 16 members participating. The subgroup agreed to focus on the Principals decisions, namely: (i) Advocate for standing humanitarian exemptions in COTER measures; (ii) Provide guidance to and ensure leadership by HCs and HCTs to engage actors locally to address the impact of COTER measures; (iii) Deepen efforts to document the negative effects and make an evidence-based case; (iv) Engage proactively in open and sustained dialogue with Member States to raise awareness on concerns and work toward practical solutions, including in Security Council resolutions, donor agreements and domestic legislation; and (v) Engage the UN COTER architecture (the COTER Committee and its Executive Directorate, the Office of COTER, Sanctions Committees). The subgroup will soon discuss how to take these forward, while capitalizing on members' different added values and roles.

Co-Chairs acknowledged the importance of this workstream in addressing ongoing challenges. Members were requested to provide further feedback on the previously shared "Learning note on Al-Shabaab listing case."

Co-leads of the Climate Change subgroup (OCHA and IFRC) briefed that communications from various partners for the Earth Day were shared within the subgroup, including the Secretary-General's six climate actions relevant to the pandemic. The subgroup is currently working on two deliverables: (i) "*Develop a common narrative on climate change and humanitarian action and engage on the humanitarian dimension of climate change*" – with priorities given to providing humanitarian lens on the intersection between COVID-19 and climate; coordinating and scaling up climate messages while major events are being postponed or rearranged online; and education; and (ii) "Provide advocacy points on the impact of extreme weather events during COVID-19" – with focus on forming key messages around continued funds for preparedness and response to the next extreme weather events during COVID-19.

Co-Chairs noted that by the end of May a best-practices document on the engagement with **Non-State Armed Groups** to support HCs and HCTs on the ground would be finalized, while the work on **cross-border resolutions on Syria** is currently put on hold, considering limited capacity at this stage.

Action Points

1. Members to share further feedback on the "Learning note on Al-Shabaab listing case."
2. Co-Chairs to share the best-practices document on the engagement with Non-State Armed Groups to support HCs and HCTs on the ground by end May.

UPCOMING OPAG MEETING

Co-Chairs noted that a draft Progress Report (November 2019 – April 2020) was circulated with the Group for inputs. The agenda of the upcoming OPAG meetings includes Risk Communications and Community Engagement; Stepping up efforts around localization in light of COVID; Donor conditionalities/flexibility and reporting in light of COVID-19; Linkages between the GHRP, SPRP and the socio-economic plan; Digitization and data responsibility in light of COVID-19; Protection risks in light of COVID; and progress update of the five Results Groups [*updated per the final agenda circulated on 6 May*].

Co-Chairs further noted that, while the Group was not directly tasked by the Principals, the Group could contribute to various topics being considered for the OPAG meeting as advocacy is overarching, and reiterated that the Group's added value could be found in focusing on ongoing crises and bringing different workstreams together around collective advocacy.

IASC secretariat was requested to review the consolidated events list to reflect the changes in light of COVID-19 and share the link to the Group's subpage where members could share relevant information.

Action Points

1. Members to provide inputs to the draft Progress Report with co-Chairs, copying Jione Park (jione.park@un.org) from the IASC secretariat
2. IASC secretariat to review the consolidated events list to reflect the changes in light of COVID-19.
3. IASC secretariat to share the [link to the Group's subpage](#) on the IASC webpage. *Actioned*

AOB

OCHA shared that advocacy efforts were being stepped up for the GHRP funding of common services provided by WFP on logistics and MedEvacs. It was also noted that Yemen HRP was critically underfunded and a pledging conference was penciled for 4 June.
