

## IASC Results Group 1 – Operational Response

16 September 2020

### Summary Record

---

IASC Results Group 1 on Operational Response met on 16 September 2020 to discuss (i) options to make protection central across IASC structures; (ii) IASC mandate extension and implications for Results Group 1, (iii) OPAG preparations and sub-group progress and priorities; and (iv) any other business.

#### **Action points:**

1. UNHCR to share options paper regarding protection and IASC structures with RG1 members **[UNHCR]**
2. Host a brainstorming session with UNHCR on options paper regarding protection and across IASC structures **[RG 1 Centrality of Protection sub-group]**
3. Present options paper on protection and IASC structures in upcoming OPAG meeting as well as to various results groups **[UNHCR]**
4. Provide rationale on rationalization and prioritization in RG1 and seek OPAG endorsement **[RG 1 co-chairs with support from IASC Secretariat]**
5. Share draft IASC Protection Policy ToRs with RG1 **[RG 1 Centrality of Protection sub-group]**
6. Provide feedback on the specific questions raised by the Bureaucratic and Administrative Impediments sub-group on the draft Myanmar case study **[RG 1 members]**
7. UN agencies to express interest in being involved in future BAI case studies **[RG 1 members]**
8. Share Operational Guidance on Data Responsibility with RG 1 following sub-group consultations **[RG 1 Data Responsibility sub-group]**

#### **1. Opening Remarks**

The Co-chairs welcomed participants to the meeting and expressed their appreciation of the work that group members have undertaken over the last months. The Co-chairs noted that UNHCR, ICVA and Somalia NGO Consortium have recently taken leadership of the localization sub-group and thanked the previous co-chairs, UNICEF and IFRC, for their efforts. The Co-chairs also reflected on the All Results Groups Co-chairs meeting in which preparations for the OPAG meeting was discussed including the planned focused discussion on the future of the IASC structures, following the extension by the ERC.

#### **2. Options to Making Protection Central Across IASC structures**

The co-chairs noted that it was agreed in the June OPAG meeting, UNHCR would develop an options paper on integrating protection in IASC structures. Ms. Grainne O'Hara, Director of International Protection Division, UNHCR thanked Results Group 1 for providing the space to brainstorm on the options developed noting that an internal think piece would be shared with Results Group 1. Ms. O'Hara noted that protection discussions often take place in discussions involving in forums with like-minded professionals. UNHCR adapted its proposals following the extension

of the mandate of the IASC structures. The focus is now on exploring ways to strengthen existing architecture on centrality of protection. UNHCR acknowledged some of the results group have taken good steps to bring attention to centrality of protection under Results Group 2, and 5 as well as Results Group 1 through the Centrality of Protection sub-group.

Against this backdrop, UNHCR proposed to hold a provide dedicated quarterly OPAG-wide protection briefings strengthen the existing architecture and good work and facilitate discussions through a predictable mechanism. This mechanism would bring in the wider membership of OPAG and representatives of various IASC bodies and create clear linkages across all IASC bodies. In addition, UNHCR proposed that every results group adopts a specific objective and related indicators on centrality of protection in their annual work plan. Likewise, UNHCR added that results group co-chairs should report back to OPAG on how their results group contributes to placing protection at the center of humanitarian response, flags progress made in achieving their objectives on protection, and updates on how these objective and progress link up with other IASC structures including the Emergency Directors Group and the IASC Principals. UNHCR also offered to draft Terms of Reference for the dedicated quarterly OPAG-wide protection briefing.

In the ensuing discussion, participants welcomed the proposals made by UNHCR. OCHA inquired about what success would look like if protection was integrated across IASC structures and how the proposals made will link up with the centrality of protection indicators work undertaken by the CoP sub-group. UNICEF referred to discussions on protection and bureaucratic and administrative impediments in the last IASC Principals meeting and asked for clarity around the specific requests and expectations from this Results Group. Likewise, UNICEF noted that it may be useful to bring in outside perspectives to conversations on the proposed OPAG-wide protection briefings. The CoP sub-group co-chairs stated that having the capacity to engage with various IASC bodies and make linkages has been a challenge and that at the operational level several other challenges including insufficiently facilitated HCT protection policies and/or practical implementation of these policies exist. The CoP hopes, for instance, the Protection indicators would provide greater shared clarity and structure on how to articulate and implement these issues. The CoP sub-group requested in taking this proposal forward UNHCR consider how to focus the attention of various entities and results groups on create ways rather than centrality of protection writ large. The sub-group also offered to host a consultation session with its membership and UNHCR on the proposals.

The Global Protection cluster noted that it has been involved in protection discussions in various results groups which have been advancing several outputs on protection. Nevertheless, what has been missing is the formulization that protection and centrality of protection are crosscutting issues. While the role of CoP sub-group is recognized and remains important, it is equally important to formalize the responsibility and accountability to other bodies through diversification on centrality of protection. UNHCR acknowledged the feedback provided by participants noting that each result group and entity will identify protection objectives and actions relevant to their area of work and that protection experts should reach out to relevant results groups to bring together protection work.

There was agreement that UNHCR should share the options paper with Results Group 1 members, brainstorm on the proposal with Centrality of Protection sub-group and hold consultations with other results groups. These consultations would feed into the OPAG meeting and have discussion around the proposals at hand.

### **3. IASC mandate extension and Implications for Results Group 1**

The Co-chairs made a reference to the recent message by the Emergency Relief Coordinator on the mandate extension of the IASC structures for the next 15 months while also asking for further complementarities across various bodies and prioritization of deliverables. The co-chairs noted that Results Group will need to consider how to use the mandate extension, what the results group has learned to date, and what to improve upon collectively. Likewise, the co-chairs noted that the group should reflect on how these workstreams add value and what workstreams require inter-agency collaboration and coordination and which ones could be led by one agency or another with some benchmarks without necessarily being part of Results Group 1. The co-chairs sought the views of the membership on what should be put forward to OPAG and the way the Results Group 1 workstreams should be rationalized.

Participants agreed that Results Group 1 should rationalize its workstreams. Based on the co-chairs' consultations and various bilateral discussions, the co-chairs proposed that Centrality of Protection, Bureaucratic and Administrative Impediments, and Localization sub-groups to continue as planned given the inter-agency leadership they require and the demands and expectations from EDGs, OPAG and Principals. The Data Responsibility, Early Warning and Early Action, as well as Humanitarian Leadership sub-groups, on the other hand, are led by one agency which undertakes necessary consultations with relevant stakeholders and, as a result, there is a question whether they belong to Result Group 1. Both the Data Responsibility and Humanitarian Leadership are led by OCHA with dedicated support while the Early Warning and Early Action is led by WFP with participation from IASC members. These sub-groups will still be expected to deliver on their priorities

There was agreement with the suggested way forward and the co-chairs asked the IASC Secretariat to articulate the agreement of the Results Group 1 members and facilitate OPAG endorsement of the rationalization decisions made. The Data Responsibility and Humanitarian Leadership sub-groups asked for having the flexibility to approach Results Group 1 as a point of entry, as needed. Both the Data Responsibility and Humanitarian Leadership sub-group chairs expressed support for the proposal but asked for guidance and flexibility if deliverables cannot be completed on time or blockages are faced. It was acknowledged that the Early Warning and Early Action sub-group already produces its reports, convenes regularly and supports the Emergency Directors Group (EDG). WFP stated that the Early Warning and Early Action group will continue to feed into EDG work. WFP also noted that this group could brief or communicate with Results Group 1 as needed.

#### **4. Update on OPAG meeting preparations and Sub-group progress and priorities**

The co-chairs provided an update on the upcoming OPAG meeting which would provide an opportunity to take stock of the progress made in various results groups and discuss the mandate extension of IASC structures including rationalization and prioritization of deliverables. The co-chairs noted that both localization and protection were tagged for the OPAG discussion and inquired with sub-group co-chairs what would be presented along with key messages under consideration. The Results Group 1 co-chairs noted that the OPAG agenda was still being finalized with a view to have a broader discussion around mandate extension.

The Localization sub-group noted it plans to present on its priorities in the OPAG meeting. It recently held a meeting and agreed to develop guidance on the meaningful participation of local NGOs in coordination structures building upon the good work that has been done by ICVA and OCHA. In addition, the sub-group will work to operationalize the interim localization guidance issued in the context of Covid-19 and review the extent to which it has been disseminated and used to date including through consideration of webinars. The sub-group also held consultations with Results Groups 2 and 5 exploring how accountability and inclusion, and humanitarian financing can be incorporated into upcoming

localization guidance and work. As part of its contribution to the sub-group, UN-HABITAT developed a framework for engaging local government and the sub-group members will provide feedback with a smaller group also working for high-level messages from the framework. Finally, the sub-group co-chairs noted that the sub-group does not have any local NGO members and the sub-group is currently considering criteria to invite some local organizations to the sub-group.

The Centrality of Protection sub-group updated that it has made progress on the draft Terms of Reference on the IASC Protection Policy review. The sub-group had several rounds of consultation and received inputs from the Global Protection Cluster Strategic Advisory Group. The CoP sub-group would like to table this draft to OPAG for endorsement. The co-chairs noted that the stigmatization recommendations received support within the sub-group and that the sub-group intends to put these recommendations forward for the Results Group 1. Further, the co-chairs recently received an HCT reflection paper from Yemen and acknowledged the sub-group's work on indicators has been slower than intended.

The Bureaucratic and Administrative Impediments sub-group co-chairs noted that their priority is to develop normative guidance for HCs and HCTs to mitigate risks and impact bureaucratic and administrative impediments. The sub-group recently shared the draft case study on Myanmar which provides a light framework to analyze bureaucratic impediments and examines the Myanmar context. The sub-group is looking for specific feedback on tools and templates to include, what to use from the framework for future studies, and whether UN agencies would agree to designate in country focal points for future studies. The co-chairs noted that it has been challenging to get agencies to get involved in the sub-group's work and encouraged UN agencies to engage in future work.

The Data Responsibility sub-group noted that the Operational Guidance is being finalized to be shared with Results Group 1 and OPAG in November. The chair of the sub-group will reach out to the IASC Secretariat for OPAG endorsement process.

The Humanitarian Leadership sub-group noted that work is continuing the RC/HC Handbook with video and audio materials being added on the project including interviews to present learning materials interactively. It is expected that the way material is presented will help communicate key learning materials and messages more effectively.

The Early Warning and Early Action sub-group noted that the bi-annual report drafting has started in September and will be issued in November. It will also inform the next EDG horizon scanning exercise in November with 17 countries currently considered to be at risk. The group will hold an analytical meeting at the end of September which will inform prioritization of issues at hand. El Nina phenomena is expected to feature in this report given current climatic trends.

## **5. AOB**

The co-chairs encouraged sub-groups to provide regular written progress updates to Result Group 1 co-chairs and continue to hold sub-group meetings at regular intervals.