
IASC Results Group 3 – Collective Advocacy
3 November 2020

Summary Record

IASC Results Group 3 on Collective Advocacy met on 3 November 2020 to discuss (i) the conclusions of the 29 October OPAG discussion on protection; (ii) Yemen advocacy opportunities complementing country-level advocacy engagement; (iii) Update on food security related collective advocacy; (iv) discussion on key advocacy activities planned for the Afghanistan conference, scheduled for 23-24 November; (v) COTER update; and (vi) climate change update; (vii) debrief on the Central Sahel Ministerial Conference; (viii) Planning 2021: Outline of the process

Action points:

1. IASC secretariat to circulate the TOR of the IASC protection review discussed in the 29 October OPAG session. (ACTIONED)
2. RG3 co-chairs to reach out to UNICEF/GPC and others interested to identify 2-3 action points on how RG3 could contribute to the follow-up of the OPAG protection discussion.
3. WFP/ FAO to share the latest hotspot report with the RG3 co-chairs (ACTIONED)
4. FAO/WFP to finalize the final RG3 food security key messages.
5. RG3 members to share any advocacy documents on the Afghanistan conference with the RG3 co-chairs.
6. RG3 co-Chairs to table 2021 planning at the December meeting.

Conclusions of 29 October OPAG discussion on protection by RG3 co-chairs

- The RG3 co-Chairs debriefed on the 29 October protection session at the OPAG. Support was expressed for the review of the IASC protection policy on protection undertaken by RG1's Centrality of Protection sub-group. By and large, the TOR had been endorsed, and it was recommended to establish a small advisory group to accompany and ensure system-wide support for the review. In addition, UNHCR had tabled a proposal to elevate protection in the work of IASC subsidiary bodies, which was being revised and the Results Groups were to be consulted on how to address this within their groups.
- The Global Protection Cluster (GPC) noted that its advocacy task team which was working on the 2021 protection strategy would be connecting with these efforts of RG1 to assess what efforts would strengthen protection at the country level.
- UNICEF commented that the OPAG highlighted that the recommendations would be clear and be followed up with a management plan to ensure implementation. To this end, RG3 may have an entry point to engage in the management response. As for the OPAG agenda item on how to elevate protection across the IASC, all subsidiary bodies were invited to identify how to contribute to potential early action related to protection.

Yemen advocacy opportunities complementing country-level advocacy engagement by RG3 co-chairs

- The RG3 co-Chairs highlighted the key humanitarian challenges of the Yemen response, including the challenging operating environment, and some programs having scaled down or stopped as a result of underfunding, and an increasing food insecurity. They referred to the senior official meeting co-organized by Sweden and the EU on 12th of November, and noted that the advocacy work of the Yemen communication group had been shared.

- ICVA referred to a meeting between the ERC and some CEOs of NGOs, focusing on the level of needs and operating challenges in Yemen, and resulting in an agreement on a clear set of key messages in the areas of underfunding and access-related challenges. While the Yemen communications group was driving the messaging at the country level, possibly the RG3 could focus on a few topline messages, while the more nuanced messages should be taken forward by the country level.
- UNFPA noted that the organization had to shut down some services as well, including 140 of 180 reproductive health centers for women, resulting in a number of women dying in childbirth. Its advocacy was beyond the funding aspect and included aspects of the increase of child marriage, the increased exposure to trafficking, and the number of women-headed households. The GPC referenced its recent [Yemen brief](#):
- FAO commented that its Emergency Director was on mission to Yemen and KSA to discuss access regarding the desert locusts response.

Update on food security related collective advocacy

- The RG3 co-chairs noted that FAO and WFP were updating the food security key messages based on the forthcoming hotspot report. WFP noted that the hotspot report was to be published on 6 November. FAO noted that the four countries of heightened concern highlighted stayed the same – Yemen, Burkina Faso, northeastern Nigeria, South Sudan.
- The RG co-Chairs commented that the Geneva Humanitarian Liaison Working Group was to be co-chaired by the UK ambassador and the first meeting was to focus on food security. They added that during the IASC Principals meeting the day before, various Principals had expressed concern about the worsening food security, and that the RG3 may have an opportunity to feed into the food security aspects of the annual horizon scanning meeting of the Principals meeting on 30 November.
- WFP noted that **the Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) on 1 December** will feature food insecurity as well. The RG3 co-chairs noted that this year's GHO will focus on women and girls, protection and displacement. To this end, any collective actions for RG3 to undertake would be welcome.
- OCHA commented that one of the five launches would be in Geneva, with other events placed in London, Brussels, Washington and Berlin. Each country would have a different thematic focus. While the locations were the capitals of Western donors, more local voices were to be included in the communication and outreach initiatives.
- OCHA raised that the Central Sahel event had been far more successful than the Yemen donor conference, and that advocacy was continuing up to the GHO.
- The GPC added that a high-level event would be organized around protection financing just before the GHO launch (invitation attached)

Discussion on key advocacy activities planned for the Afghanistan conference, scheduled for 23-24 November

- The RG3 co-chairs referred to the Afghanistan conference to be convened on 23-24 November by the Afghan government, Finland and the UN, and noted that this conference was organized every four years. The focus of the side events will be on women, girls, human rights and the integration of refugees; the frameworks on the fight against corruption; and on accountability and the assistance framework to the Afghan government.
- ICVA noted that NGO engagement was coordinated through the NGO consortium BAAG - <https://www.baag.org.uk/2020-afghanistan-conference>.

COTER update by RG3 sub-group co-Chairs

- On behalf of OCHA, one of the three co-chairs of the COTER sub-group, Mr. Julien Piacibello presented the major components comprised in the counter-terrorism concept note on the **IASC COTER database** prepared by InterAction and shared with RG3 beforehand. He recalled that the origin of the counterterrorism database was based on the Principals decision from December 2019 to strengthen the evidence base on the negative effects of counterterrorism. The objective was threefold: evidence basis to inform advocacy; trends analysis over time; and early warning response capacity to identify emerging COTER issues.
- Mr. Piacibello affirmed that the content of the IASC database concept note was closely linked with the content of the survey on the impact of counterterrorism measures which will feed into the forthcoming SG report on counterterrorism to be issued in autumn of 2021. Both the launch of the database and the survey are to be launched towards the end of 2020.
- The IASC secretariat will host the database, and it will administered by OCHA, the IASC secretariat and InterAction. The administrators will guarantee confidentiality by ensuring that the name of the reporting organization, and the name of the actor imposing the restriction will be hidden from public view. In addition, contributors are available to anonymize information when inputting into the database.
- In terms of the **roll-out**, the database will first be populated with COTER impact highlighted in public reports; **it will then be socialized at headquarter level towards the end of the year**, and subsequently rolled out in the field.
- The RG3 co-Chairs emphasized that the added value of this IASC database was to get evidence on regular basis as opposed to ad-hoc surveys.
- The COTER sub-group co-Chair Mr. Andres Vinas referred to a **calendar with activities** where different COTER sub-group members would be invited to lead on different activities.
- In terms of COTER developments, Mr. Andres Vinas briefed on a **Security Council resolution on counter-terrorism related to foreign fighters** with a focus on prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration, which was tabled at the initiative on **Indonesia**, and was eventually vetoed by the US. In retrospective: the main impetus for the SCR seemed to be related to Indonesia's presidency. From a humanitarian perspective, the outcome was positive as revised drafts of the resolution had built on resolutions 2462 and 2482.
- The draft resolution had been especially problematic from a human rights perspective due to repatriation-related negotiations of foreign fighters and their families, with some P5 seeking to include such reference, and some European Member States showing willingness to compromise on basic children's right language in order to avoid references to repatriation.
- Mr. Andres Vinas further referred to **COTER developments in national legislations**. First, **Switzerland** had adopted **two controversial national laws adopted** on 25 September, which constituted an expansion of Swiss counter-terrorism laws in the criminal and administrative measures space. The first law criminalizes support to terrorism organizations. This law does include a humanitarian exemption. The second law on administrative measures is called the police measures to combat terrorism (PMT). It includes a range of control orders directed to 'potential terrorists' (defined as 'individuals who could be engaged in terrorist activities') Of overall concern was the potential for other countries to adopt the same vague definition of terrorist activity. Finally, it called into question Switzerland's credibility in the counter-terrorism space.

- Second, a **counter-terrorism bill in the Netherlands**, aimed to criminalize Dutch citizens' travel to designated areas, which is an attempt to address the issue of foreign fighters, as European countries struggle to prosecute returning foreign fighters. To this end, not the activity but the presence in designated areas may be criminalized. Currently, the ICRC, Red Cross and Red Crescent are currently exempted from seeking travel permission.
- **Counter-terrorism discussions in France** ensued following attacks on ACTED personnel in Niger, and a humanitarian exemption was being debated.
- Mr. Andres Vinas highlighted the humanitarian community's concerns that Kenya may resume its objective to **list Al Shabaab under the SCR 1267 sanction regime** when joining the Security Council in January. Mr. Andres Vinas recalled that Kenya had undertaken a similar initiative in November 2018, which had not borne fruits due to the opposition of six Member States, including two P5 states. While Al Shabaab was listed in a Somalia resolution, that resolution had a humanitarian exemption, while the SCR 1267 sanction regime did not. Therefore, the risk was that the humanitarian exemption currently in place would not apply once Al Shabaab was listed under SCR 1267. OCHA at the country level led the inter-agency development of key messages.
- **Efforts by the US government to list Ansarallah in Yemen** also constituted a challenge, and humanitarian organizations were engaging US officials to highlight the humanitarian challenges.
- Overall, Mr. Andres Vinas highlighted that the humanitarian advocacy angle was **the request for a humanitarian exemption**, rather than engaging in the discussion whether to list or not an organization.
- Furthermore, donor demands relating to beneficiary vetting have become more pronounced at the EU level regarding certain contexts like Syria.
- SCHR and WHO expressed appreciation for the database and the former noted its availability to support sensitization activities.

Climate change update by RG3 sub-group co-Chairs

- The climate change sub-group co-Chair Ms. Hagon referred to the draft **common narrative on the humanitarian impact of climate change**, which included key messages and key facts and statistics. Comments were currently collected from the RG3 and its respective sub-group on thematic priorities and specific groups.
- In terms of events, while the COP was delayed to November 2021, several events were to build up the momentum. First, the UN and UK were co-hosting an event on 12 December – the anniversary of the Paris Agreement - with global leaders to rally greater climate action. Second, due to its focus, the Adaptation Summit scheduled in January was of special relevance to the humanitarian community.
- Several reports were being released – and the media had informed some stakeholders to phase the release of some reports. To this end, the sub-group's objective was also to support awareness of upcoming events and reports, rather than focusing solely on joint initiatives.
- As for current natural disasters, the use of adequate humanitarian language regarding storms in Vietnam, Nicaragua, Cambodia, Philippines was important. The RG3 co-chairs commented how climate change accelerated natural disasters, and how climate change therefore needed to be at the center of humanitarian action.
- The RG3 co-Chairs asked about how the sub-group was planning to engage in the **Adaptation Summit**. The climate change sub-group co-Chairs responded that some sub-group members were planning to engage with a humanitarian side event to highlight the humanitarian impact, and the need for adaptation, as well as for investments in fragile/ vulnerable states.
- The office of the UN SG seemed to consider that messaging on mitigation had encountered some traction given respective announcements from Japan, China, South Korea, and the Philippines.

Debrief on the Central Sahel Ministerial Conference;

- OCHA noted that more funding was pledged than expected, and also numerous side events had been organized by partners. From a communication perspective, some high-level missions from WFP and ICRC supported the messaging. The media response was much more far reaching than for the Yemen pledging conference. The RG3 co-chairs noted that the concise nature of the core narrative developed at the regional level contributed to a strong information base.

AOB:

- The RG3 co-Chairs noted that the next meeting was scheduled on the day of the GHO launch. To this end, the RG3 meeting may be scheduled a bit later in that week.
- The RG3 co-Chairs highlighted that across the IASC structures emphasis was placed on greater focus, and synergies across RGs. In addition, the focus was shifting towards exiting the COVID-19 lens, as also the scale-up protocols were expiring in mid-January. RG3 members were invited to bear these dynamics in mind when considering 2021 planning for the RG3.

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