IASC Results Group 3 – Collective Advocacy
2 March 2021
Published on the IASC website

Summary Record

IASC Results Group 3 on Collective Advocacy met on 2 March 2021 to discuss (i) review action points from the RG3 February meeting; (ii); COTER update on IASC Counterterrorism Database; (iii) CCHN presentation on approach and tools developed to negotiate access for COVID-19 vaccination in conflict settings (Claude Bruderlein; Brett Davis; Maura James); (iv) Climate Change update by RG3 climate change co-chairs.

Action points

- **RG3 members to reach out within their organizations and encourage COTER focal point nominations to facilitate liaison with the administrators of the IASC Counterterrorism Database (InterAction, OCHA, IASC secretariat), not to be the agency recorder of COTER incidents necessarily, but to encourage their agency's sharing of incidents via the database.**
- **RG3 co-chairs to place famine prevention on the RG3 agenda for April**

Review of key action points from the RG3 February meeting

- **RG3 members to encourage their organizations to engage on the Climate and Environment Charter** [CONTINUOUS]
- **RG3 member to complete upcoming survey initiated by UNHCR to refine focus of elevating protection across IASC structures**. [ACTIONED – survey circulated]
- **RG3 co-Chairs to explore local action inclusion in RG3**: [ACTIONED] The RG3 co-Chairs welcomed Ms. Ritah Nansereko, who joined RG3 for the first time as Executive Director of Awyad, a national NGO from Uganda, Additional national organizations may join in March 2021.

COTER update on IASC Counterterrorism Database Briefing on the IASC Counterterrorism Database

- InterAction as COTER co-chair reminded RG3 that in an effort to strengthen the evidence base regarding the negative impact of counterterrorism (COTER) measures, an **IASC Counterterrorism and Humanitarian Action Database** had been developed, which could potentially allow for faster visibility on real-time impacts to inform evidence-based advocacy, as well as for a trends analysis over time. The database has been launched via an email to the OPAG and will be discussed at the OPAG meeting on 26 March, is ready to be populated, and is now being rolled out. The confidentiality elements built into the database should enable organizations to record their COTER and humanitarian action incidents and constraints, such as host state policies, and donor restrictions via agreements. The focus is now on being utilized by the community. To this end, focal point nominations from IASC members were most welcome in addition to those received.

- Upon Awyad's query whether local organization networks also had the opportunity to upload information into the database, InterAction underscored that wide utilization and reporting into the IASC Counterterrorism Database, including by local actors given the impact of COTER on their organizations was the hope. Local actors' reporting would enable evidence-based advocacy regarding local organizations' COTER challenges. Overall, the success depended on humanitarian organizations' buy-in and utilization of this tool.

- Upon the RG3 co-chair's query regarding the roll-out plan of the IASC Counterterrorism Database, InterAction noted that a draft plan was in place, and would be accompanied by support documents, such as the concept note that had been circulated, a Frequently Asked Questions, and a short powerpoint. RG3 members were encouraged to socialize the database within their agencies, and InterAction will socialize among its own membership.

- In addition, InterAction established an online **resource library** that also included the **set of key recommendations** comprised in existing literature. The resource library will shortly be finalized.

- OCHA as COTER co-chair emphasized that the database and the resource library responded to a request by the IASC and Member States to have a strengthened evidence base of the impediments and impacts of COTER legislations and measures.

- OCHA added that the database categories of impediment and impact were aligned with the categories developed for the **UN CTED report** on the humanitarian impact of counterterrorism measures which was to be presented to the UN Security Council Counterterrorism Committee by June 2021. The drafters of the CTED report had presented the genesis and objective of the report to the RG3 COTER sub-group in February. IASC members' inputs on the CTED report were due to OCHA by the beginning of April.

- OCHA added that under the leadership of Save the Children, the RG3 COTER sub-group was also finalizing the **solutions proposal** on advocacy options that would mitigate the humanitarian impact of COTER measures, noting that the proposal had been circulated to RG3 for comments.

- OCHA further developed a **HC COTER guidance**, which was under internal clearance process and will be accessible for IASC members. Upon the RG3 co-chairs' query regarding the nature of HC COTER guidance, OCHA explained that the purpose was to sensitize HCs and expectations from HCs. Additionally, a section on sanctions was also included in the RC/HC Handbook.

Presentation by CCHN on approach and tools developed to negotiate access for COVID-19 vaccination in conflict settings (Claude Bruderlein; Brett Davis; Maura James of CCHN)

- The RG3 co-Chairs explained that the idea for this presentation emerged from the RG3's discussion in December regarding non-state armed actor engagement (NSAG) regarding vaccinations. CCHN, in turn, had extensive expertise negotiating access with non-state actors and had developed tools to negotiate access for COVID-19 vaccination in conflict settings.

- Mr. Claude Bruderlein, the Director of CCHN, informed that CCHN has some 2000 members, is hosted by the ICRC, has a partnership with WFP, UNHCR, MSF, and the Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) Centre, and focuses on peer exchange. The **project on negotiating access for COVID-19 vaccination in conflict** focuses on sharing lessons learned and best practices in real time via 'actionable tools'.

Activities conducted in the context of this project include: interviews which have been conducted with organizations experienced with negotiations for vaccination in conflict zones prior to COVID-19 (e.g. measles, meningitis, cholera); drafting access protocols; conducting negotiation lab with mid-Career Harvard students; context-specific reviews in Afghanistan, Yemen, northwest Syria; and simulations. These initiatives were to be elaborated in greater detail at the March 9th information [session](#).

- The **Access Protocol and Exchange Platform** constituted an interactive repository of CCHN tools and research on vaccination campaigns distilling lessons learned from Ebola to measles to COVID-19. On this platform, practitioners and national authorities can consult one another on particular bottlenecks. This will be launched in September 2021 during a conference to which governments will be invited.

- Upon demand from its partners, CCHN has also developed an **APEP Access Barometer** platform to build trust and ensuring safe access, which includes the calculation of an 'access score' based on community surveys, factoring in personal relationships, organizational relationship, operational capacity, expertise and network. This tool could also be interesting in approaching negotiations beyond the topic of vaccination.

- In addition, CCHN was organizing and advanced professional certificate in coordination with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, which included a 5 half-day training organized in April/June/September utilizing evidence-based policy tools for humanitarian practitioners.

- In the ensuing discussion, WHO highlighted the timeliness of this initiative, noting that COVID-19 vaccination roll-out had the potential of not being equitable, and creating more conflict.

- In response to the RG3 co-chairs question about the lessons learned around polio vaccination in Afghanistan, CCHN highlighted the importance of:
  i) **trust and rapport-building**, i.e. how to understand and improve trust;
  ii) the **impact of misinformation and disinformation** (i.e. manufactured bad information, such as sterilization, side effects) – and the importance of tools for frontliners where good information could be easily accessed. A dashboard for this purpose was under development.
  iii) **Priority** a) people not considering COVID-19 a priority, so people may not go through the trouble of accessing vaccination unless the vaccination space also offered other services provided in a medical infrastructure; b) prioritization with guidelines forthcoming from WHO, however, there were no safeguards to ensure that these prioritization criteria were respected, particularly in areas beyond government control.

- As for the RG3 co-chairs' query regarding community engagement, CCHN affirmed that this was a core consideration during the development of the tools.

- Upon the RG3 co-chairs' question relating to **national authorities**, CCHN underlined that the primary responsibility resided with the national government regarding vaccination. The tools were developed to develop humanitarians' capacities for areas where there may be gaps relating to vaccination.

- In conclusion, the RG3 co-chairs underscored that all depended on the availability of a vaccine, and referred to the IASC developments relating to the humanitarian buffer as part of the COVAX facility.

- CCHN expressed interest in the IASC supporting dissemination of information around the APEP platform, and encouraged IASC members in addition to the CCHN partners to engage in the CCHN network as it also fostered policy-making.
- The CCHN World Summit will take place on 28 June in a digital way.

Climate change update

- The RG3 climate change co-chairs reminded that the draft **Climate and Environment Charter** was encouraging sign-up by humanitarian organizations, but not by donors. The focus is on a series of top-level commitments (as opposed to technical targets) by humanitarian organizations around greening the humanitarian response and scaling up, both in the area of mitigation and adaptation. The objective is to get as many endorsements as possible to send a strong signal from the humanitarian community around to the UNFCCC, looking internally at greening one's response, providing a guide on what related initiatives are planned, and also looking externally. Information has been shared with the OPAG, and a number of bilateral meetings have been convened.
- A final version should be available in April, and endorsement/adoption by organizations was expected as of May, with organizations expected to develop their own technical targets. The Charter may be brought to the IASC Principals level to see whether an IASC endorsement may be feasible – which may help organizations that may otherwise struggle to sign up individually given their internal processes. An information session on the Charter is also planned during the Humanitarian Network and Partnership's Week on 27 April.
- Overall, climate change was a priority topic at **HNPW** this year along with anticipatory action, so several events were planned around climate this year.
- As for the **Common narrative** on climate change which is a deliverable in the RG3 workplan, comments received from OPAG members were being integrated, subsequent to which the endorsed common narrative will be issued.
- As for recent and **upcoming climate events and reports available on [trello](#)** put together by OCHA, the RG3 climate co-chairs highlighted the following:

  - [UNFCCC's Nationally determined contributions (NDC) synthesis report](#) on how governments proceeded regarding mitigation, i.e. reducing emissions. This report highlighted that to limit global temperature rise to 1.5C by the end of the century, global emissions needed to be cut by 45% by 2030 from 2010 levels. The report shows that while the majority of nations increased their individual levels of ambition to reduce emissions, their combined impact puts them on a path to achieve a less than 1 per cent reduction by 2030 compared to 2010 levels.
  - World Ocean Summit;
  - US-hosted Leaders climate summit in April
  - A proposed focus of ECOSOC HAS on 23-25 June in Geneva and virtually may be on climate change and humanitarian action, in particular anticipatory action and gender-sensitive response. FAO noted that famine prevention had been suggested as a topic for ECOSOC HAS as well.

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- WFP suggested that famine prevention be placed on the RG3 agenda for April, given that numbers were on the rise, and funding not forthcoming. At the 1 March Yemen Pledging Conference, US1.7 billion of the $3.85 billion had been pledged. In consultations between WFP and ICVA, an open letter to States calling for more urgent attention to the deteriorating food security situation has been discussed G7 had established a "Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Crises Panel"
- FAO updated about the **Call to Action requested by the UN Executive Committee**, in terms of FAO, WFP and OCHA working together on urgent action regarding famine prevention and resource mobilization.
- UNFPA highlighted that UNFPA and UNICEF were developing a **Statement by IASC Principals on GBV in the Tigray region of Ethiopia** further the Principals action point on 23 February. The RG3 co-chairs encouraged RG3 members to mobilize their agencies to encourage sign-up to the Statement.