
IASC Results Group 3 – Collective Advocacy

5 October 2021

Published on the [IASC website](#)

Summary Record

IASC Results Group 3 on Collective Advocacy met 5 October 2021 to discuss (i) Up-date on advocacy related to food crises and prevention and response to famine; (ii) Debrief on the OPAG meeting (8 Sept.) on Non State Armed Groups and on the report submitted by the RG3 on good practices and lessons learned in terms of engagement with NSAGs; (iii) COTER update, including latest developments on COTER and Afghanistan; (iv) Climate change update.

Action points

- **RG3 members to provide redline comments to the food crisis document by 8 October 2021**

Up-date on advocacy related to food crises and prevention and response to famine

- Members reflected on the **4 October high-level event on famine prevention**. They welcomed the co-sponsoring of the event by the Group of Friends, while they noted the lack of concrete outcomes, including in terms of funding. While some noted that NGOs may be more outspoken than UN agencies who depended on Member States, others commented that NGOs could only speak out at the global level, as they faced similar, if not greater access challenges at the country level upon use of public advocacy. In addition, it was noted that Member States seemed to be readier to refer to IASC members' messages, such as 'starvation as a weapon of war' than in recent years. Furthermore, greater advocacy efforts may be needed with the private sector, including foundations, as well as the mainstream media, and political stakeholders.
- In terms of smart advocacy, the terminology and ethics factors had been discussed at the Principals level.
- A **NGO Global Famine Action Open Letter** was to be launched (subsequently to the meeting, final version accessible here: [the public letter on famine action](#)).
- **Upcoming events:** [Concern's Global Hunger Index](#) on 14 Oct.; Concern's Irish-focused campaign against the use of starvation as a weapon of war; [World Food Day](#) on 16 Oct.; World Vision's event on the hunger crisis on 16 Oct; COP from 31 Oct – 12 Nov; Hotspot report in early Nov.; 1 Dec. Nutrition for Growth summit; 2 Dec. [GHO launch](#) with multiple launches in several capitals (Berlin, Brussels, London, Stockholm and Washington, D.C.)
- In terms of the **RG3 Alert on Famine and Food Insecurity** (draft available [here](#)), RG3 members highlighted the need for joint ownership across IASC organizations. They noted that the recommendation for additional structures constituted a redline for some IASC members, as the lack of action was a failure of the move from the early warning to the triggering of resource allocations, rather than the lack of structures.

Debrief on the OPAG meeting (8 Sept.) on Non State Armed Groups and on the report submitted by the RG3 on good practices and lessons learned in terms of engagement with NSAGs

- The RG3 co-chairs debriefed on the feedback of the 8 September OPAG meeting on NSAG engagement, noting that the interviews with frontline humanitarian workers had been appreciated, while the recommendations were suggested to be more targeted to specific stakeholders. In terms of the substance, OPAG members had called for more sustained engagement with NSAG, the potential tensions the nexus represented for NSAG engagement, and the need to create clarity around the definition of NSAG.
- The next steps were to revise the document in line with OPAG comments, and then submit to OPAG for endorsement.

COTER update, including latest developments on Afghanistan

- The COTER co-chair InterAction referred to the **general licenses** released on Afghanistan from US Treasury. The **silver lining** constitutes that the general licenses were broad in scope in comparison to other contexts (e.g. the special license in Somalia which had narrow parameters for humanitarian action, such as an itemized list of sectors; and which had not extended to non-US citizens), extending to non-US entities and non-US persons, covering national and European organizations, as well as IFIs, and banks in relation to the provision of basic services. The second general license referenced the private sector specifically, i.e. banks, exporters to Afghanistan based on an itemized list (e.g. medical items).
- In terms of **challenges** relating to the general licenses, some sectors are excluded, e.g. education (and thus potentially education in emergencies); payments – including for the private sector - are only authorized for the delivery of humanitarian action to cover basic needs, possibly inhibiting payments to staff undertaking development work; the compounding effects of overlapping sanction regimes are not facilitated (e.g. procurement of Iranian goods to deliver them in Afghanistan). To this end, the general licenses may not satisfy the needs of IFIs and the commercial sector, resulting in a liquidity crunch, given limits on ATM withdrawals, and disrupted cash flows from international to correspondent banks.
- The notion of the Afghan government is also not yet clear, with the US authorities not referring to the ‘Afghan government’ or ‘Taliban government authorities’. In addition, the general licenses were advised to be self-executing, and therefore organizations were called on to make decisions based on their own due diligence considerations.
- The COTER co-chair/OCHA highlighted that payments to line ministries were not covered by the US general licenses. A key ask to the Sanctions Committee may be the call for a general license as existed in the 1988 Somalia sanctions regime, and outreach to Sanction Committee members was underway.
- As for the **IASC CT guidance for HCs**, the ERC had circulated it to all Principals and HCs. Events to disseminate this guidance will be organized, e.g. webinars for OCHA offices and HCs, and members were encouraged to reach out to OCHA if there was an interest in organizing joint events.

Climate change update

- At the 20 October IASC Principals meeting, climate will be on the agenda as per information by the RG3 co-chairs.