IASC Results Group 1 on Operational Response Meeting
8 January 2020

Brief Summary

Results Group 1 on Operational Response met on 8 January in Geneva to share key results of the OPAG meeting on 7-8 November; discuss the new priority areas for 2020 around “supporting efforts to operationalize localization” and the “joint system-wide operational guidance on data responsibility”; as well as review updates from sub-groups on the concrete deliverables.

The co-Chairs briefed members on key results of the OPAG meeting, noting that they received largely positive reaction to the Group’s progress made in 2019 and to the proposal to continue focusing on delivering on the priorities already identified as well as the suggestions to add localization and data responsibility to the areas of focus in 2020. The OPAG members also highlighted the good work of the Early Warning, Early Action and Preparedness (EWEAR) group; however, they requested better alignment with other Disaster Risk Reduction and IASC preparedness mechanisms and an adjustment to the report’s publication timeline. The OPAG also welcomed the work around the development of Guidance for DHCs. During the deep-dive session on mainstreaming protection, the need to consider a holistic approach was noted. The OPAG also advised to reinforce collaboration with other Results Groups and relevant Grand Bargain workstreams in 2020. Members raised the importance of following up on the OPAG request for the Group to review the 2018 Amman Stocktake exercise to identify areas that can be taken forward to support a transformation in fulfilling the Centrality of Protection in practice [see attached document].

In the ensuing discussion, it was noted that the OPAG agreed that the Group would take forward, as a new priority area of work for 2020, “Support efforts to operationalize localization, including representation of relevant national and local organizations in coordination structures” in collaboration with the Grand Bargain initiative and other RGs. IFRC, as co-convenor of the Grand Bargain Localization Workstream, shared that the focus of the Grand Bargain is the financing aspects of the agenda, including achieving the target of at least 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national responders. This is complementary to RG1’s focus on enhancing the representation of national and local actors in coordination structures. Several ongoing studies and initiatives were identified, including ICVA’s analysis on the number of national NGO participating in HCTs (to be finalized by March); IFRC’s guidance for national societies participating in HCTs and clusters; GPC’s revised TORs to include national NGOs and field coordinators as members of its strategic advisory group; the collation of information on HCT composition (to be ready by March) done through the EDG’s Annual Review of Operations; Grand Bargain’s draft guidance note on localization; and a mapping study of sub-cluster participation from a gender perspective. Members agreed to conduct an initial review of these available studies and products by March and to pin down concrete deliverables, possibly including a normative guidance to the field. There was a suggestion to include a brief section on localization within the 2015 Introduction to Humanitarian Action: A Brief Guide for Resident Coordinators currently being updated. Members were encouraged to share the mentioned studies with the IASC secretariat as they become available. In terms of taking forward this workstream, several members, including UN-HABITAT, GPC, ICVA and Save the Children, expressed interest to contribute.

Action

- IFRC was nominated as a possible lead for the “Sub-Group on Localization” pending internal discussion within IFRC on whether to take this on.
The Group’s discussion then moved to a briefing from OCHA’s Center for Humanitarian Data at the Hague on the new “joint system-wide operational guidance on data responsibility”. The Center has conducted extensive consultations, including an internal review within OCHA and consultations in OCHA country offices and with IASC member organizations. There is broad interest for a system-wide and formalized guidance, which will be undertaken through a series of desk reviews and consultations on existing policies related to data management, distilled into a brief draft Guidance Note. The draft will go through two rounds of consultations with IASC members both at HQ and field levels. The first draft will be ready by March, while the final draft will be shared with the RG1 members for formal consideration before submission to the OPAG. The guidance will aim to offer a set of standards and minimum quality criteria to responsible data management that each country office can tailor to their specific contexts. The Center will soon share a brief concept note with the members with an invitation to members to participate in the subgroup.

Action
- RG1 agreed to proceed with the creation of a “Sub-Group on Data Responsibility” to be co-led by OCHA and UNHCR (UNHCR to confirm its participation as co-lead).
- Co-leads will provide a concept note on the Guidance to be shared with RG1 members (attached).
- Interested members are invited to take part in the sub-group by contacting Mr. Stuart Campo, Team Lead, Data Policy, Centre for Humanitarian Data at campo2@un.org.

In the following session, the Protection subgroup, led by InterAction and OCHA, briefed on progress made under their three deliverables as follows: (i) Critical protection inputs on Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Venezuela were provided to inform the Principals horizon scanning session during their meeting on 5 December. This paper was developed with contributions from the respective protection clusters and IASC members both in operations and HQ, while the process also went through the HC and their offices in Venezuela and Burkina Faso. Key lessons learned during this first exercise included that there were lacks of solid analysis that can be translated into strategic thinking and concrete recommendations at a higher or broader level despite a lot of data being generated at field level. It was also noted that the clearance process for the RG’s products needed to be further clarified; (ii) Guidance was finalized after rounds of consultations to assist the HCs/HCTs in ten selected countries (Afghanistan, Cameroon, CAR, Colombia, DRC, Iraq, Myanmar, Nigeria, South Sudan, Yemen) to undertake reflection and exchange of lessons learned on implementation of the core requirements of the IASC Protection Policy. The critical lessons and issues emerging from these reflections will be distilled in a 2-page paper and inform agreed, specific and measurable indicators on the centrality of protection in practice.

After the presentation, it was advised that OCHA Head of Offices should assist in steering the reflection exercise with the HCTs, linking up with protection clusters when needed, with six weeks of time window.

Action
- RG1 agreed to proceed with distributing the reflection guidance through the OCHA Heads of Offices to facilitate the exercise with the HC and HCT and provide feedback to the sub-group.
- Co-leads will provide a one-page concept note on the Guidance Note to be shared with RG1 members.

The Humanitarian Leadership subgroup, led by OCHA, ICVA, UNDP and UNHCR, briefed that consultations are ongoing with DHCs, including face to face interviews during the upcoming HCT retreat scheduled for the 1st week of June. The first RC Induction Briefing since the implementation of the reinvigorated RC system was held last November, where a half day was committed to discussing humanitarian aspects to ensure that field leaders were aware of expectations and support available by the IASC for their humanitarian coordination function. The update of the Introduction to Humanitarian Action – A Brief Guide for Resident Coordinator will be finalized in the first quarter of 2020. IOM proposed to join the subgroup with particular interest on the activity related to the RC Induction, which was welcomed by the subgroup, and suggested considering new deliverables, including coordination modalities in mixed IDP-refugee-migrant response.

WFP briefed members on the work of the IASC Early Warning and Early Action Analysis group that the analyst group met in last October to discuss 23 risks, which were boiled down to eight risks in the November edition of the EWEAR analysis report for the EDG’s consideration. Looking forward, a biannual face to face meeting is planned to take place in April before the issuance of the report in May. The revision of the ERP guidance is expected to be finalized by early 2020.

As noted during the meeting, an update on the progress made on bureaucratic impediments was shared by the subgroup leads as follows: Initiated in Q3 of 2019, a sub working group of RG1 members co-led by InterAction and ICVA started the process of documenting, analyzing and producing normative guidance supplemented by case studies and sample assets, for HCTs and HCs regarding addressing bureaucratic impediments at the country level. The Sub WG has held 2 Sub-WG calls to align efforts and solicit feedback on approach, worked to produce an indicative matrix of bureaucratic impediments and accompanying topline analysis (attached), and is about to undertake a series of country specific “deep dives” to better document and understand problems and solutions at the country level highlighted vis a vis the indicative matrix.

These deep dives, listed below with relevant focal points who have agreed to support, will include interviewing NGO consortia leads in each country to be led by InterAction and ICVA, with NGO and UN colleagues carrying forward interviews and data collection with their respective country offices and colleagues. The intention is to round out the data with the goal of a comprehensive and collective (NGO & UN agency) understanding of problems and potential solutions at the country level. InterAction and ICVA are close to finalizing a series of questions to standardize the interviews, and are creating a secure file share structure to house the data linked to an information security protocol; only the individuals actively contributing to the country deep dives will be granted access due to privacy and security considerations.

Next steps and timeline against who’s committed to doing what, and where there are gaps in terms of support:

1. Between now and the end of January/beginning of February: undertake country deep dives for the countries listed below. ICVA & InterAction will take responsibility for interviewing and engaging the NGO Consortia at field level, and we have a commitment from our InterSOS
colleagues to support as able on Yemen (noting challenges with access to information in Yemen).

a. Colombia (international displacement + VZ displacement)- Confirmed IA/ICVA (NGO Consortia data) Seeking UN agency focal point to collect UN data & additional NGO/IFRC inputs
b. DRC- Confirmed IA/ICVA (NGO Consortia data) Seeking UN agency focal point to collect UN data & additional NGO/IFRC inputs
c. South Sudan- Confirmed IA/ICVA (NGO Consortia data) Seeking UN agency focal point to collect UN data & additional NGO/IFRC inputs
d. Syria- Confirmed IA/ICVA (NGO Consortia data) Seeking UN agency focal point to collect UN data & additional NGO/IFRC inputs
e. Yemen- Confirmed InterSOS (for NGO data) Seeking UN agency focal point to collect UN data & additional NGO/IFRC inputs
f. oPt- Confirmed IA/ICVA (NGO Consortia data) Seeking UN agency focal point to collect UN data & additional NGO/IFRC inputs
g. Afghanistan- Confirmed IA/ICVA (NGO Consortia data) Seeking UN agency focal point to collect UN data & additional NGO/IFRC inputs
h. Bangladesh- Confirmed IA/ICVA (NGO Consortia data) Seeking UN agency focal point to collect UN data & additional NGO/IFRC inputs
i. Myanmar- Confirmed IA/ICVA (NGO Consortia data) Seeking UN agency focal point to collect UN data & additional NGO/IFRC inputs
j. Somalia- Confirmed IA/ICVA (NGO Consortia data) Seeking UN agency focal point to collect UN data & additional NGO/IFRC inputs
k. Iraq- Confirmed IA/ICVA (NGO Consortia data) Seeking UN agency focal point to collect UN data & additional NGO/IFRC inputs

2. **February:** finalize deep dive data collection efforts, analyze data and conduct any necessary follow up
3. **March:** draft guidance and prepare sample assets /relevant products
4. **April:** final consultations against guidance and any sample assets/products and prepare to present at April OPAG meeting (date TBC).

The next face to face meeting will take place on **12 February from 15:00 to 16:00 pm GVA / 9:00 to 10:00 am NY** with further details to be circulated by the IASC secretariat. Please note that bilateral meetings will be scheduled between sub-group leads and RG1 co-Chairs in the coming weeks to provide updates and ensure feedback from co-Chairs as relevant.

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