
IASC Results Group 3 – Collective Advocacy

7 September 2021

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Summary Record

IASC Results Group 3 on Collective Advocacy met 7 September 2021 to discuss (i) Afghanistan collective advocacy efforts; (ii) update on COTER impacts; (iii) the climate update; (iv) food crisis update – follow-up on August ad hoc call. The RG3 co-chairs welcomed Mr. Steven Wamoro from AWYAD in Uganda to RG3. He replaced the late Ms. Ritah Nansereko.

Action points

- **RG3 co-chairs to arrange the third ad hoc call on the food crisis [ACTIONED, scheduled for 20 September]**
- **RG3 co-chairs to consider convening ad hoc calls on Afghanistan**

Afghanistan collective advocacy update (RG3 co-chairs)

- The RG3 co-chairs noted that while RG3's set-up was not conducive to lead on collective advocacy efforts in the context of fast-moving and very fluid operational developments, yet that the forum served to align messaging and discuss advocacy tactics on such crises developed in a range of different forums. They alluded to the forthcoming high-level Afghanistan humanitarian meeting on 13 September which will aim to raise greater resources for the humanitarian response, notably the \$606 million [Afghanistan Flash Appeal](#). They referred to the risks associated with the freezing of development funding, on which the education and health system relied, and noted the recent [WHO statement](#) that announced the closure of over 2000 health facilities as a result of the funding pause.
- An IASC member commented that discussions with de facto authorities had resulted in an understanding that humanitarian assistance in the broad sense was accepted. In the context of development funding related challenges, as well as donor conditionalities and sanctions, in particular, it was suggested that advocacy messaging focused on the **flexibility of humanitarian assistance**, possibly entailing not only life-saving assistance, but also system-strengthening assistance, and even the payment of civil servants. An IASC scale-up in Afghanistan was encouraged, including to empower the humanitarian leadership on the ground, not least in terms of greater autonomy in the engagement with the de facto authorities.
- As for the debate around the **rights of women and female humanitarian workers**, an IASC member noted that IASC members seemed to agree on the principles, while perhaps differing on the strategies that would be most effective in seeking respective guarantees from the de facto authorities. In particular, members reiterated the HC's message that such advocacy should be tactical, such as by drawing on examples of women's rights in Member States that had influence over the current authorities (e.g. Qatar), as well as on good practices in similar contexts (e.g. Yemen and Syria).
- UNHCR referenced the [Afghanistan Situation Regional Refugee Preparedness and Response Plan](#) (RPRP) requesting a total of \$300m for inter-agency requirements, and noted that the agency continued to have access to all the provinces.

- More than one member observed that some IDPs were already returning to areas, especially rural ones, , so **advocacy efforts should shift from urban to rural areas**. In addition, some multi-mandated agencies were exploring how to draw on the **resilience/nexus approach to enable the continuation of some development projects**.
- Referencing the work of RG1's group on bureaucratic and administrative impediments, advocacy to enhance **humanitarian access** with the current authorities in charge was highlighted as key, and it was commented that respective advocacy with the previous government had focused on a NGO law.
- OCHA updated on the ERC's visit to Kabul, describing how the authorities' guarantees on facilitating a principled humanitarian approach will be monitored. As for the 13 September **Afghanistan high-level meeting, it was highlighted that it was not set up as a pledging conference**. OCHA was however setting up a separate page on the Afghanistan Flash Appeal, in order to differentiate between commitments against the HRP and the Flash Appeal.
- Regarding the forthcoming **UNAMA mandate renewal** under Ireland's Security Council presidency, ongoing advocacy efforts were noted around the content of the resolutions, e.g. the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, humanitarian access, and UNAMA's role in securing essential services.

Food crisis update (RG3 COTER co-chairs)

- Following two ad hoc RG3 calls on the food crisis and in light of the High-Level Event on Famine Prevention which was postponed from September to October, the RG3 co-chairs noted that one of the objectives was to agree on a way forward, including to avoid confusion between WFP's/FAO's call of action earlier this year requesting \$6.6bn for 43 countries, and the more recent RG3 draft call to action, which may focus on saving lives now, including the consequences of funding to date not having been sufficient, as well as mitigating the risks of famine.
- Options on the format included to turn the more recent document – not to be referred to as call to action - into an IASC statement, which may be difficult to be endorsed by some IASC members; a joint Op-ed between the HLTF and the IASC; and RG3 key messages to ensure alignment.
- Forthcoming high-level events encompassed:
 - Sep. 9th High-Level Policy and Pledging Event in Support of Anticipatory Humanitarian Action
 - Sep. 22nd – High-level event on Yemen
 - Syria high-level event – date TBD
 - Sep. 23rd - Food systems Summit
 - October: High-level event on famine prevention
 - End of Oct/early Nov: release of the hotspot report
 - Nov. 26th – COP
 - Dec. 1st – Nutrition for Growth Summit
- As for the **requirements**, a meeting between the HLTF members WFP, FAO and OCHA had resulted in agreement to call for the \$6.6bn to avoid further confusion among donors.

COTER update based on the sub-group's 1 Sep. meeting (RG3 COTER co-chair InterAction)

- On the US side, The Taliban are listed as a terrorist group by the US under Executive Order 13268, dated 2002. This poses a problem given their current status as de facto authorities, and the fact that development assistance focused on supporting the line ministries.

- On August 25th, a **specific license was issued retroactively, and only applies to USAID and the State Department program and partners.**
- Following the IMF's suspension of a programmatic tranche that was to reach Afghanistan, the Afghanistan Central Bank assets have been frozen, which resulted in the current cash/liquidity crisis. InterAction and ACBAR members started documenting the range of financial and commercial challenges. On the positive side, MoneyGram and Western Union resumed operations to Afghanistan, reportedly based on assurances from the US government.
- On the **UN side, some 130 Taliban individuals, and 5 networks, inc. the Haqqani network** are listed. COTER concerns related to the potential role of these listed individuals in the new government. IPI specified that currently the Central Bank Governor was a Taliban member, and that the Haqqani network is providing security in the country.
- IPI had briefed the RG3 COTER group about its recent project on humanitarian safeguards related to the sanction regime in SCR 1267 regarding ISIL and Al Qaeda. The objective is to influence the 3 forthcoming mandate renewals of which the US is the penholder, i.e. the 1267 one; the CTED mandate renewal, which could also include an update to SCR 1373; and the mandate renewal of the Taliban sanction regime. The RG3 COTER group will meet more regularly to coordinate influencing efforts.
- Following the requested action regarding sanctions by the UN Executive Committee's Working Group on Afghanistan, a UN-internal document was prepared on donor conditionalities. Another paper was under development on sanctions specifically.

Climate change update (RG3 climate change co-chairs Kirsten M. and Danielle L.)

- The climate focused World Humanitarian Day (WHD) campaign was toned down in the days of the Afghanistan and Haiti events. However, 700,000 people signed up to the STRAVA campaign, and it linked to the **SG's call** to realize the pledge of spending an annual \$100 billion adaptation approaching COP.
- As for **reports**, the weekly updates highlighted the number of climate-focused reports, including the WMO **Atlas** of Mortality and Economic Losses from Weather, Climate and Water Extremes (1970–2019) to be launched at UNGA; the OCHA launch of the **online tool to help humanitarians assess environmental risks in urban areas**; UNICEF's children's climate risk index; and **UNF's United in Science** report, which is a good resource on how to frame climate issues for the general public.
- As for events, the 9 September High-Level Policy and Pledging Event in Support of **Anticipatory Humanitarian Action** will garner support for acting early, to scale funding and AA responses; and the the closed **UNGA SG high-level event on climate action** o Member States' NDCs is scheduled for 20 September.
- It was not yet clear whether climate change will feature on the agenda of the forthcoming Principals Meeting (later confirmed for 20 Oct.); IASC members were encouraged to sign up to the Climate and Environment Charter individually.

AOB

- At the RG3 October meeting, the co-chairs will debrief on the 8 September OPAG meeting where the RG3 paper on non-state armed actor (NSAG) engagement will be discussed.