Inter-Agency Standing Committee

IASC Task Force on Climate Change

Advocacy Plan 2010

 *Final Version*

# Background and objectives

The IASC Principals on 4 February 2010 discussed the outcomes of the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in December 2009 (COP15) and its implications for agency policies and operations. To inform the discussion, the IASC Task Force on Climate Change produced a discussion paper entitled “The outcomes of the Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change and implications for the operational work on the humanitarian impacts of climate change”.

The IASC Principals:

* recognized the importance of continued advocacy for humanitarian concerns in the climate change negotiations and committed to maintain this advocacy in 2010
* called upon agencies to develop project proposals in order to access funding available for adaptation strategies, while working closely with governments to implement local and national adaptation strategies
* requested the IASC Task Force on Climate Change to develop an action plan for the year, focused around a common advocacy strategy, while also providing guidance on how to access funding for adaptation initiatives.

The 2010 TOR and Work Plan for the IASC Task Force on Climate Change set as objectives to:

* support strengthened advocacy and awareness raising by facilitating IASC agencies to effectively advocate on issues of common concern regarding the potential humanitarian impacts of climate change to the UNFCCC process and other relevant fora.
* support a dialogue with IASC agencies and fora at regional and national levels to facilitate the provision of climate change adaptation guidance, support and training for awareness raising and capacity building.

This paper outlines the joint IASC advocacy strategy in 2010 which has been developed by agencies participating in the IASC Task Force on Climate Change.

**II Overall shift of focus: From global advocacy towards regional and country level advocacy and implementation**

IASC advocacy on climate change in 2009 was highly successful. Of particular note, humanitarian concerns are now an integral part of the UNFCCC agenda. The links between disaster risk reduction, preparedness, food security, health, migration and displacement with climate change adaptation have been integrated into the negotiating text. However, the overall UNFCCC process is making slow progress on issues like financing, governance and technology transfer, which are beyond the realm of humanitarian actors.

In parallel, G8, G20 and the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate (MEF) have emerged as key multilateral fora with climate change on their agendas. Nevertheless, these do not have the inclusiveness of the UNFCCC with regard to the developing countries. The Bretton Woods institutions and regional development banks are also considered to be instrumental in achieving progress on climate change. In addition, the High-Level Advisory Group of the UN Secretary General on Climate Change Financing will be playing an important role in the coming period. The UN High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability may also become relevant, especially given its role in carrying out a strategic assessment of the relationship of climate change to development and its implications.

Overall, the context and fora for moving forward the international climate change agenda have clearly changed since COP15. While UNFCCC will remain, for most countries, the principal forum for shaping a global deal on climate change mitigation and adaptation, IASC members should now focus their attention on regional and national fora.

Momentum has clearly shifted from global negotiations towards regional, national and sub-national level policy and programme implementation. With this shift, regional and country level fora for advancing climate change adaptation, as well as strengthened interaction with government focal points have gained in importance.

Implications for an IASC advocacy plan:

* The focus should be on fora other than the UNFCCC, while however not ignoring the UNFCCC (see section VI);
* Advocacy efforts should not try to ‘open a door that is open.’ Humanitarian concerns are already integrated in the UNFCCC dialogue and text, so efforts should be aimed at maintaining these elements and adding to them, rather than repeating the same, more general case used in 2009;
* Based on the Copenhagen experience, the bulk of advocacy efforts should take place before the event (COP16 in Cancun);
* IASC agencies should consider options to better link enhanced programming and advocacy.

**III Opportunities for IASC advocacy**

The opportunities for IASC advocacy and awareness raising have changed with the overall shift of focus towards implementation at national and sub-national levels.

**At the global level**,

* UNFCCC process

The IASC agencies should continue to monitor and support global policy dialogue in the UNFCCC process leading towards COP16 in Cancun, Mexico. Agencies agree that IASC presence in the UNFCCC process should be maintained to secure the gains in the negotiating text, although in general, agencies should invest less in the UNFCCC process this year. Opportunities for providing further technical support to the UNFCCC process are regarded by IASC agencies as greater prior to COP16, rather than at COP16 itself.

The Climate Change Conference in Cancun, Mexico in December 2010 (COP16), will be an opportunity for IASC agencies to engage the governments and countries of the Americas and draw their attention to the impacts of climate change within the region and existing good practices, experience and expertise from IASC agencies. Important civil society participation is expected in and around the conference. IASC agencies should be in dialogue with key UNFCCC Parties in advance of COP16 with a core set of messages aimed at maintaining existing advocacy gains.

IASC agencies will organise a joint side event at COP16. Agencies agree that such a side event shall feature the realities of climate change on the ground and could have government representatives and external experts on the panel.

The IASC will explore opportunities for organising a joint Humanitarian Day at COP16, but will not strive to replicate the high-level participation achieved in COP15.

* Global events outside of the UNFCCC process

Agencies have identified a number of events (see calendar, point VI) including for example the Midterm Review of the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) and the MDG revision.

IASC agencies, with the support of the IASC Climate Change Task Force Secretariat, will generate one or more opinion pieces and encourage high-level figures in IASC agencies to submit these to major publications or deliver them through public/media events.

Some agencies are exploring social media opportunities to capture online supporters to advocate and inform on the subject of integrating climate change considerations into humanitarian work.

**At the regional level**

The overall objective is to provide technical input and describe real-world experiences to inform policy processes and help create an enabling environment for scaling-up practical climate change activities through coordinated advocacy efforts. Agencies are encouraged to:

* Explore opportunities for advocacy within regional fora, such as intergovernmental and ministerial conferences on climate change adaptation.
* Link with regional organisations involved in climate change adaptation as well as with sub-regional mechanisms for humanitarian assistance and risk reduction. (E.g. AU, ECOWAS, ASEAN, CAPRADE, CDEMA, CEPREDENAC, and REHU, the Forum on Coordination and Cooperation of Subregional Agencies for Disaster Risk Management in the Americas).
* Strengthen ‘early warning-early action’ partnerships with regional knowledge centres and clearing houses on weather and climate services, climate change adaptation and environmental expertise.
* Generate coverage, including Op-eds, to convey key advocacy messages.
* IASC agencies will enhance efforts to integrate advocacy components into their existing climate change adaptation activities to highlight, communicate, document and share examples of practical activities to reduce climate change impacts. For example, a number of IASC agencies are collaborating on an initiative in Nepal to increase adaptation activities through a better alignment of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation efforts. IASC agencies undertake to disseminate good practices through the TF Secretariat as well as their own institutions.

**At the national and sub-national level**

Governments, especially at the national level, are perceived to be open to discuss policy issues and technical solutions to climate change adaptation. In their advocacy efforts at national level, IASC agencies should:

* Provide input to government planning and guidelines on climate change adaptation.
* Advocate for the integration of the humanitarian impacts and disaster risk management, with specific reference to the most vulnerable.
* Ensure that major government programmes on disaster risk management and climate change adaptation target local levels and use existing tools.
* Target key government officials in a coordinated effort to present existing best practices on climate change adaptation initiatives.
* Highlight the expertise and experience of IASC organisations in assisting communities and countries to build resilience to climate change.

**IV Links to potential new climate change adaptation funding**

Climate change adaptation funding sources have the potential to help overcome traditional gaps in financing preparedness and disaster risk reduction activities by providing a larger, non-traditional, non-humanitarian funding window. Fast-track funding has already started flowing and is mostly being channelled through bilateral aid and mechanisms like the UNFCCC Adaptation Fund and the World Bank’s Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR).

The climate financing landscape is only emerging and is evolving quickly. It will be important for IASC agencies to monitor developments on a global and, more importantly, at country level. At the same time, agencies should continue to showcase humanitarian action relevant to climate change adaptation.

The IASC Task Force on Climate Change facilitates the sharing of guidance on how to access these new funding sources, and advocates for the importance of including disaster risk reduction and preparedness activities within broader climate change adaptation proposals. Advice on accessing funds can be provided by the climate change focal point of individual organizations, and, in the immediate term, by members of the IASC Climate Change Task Force.

Furthermore, several institutions and specialised websites are tracking the emerging funding. Information on major multi-lateral funding sources that can be used for preparedness can be found here:

* http://www.preventionweb.net/english/email/url.php?eid=14454. This also contains messages that can help access funding.

Other sites that track emerging sources of funding include:

* http://www.climatefundsupdate.org
* http://www.climatefinanceoptions.org/cfo/
* http://www.project-catalyst.info/index.php?option=com\_content&view=article&id=92&Itemid=74

The World Resources Institute monitors funding pledges at:

* http://pdf.wri.org/climate\_finance\_pledges\_2010-06-05.pdf

**V IASC Advocacy messages**

IASC agencies will build on the shared advocacy messages identified:

**Climate change is a humanitarian challenge**

* Climate change and its consequences are and will continue to be an increasing burden on humanitarian systems.
* This additional burden necessitates innovative and multisectoral approaches including strengthening capacities of urban and rural communities, countries and international organizations, as well as a greater reliance of countries on regional and national response mechanisms and mutual assistance.
* Climate change affects primarily the most vulnerable, who have done the least to cause the problem and have little or no means to cope.
* A proactive instead of reactive approach is essential, meaning investing in preparedness and disaster risk reduction to reduce vulnerabilities and build long-term resilience and adaptive capacity.
* Climate change can be a factor driving food insecurity, risks to health, erosion of livelihoods, migration and displacement in certain contexts.
* There is a need for better understanding of the link between climate change and conflict.

**Humanitarian action can build resilience to climate change**

* Multisectoral disaster risk reduction strategies, risk management mechanisms and safety nets are the first line of defence against the impacts of climate change, with short- and long-term interventions needing synchronization.
* Climate change can have negative impacts on humanitarian and development outcomes. Subsequently effective climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction can help protect development gains, and therefore contribute to the achievement of the MDGs
* IASC agencies have the expertise, implementation capacity and partnerships for managing disaster risks and building resilience to support climate change adaptation.
* Full participation of civil society in planning and decision-making through a gender-sensitive approach is key for empowering vulnerable communities to adapt to climate change.

**Climate change adaptation needs investment in DRR**

* Substantial and additional human and financial resources should be made available for disaster risk reduction, risk management and social protection to build resilience and adaptive capacity among the most vulnerable people.
* Building resilience requires investments in prevention and preparedness in line with the priorities of the Hyogo Framework for Action, and closer alignment with development processes.
* Funding should be available at national, sub-national and local levels.
* Allocation of funding should be transparent and balanced between mitigation and adaptation.

**VI Advocacy calendar**

* UNFCCC negotiation session, Tianjin, China, 28 September to 3 October 2010.
* HFA mid-term review meetings with governments and other stakeholders.
* Social Forum of the Human Rights Council, 4-6 October 2010; Discussion of Human Rights and Climate Change.
* Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), 8-11 November 2010, round table on climate change in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.
* Climate Change Conference in Cancun, Mexico (COP16) **29 November to 10 December 2010.**