

**Summary note of the Reference Group on Principled Humanitarian Action
Meeting of 29 March 2017**

Present: OCHA, NRC, UNHCR, InterAction, IOM, UNMAS, ACF

The basic points agreed are the following:

1. OCHA provided an update on the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force retreat recently held in NY to the RG. NRC thought this could be useful information for members of the RG who were not able to attend this meeting. OCHA agreed to send a brief email readout highlighting key points from the retreat.
2. No objections or further changes were raised with regard to the RG workplan *Priority 1 regarding improved awareness, application and integration of humanitarian principles at field level*. However, OCHA and UNHCR propose hosting the resources and good practices platform on the IASC website, rather than ALNAP, in order to ensure visibility and ownership by the IASC. NRC explained the technical advantages of hosting it on ALNAP and underlined that the domain would remain independent. It was agreed that NRC, OCHA, UNHCR will discuss both the technical and visibility aspects with the IASC Secretariat and subsequently present options to, and seek the views of, RG members by email.
3. Reference was made to concerns raised regarding *Priority 2 on keeping the Counterterrorism (CT) and Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism agenda clearly distinct from PHA*. It was noted that UNHCR had flagged some concerns in an email shared with the RG. Subsequently OCHA, NRC and the IASC Secretariat held discussions with UNHCR with a view to addressing these concerns. It was highlighted that this priority was clearly identified at the RG retreat; it is reflected in the IASC WG workplan; and historically has been on the IASC agenda, under the former TT PHA. UNHCR noted that it did not object to the importance of the topic, as such, but raised concerns about how to practically advance on the topic and the value added of the RG, for reasons including that it is a topic that is dispersed across different fora; it could require significant investment as well as bearing in mind the difficulty in the past to reach common positions on CT issues. It was noted that RG members determine their contribution and the primary workload for this work stream has largely been shouldered by a few organisations. It was agreed that this priority would remain on the work plan, however tweaks to the language will be welcome. NRC will send out an email to all those interested in this priority, requesting track changes to the work plan by email by early April. It was noted that the P/CVE part of the work stream should be checked with ICRC who are doing work in this area.
4. With regard to *priority 3 on improved protection of humanitarian action in accordance with International Humanitarian Law*, it was agreed to drop the third activity from the work plan. The basis for this decision is general agreement that for an activity to be supported by the RG there should be broader participation by the RG.
5. In light of the holidays in April, the next RG meeting will be held in six weeks' time in early May 2017. In the meantime, priority leads and partners involved in the work plan are encouraged to proceed with taking forward work plan activities.
6. RG members interested in the EU supranational risk assessment are welcome to contact Kate (NRC) for more information.