

## MEMORANDUM

### IASC REFERENCE GROUP FOR MEETING HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES IN URBAN AREAS

8 OCTOBER 2013 – MEETING MINUTES

#### **PARTICIPATING AGENCIES:**

IFRC/Shelter Cluster  
UNDP/BCPR-Early Recovery Cluster  
IASC Secretariat-New York  
UN-Habitat New York Office  
UNHCR  
NRC-IDMC  
Concern-Kenya  
British Red Cross  
Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS)  
OCHA-Joint Environment Unit  
SR for IDPs-New York  
UNICEF Humanitarian Policy Unit, New York  
IOM

#### **MEETING MINUTES:**

I. Haiti Post-Earthquake Response 2010 – GFDRR/UN-Habitat/HfH Debrief/Lessons Learned  
(Presentation by Filiep Decorte, UN-Habitat NY Office)

Discussion Summary: This assessment and discussion focused on three key questions: (1) What aspects of the urban context were insufficiently understood and as a consequence resulted in un-adapted shelter and housing strategies?; (2) What should have been the essence of an 'urban strategy' in Haiti?; (3) If a longer term objective is to 'build back better', build resilience and facilitate sustainable urban growth, how appropriate was the shelter/housing response? Recognizing the challenges and the accomplishments to date, among the recommendations made that have direct bearing on improving performance on current and future urban-based emergencies and the implementation of the IASC MHCUA Strategy: (1) improve urban context analysis and early elaboration of an urban strategy linked to the broader assistance strategic plan; (2) understand the urban economy including cash and markets; acknowledge complexity, diversity, informality and fluidity of urban communities including informal ones; and (3) optimize opportunities for communication, participation and inclusive urban governance.

II. Urban Displacement: Challenges in Monitoring and Identification (Presentation by Joseph Ashmore, IOM-Geneva)

Discussion Summary: The challenges of urban displacement in recent emergencies were highlighted. However, the discussion focused on the proposal of IOM and UN-Habitat: 'Bridging Emergency Urban Planning and Shelter Interventions with Mobility Tracking Mechanisms to Promote Sustainable Recovery'. The joint activity proposal includes developing: (1) enhanced information management systems and risk mapping to support long term planning; (2) integrated shelter, CCCM and urban planning rapid response

teams; (3) guidance for emergency urban planning; (4) capacity building for national and local authorities in CCCM and urban planning; and (5) new and adapted urban tools. The focus of shelter initiatives is on neighborhoods and longer-term urban planning and resilience efforts. The joint activity, when funded, will be piloted in a number of cities in partnership with Shelter and CCCM Clusters, UN/HCTs and other humanitarian partners. As such, this activity substantially advances the IASC MHCUA Strategy implementation in the areas of strengthened technical capacities and inter-agency partnerships; new urban tool development and enhanced preparedness and resilience in vulnerable urban communities.

Action Point: NRC-IDMC expressed strong interest in becoming associated with this joint activity and a follow-up meeting will take place with IOM and UN-Habitat Geneva Office to explore opportunities for collaboration.

III. Urban Risk Management and Preparedness: Lessons from the Kathmandu Valley (Presentation by Samuel Carpenter, British Red Cross)

Discussion Summary: Initial findings of this study were presented which focuses on community engagement and local and national actions in urban disaster management being undertaken by the British Red Cross in cooperation with Groupe URD. The study is demonstrating the scale and complexity of the challenge of preparedness in a fast-growing city (Kathmandu). The study will ultimately draw-up a set of generalized learning points and implications, incorporating them into training activities undertaken by the Red Cross/Crescent Movement globally. As such, this work directly advances urban preparedness objectives of the IASC Strategy.

IV. AOB

1. The RG MHCUA Chair, George Deikun, summarized the discussions and decisions of the ERC/DERC/IASC WG on the status of subsidiary bodies. RG MHCHUA will be retained as a community of practice on issues related to urban emergencies and continue to coordinate the implementation of the IASC MHCUA Strategy and Action Plan.

Action Point: Draft Revised TORs for the RG MHCUA will be circulated by the Chair for comment by RG members. Comments are requested by end-October in order to prepare a final draft TORs for submission to the IASC WG in early November, 2013.

2. The potential role of the RG MHCUA in highlighting urban emergencies in the upcoming World Humanitarian Summit of 2016 was raised by Filiep Decorte (UN-Habitat NY).

Action Point: Filiep Decorte will prepare a draft concept note for consideration and comment by RG MHCUA members in the coming two weeks.

3. Next meeting of the RG MHCUA: end November – early December, 2013. RG MHCUA members are encouraged to submit agenda items to the Chair.