

Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action

Terms of Reference

1. Background

Persons with disabilities comprise approximately one billion people worldwide, 80% of whom live in developing countries¹. In accordance with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, States Parties are required to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters.² The Secretary-General has highlighted this population as a critical group for inclusion under Core Responsibility 3 of the Agenda for Humanity. The Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action was one of the key outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit³. As of August 2016 the Charter has been endorsed by over 140 humanitarian and human rights networks and organisations, networks of organisations of persons with disabilities (DPOs), UN agencies and governments. This broad-based endorsement illustrates the recognition by stakeholders of progress required to promote the effective inclusion of persons with disabilities across the humanitarian system.

One of the key components to realize the goals of the Charter is the development of guidelines on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action, which will strengthen accountability to persons with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies.

2. Expected Results

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action will assist humanitarian actors, governments and affected communities to coordinate, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate essential actions that foster the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action, resulting in the full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities and changing practice across all sectors and in all phases of humanitarian action.

The development and implementation of the Guidelines will support the IASC Working Group to advance the overarching goal of the IASC by ensuring system-wide policies, guidelines and tools that strengthen effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action for women, men, girls and boys with disabilities. More specifically, the development of the Guidelines is closely aligned with ***strategic priorities on accountability and inclusivity***, and will directly contribute to ***strengthening and operationalizing accountability to affected populations***.

3. Objective and Tasks

The primary objective of the Task Team is the creation and endorsement of IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.

The development of guidelines would entail the following specific tasks:

- **Data collection, mapping and research** to review and collate existing guidance and evidence related to inclusion and protection of persons with disabilities in situations of risk and

¹ http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/

² Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 11.

³ See <http://humanitariananddisabilitycharter.org/>

humanitarian emergencies and identify operational and policy gaps in all phases of humanitarian action.

- **Development and review of initial guidelines**, including testing and validation, through field and online multi-stakeholder consultations and workshops.
- **Final review, validation and production of the Guidelines** together with the IASC Working Group, and endorsement by IASC members and a broad cross-section of stake-holders.
- **Initial development of roll-out plan**, including creation of training materials and resources, as well as the organisation of workshops.

All tasks listed above will be conducted with the full participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations. The tasks will also be supported through two additional activities:

- Funding and resource mobilisation
- Development of an accessible communication and participation strategy

Please refer to Annex A for the initial work plan of the Task Team until December 2018. A more detailed work plan will be developed through consultations and a workshop in October 2016.

4. Working Methods

a) Chairs/Co-Chairs

The Task Team will be co-chaired by UNICEF, the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and Handicap International (HI). This tripartite co-chairing arrangement recognizes that the development of inclusive and accessible guidelines requires the combined expertise of UN agencies, DPOs and humanitarian actors.

The co-chairs' responsibilities include:

- Steering the implementation of the work plan
- In consultation with Task Team members, finalize the work plan and monitor implementation.
- In coordination with the Secretariat, ensuring the effective dissemination of information and sharing of updates to the Task Team and broader group of stakeholders
- Linking to the IASC Working Group, other IASC Task Teams, Reference Groups and processes
- Representing the Task Team externally, including speaking on behalf of the Task Team
- Guiding the agenda and chairing meetings of the Task Team
- Overseeing / Coordinating the different work streams

b) Work Streams

The Task Team will develop work streams and form technical sub-groups as necessary, which will nominate their own leads/co-leads, to support the development of the guidelines. The number and nature of work streams and sub-groups will be decided at the workshop in October 2016.

c) Secretariat

OCHA will serve as the secretariat of the Task Team. The activities undertaken by the Secretariat will include:

- Supporting the co-chairs to draft the annual work plan for discussion and agreement by the Task Team using information provided by participants of the Task Team

- Maintaining an e-mail distribution list of participants
- Convening meetings of the Task Team at the request of the co-chairs
- Drafting and distributing the agenda and minutes and keeping a participants' list for each meeting
- Preparing materials for distribution to the Task Team and facilitating the flow of communication
- Working closely with the IASC Secretariat to ensure that the IASC website and calendar are updated with information relevant to the Task Team

d) Participation

Participation is open to interested international and local humanitarian organisations and UN agencies, bringing together NGOs, UN, IOM, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and other international organisations on an equal footing.

Participants are expected to actively contribute to the work of the Task Team and take on responsibilities to advance the Task Team's work. The Task Team may establish core and associate memberships as required to define levels of contribution from participants. Participants represent their organisations and, where applicable, ensure that their IASC Working Group (WG) or Emergency Directors Group (EDG) representatives or principals are regularly briefed on the Task Team's work and progress. Experts, donors, and/or governments may be invited as observers to provide technical input or to discuss certain relevant issues, when needed. Operational NGOs are encouraged to participate actively.

The Task Team will make special efforts to include DPOs, NGOs and other non-UN members of the IASC in its work, especially in its missions, to consult and validate the Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.

e) Meeting Schedule and Frequency

The task team will meet bi-monthly through telephone/video conference. Frequency of meetings will be reviewed in Quarter 2 of 2017. Individuals involved in specific work streams may need to meet more often.

f) Decision-Making

Decision-making will be consensus based. If consensus is not achievable then a majority decision as determined by the co-chairs will be required. Agreement on accuracy of minutes, wording of documents etc. will be on a 'no objections' basis, with every effort made to ensure Task Team members have adequate time to respond.

g) Funding and Resources

The co-chairs and organisations listed above, will commit currently-available resources over the next six months to initiate the Task Team and develop the work plan. It is clear that sourcing further funding will be crucial to the wider guidelines development process, which is anticipated to take at least two years. Collaboration among the co-Chairs and other committed partners to develop coordinated funding proposals will begin in the third quarter of 2016.

h) Special Considerations

Throughout the guidelines development process, necessary measures will be taken to ensure all activities and processes undertaken by the Task Team, as well as final deliverables, are inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities.

i) Reporting

Accountability

The 84th IASC Working Group in March 2013 agreed that Task Teams are to be “accountable to the Working Group”. In order to support Task Teams, IASC Working Group Sponsors will work closely with the Task Team to meet its objectives and ensure links with the IASC Working Group. The Task Team co-chairs and IASC Working Group Sponsors are responsible for ensuring their Task Team’s accountability to the IASC Working Group. UNHCR under Priority 2 will act as Sponsor of the Task Team.

The Task Team will liaise, as required, with the other IASC Subsidiary Bodies (Task Teams, Reference Groups etc) to ensure that its output is consistent and compliant with the thematic priorities and established policies of the IASC. Progress updates, when requested by the Working Group, would be provided in writing, for information. The process to place an item on the WG’s agenda is at Annex B.

Monitoring

The Task Team Working Group Sponsors and co-chairs are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Task Team’s objectives and work plan, with the support of the IASC Secretariat.

IASC Working Group Sponsor: UNHCR

IASC Task Team Co-Chairs:

- Gopal Mitra, UNICEF, (gmitra@unicef.org)
- Georgia Dominik, International Disability Alliance (gdominik@ida-secretariat.org)
- Ricardo Pla Cordero, Handicap International (rplacordero@handicap-international.org)

Annex A: Initial Work Plan (To be inserted)

Annex B: The Role of IASC Working Group Sponsor

The term 'Sponsor' is a new designation at the IASC. In essence, a Sponsor is a Working Group member who oversees and advocates for a particular priority, and ensures that policy development for the said priority is aligned at all levels – from designation by the Principals, through discussion at the WG, and through **elaboration at the Task Teams. In some cases, the Sponsor will also be a Co-Chair of a Task Team (TT)/Reference Group (RG); where this is not the case, the Sponsor should ideally be from the same organization as the Co-Chair of the relevant TT/RG.**

More precisely, the functions of the WG Sponsors are as follows:

- Act as a manager, or focal point, for the IASC priority
- Ensure a liaison function between the TT/RG and the WG
- Advocate for the priority or the TT/RG’s work vis-à-vis the WG, when necessary

- Facilitate the TT/RG getting items on the WG agenda for discussion and decision, when necessary
- Provide strategic guidance to the TT/RG
- Work closely with the TT/RG (Co-) Chairs to ensure accountability of the TT/RG to deliver on the expected results within the set time frame

As the IASC Secretariat closely follows each of the IASC subsidiary bodies, the WG Sponsors can call upon the IASC Secretariat to support them in the above functions.

ANNEX: Task Team Members as of September 2016

This list will be updated on an ongoing basis as new members join the Task Team.

To date, UNHCR, UNRWA, UNESCWA, UNESCAP, OHCHR, UNDESA, UNWFP, WHO, UNMAS and ICRC, CBM International, the Women's Refugee Commission and Human Rights Watch have expressed interest to contribute to the Task Team. Several partners are also members of consortiums, such as Inter Action and ICVA, and are actively engaged in other humanitarian coordination forums, such as the Global Protection Cluster and the MHPSS Reference Group and the Gender Reference Group. One of the initial actions of the Task Team will also be to reach out to Global South partners active in this field to ensure a cross-regional approach.