MULTI-PARTNER REVIEW OF THE ENHANCED HPC APPROACH 2021

Concept Note

I. INTRODUCTION

1. An 'enhanced' approach to the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) was introduced for the 2020 cycle, after which the HPC Steering Group undertook a light review to identity areas for update in advance of the next iteration. Feedback from a cross section of field colleagues and field support teams engaged in HPC processes indicated a demand for complementary guidance targeting a few key areas (i.e. people in need calculations, prioritization, application of the Joint Inter-Sectoral Framework), and modifications to the templates.

2. A similar review of the 2021 cycle will take place, looking more specifically on clarity of expectations and level of understanding of the guidance, and on critical issues such as people in need calculations, targeting, cash coordination and inclusivity (gender, disabilities, age, mental health, etc.). Findings will again be used to inform updates to the 2022 HPC package and to inform country support ad capacity-building programmes.

II. BACKGROUND

3. During a workshop held 26 - 27 April 2018, the inter-agency steering group for the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) identified several areas within the (HPC) which warranted further attention or updating and agreed to collectively work on enhancing the HPC. These included:

    - Strengthening the intersectoral analysis of needs and associated causes, vulnerabilities and risks:
    - Better prioritization of needs for response;
    - Identification of opportunities for multi-sectoral responses;
    - Transparency of costing methodology used to estimate funding requirements;
    - Systematic monitoring of needs and the collective response; and
    - Reinforcing joint analysis and joined up planning between humanitarian and development actors

4. In April 2019, following a year of work by a set of interagency sub-groups, the enhancements were made and endorsed at the IASC Operational Policy and Advocacy Group (OPAG) level. A step-by-step guidance and revised templates for Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs) and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) were produced to reflect these areas of improvement[1].

5. HPC enhancement efforts built upon synergies with other global initiatives including, but not limited to, the New Way of Working, and the Grand Bargain. As part of the latter, a Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF) was developed by the Joint Intersectoral Analysis Group (JIAG) to guide the analysis in the HNO and the estimation of the number of persons in need (PiN) integrating various humanitarian

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[1] The step-by-step guidance and templates for the HNO and HRP are accessible at https://assessments.hpc.tools/content/hpc-2021-facilitation-package.

conditions. The intersectoral needs analysis is describes and estimates the number of persons experiencing different types of humanitarian consequences associated with physical and mental well-being, living standards, and resilience, all inclusive of protection considerations. The various types of consequences aim to reflect differences in the time-criticality of needs, while a severity analysis would highlight the gravity of each.

7. Some of the most relevant changes in the HRP included clear criteria to prioritise population groups, geographic areas and types of humanitarian consequences for the response; the formulation of measurable inter-sectoral strategic objectives underpinned by specific objectives; the inter-sectoral analysis of response options including opportunities for multi-sectoral responses; and transparent explanations on how the cost of the various responses was estimated.

II.   PURPOSE, SCOPE AND USE OF THE REVIEW

Purpose and Use

8. The Multi-Partner Review (Review) is a formative study to document and understand, from the perspective of field actors and field support teams, the clarity of expectations and level of understanding of the guidance.

9. **The results will inform adjustments for the next HPC cycle; identify areas for further strengthening; and priorities for capacity building and support.**

10. The review will be focused on learning. It is not an accountability mechanism and will not serve as an assessment of any country's HPC process, agency, organization, or government.

11. The Review of the 2021 enhanced HPC will:

   - Identify the key challenges faced by agencies and field clusters in applying the enhanced HPC;
   - Identify the main strengths and benefits experienced by agencies and field clusters in applying the enhanced HPC;
   - Briefly describe the main factors which contributed to the challenges and successes. These may include timing, consultation mechanism(s), capacity, data availability and access, quality of guidance, etc.; and
   - Recommend further adjustments to the HPC guidance and templates, and other support efforts identified as critical to effective HPC implementation.

Intended Users

12. The primary intended users of the Review are:

   - The HPC Steering Group who will be provided with information required to determine whether further modifications to the enhanced HPC processes, guidance and/or templates are warranted;
   - Country teams to reflect upon strengths and weakness in the 2021 HPC process, to inform modifications (if any) for the 2022 cycle; and

▪ Agencies and global clusters to inform agency and cluster/sectors specific guidance, processes, etc.

Scope

13. The Review will focus on all country-level 2021 HPC processes to date and resulting products, namely HNOs and HRPs.

14. The Review is limited in scope and time to inform initial revisions to the guidance and templates. A more detailed lessons learned exercise or evaluation is envisaged to take place upon 3 years of implementation of the full enhanced package.

Related studies and information

15. The HPC Quality Scoring exercise is envisaged to take place during between February and March 2021[2] and, thus, will be ongoing at the same time as the review. Any Initial findings from the HNO and HRP scoring process will feed into this Review.

16. Where available, any agency, organization and/or cluster internal reviews, evaluations, lessons learned, etc. which include information on the application of the enhanced 2021 HPC will also be utilized to inform this Review.

17. An independent review of the JIAF is scheduled to be conducted during the first quarter of 2021. While some of the issues related to the application of the provisional elements of the JIAF may be included in the Review, the JIAG will in parallel examine specific aspects in greater depth[3]. Results will be used to inform this Review, as applicable.

III.   PROPOSED APPROACH FOR THE REVIEW

Coordination and Management Arrangements

18. The Multi-partner Review process will be an interagency collaboration coordinated and managed by OCHA. A sub-group of partners from the HPC Steering Group will be established whose responsibility to advise on and undertake the Review (subsequently referred to as the 'HPC Review Sub-Group').

HPC Steering Group

19. The HPC Steering Group will be provided regular updates on the status of work and will be tasked with endorsing key deliverables, notably the initial findings and review report.

HPC Review Sub-Group

20. The HPC Review Sub-Group will act as an advisory body overseeing and implementing the approach, content and implementation of the Review.

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[2] The HNO and HRP scoring will be done by a multi-agency team using the revised quality criteria developed under the Grand Bargain on Needs Assessments. The criteria can be found here.

[3] These may include: the appropriateness and relevance of the JIAF main components (context, event/shock, impact, humanitarian conditions) as well as of the provisional JIAF indicators and severity thresholds, data availability and reliability, analysis capacities etc. The JIAG will look at select case studies of a few HPC countries reflecting different crisis situations and capacities.

21. The Sub-Group will be comprised of individuals representing HPC Steering Group member organizations who have been designated by their organization and will be empowered to represent and speak on behalf of their organization or associated entity.

22. The Sub-Group will be responsible for refining the timeline, methodology, developing the data collection tools, creating a data management platform, developing an analysis plan, and identifying how to look at inclusivity (i.e. gender, disability, AAP), based on the Review's objectives. It is recommended that the number of core questions be limited and targeted, preferably not exceeding 10-15 (while partners would have the latitude to ask additional questions to their own constituencies, see Methodology below).

23. The Sub-Group will oversee the data collection, management, consolidation and analysis of the data and information emanating from the responses to the core questions, as well as any additional relevant information shared by partners.

24. The Sub-Group will agree on a set of key findings and recommendations which will be presented to the HPC Steering group for validation. Once approved, these key findings and recommendations will inform and trigger possible modifications to the enhanced HPC. [4]

25. The Sub-Group will draft the Review report and submit to the HPC Steering Group. They will also develop associated presentations, briefs and key messages.

Timing

26. The data collection phase will commence January 2021 and will continue on a rolling basis until the end of April. Data will be analyzed in early March to inform the development of initial findings to be presented to the HPC Steering Group, and again at the end of April.

27, Work on the data collection tool(s), data management and analysis plans would take place during the December 2020 and early January 2021. An elaborated calendar may be found in the next section.

Methodology, Data Collection Tools and Approach

28. Primary data collection will be comprised of two elements: a facilitated discussion or After-Action Review (AAR), and an online survey.

29. The **facilitated discussion or After-Action Review (AAR)[5]** would likely be undertaken by Inter Cluster Coordination Groups (ICCGs, or their equivalent) and asks country teams to reflect on strengths and weakness of the enhanced HPC approach itself, its application, areas that warrant further clarification for 2022, and how they might improve upon or streamline the process for the next cycle. Cluster Coordinators will be asked to also discuss with their respective clusters to share both the collective and their individual views. A Guidance Note and Power Point presentation can be found in the 2021 HPC Facilitation Package.

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[4] Due to timing constraints, work on revisions to the Step-by-Step Guide and/or templates will need to commence based on the key findings and recommendations, as oppose to waiting for the full Review report to be drafted.

[5] An AAR facilitation package is available to support implementation of the AAR. The package includes guiding question that have been developed by the Sub-Group, with the understanding that these will be contextualized to the individual country context.

The AAR has been added to the Step-by-Step Guide for 2021 an effort to highlight its position as an important part of the HPC. An AAR facilitation package is available through OCHA's Knowledge Management Platform. HPC Steering Group members will be requested to reach out to their country-level colleagues to encourage participation and provide support. Where feasible, direct hands-on support will be provided to country operations to undertake their AARs.

30. The **online survey** aims to elicit feedback from a greater breadth of actors involved in the HPC, notably including local and international NGO cluster members. Additionally, it affords respondents to supply greater detail and depth of feedback in a confidential manner. Survey link will be sharable so that it can be circulated by any organization/cluster.

31. Specific attention will be dedicated this year to **increasing the response rate and level of representativeness** for both the AAR and online survey. Effort will be made to create a 'denominator' to determine the level of response for each country. This will consist of the number of organizations who have contributed to each country's HPC.[6] Targets for response rates will be set for each country that the Sub Group will endeavor to meet to improve the validity of the findings.

Deliverables

32. The Sub-Group will finalize the Concept Note; refine methodology; develop questions; draft key findings and recommendations; produce Final Report; presentations; briefing notes and key messages.

Communication and Dissemination

33. The HPC Review- Sub Group will provide status updates to the HPC Steering Group on a regular basis (to be defined in consultation with HPC Steering Group).

34. The Review report will be submitted to the HPC Steering Group and the recommendations made available through the relevant agencies and organizations.

35. Findings will be disseminated through various channels, including donor and NGO fora, in support of open and transparent ongoing dialogue.

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[6] This can be done through the Financial Tracking Service (FTS) for those countries that to activity-based costing. For those which do unit-based costing, it will be necessary to identify alternative methods to identifying organizations involved in those countries HPCs.

IV.   ESTIMATED TIMELINE

An overview of the key tasks and deliverables, and deadlines in provided in the table below. Specifically:

Refinement of Concept Note and Development of Tools and Methodology	
HPC Review Sub Group Activated	4 December 2020
Revised draft (a) concept note, (b) AAR package, and (c) online survey questionnaire circulated to Sub Group for comments and feedback	Week of 14 December
Deadline for comments on draft 2021 MPR package	7 January 2021
Sub Group meeting to address any outstanding questions and finalize MPR package	as needed
Sub Group updates HPC Steering Group on decisions and recommendations to date	January HPC SG Meeting
Data Collection, Consolidation and Analysis	
OCHA and partners in field operations lead and/or participate in country-level After Action Reviews	January – February 2021
Online questionnaire circulated	Week of 18 January
Analysis of available data and information	Week of 4 March 2021
HPC Review Sub Group consolidates and analyzes information, discusses and endorses key findings	Week of 11 March 2021
Reporting and Use	
Sub Group presents Key Findings and Recommendations to HPC Steering Group	Mid-March 2021
HPC Review Sub Group incorporates comments from HPC Steering Group and finalizes key findings and recommendations. **Work on any revisions to the guidance and templates will commence based on this information to allow for work to be completed, endorsed and disseminated to field actors by mid-April.**	End-March 2021
Based on feedback from HPC Steering Group on initial findings, HPC Steering Group produces a short Review report (draft)	End April 2021
HPC Steering Group provides comments on draft Review report	May 2021
HPC Sub Group incorporates comments and finalizes report	May 2021
HPC Steering Group endorses final Review	May 2021
Report Disseminated	**May 2021**

ANNEX 1

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Below are questions to guide the AAR and comprise the online survey that will be circulated.

	Why?	Suggestions?
1- How useful was the HPC Step-by-Step guidance to the HPC process?		
2- Humanitarian Needs Overviews: **What were the most challenging aspects of the HNO, and improvements compared to previous years?** 2.1- In general		
2.2- Use of JIAF indicators and severity thresholds		
2.3- Inter-sectoral analysis structured by humanitarian conditions		
2.4- Analysis of risks, vulnerabilities and coping mechanisms by diversity (gender, age, disability, etc.)		
2.5- Estimation of the number of persons in need (PiN) by humanitarian condition and by population group		
2.6- Staff analysis capacities		
2.7- Risk analysis and projection of needs		
2.8 – Community engagement		
2.9 – Clarity of the guidance and expectations		
3- Humanitarian Response Plans: **What were the most challenging aspects of the HRP, and improvements compared to previous years?** 3.1 – In general		
3.2 – Prioritisation of population groups, geographic areas and factors to address in the response, based on the HNO		
3.3 – Inter-sectoral analysis of response options		
3.4 – Formulation of 'SMART' inter-sectoral strategic and specific objectives		
3.5 – Transparent costing of responses		
3.6 – Community engagement		
3.7 – Inclusion of cash and multipurpose responses		
3.8- Clarity of the guidance and expectations		
4- Monitoring in HNO and HRP: What were the most challenging aspects of, and improvements compared to previous years? 4.1- In general		
4.2 – Identification of situation, needs and response indicators		
4.3 – Disaggregation of data by diversity (gender, age, disability, etc.)		
5. – Were HRP participant organizations requested to cut targets or funding requests? If yes, please indicate by who (i.e. HC, HCT, Cluster Lead, OCHA)		

ANNEX 2

MULTI-PARTNER REVIEW OF THE ENHANCED HPC APPROACH 2020: PROPOSED CALENDAR

Deliverable	Who/Group	4 Dec	7-11 Dec	14–18 Dec	21–25 Dec	28 Dec–1 Jan	4–8 Jan	11–15 Jan	18–22 Jan	25–29 Jan	1–5 Feb	8–12 Feb	15–19 Feb	22–25 Feb
HPC Sub Group convened	OCHA	X												
Draft Concept Note, timeline, online survey and AAR package revised and updated based on decisions and recommendations from Sub Group	Sub		X											
Sub Group (a) inputs to revised documents and data collection tools	Sub			X	X	X								
Sub Group meeting to address any outstanding questions and finalize MPR package (if needed)	Sub							X						
Sub Group updates HPC Steering Group on decisions and recommendations to date	Sub								X	X				
OCHA and partners in field operations lead and/or participate in country-level After Action Reviews; and online questionnaire circulated (Jan – Feb)									X	X	X	X	X	X
Online questionnaire circulated														

Deliverable	Who/Group	1- 5 Mar	8 – 12 Marc	15 -19 Mar	22-26 Mar	29 Mar-2 Apr	5-9 Apr	12-16 Apr	19-23 Apr	26-30 Apr	3-7 May	10-14 May	17-21 May	24-28 May
HPC Review Sub Group consolidates and analyzes information, identifies key findings	Sub		X	X	X									
Sub Group presents Key Findings and Recommendations to HPC Steering Group	Sub/ Steering					X								
HPC Review Sub Group incorporates comments from HPC Steering Group and finalizes key findings and recommendations. **Work on any revisions to the guidance and templates will commence based on this information to allow for work to be completed, endorsed and disseminated to field actors by mid-April.**	Sub						X							
Work on revisions to guidance and templates.	Steer						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Based on feedback from HPC Steering Group on initial findings, HPC Sub Group produces a Review report (draft)	Sub							X	X	X	X			
HPC Steering Group provides comments on draft Review report	Steer											X		

HPC Sub Group incorporates comments and finalizes report	Sub													
HPC Steering Group endorses final Review report	Steer													
Report disseminated	All													