

**Disaster and Crisis Working Group (DCWG)
Vienna, 1 June –3 June 2022**

Meeting Minutes

Reconnecting and a shared understanding of the DCWG:

Following the endorsement of a new [Terms of Reference for the DCWG](#) in 2020 this was the first time the DCWG had met in person.

Ahead of the meeting the Organizing Committee for the DCWG set the following objectives for the DCWG meeting in Vienna:

- To learn from one another through sharing of operational experiences, challenges and best practices;
- To reinforce a network of relationships to provide mutual support and optimize coordination and cooperation between our agencies;
- To initiate and recommend innovative disaster and crisis response mechanisms or approaches that may be replicable elsewhere by other partners; and
- To reaffirm the role and value of the DCWG and renew commitment and momentum towards our collective goals;

Operations Quality:

1. Emergency Needs Assessment

➤ Discussions:

Paco Maldonado, IFRC Surge Capacity Lead presented the key learnings from Practice and Evidence outlining opportunities, achievements and main priorities to further develop the quality of Needs Assessments with a focus at local level.

➤ Outcome & Recommendations:

Working groups were asked to brainstorm on potential ways to operationalize the proposed roadmap and to prioritize recommendations. This is captured in the following [results](#) (slide 6)

The following NS will contribute to actions linked to the ENA Road Map:

American RC, Australian RC, British RC, Canadian RC, Danish RC, French RC, German RC, Italian RC, Norwegian RC, Netherlands RC, MDA, HKRC Swedish RC

2. Operations Management

➤ Discussions:

The session was led by Nelson Castano, IFRC Manager, Operations Coordination and focused on exploring how we can increase and diversify our pool of operations managers collectively. This included a presentation of results from a [survey](#) conducted to trained Operations Managers.

➤ Outcome & Recommendations:

Analysis shows the ongoing need to invest with a focus on addressing language, gender and diversity including increased representation from the Global South.

IFRC with the support of PNS developed a concept note which aims to define a clear and tangible initiative to re-engage trained Operations Manager to ensure there is a pool of predictable, diverse, gender balanced talent pool of trained and available Operations Managers to deploy as locally as possible to manage IFRC Operations. IFRC to revise and update this concept note and share with interested PNS to develop a small working group to drive forward this initiative. Operations Management training curriculum to be updated in 2022.

3. ERU Optimization

➤ Discussions:

Paco Maldonado, IFRC Surge Capacity Lead gave an [update on the ERU Optimization process](#). Working groups focused on the minimum key commitments that should be made by IFRC/PNS through the ERU optimization process. The session explored whether the commitments are realistic and achievable, where constraints with compliance can be identified and how the commitments can be communicated.

➤ Outcome and Recommendations

Summary of the recommendations are captured in the following [presentation](#) (slide 2-4). The discussion concluded to focus on three rather than four commitments which included (1) well informed analysis for ERU decision making but not at the compromise of speed, (2) increasing the diversity of ERU network through enhanced engagement of regional Rapid Response network and (3) commitment to enhance the capacity of receiving NS pre and post deployment.

The ERU Optimization process is well established, and smaller working groups will continue to progress on these topics.

4. Update on the Developing Head of Emergency Operations (DHEOps) Program.

[Presentation](#) by Florent Del Pinto, IFRC Emergency Operations Center manager on the DHEOps program key achievements since its inception 10 years ago.

Ukraine Response

1. Cahier des Doléances on the Ukraine Response

Participants were asked to reflect and write down the key issues, concerns and challenges presented by the Ukraine crisis response. These were captured on the [cahier des doléances](#), wall. This was visible to all participants for the remainder of the meeting.

2. Ukraine Lessons Learned

➤ Discussion:

Presentation from Irina Boicheva, Head of International Relations and Partnership, URCS followed by a panel discussion with participation of ICRC, IFRC, Danish, German RC, Norwegian RC and the IFRC Psychosocial Support Reference Centre and a plenary discussion.

➤ Outcome and Recommendations:

Members of the DCWG recognized the achievements of URCS since the escalation of the conflict in February. URCS presented their plans and challenges with and ask to PNS to trust URCS and to work with them in terms of reporting requirements, instead of producing separate report for each NS. URCS also noted that the constant rotation of surge personnel was presenting challenges and encouraged all partners to consider longer term deployments.

During the panel discussion and plenary, issues around coordination in the operation were discussed, particularly in regards to ICRC's role as co-convenor and IFRC's membership coordination role, with some PNS expressing the view that they have found it challenging managing and navigating in the unknown between IFRC and ICRC. Additionally, several PNS talked about the unusual choice they had made to work bilaterally for this operation where usually they would contribute to IFRC/ICRC operations and appeals. There is a great commitment by PNS to support Ukraine and the surrounding countries.

The issue of preparedness came up several times with many participants questioning the lack of preparedness across the RCRC Movement in predicting the escalation of this conflict and being ready to respond. There was agreement on the need to focus and invest in this issue in the future. Additionally, the need to prepare for the upcoming winter season was emphasized with participants suggesting planning needed to occur now.

Coordination and Cooperation

➤ Discussion:

The session was led by Nicolas Luyet (ICRC), Bushra Ghazanfar (IFRC) and Nienke Boskma (IFRC) on how we can better work together to increase the quality of our operations and increase our impact, including two perspectives and discussions on:

- Movement Coordination: SMCC
- Membership Coordination: Agenda for Renewal and New Ways of Working (focused on operations)

➤ Outcome and Recommendations:

The discussion on SMCC concluded that the DCWG network is not being informed consistently of outputs and updates from SMCC and there is a commitment from the SMCC Coordination Group to ensure regular information sharing. The working session yielded tangible actions for the SMCC Coordination Group, which is updating their work plan to include these inputs. This work plan will be shared with the DCWG network to engage interested partners in concrete activities such as updating of the Movement Coordination Officer learning path and concept.

The New Way of Working session concluded that a dedicated working group focused on New Way of Working in Operations would be established under the leadership of Florent Del Pinto & Nienke Boskma. This working group will aim at guiding IFRC and its members on which model and ways of working do we want to promote while implementing membership coordination in operations at country level. Interested NS are American RC, Austrian RC, British RC, Canadian RC, Costa Rican RC, Italian RC, Netherlands RC, Norwegian RC, Swedish RC.

Anticipatory Action

➤ Discussion:

[Presentation](#) from Nazira Lacayo, IFRC Senior Officer DREF Forecast Based Action on what does successful Anticipatory Action look like and what is the added value of taking an anticipatory approach. Discussion within groups on how can the DCWG support the operational framework for scaling up anticipatory action?

➤ Outcome and Recommendations:

The main [outcomes](#) of the group sessions are highlighting the following priorities to be able to scale up Anticipatory action at country level :

- Need to invest more on the dissemination/trainings on what is AA / FBA to NS and CD

- Continue to increase simplification of tools, process & procedures
- Explore funding and supporting contingency plans
- Create a national relief funds & Crises modifier aspect
- Have more PNS developing simplified EAPS at country level
- Develop more case studies to “demonstrate” the added value

ICG and DCWG

➤ Discussion:

Maria Alcazar, Head of International, Spanish Red Cross and member of the core group of the Informal Coordination Group (ICG) provided information on how the ICG is working, its strategic areas of focus for the next years, including Localization, Agenda for Renewal and Climate. She also gave some insights into how the DCWG could leverage its role to work more strategically to influence change at the operational level.

➤ Outcome and Recommendations:

Recommendation is that the new DCWG Organizing Committee explores formal linkages with the ICG ensuring ways to work together and identify synergies between the two groups.

Cross-cutting Issues

➤ Discussion:

DCWG members were asked to use [the ADKAR methodology](#) to rate the key challenge standing in the way of operationalizing the key cross cutting themes of PGI, CEA and MHPSS into their operations.

This was followed by a presentation by

- Gurvinder Singh, Senior Advisor, Protection, IFRC and CRC
- Zara Elaine Sejberg, MHPSS Delegate / Psychosocial Support Advisor, Danish Red Cross
- Sofia Ribeiro, MHPSS, IFRC

The presentations of PGI and MHPSS highlighted the importance of this kind of sharing, the willingness of PGI and MHPSS to learn more on the needs of those engaged at the operational level.

While participants agreed that such integration would improve the quality of response, a common challenge is that integrating expert’s advice in an effective and contextual appropriate manner timely and context fashion is often challenging in a response.

➤ Outcome and Recommendations:

Consensus exists that PGI and MHPSS inputs and activities should be incorporated/mainstreamed into sector activities (health, shelter, relief, livelihoods) rather than be seen as stand-alone thematic activities. To facilitate this there is need to create better exchange and interaction between PGI, MHPSS and delegates and heads of sectors in the field to ensure the incorporation of technical inputs into operational plan. Additionally, it is recommended that activities beyond trainings need to become indicators in operational plans.

There is a need to train delegates in the basics of MHPSS & PGI, and also for MHPSS and PGI delegates in the basics of DM

DCWG – next meeting and new Organizing Committee

➤ Discussion:

Plans for the next meetings and the new DCWG Organizing Committee (OC) were discussed in plenary. A new OC will be responsible for organizing these meetings. At the end of the Vienna meeting the Australian Red Cross and Austrian Red Cross stepped down from the OC.

➤ Outcomes:

The next DCWG meeting will be hosted by the Italian Red Cross in May/June 2023 with an online workshop planned for November 2022.

The French RC, Netherlands RC, Swedish RC and Uganda RC all expressed interest in joining the OC. These members will be invited to the next OC meeting where new members and a chair will be confirmed. This will be communicated to DCWG members by September 2022. In the interim, Chaim Rafalowski and Lorenzo Massucchielli will be the key focal points for the OC. Contact details as follows:

- Chaim Rafalowski: i <Haimr@mda.org.il>
- Lorenzo Massucchielli <lorenzo.massucchielli@cri.it>

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