Draft Terms of Reference
Proposed English name:
Integrated Core Group on Emergency Preparedness and Response
Proposed French name:
Groupe intégré de préparation et réponse aux urgences (GIPRU)

I   Background/Context

Burundi has experienced a series of socio-political crises over the past three decades. Ethnic conflict has led to the destruction of infrastructure and has also seriously affected the access to basic services. The violence also caused an outflow of over 500,000 people (mainly to neighbouring Tanzania) as well as significant displacement within the country. The resumption of the peace process, improved security and political stability as well as the closure of refugee camps in Tanzania has led to increased returns of refugees. Close to 50,000 Burundian refugees are expected to return in 2009. Many internally displaced persons have also been able to return home

A combination of decades of conflict, structural issues such as pressure on limited land resources, high vulnerability to climatic shocks, widespread environmental degradation and rising global food prices has led to chronic food insecurity in some parts to the country, an overall net deficit of 33% in domestic food production and an annual inflation rate of over 30%. Since on average 70% of households' income is spent on food, many Burundian families are eating fewer meals a day. This has direct consequences on the nutritional status of children and women in particular.

Malnutrition and communicable diseases remain a major health issue. Burundi has a very high under five mortality rate. The major causes of child mortality are communicable diseases (measles, water born diseases, malaria etc) and poor health management. The health system is still facing many challenges, which severely affect the provision of basic health care especially in times of emergency. The influx of returnees from Tanzania is also stretching the health care system to its limits and access to both preventive and curative health care has further deteriorated.

Although there have been very positive developments in the areas of reconciliation, security and political stability in Burundi over recent years, some sectors of society still remain very vulnerable to shocks which can lead to serious humanitarian concerns and reliance on negative coping mechanisms.

Various coordination structures already exist in Burundi particularly in the areas of peace building, development and poverty reduction. The humanitarian response on the other hand has evolved from a full-fledged emergency with CHAP/CAP process to smaller scale localized interventions. The humanitarian community could benefit from improved and adapted coordination mechanisms to a recovery environment and better partnerships between the Government of Burundi, the United Nations and civil society. This should then lead to more effective and timely responses and better accountability to the people of Burundi. Following a series of discussions with the Government of Burundi, civil society (including both international and national NGOs) and United Nations agencies, the Humanitarian Coordinator has formalized the partial implementation of the cluster approach in September 2008.

The cluster approach has been activated in Burundi with the following clusters:
- Food Security
- Water and Sanitation
- Education
- Health and Nutrition (with a nutrition component also with food security)
- Logistics and Telecoms
- Early Recovery and Reintegration Network *(Commission Intégrée)* with a protection component[1]

II   Objectives

Overall Objective
The overall objective of the Core Group is to ensure that humanitarian action (meaning early warning, prevention, preparedness and recovery as well as response) in Burundi is effective, timely, accountable, properly coordinated and is grounded on principles of partnerships and ownership.

Specific Objectives
To achieve the overall objective, the Core Group has three specific objectives:

A. To ensure that all organizations and institutions working on early warning mechanisms for both natural and man-made disasters (whether national or sub-regional) regularly provide a detailed and coordinated analysis that is accompanied by recommendations so that the humanitarian community can better anticipate emergencies, can develop joint contingency plans, can pre-position resources as appropriate, can implement preventative activities and can develop joint strategic responses.

B. To oversee the technical implementation of the cluster approach in Burundi and in particular to ensure that clusters coordinate with each other and that cross-cutting issues (gender, human rights, SGBV, HIV/Aids and environmental issues) are mainstreamed into cluster activities. This implies that the Core Group will provide technical advice and recommendations to clusters and government structures.

C. To ensure that early recovery is integrated into the humanitarian response in Burundi and more specifically to make sure that all humanitarian action positively contributes to peace-building and reconciliation in Burundi and wherever possible enhances socio-economic development. This also implies an obligation to ensure that all humanitarian action respects and promotes the protection of human rights, prioritizes vulnerable groups, applies 'do no harm principles', is designed to strengthen the capacity of Government agencies and local communities and takes into account lessons-learned from previous responses.

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[1]Various other thematic protection/human rights groups exist in Burundi. UNHCR and OHCHR are currently reviewing these structures to see how they can be developed and better coordinated to cover any gaps in the emergency protection response.

III   Membership

The membership of the Core Group will comprise the following partners:

1. **Chair**   **Humanitarian Coordinator a.i.**
2. **Coordination**   **UNHCR**
3. **Consortium of International ONGs**   **RESO (3 representatives at the**
   programs/Operations manager level)
4. **Observers:**   **Croix-Rouge du Burundi, ICRC**
5. **Cluster Representation (cluster leads or their replacement):**
   a. Food Security   **FAO, WFP**
   b. Education   **UNICEF**
   c. Health & Nutrition   **WHO, UNICEF**
   d. WASH   **UNICEF**
   e. Logistics and Emergency Telecom   **WFP (in support of BINUB for Telecom)**
   f. Early Recovery and Reintegration   **UNDP**
   g. Protection/Human Rights   **UNHCR, UNICEF, OHCHR**

All organisations should make every effort to ensure consistency in representation and also that representation is at a sufficiently senior level to enable decision-making.

The Chair shall review membership on a regular basis and make recommendations for change as appropriate.

IV   Relationship with other coordinating bodies

With the clusters and the Plateforme Nationale
The cluster leads are key members of the core group and the Plateforme-Nationale and shall regularly report (no less than once every 3 months and more often if the situation warrants) to the Core Group with details about the progress of cluster activities, constraints faced by cluster members and any issues arising out of the implementation of activities. The Core Group shall assist clusters and the government structures, particularly the Plateforme Nationale, in addressing constraints and concerns by providing technical advice, practical support and/or advocacy as is appropriate in the circumstances and to ensure that inter-cluster and cross-cutting issues are addressed.

With Le Groupe de Coordination des Partenaires (GCP) and the Comité National de Coordination des Aides (CNCA)
The Core Group shall advocate with the Groupe de Coordination des Partenaires/CNCA to ensure that humanitarian and early recovery issues/concerns are taken into account in the design and implementation of development programmes. The Core Group shall regularly brief the CNCA on humanitarian activities and current humanitarian issue.

With the Comité Humanitaire
The Core Group shall report on its activities and recommendations at each meeting of the Comité Humanitaire. Strategic and policy decisions related to humanitarian issues are taken at the level of the Comité Humanitaire (Head of agencies/organizations).

V   Administration

Chairing and venue of the meetings
The meetings shall be chaired by the Humanitarian Coordinator and in his absence the Humanitarian Coordinator *ad interim.*   The venue shall be the UN information centre (CINU) unless agreed otherwise and informed to members.

Decision-making
Wherever possible decisions should be made by consensus but where this is not possible, the Chair will take into account the majority opinion.

Agendas, action points and minutes
The Secretariat shall be the BINUB/OCHA HC support unit.   Agendas shall be circulated well in advance of the meetings with copy supporting documents. Minutes and action points shall also be circulated by the Secretariat as soon as possible after meetings.

Regularity of meetings
The Core Group shall meet once every month and more often if necessary. It is the responsibility of the Chair to call extraordinary meetings.