## Joint Letter regarding Cooperation between

## the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the

## United Nations Office of Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)

## on Common Operational Datasets

**To:     UNFPA HQ, Country Office Representatives and Regional Directors**

**OCHA HQ and Heads of Regional and Country Offices**

Dear Colleagues,

We address this letter to you as representatives of UNFPA and UNOCHA in order to clarify and strengthen our cooperation in the collection, analysis and use of data for humanitarian preparedness planning, emergency response and development. We believe this will help ensure evidence-based and coordinated humanitarian response that will directly benefit vulnerable populations whilst promoting the humanitarian-development nexus through smoother transition from crisis to development.

The Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidance on Common Operational Datasets (CODs) was recently revised by the global Information Management Working Group (IMWG) to highlight the importance of several key datasets that provide a framework for national authorities, development actors, and humanitarian agencies to engage in coordinated preparedness and response activities. The three core CODs (on administrative boundaries, population statistics, and humanitarian caseloads) underpin a broad range of information analysis, products and systems, including Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRP).

CODs on population statistics are defined as the 'best available' sex and age disaggregated population data, recognizing that women, girls, boys and men have distinct roles and needs and that these must each be addressed through informed planning, operations and monitoring. The importance of ensuring accurate data on populations for emergency preparedness is noted by UNFPA in the 2007-2009 UNFPA Humanitarian Strategy[1], the 2010 UNFPA Guidelines on Data Issues in Humanitarian Crisis Situations, and the 2018 to 2021 UNFPA Strategic Plan.

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[1] DP/FPA/2006/14: UNFPA role in emergency preparedness, humanitarian response, and transition and recovery – Integrating the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development into emergency preparedness, humanitarian response, and transition and recovery programmes: a strategy to build commitment and capacity. Second regular session 2006
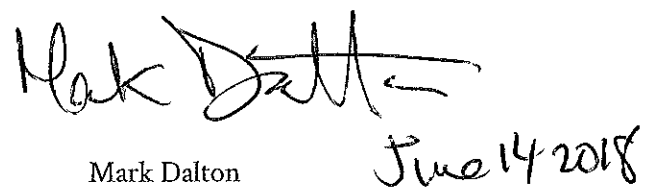
In recent years, OCHA has substantially improved the availability and usability of CODs on administrative boundaries. Currently, all 30 operational humanitarian countries and 70 out of 81 preparedness countries have fully usable CODs on administrative boundaries. In contrast, currently only 6 operational countries and 14 preparedness countries have fully usable CODs on population statistics (Please see Annex II). Close collaboration between UNFPA and OCHA is essential in improving availability and usability of CODs on population statistics.

We encourage you to review and implement the practical steps outlined in Annex I to this letter to help ensure that humanitarian preparedness and response can be done based on accurate evidence and a nuanced understanding of the different needs of women, girls, boys and men.

For further information and assistance in addressing these actions, please refer enquiries to Mr. Romesh Silva, Technical Specialist, Health & Social Inequalities, Population & Development Branch UNFPA New York (email rosilva@unfpa.org) and Ms. Janet O'Callaghan, Field Information Service Section, OCHA Geneva (email ocallaghan@un.org).

Rachel Snow
Chief, Population and Development Branch,
United Nations Population Fund

Mark Dalton
Chief, Information Management Branch,
United Nations Office for the Coordination
of Humanitarian Affairs

Ugochi Daniels
Chief, Humanitarian and Fragile Context
Branch, United Nations Population Fund

**Annex I - Specific Activities**

**Joint Letter regarding Cooperation between**

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There are many potential areas for collaboration between UNOCHA and UNFPA regarding Common Operational Datasets (CODs). The activities listed below are intended to be the first in longer term active collaboration between the two agencies.

Specific Activities:

1. UNFPA HQ to develop technical guidance on Common Operational Datasets on Population Statistics (COD-PS), including linking to corresponding CODs on Administrative Boundaries (COD-AB).

2. UNOCHA HQ to ensure guidance on all Common Operational Datasets align with COD-PS technical guidance developed by UNFPA.

3. UNOCHA country offices to ensure the inclusion of UNFPA Population and Development Specialists in country level inter-agency information management working groups (IMWG).

4. UNFPA country offices to work with National Statistics Offices to acquire, analyse and disseminate national and sub-national level age and sex disaggregated population statistics and projections on an annual basis including:

    a. Providing guidance to the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and/or Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) on the strengths and limitations of available subnational population projections, via advisory notes and direct consultations.

    b. Producing the COD-PS dataset disaggregated by age and sex to the lowest reasonable administrative level, taking into account population migration and displacement.

    c. Disseminating relevant datasets with detailed metadata via open data platforms such as the UNFPA Population Data Platform and OCHA's Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX).

5. UNOCHA and UNFPA country offices to support the Resident / Humanitarian Coordinator in ensuring that the COD-PS are developed and maintained according to guidance and reviewed or updated on an annual basis.

6. UNFPA HQ and country offices to provide capacity-building for UNFPA staff at the country-level based on IASC Operational Guidelines for Needs Assessments and UNFPA's Guidelines for Data in Humanitarian Settings.

7. UNFPA and UNOCHA are encouraged to explore and identify further opportunities for strengthened collaboration in the area of humanitarian data.

# Annex II - Availability and Usability of Common Operational Datasets (CODs) on Administrative Boundaries and Population Statistics (as of 12 April, 2018) and Technical Support Package on CODs)

## Common Operational Dataset: Detailed Evaluation (as of 12 April 2018) — ⊕ OCHA

Common Operational Datasets (CODs) are authoritative reference datasets needed to support operations and decision-making for all actors in a humanitarian response. CODs are 'best available' datasets that ensure consistency and simplify the discovery and exchange of key data. The usability rating below is conducted by OCHA Field Information Services (FIS) as the Core CODs (Administrative boundaries (AB) and Population Statistics (PS) are made available on the Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX).

The status below indicates the quality each admin level (down to level 4), the availability on Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX) and the existence of live web services (for AB only) for both administrative boundary and population statistic CODs; as well as the ability for the COD-AB and COD-PS to link to each other. The quality rating describes how functional the datasets are for operational purposes. Information Technology Outreach Services (ITOS), based in the University of Georgia and OCHA are working to improve the quality and create Live Web Services for Administrative Boundary CODs which are added to HDX as they are made available.

**Usability Score**
- Fully Usable 🟢
- Partly Usable 🟠
- Need Improvement 🔴

**Availability on HDX**
- Available ✓
- Not Available ⚪
- Not Available Due to Policy 🔒

**AB-PS Link**
- Working 🔗 (green)
- Not Working 🔗 (red)

Fully usable" indicates that dataset can be used for any purpose (e.g.: mapping, framework, taxonomy, etc.). "Partly usable" indicates some problem with the dataset that may limit its use (e.g.: has topology issues so can only be used for tabular/taxonomy purposes or does not contain Sex and Age Disaggregated Data. "Needs improvement" indicates that there are some issues with the data and it can likely only be used for small scale maps

## STATUS AND RATING BY COUNTRY AND REGION

| Region | Status | Country | ADM1 | ADM2 | ADM3 | ADM4 | HDX | LIVE | AB-PS | ADM1 | ADM2 | ADM3 | ADM4 | HDX |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Syria Crisis | Operational | Lebanon | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Syrian Arab Republic | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Turkey | 🟢 | 🟠 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| Middle East and North Africa | Operational | Afghanistan | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | 🔗 | 🔴 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Iraq | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Libya | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Pakistan | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | State of Palestine | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | 🔴 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Yemen | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | 🔗 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | Preparedness | Egypt | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| West and Central Africa | Operational | Cameroon | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Central African Republic | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Chad | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | 🔴 | 🔴 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Côte d'Ivoire | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | DR Congo | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | 🔴 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Mali | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | ⚪ | ⚪ | 🔴 | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Niger | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Nigeria | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | 🔴 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | Preparedness | Benin | 🟠 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Burkina Faso | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Cabo Verde | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Congo | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Equatorial Guinea | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Gambia | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | 🔗 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Ghana | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Guinea | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | ⚪ | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Guinea-Bissau | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Mauritania | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | 🔴 | ⚪ | 🔴 | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Sao Tome and Principe | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Senegal | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Sierra Leone | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | 🟢 | ✓ | ✓ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| Southern and Eastern Africa | Operational | Burundi | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | ⚪ | ⚪ | 🟢 | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Eritrea | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | 🔗 | 🔴 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Ethiopia | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | 🔗 | ⚪ | ⚪ | 🔴 | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Somalia | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | 🔴 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | South Sudan | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | 🔗 | ⚪ | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Sudan | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ✓ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | Preparedness | Djibouti | 🔴 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | 🔗 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Gabon | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Kenya | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | 🔗 | 🔴 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ |
| | | Lesotho | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | 🔴 | ✓ |
| | | Madagascar | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🟢 | 🔴 | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Rwanda | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | 🔴 | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Zambia | 🟢 | 🟢 | ⚪ | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |
| | | Zimbabwe | 🟢 | 🟠 | 🔴 | ⚪ | ✓ | ⚪ | | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ | ⚪ |

| Region | Category | Country |
|---|---|---|
| Caucasus and Central Asia | Operational | Ukraine |
| | Preparedness | Armenia |
| | | Azerbaijan |
| | | Georgia |
| | | Kazakhstan |
| | | Kyrgyzstan |
| | | Tajikistan |
| Asia and the Pacific | Operational | Bangladesh |
| | | Myanmar |
| | Preparedness | Bhutan |
| | | Cambodia |
| | | DPR Korea |
| | | Lao People's Democratic Republic |
| | | Maldives |
| | | Nepal |
| | | Thailand |
| Caribbean | Operational | Haiti |
| | Preparedness | Antigua and Barbuda |
| | | Bahamas |
| | | Barbados |
| | | Belize |
| | | Bermuda |
| | | British Virgin Islands |
| | | Cayman Islands |
| | | Cuba |
| | | Dominica |
| | | Dominican Republic |
| | | Grenada |
| | | Guadeloupe |
| | | Jamaica |
| | | Martinique |
| | | Montserrat |
| | | Puerto Rico |
| | | Saint Kitts and Nevis |
| | | Saint Lucia |
| | | Saint Vincent and the Grenadines |
| | | Trinidad and Tobago |
| | | Turks and Caicos Islands |
| | | United States Virgin Islands |
| Latin America | Operational | Colombia |
| | Preparedness | Argentina |
| | | Bolivia |
| | | Brazil |
| | | Chile |
| | | Ecuador |
| | | El Salvador |
| | | French Guiana |
| | | Guatemala |
| | | Guyana |
| | | Honduras |
| | | Mexico |
| | | Nicaragua |
| | | Panama |
| | | Paraguay |
| | | Peru |
| | | Suriname |
| | | Uruguay |
| | | Venezuela |
| Pacific Islands | Operational | Indonesia |
| | | Philippines |
| | Preparedness | Fiji |
| | | Papua New Guinea |
| | | Solomon Islands |
| | | Timor-Leste |
| | | Tonga |
| | | Vanuatu |

The latest COD dashboard can be found at:
https://public.tableau.com/profile/ocha.field.information.services - !/vizhome/COD-Status_1/DetailedEvaluation

Technical documentation on CODs can be found at :
https://humanitarian.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/imtoolbox/pages/42045911/Common+Operational+Datasets+CODs