

Project Report
STAIT: Strengthening the effectiveness of collective humanitarian response
through the roll-out of the IASC Transformative Agenda
2015



Figure 1: Humanitarian impact of conflict

July, 2016

LOGOS OF CONTRIBUTING DONORS:



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ACRONYMS

AAP:	Accountability to Affected People
DRC:	Danish Refugee Council
ECHO:	European Union Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department
EDG:	Emergency Director Group
ERC:	Emergency Relief Coordinator
HC:	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT:	Humanitarian Country Team
IASC:	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICCG:	Inter-Cluster Coordination Group
ICVA:	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
INGO:	International Non-Governmental Organization
IRC:	International Rescue Committee
MDG:	Millennium Development Goals
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
NRC:	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA:	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OPR:	Operational Peer Review
RRM:	Rapid Response Mechanism
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goals
SCHR:	Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response
TRAC:	Target for Resource Assignment from the Core
UNDP:	United Nations Development Program
UNDSS:	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNHCR:	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP:	World Food Program
WHS:	World Humanitarian Summit

I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

TITLE	STAIT: Strengthening the effectiveness of collective humanitarian response through the roll-out of the IASC Transformative Agenda
LOCATION	Global project
PROJECT ID	00088890
DURATION	2015-2016
UNDP Strategic Plan Outcomes / Outputs Expected Output	<p>OUTCOME 5: Countries are able to reduce the likelihood of conflict and lower the risk of natural disasters, including from climate change.</p> <p>OUTPUT 5.5: Preparedness systems in place to effectively address the consequences of, and response to natural hazards and man-made crises at all levels of government and community.</p> <p>EXPECTED OUTPUT: Humanitarian Country Teams are supported and empowered to effectively lead humanitarian operations and apply the tools of the Transformative Agenda to strengthen the collective response to achieve better outcomes for affected people.</p>
Total PROJECT BUDGET	USD 4,559,979
DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS	ECHO – EUR 500,000 (approx. USD 558,452)
	Sweden – SEK 3,000,000 (USD 353,941)
	USAID – USD 500,000
	Germany – EUR 300,000 USD 337,458
	DFID – GBP 200,000 (USD 300,820)
	Netherlands – USD 375,000
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS COMMITTED	USD 2,425,671
UNFUNDED BUDGET	USD 2,134,308
2015 (ACTUAL EXPENDITURE)	USD 365,157
IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	UNDP direct implementation in close consultations with OCHA

Disclaimer: Financial Data provided in this report is an extract from UNDP's financial system. All figures are provisional and do not replace certified annual financial statement issued by UNDP.

II. CONTEXT

The Transformative Agenda (TA) was launched by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in December 2011 in order to improve the effectiveness and timeliness of international collective humanitarian response through stronger leadership, more effective coordination structures and improved accountability to affected people in regard to delivering assistance and providing protection. The TA recommendations have been translated into a set of ten guidance documents, known as the TA Protocols.

In 2014, the IASC Emergency Directors Group (EDG) established the Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team (STAIT) to support the implementation of the IASC Transformative Agenda at field-level. The STAIT aims to contribute to a “culture shift” in the way humanitarian actors work together to enable a more effective, accountable and timely humanitarian response. The STAIT is an inter-agency team which includes senior UN and NGO colleagues with extensive experience in humanitarian operations.

The STAIT is an inter-agency project that supports Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) and Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) in countries affected by humanitarian crises. The project provides direct support to Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) and Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) to strengthen the collective humanitarian response in countries affected by crises. The projects predominant clients are HCs and HCTs, but the project also includes partners involved in delivering humanitarian assistance and providing protection to people as part of a collective response. A better humanitarian response will alleviate suffering for affected people, maintain stability in conflict affected countries, and contribute to recovery in natural disaster). This will help countries that are affected by humanitarian crises to maintain their progress towards development goals, and/or minimizes the impact of a crisis on progress towards development goals. Inter-agency field missions are substantive elements of this part of the STAIT’s function.

The STAIT also engages partners at the headquarters level to strengthen organizational understanding of the Transformative Agenda. The intention of this element of the project is to encourage headquarters and regional office representatives to engage with their staff in the field to communicate the purpose and processes of the TA, and to help field operations to be structured around common policies. Communications products are essential to this part of the STAIT’s function and reflect a significant focus on communications in the STAIT project.

The STAIT project was initially administered by OCHA. The project administration switched to a UNDP platform mid-way through 2015 to facilitate the project’s operation and management. The STAIT project is accountable to the IASC Emergency Directors’ Group (EDG) and takes its direction from this group as an inter-agency project. Its activities and strategic approach are guided by this group. A Project Board composed of the chairperson of the EDG and a UNDP representative oversees project implementation.

III. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The 2015 STAIT project addressed remaining gaps in the roll-out of the Transformative Agenda and extended STAIT support to TA implementation through: 1) field support missions; 2) remote support to HCTs; 3) webinars; 4) communications material; and 5) policy shaping and sharing of lessons learned at country and global level.

The STAIT implemented its activities with a small staffing presence that consisted of a Director (D2), four project support staff (3 x P4, 1 x P2 (five months) and 1 x G6), and occasional consultants for specific purposes such as communications and the development of the website. . The Director led all field missions (OPRs and STAIT missions) that provided the peer-to-peer support to HCs/HCTs and was supported by the P4 Humanitarian Affairs Officer support staff.

The STAIT organized OPR missions based on the ERC/IASC Principals designation of *an* L3 crisis. The STAIT missions were identified by the EDG and carried out with a balanced team of UN agency and INGO

representation to reflect the composition of the HCT and the various actors involved in humanitarian response on the ground.

(1) Partnerships

Partnerships form a very strong element of the STAIT's activities and approach. The STAIT works in close collaboration with all IASC member organizations at headquarters and in the field.

Six donors have provided financial support to the project in 2015 and it is expected that the donor base will expand in 2016. The STAIT Team Leader was seconded to the project through an inter-agency loan agreement with UNHCR. In addition, the project has utilized staff contracting from OCHA, UNDP and the Danish Refugee Council's (DRC's) Standby Roster in 2015. It is expected the Norwegian Refugee Council will also provide support in 2016 for staffing thus reinforcing the diversity of the workforce and the representation in the team.

All STAIT missions are organized and carried out with different UN agencies and NGOs, illustrating the strong partnership nature of the project. Senior staff from UNICEF, OCHA, UNDP, WFP, UNHCR, NRC, IRC, DRC, ICVA, Inter Action, and The Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response, CARE International have all participated in STAIT and/or OPR missions.

The STAIT also reaches out to all IASC organizations prior to OPR and STAIT missions, including the ICRC and MSF. During OPR and STAIT missions, the team consult with all members of the HCT, the INGO Forum (or equivalent), national NGOs, local authorities, and people affected by the crisis. The mission reports and findings are based on the engagement with (usually) more than 200 individuals during each mission.

(2) Quality Assurance

In line with the project document, the STAIT prepared its Annual Review Report for the Project Board review and approval, while UNDP carried out day-to-day objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions.

The STAIT reports to the EDG on its missions and findings on a regular basis (officially twice per year, but informally more than once per month with the Chair of the EDG and other members of the group). The feedback from missions is used by the EDG to inform its approach to priority humanitarian issues globally.

IV. OVERALL PROGRESS REVIEW

In 2015, the STAIT supported Humanitarian Country Teams to effectively strengthen the collective response to humanitarian crises in six countries with direct mission support. In particular, the STAIT has completed Operational Peer Review (OPR) missions to Iraq (May), the Whole of Syria (June / July), and Yemen (December). The HC and HCT in each of these countries have developed action plans related to the OPR report, and have reported on progress to the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and the IASC Principals three months after the OPR's publication.

The STAIT also completed STAIT missions to Niger (March), the Central African Republic (November), and Nepal (December) in 2015. STAIT missions have a similar function to OPR missions, but are carried out in non-L3 countries and the responsibility of HCs and HCTs to report on actions taken following the missions is to the EDG rather than the higher level ERC/IASC Principals.

An evaluation of inter-agency support to senior leadership in humanitarian crises and the implementation of the Transformative Agenda has been carried out by the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPI). The independent review team was contracted by ECHO and was not specific to the STAIT project. The evaluation report, "The Transformative Agenda: a Review of Reviews and their Follow Up" did reference the work of the STAIT and is a useful benchmark of the STAIT's work alongside OCHA and other organizations in supporting the implementation of the TA and strengthening humanitarian response in the field. The evaluation report will be presented at the EDG meeting of January 2016. However, initial findings indicate the STAIT's work is appreciated and as effective in supporting the implementation of the Transformative Agenda, and supporting stronger leadership, coordination and delivery of a collective humanitarian response. The following provides summary comments from the GPPI report that relate to the implementation of the TA:

- The [TA] process helped develop a strong pool of qualified and experienced leaders that can be deployed as HCs or Deputy HCs to provide the direction and leadership to an operation when it is most needed.
- It enabled major emergencies to be better funded following activation of Level 3 responses
- It reinforced global coordination including with donors, but also field-level coordination with a better understanding of the role of the clusters and inter-cluster coordination
- It enhanced the inclusion of NGOs in all HCTs and as cluster co-leads, and there are some signs that national actors are starting to take their place alongside international actors in humanitarian response.
- It supported field leaders and workers to self-improve the response based on Operational Peer Reviews (OPRs) and other support missions by senior peers
- It adapted its protocols and guidance based on feedback from the field to make it more fit for purpose.

The STAIT will take the full recommendations of the GPPI evaluation in due consideration for its work in 2016 and beyond.

The STAIT has finalized a Communications Strategy and has developed a selection of communications products in multi-media format (webinars, documentation, video, animation and audio) to strengthen the dissemination of Transformative Agenda and the application of best practices to the field and to other interested practitioners. The STAIT has also developed a website to host communications products and other information from missions that will be launched in the course of 2016.

Output 1:

IASC Partners have a better understanding of the spirit, core pillars and tools of the Transformative Agenda and are able to adapt them to their specific context.

In order to improve the understanding of the core pillars and tools of the Transformative Agenda and their application to the specific country and crisis context, the STAIT has elaborated and started to implement a comprehensive multi-media communication strategy.

The STAIT has hosted ten webinars on subjects related to the Transformative Agenda. The webinars are a key tool in spreading knowledge about the Transformative Agenda in different contexts, as well as other topics which are becoming more pertinent in humanitarian operations. The webinars have engaged senior leadership from different countries, including Humanitarian Coordinators in several L3 emergencies, and other operational practitioners from UN agencies and international NGOs.

More than 3,000 humanitarian practitioners have tuned in to live webinars and around 2,800 have accessed the recordings which are posted on humanitarianresponse.info and on YouTube.

The webinars have covered the following topics. More details on dates and access to the recordings can be found at the STAIT website, www.deliveraidbetter.org, and at the IASC's humanitarianresponse.info website:

- Humanitarian Country Teams and Inter Cluster Coordination linkages
- Accountability to Affected People
- Accountability to Affected People [in French]
- Inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism, IARRM
- Donors and the Transformative Agenda
- Prioritization
- Demystifying the Transformative Agenda [in French]
- Cash Assistance
- Humanitarian Principles
- Humanitarian Access

The STAIT has also developed a number of communications products in written, video, audio and animation format. The full-range of products is still being developed and its dissemination has been partial as these have been developed in the final quarter of 2015. The finalization of a dedicated STAIT website will provide the platform for all these products to be accessed and disseminated. The website will be launched in 2016 at www.deliveraidbetter.org

The STAIT has produced summaries of all Transformative Agenda protocols which will be posted on the website. The summaries are awaiting approval from the 'owners' of each protocol. This is a longer process than anticipated due to extended discussions, competing priorities of different agencies, NGOs and personnel, and the slightly defensive nature of some agencies towards their 'ownership' of certain issues.

Feedback from Humanitarian Coordinators and HCT members on the webinars and the communications products has been complimentary. A formal assessment of the impact of how the webinars and communications products have enhanced understanding of the spirit, core pillars and tools of the Transformative Agenda is planned to be conducted in 2016.

The STAIT has also carried out other activities (besides missions, webinars, communications work) to communicate the Transformative Agenda and strengthen the application of a collective humanitarian response. The STAIT carried out a regional workshop on the TA and provided feedback on the Niger mission for UN agency and NGO Regional Directors in Dakar, Senegal. This communicated immediately the protocols and spirit of the TA to senior leadership in the region that can be absorbed by the operational staff of these agencies. The feedback to the Regional Directors from the Niger mission also encouraged the mission findings (recommendations) to be given prominence for implementation from the senior level of different agencies and NGOs. Similar regional workshops were also carried out in Cairo and Nairobi.

The STAIT also engaged with the HCT and HCT in Ethiopia remotely, to help the humanitarian leadership adapt the protocols and other aspects of the TA to the country context. Based on the experience, the STAIT feel that remote support did not generate the intimacy and trust that is essential for the peer-to-peer support to be effective. Remote support is considered to be an unsuccessful experiment that was worth trying, but was not an effective means of engagement with senior leadership. The STAIT feels that remote support in a post-

mission environment is valuable and should be maintained. The STAIT's follow up support after OPRs and STAIT missions to Iraq, Syria, Yemen, CAR and Niger in 2015 has been done remotely, and successfully. The STAIT will continue to engage with their 'clients' remotely, but not at the expense of face-to-face in-country support.

Output 2:

HCTs have assessed their performance against the core objectives of the Transformative Agenda and made changes to improve the effectiveness and accountability of their humanitarian response.

In 2015, the STAIT completed Operational Peer Review (OPR) missions to Iraq, the Whole of Syria, and Yemen, and STAIT missions to the Central African Republic, Nepal and Niger. In each mission, the STAIT team provided recommendations based on impartial assessment, resulting in the elaboration of action plans by each HCTs.

The HCTs, Iraq, Yemen and in the countries involved in the Whole of Syria Response (Syria, Turkey, Jordan) have submitted the 3-month follow-up report and are currently implementing the course correcting activities agreed upon in the HCT action plans. The HCT in Central African Republic, Nepal and Niger are also implementing correcting activities agreed upon in the respective action plans.

HCTs and HCs have indicated the course correctors and recommendations from OPRs and STAIT missions have provided appropriate direction to improve the effectiveness of the response. The appreciation of the STAIT's work is reflected in requests by the HCT to the STAIT for follow up support and guidance on reporting to the IASC Principals (OPR missions) and supporting the implementation of the action plan.

The leadership of the various humanitarian operations that the STAIT has supported have confirmed an appreciation of the OPR and STAIT missions, and have welcomed the OPR's impartial observations and assessment of work of the organisations 'on the ground'. Overall, the IASC members continue to acknowledge the importance of the OPR tool in strengthening the effectiveness of humanitarian response.

Output 3:

Humanitarian policy and practice in relation to the core pillars of the Transformative Agenda are influenced by learning gathered from STAIT operational support.

Distilling lessons and good practices and making them available to the STAIT stakeholders is one of the main functions of this project. In 2015, the STAIT has gathered a number of lessons learned from OPR and STAIT missions, and has identified common issues of concern in different contexts. The STAIT has carried out an analysis of findings from all OPR and STAIT missions and provided this feedback to the IASC Working Group and the EDG. This has included a compilation of common challenges that are faced in almost every humanitarian mission. OPRs and STAIT missions have recurrently found that the centrality of protection needs to be clearer for senior leadership, and implemented more substantially. The same applies to security risk management, access, and a collective approach on accountability to affected people. This feedback loop to the EDG and other IASC fora helps orient discussions on humanitarian policy and practice to be relevant to field operations.

The STAIT presented a summary of its key findings from a number of OPRs and STAIT missions to the IASC Working Group, the EDG, and to the donor community in Geneva. The compilation of common issues faced in different crises clearly showed more attention is needed to strengthen protection; access and security frequently undermines the ability to deliver assistance and provide protection; coordination efforts are too concentrated in capitals and sub-national hubs are not sufficiently staffed and/or empowered; and the

coordination between the strategic and operational sides of the response (the HCT and the ICCG) are too often dis-connected.

This knowledge has allowed the STAIT to go beyond the strict confines of the TA which allow it to be practical and relevant in its work. The STAIT continues to work on the principle of practicality: if delivery is impeded, the STAIT will work with the HC and HCT to overcome the impediment in a practical way.

At the end of 2015, the STAIT had identified four specific issues that were consistently referenced by HCs and HCTs as needing support. These specific area were derived from the compilation of issues that have been repeatedly cited on different missions (see image, below) and include 1) security (including security risk management); 2) humanitarian access; 3) prioritization; 4) collective accountability to affected people; 5) protection (specifically the centrality of protection); 6) HCT/ICCG effectiveness, including agencies taking up their Cluster Lead Agency responsibilities

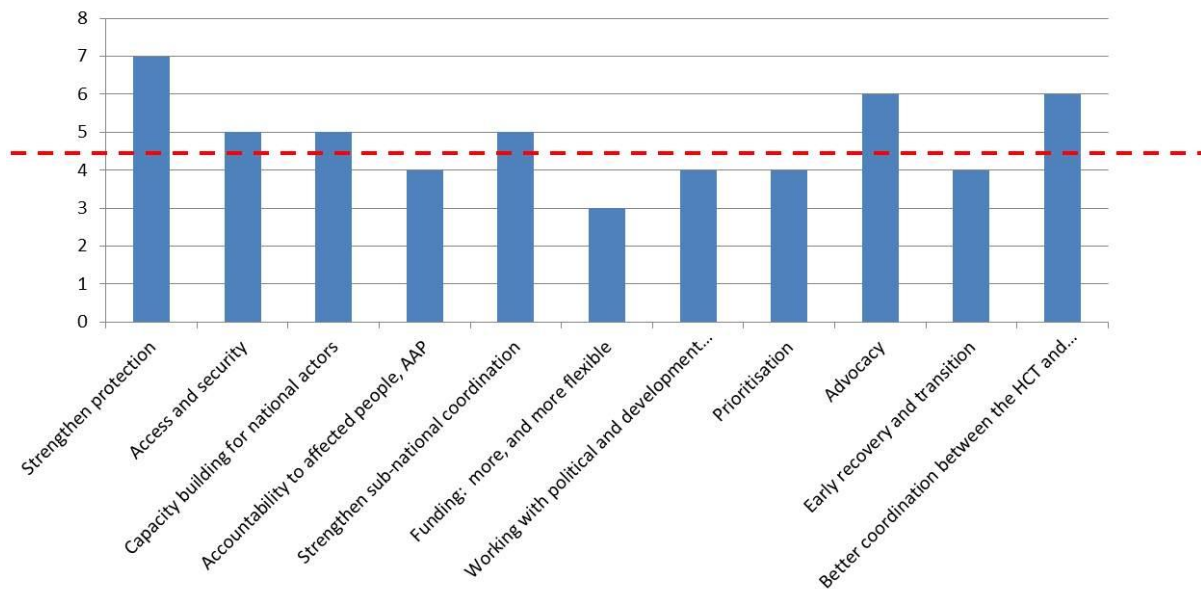


Image: A compilation of common issues from different missions that needed more support, as identified by HCs and HCTs.

The STAIT is consistently requested to provide summary papers and analysis reports to the EDG for consideration by the IASC Principals based on OPR and STAIT mission findings. This allows a very substantial engagement with the senior level of UN organizations and NGOs, enabling a wider influence of the findings from the missions, to global policy as well as practice at the field level.

V. PROGRESS AGAINST TARGETS (as per the project document results matrix)

Output, Indicator and Target	Achievement against target	Actions/next steps required
Output 1: IASC Partners have a better understanding of the spirit, core pillars and tools of the Transformative Agenda and are able to adapt them to their specific context.		
Target 1.1: 12 webinars per year delivered on core TA themes each to 200 or more field and field support humanitarians <u>Baseline: 3</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The STAIT has implemented 10 webinars. ▪ More than 3,000 humanitarian practitioners have tuned in to live webinars and/or accessed the recordings (average of 300 per webinar). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continuation of webinar series.
Target 1.2: Package of TA Protocols and summary notes translated and disseminated to 15 countries with a HC and high risk RC countries TA protocols posted on TA website <u>Baseline: 0 (new product)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Summary notes of TA protocols completed, and awaiting agency / working group approval before dissemination can take place (target achieved). ▪ TA protocols and summary note not disseminated to fifteen countries (target not achieved) ▪ TA protocols posted on IASC website, humanitarianresponse.info, STAIT website (target partially achieved) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Translate TA protocols. ▪ Approval of TA protocols summary notes ▪ Disseminate protocols and summary notes to HCs in all countries affected by a humanitarian crisis, and countries at high risk of humanitarian crisis.
Target 1.3: 8 Presentations on core TA components for field operations available through TA website and posted on IASC agencies websites/training. <u>Baseline: 1</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentations completed and posted on IASC website (target achieved). ▪ 7 TA awareness session conducted to Regional Directors (UN agencies and NGOs) in Dakar, Senegal, and Nairobi, Kenya and in all STAIT mission and OPR mission countries (target 88% achieved) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analysis on common humanitarian issues and presentations on best practices completed and used for learning across HCs and HCTs in countries affected by humanitarian crises.
Target 1.4: Series of (seven) talking-heads videos with key messages from the TA integrated into IASC agency websites/training available from TA website <u>Baseline: 0 (new product)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One talking heads video completed, and several under development in early 2016 (target 15% achieved) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communications consultant recruited and production of six talking heads videos and animation products already underway.
Target 1.5: 70% of field mission target groups, webinar participants and users of communication material indicate that they have a better understanding of the TA and have identified ways in which they can apply the learning to their own context <u>Baseline: 0 (new monitoring)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No formal assessment conducted (unknown % of target achieved) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survey users of communications products to measure an improvement in their understanding / awareness of the TA.

<p>Output 2: HCTs have assessed their performance against the core objectives of the Transformative Agenda and make changes to improve the effectiveness and accountability of their humanitarian response.</p>		
<p>Target 2.1: 11 HCTs carry out self-assessments of their performance against key Transformative Agenda objectives and develop an action plan to address priority areas <u>Baseline: 2</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 HCTs completed self-assessments and developed action plans to address priority areas in the humanitarian response. NOTE: This includes three separate HCT (or equivalent) in the Whole of Syria Response that includes three countries (target 82% achieved). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue OPR and STAIT missions that work with HCTs to develop action plans on priority issues.
<p>Target 2.2: 13 HCTs implement priority actions as per HCT Actions plans from missions/remote support <u>Baseline: 0 (new monitoring)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 HCTs have implemented, or are implementing, priority actions to strengthen humanitarian response following OPR and STAIT missions (target 70% achieved). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue OPR and STAIT missions that work with HCTs to develop action plans on priority issues.
<p>Target 2.3: 8 HCTs report that actions implemented from the HCT-STAIT actions plans contribute to changes in the effectiveness/accountability of their humanitarian response <u>Baseline: 0 (new monitoring)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No formal assessment conducted (unknown % of target achieved) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short survey of HCT members to measure the change in effectiveness of the humanitarian response following an OPR or STAIT mission.
<p>Output 3: Humanitarian policy and practice in relation to the core pillars of the Transformative Agenda are influenced by learning gathered from STAIT operational support.</p>		
<p>Target 3.1: 8 revisions needed of TA Protocols are proposed to the IASC <u>Baseline: 0 (new product)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to difficulties encountered in reaching agreement with different organizations/agencies, it was not possible to revise the TA protocols. Instead, the STAIT provided analyses of humanitarian issues based on the findings of OPR and STAIT missions to the EDG and IASC to reflect the focus of humanitarian policy, based on field reality. (Target indicator not applicable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STAIT will continue to provide analysis to policy groups based on field mission findings, analysis and consolidation of common issues of concern.
<p>Target 3.2: 3 lessons papers produced and disseminated per year <u>Baseline: 0 (new product)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The STAIT produced analysis papers for the IASC Working Group, and analysis summaries on Syria and Yemen to the EDG. The STAIT completed a learning mission to Nepal in 2015 with the report finalized in January 2016 (target 100% achieved). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STAIT will continue to provide analysis to policy groups based on field mission findings, analysis and consolidation of common issues of concern, and will carry out specific learning missions in countries identified by the STAIT Steering Group

<p>Target 3.3: Field Reviews (per year) of TA objectives indicate a positive impact on the effectiveness/accountability of humanitarian response Baseline: 0 (new product)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Field reviews not implemented (<i>Target not achieved</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survey / assessment to be conducted on the effectiveness of the TA and its impact on the effectiveness of humanitarian response.
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(1) Impact on Direct and Indirect Beneficiaries

The direct beneficiaries of the STAIT project and its mission work are the Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) and the Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs). A more effective humanitarian response will greatly benefit the affected populations (indirect beneficiaries) if the HC/HCT can generate a more collective effort to delivering assistance.

The STAIT will survey the direct clients with a perception survey to get a basic idea on the impact of its work on the direct beneficiaries (HCs and HCTs).

(2) Capacity Development

The project aimed to raise awareness of the Transformative Agenda amongst a range of humanitarian practitioners to integrate it into humanitarian response in field operations.

The ECHO funded assessment conducted by the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPI) titled “IASC Transformative Agenda: A Review of Reviews and their Follow-up” provided an indication of how improved awareness of the TA and its application has benefitted the humanitarian response in field operations and of the positive role played by STAIT.

(3) Gender Mainstreaming

To foster the TA protocol on Accountability to Affected Population concept and its application to crisis countries, STAIT missions and OPRs included special reference to the situation of women and girls in all their Terms of Reference and also focused on the situation of women and girls, boys and men while in country. The STAIT makes every effort to ensure gender equality is included in the frameworks that structure the missions and support to HCs and HCTs.

Recommendation related to the TA protocol Accountability to Affected Population, and to gender mainstreaming, are an integral part of the STAIT reports and HCT action plans.

(4) Communication Strategy

The STAIT utilizes the IASC logo on its products and on its website to illustrate its inter-agency nature and its independence from an agency bias. The STAIT website will also make reference to the inter-agency nature of the project and its focus on supporting a collective response.

VI. CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES

The STAIT serves country teams located in highly volatile environments where security dynamics often dictate access, movement, and delivery modalities. Support missions and follow-up depend on the availability of key staff in the countries and by the ever evolving nature of the crisis.

The administrative switch from an OCHA support base to a UNDP administrative support base required an adjustment in the way the project operates as project staff had limited knowledge of UNDP systems, processes, and rules and regulations. Some delay was also experienced in the recruitment of staff into key positions (two Director level positions) due to funding and budgeting constraints as well as unavailability of strong candidates.

VII. LESSONS LEARNED

STAIT is recognized for its impartiality and its light and practical field support. Bringing the UN system and NGOs together, STAIT can capture and share good practices and allow feedback from field operations to influence policy discussions. Its early focus on the humanitarian development nexus has been beneficial to the lead and follow-up of the WHS.

The STAIT mandate has been extended until the end of 2016, but will likely be requested to adapt its approach to take into account the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) and key themes that the STAIT has already identified as critical to strengthening humanitarian action: 1) security (including security risk management); 2) humanitarian access; 3) prioritization; 4) accountability to affected people; 5) protection; 6) HCT/ICCG effectiveness. The future direction and concrete steps are to be confirmed in consultation with the EDG and other stakeholders in the course of 2016.

VIII. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The table below show details of the amount received and spent in 2015 per donor:

Table 1: Financial inputs and expenditure*

DONOR	COMMITTED	RECEIVED (USD)	EXPENDITURE (USD)	BALANCE (USD)	End of Implementation Period
Sweden	SEK 3,000,000	353,941	353,941	0	31/12/2015
DFID	GBP200,000	152,672	7054	145,618	31/03/2016
Germany	EUR 300,000	337,458	0	0**	31/12/2015
USAID	USD 500,000	500,000	4,162	495,838	30/08/2016
ECHO	EUR 500,000	***440,775	0	440,775	30/11/2016
Netherlands	USD 375,000	375,000	0	375,000	31/12/2016
TOTAL		2,159,846	365,157	1,457,231	

*All financial information is preliminary. An annual certified financial statement will be submitted after the closure of the 2015 financial year (June 2016).

** The Cost-sharing agreement with Germany expired in December 2015 and was not utilized. The project reimbursed the full contribution to Germany in early 2016.

*** To date, 80% of the ECHO contribution was received. The remaining 20% will be received upon presentation of the final contribution report.

Several factors kept the 2015 expenditures at a lower level than initially anticipated, in particular the fact that some of the existing positions remained staffed by OCHA or were seconded by DRC. OCHA also covered some of the travel and mission costs during the year. With the recruitment of staff under UNDP contracts as of early 2016, including the senior level director positions, it is expected that expenditures will accelerate considerably in 2016.

The short implementation periods of donor contributions proved challenging to manage. Discussions with donors whose contributions expire in the first half of 2016 are underway to explore the possibility of extending the duration of their contribution as well as to mobilize resources to cover the expected project costs for the rest of 2016.