Overview
The Emergency Response Preparedness guidelines were created to better plan delivery of aid to beneficiaries affected by humanitarian emergencies. These include recommendations for Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) to record inventory amounts at the local and regional levels. However, in order to utilize this data to best serve beneficiaries, it should be aggregated and assessed/analysed. Assessment metrics to measure the quality of inventory stockpile levels and information in the Global Mapping of Emergency Stockpiles tool could support the work of the Emergency Supply Pre-positioning Strategies Working Group. In this way, organizations will see the system-wide inventory status of the items held by the community as a whole and will be able to understand the impact of their own individual actions on the entire system in terms of effect on beneficiaries and global system cost.

The Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP) Framework:
To facilitate emergency preparedness, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Team on Preparedness and Resilience has created the Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP) framework, which aims to “optimize the speed and volume of critical assistance delivered immediately after the onset of a humanitarian emergency.” The ERP gives guidance to Humanitarian Country Teams to guide emergency preparedness for natural disasters and complex emergencies. The ERP framework includes Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPAs), “a set of core preparedness activities that need to be undertaken to achieve positive outcomes in the initial emergency response phase,” and the Advanced Preparedness Actions (APAs), which are undertaken to ensure emergency readiness for specific risks. The MPAs and APAs include directives for Supply Chain-related actions, such as compiling comprehensive stock lists of priority relief items (and their locations) from in-country partners as well as international stockpiles that may be available for a potential emergency response.

The Emergency Supply Pre-positioning Strategies (ESUPS) Working Group
Currently, many humanitarian organizations, donor countries, regional organizations and governments pre-position emergency supplies worldwide; however, these efforts are not coordinated among one another. This lack of
coordination can lead to surpluses or insufficient amounts of emergency supplies pre-positioned for future humanitarian responses. To foster coordination efforts and develop a strategy for humanitarian supply pre-positioning at the international, regional and national levels, it has been suggested to create a new Working Group on Emergency Supply Pre-positioning Strategies (ESUPS). The ESUPS Working Group will convene for the first time on 3 February, 2016 at the Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Week in Geneva, Switzerland and will serve as a platform to discuss the challenges inherent in emergency supply pre-positioning and work together to overcome these challenges for the humanitarian community.

The Global Mapping of Emergency Stockpiles tool
The Global Mapping of Emergency Stockpiles is an online tool which aims to provide information on non-food items (NFIs) available for use in a natural disaster response and could support both the implementation of the ERP and the goals of the new ESUPS Working Group. In June 2015, OCHA initiated an evaluation study of the Global Mapping system’s usefulness for both stockpile holders and information receivers, as well as the benefits, challenges, and potential improvements to the system. As a first step towards a better use of the Global Mapping system, it has been determined that the Global Mapping system could support the implementation of the ERP’s Supply Chain MPAs and APAs if the necessary improvements and buy-in from the humanitarian community occur. Furthermore, information in the system must be assessed and analysed to support pre-positioning strategies.

Assessment of and Planning Emergency Stockpiles
It is not obvious how to best leverage the stockpile data from the Global Mapping tool. Is there too little inventory or too much? Is it in the right place? These questions are difficult to answer because many organizations hold lots of items in dozens of warehouses around the world. Also, disasters are random events. Thus—even though these organizations often serve the same beneficiaries when a disaster strikes—there exist no tools to help guide their stockpiling decisions from a global cross-organizational perspective. That is, decision makers lack evidence regarding sector capacity to assess the marginal contributions (positive or negative) of their actions.

In order to aid decision-makers in providing the most value to beneficiaries, metrics are proposed for assessing the quality of stockpile inventory positions and for planning to improve them. These metrics can be used to assess the quality of the humanitarian system with numerical values that relate to different objectives (e.g., cost, time, need met, etc.). Organizations can thus understand how their isolated inventory decisions affect the response capacity for the system as a whole. Such evidence enables decisions that effectively weigh internal objectives (e.g., procurement and warehousing costs, organizational mission, etc.) with contribution to system capacity.

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\textsuperscript{2} Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP), 23.

\textsuperscript{3} Acimovic, Jason and Goentzel, Jarrod. Models and Metrics to Assess Humanitarian Response Capacity (January 7, 2016). Available at SSRN: \url{http://ssrn.com/abstract=2584560} or \url{http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2584560}.