

TERMS OF REFERENCE STRATEGIC ADVISORY GROUP

INTRODUCTION

In 2006, the Somalia Inter Cluster Standing Committee took part in the global pilot rollout of the cluster system. The clusters including the Shelter/NFI Cluster (SC) were established to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian action in Somalia.

The SC is a forum where all actors can discuss and agree on issues related to shelter and NFIs supported by a coordinator and secretariat which aides the cluster members in attaining effective shelter/NFI action in Somalia. In order for the cluster to be effective in the provision of shelter and NFIs to the Somali population in need, a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), which comprises the key 10 shelter actors, guides the larger SC membership with policy decisions, strategic direction and coordination mechanisms. As Somalia stabilises, the SC is responding by reducing its life-saving activities and progressing towards sustainable and durable (shelter) solutions.

The coordination function seeks to engage more than twenty to thirty Shelter Cluster partners in Somalia and over 200 people, representing six or seven stakeholder groups, in decision-making through consensus management. The process confers legitimacy only through maximising participation and inclusivity.

Purpose of the Strategic Advisory Group

The Strategic Advisory Group of the Shelter Cluster provides policy and strategic direction to the work of the Shelter/NFI Cluster. The SAG is comprised of key shelter organizations (see composition) and will guide the Shelter Cluster and its membership in a consultative manner.

Guiding principles

The work of the SC Members is guided by the principles of neutrality, impartiality, independence and the humanitarian principle of ‘do no harm’.

The meetings are called by the Cluster Coordinator according to need. Meetings should be held according to ‘Chatham House Rules’ i.e. comments are incorporated but are not attributable to any particular organization.

All documents will be circulated among the SAG members who are expected to consult their respective constituents. Any document generated and endorsed by the SAG will be posted on the Shelter/NFI Cluster website and circulate to the full membership.

Tasks of the Strategic Advisory Group

As a Strategic Advisory Group, the following are the areas of responsibility:

1. Strategic Role:
 - a. Development of the Humanitarian Response Plan, including updating the Strategic Operational Framework. This also includes the development of contingency plans and other response plans.
 - b. Development on position papers and statements on shelter related issues
 - c. Development and guidance on resource mobilization and fund raising strategies.
2. Technical Support role:
 - a. Guidance and support to the functioning of the Technical Working group.
 - b. Providing inputs to other relevant structures through the Shelter Cluster (ICCG, HCT...)
 - c. Development of Shelter Cluster specific guidance notes for Common Humanitarian Funds (CHF).
3. Advocacy and Advisory role
 - a. Development and implementation of a shelter advocacy strategy
 - b. Advising and bring shelter priorities to the attention of the Humanitarian Coordinator and HCT as well as other stakeholders
 - c. Advocacy for fund raising at various forums and levels, specifically CHF.
4. Coordination role: improvement and strengthening of the overall structure, capacity and effectiveness of the Shelter cluster at national and regional level.

Composition and membership of the Strategic Advisory Group

The key to good Cluster coordination management practice in emergencies, therefore, is to limit representation. The SAG is limited to 10 organizations and is made up of one representative for each organization. The small representative group is facilitated by the Cluster Coordinator. Government counterparts are welcome to participate. The SAG is constituted by the following persons/organizations:

- Cluster Lead Coordinator (UNHCR)
- 2 UN agencies (UNHABITAT and UNHCR)
- 2 larger INGOs and 1 smaller INGO
- 2 National NGOs
- International Office of Migration (Global Shelter Cluster co-lead)
- REACH, surge capacity of the cluster in assessments and analysis

Observers of the SAG shall include Protection Cluster Coordinator, a donor representative (ECHO) and UNOCHA. Field Cluster Coordinators are not included for practicality reasons, except when appointed as alternate.

All organizations will need to fulfil the following requirements. Membership will be selected on an annual basis through a call for interest for NGOs meeting the criteria below). The CRC will provide support in final decisions in case of multiple interested candidates.

- Organizations either taking a lead role in coordination at field level, or having significant thematic expertise, or having significant operational shelter experience in Somalia.
- Organizations will have the ability to be represented both in Mogadishu/Nairobi and are consistent in their engagement within the group (e.g. attending meetings)
- Organizations will have the capacity to contribute to the main responsibilities outlined above and will commit to constructive cooperation.
- Organizations are represented by senior members of their respective organization. Each member will have one focal point and one alternate.
- Organization are ready to share information and expertise within the group and share information from the group in their agency

METHODS OF WORK

- The SAG will ordinarily meet once a quarter and will be convened by the Coordinator and/or the Co-Coordinator. Ad-hoc meetings may be called by the Coordinator and/or the Co-Coordinator or at the request of a SAG member as appropriate;
- The meetings of the SAG will be held alternatively in Mogadishu/Nairobi and prepared and chaired by the Coordinator and/or the Co-Coordinator. Outside of meetings, necessary decision-making and endorsement will be undertaken electronically among SAG members;
- An agenda will be circulated in advance of meetings. Any SAG member can request agenda items in advance;
- Field cluster coordinators may raise action points with the SAG members, which will be addressed by the SAG within 5 days;
- Cluster members may raise shelter issues to the attention of the SAG and may for that reason attend specific SAG meetings. This requires informing the Coordinator stipulating the issue. Should agreement be reached that the SAG should address the issue raised, and upon consultation with the member, the SAG will determine the appropriate course of action. As appropriate the requesting member will be tasked to take responsibility to address the issue and report back to the SAG.
- Minutes will be taken and shared within five days after the meetings with all SAG members, field cluster coordinators and the wider Shelter/NFI Cluster membership; but not the affiliates. Comments and suggestions on the points under discussion will be channelled through the Shelter/NFI Cluster Secretariat to the SAG for further deliberation as appropriate.
- The Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis or earlier at the request of the SAG or cluster member.