

GSC Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) Meeting Notes – 13/07/2023

Date: 13 July 2023

Participants: Australian Red Cross (Veronica Bell), CARE International (Step Haiselden), CRS (Seki Hirano), Habitat for Humanity International (Irantzu Serra-Lasa; Mario Flores), NRC (Alison Ely), InterAction (Mohamed Hilmi), IOM (Carolina Cordero-Scales), UNHCR (Francesca Coloni), GSC (Brett Moore, Pablo Medina, Stephanie Loose)

Excused or Absent: Danish Refugee Council (Chiara Jasna Vaccaro), ACTED/Impact Initiatives (Augusto Come), IFRC (Ela Serdaroglu);

Agenda:

Time	#	Agenda item
13:00 – 13:15	1	Welcome, introduction of the agenda
13:15 – 13:40	2	SAG elections
13:40 – 13:50	3	Annual Meeting: Evaluation and social media report
13:50 – 13:55	4	Environmental Statement
13:55 – 14:00	5	BHA proposal update, Shelter Projects update, AoBs

Summary of action points:

Action Point	Who	Deadline
GSC to consult with other global Clusters on their experiences with “local” actors and/or donors in global SAG members	GSC	Before next SAG meeting (?)
Plan a meeting on deliberation with mini-SAG (and interested others) on GSC Annual Meeting preparation process	GSC	No deadline agreed upon

1. Welcome and approval of the agenda

The Chair introduced the meeting agenda and welcomed participants.

2. SAG elections

As the last GSC SAG election took place in 2019, the GSC team was approached by several SAG members as well as other partners on when the next election would take place. Also, Save the Children, a former SAG member, reached out to the GSC coordinators to understand the process and timelines for SAG elections, with an intention to apply to be a SAG member. SAG members agreed that before an election, the ToR of the SAG would need to be reviewed; that the strategic functioning of the SAG needs to be clarified and an agreement on the composition of the GSC SAG was to be found. SAG members underlined that the SAG should provide strategic directions, while also contribute to substantive activities in WGs or CoPs. In the last SAG retreat (Dec 2022), most SAG members had agreed to include “local actors” in the GSC SAG. To explore this intention further, it was suggested that it would be wise to first learn from other global clusters’ experiences (e.g., WASH). The suggestion was that the GSC team should reach out to other clusters for consultations on their experiences.

The current ToR indicates that in addition to the co-lead agencies there are ten SAG members, but this could be revised as long as it would still be able to have a focused discussion.

3. GSC Annual Meeting 2023: Overview of the evaluation results and social media report

Brett introduced the main findings of the evaluation of the GSC Annual Meeting 2023 which showcased a high level of satisfaction of participants overall, with the session on “Durable Solutions and Recovery” rated as most relevant. Comments provided by the 30 participants in the evaluation survey suggested the need for early confirmation of dates for the event and agenda preparation, and the importance of interpretation/translation, and also more linkage to field cluster activities as part of the agenda over the two days.

SAG members, including CRS and IOM, shared their views on the preparation phase of the Annual GSC meeting, highlighting that while SAG members were asked to contribute to organising specific sessions, they felt their inputs were not valued or included adequately. The GSC team suggested a specific debrief conversation for those wanting further discussion (mini-SAG and anyone else interested are welcome) and will propose a meeting time in August.

Interaction underlined that while sessions and group work at the Annual Meeting were interesting, they missed “conclusions” and deeper discussions on the currently changing “environment” for the humanitarian system. The GSC team noted that proceedings of the Annual Meeting are being prepared and will be published shortly, and that this summary ‘storyboard’ style document will provide details and conclusions that will help support follow-up on key issues.

The GSC Focal Point for communication, Sarah Pilchick, introduced social media activities during the Annual GSC meeting and shared the good performance of tweets and Linked-In posts, highlighting that “tweets” on Robert Piper’s contributions got most attention. She encouraged all SAG members to share country-stories and content that could be shared in addition to global level information via the GSC social media channels.

4. *Statement on Reducing Environmental Impact*

In the last round of comments (red lines) on the “environmental statement”, the final point for clarification was the footnote on the burden of reducing carbon emissions, which should not be put on the 50% most economically disadvantaged who are responsible for just 7% of global emissions. The footnote continues that, “enabling and advancing adaptation and mitigation can be a co-benefit of good environmental practice for humanitarian shelter and settlement actions”. After a short discussion, most SAG members agreed to keep the footnote as part of the statement which will now be published on the GSC website.

5. *Update on GSC concept note for BHA funding; Shelter projects release and other updates; AoBs*

Pablo shared that in the last BHA feedback on the revised proposal, BHA requested to reduce the timeframe to two years and the budget to approx. \$3M USD, BHA also requested to reduce the number of implementing partners to no more than five (not including the standby partners for HR related agreements). A final decision by BHA on the funding is expected beginning of September 2023, with an expected start date of the grant being 1 October 2023.

The 9th edition of the Shelter Projects publication will be released virtually on Friday, 14th July with a more official launch event to be planned and organised in September 2023.

Field updates were not shared due to lack of time but the country pages of the GSC website should be consulted for up-to-date response information.

**The next SAG meeting will be held on 31 August 2023
at 13:00 Geneva time, 12:00 London time, 07:00 Washington, 22:00 Melbourne**