

GSC Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) Meeting Notes – 25/04/2024

Date: 25 April 2024;

Participants: ACTED/Impact Initiatives (Giulia Montisci), CARE International (Bill Flinn, Step Haiselden), CRS (Jamie Richardson), Danish Refugee Council (Chiara Jasna Vaccaro), Habitat for Humanity International (Mario Flores), IFRC (Ela Serdaroglu), InterAction (Mohamed Hilmi, Juli King), IOM (Takuya Ono), UNHCR (Francesca Coloni), GSC (Seki Hirano, Pablo Medina, Stephanie Loose),

Excused or Absent: Australian Red Cross (Veronica Bell), NRC (Amelia Rule),

Agenda:

Time	#	Agenda item
13:00 – 13:15	1	Welcome, introduction of the agenda
13:15 – 13:30	2	Update on the GSC Strategic Framework
13:30 – 13:35	3	Briefing on Donor Consultation Group meetings
13:35 – 13:45	4	SAG ToR and SAG elections
13:45 – 13:50	5	Update on ongoing operations
13:50 – 13:55	6	Updates on Shelter Week planning
13:55 – 14:00	7	AoB

Summary of action points:

Action Point	Who	Deadline
Propose additional donors for DCG	SAG members	open
Provide comments on SAG ToR	SAG members	03.05.2024 COB
Share activities to be included in GSC GU for HNPW	SAG members	25.04.2024 COB

1. Welcome, roll call and approval of the agenda

Pablo welcomed the SAG members and remarked that notes from last meeting (March) will be shared after today's meeting for endorsement. The agenda for today was shared in the meeting chat and was approved.

2. Update on the GSC Strategic Framework 2024-2028

Seki thanked SAG members for their feedback; 40 people had replied to the validation survey on the GSC strategic framework, providing 60-70 comments, all of which were recorded. Actions taken to respond to comments are also recorded in a table, which will be made public (anonymous style). Seki shared some examples of comments received including at objective level, but also on how partners would like to see the GSC positioned, noting that preparedness and contingency were mentioned frequently. Seki asked SAG members if "evidence" should be a "modality" or rather to be seen as an "enabler". Also, the term "Knowledge Management" was seen by SAG members to reduce the research component as data management, gathering information but also dissemination of this data would need to be covered under that term. SAG members agreed that those could be seen as a modality as well as an enabler or even a driver of change. It was agreed finally to add Evidence and Innovation as an enabler. Final wording will be proposed in due course.

The GSC will provide a template with a draft structure for the different chapters and asked SAG members to volunteer and take leadership in the drafting process on the individual sections (based on the leadership they had opted for sessions at the Annual Meeting). The text proposals should be prepared in the coming two weeks, until 10 May 2024. SAG partners agreed with this proposal. An editor will be tasked to ensure writing styles and structures will be consistent in the final version.

The discussion also included the point if the GSC Strategic framework is for the Global Shelter Cluster or for the Sector as a whole. It was clarified that the GSC Strategic framework is for the GSC but with the understanding that partners' engagement is crucial for achieving the objectives and that the strategy should be owned by the GSC partners. Seki expressed his hopes that the strategy as "umbrella document" will be relevant for the sector

and help shape programming, while not being prescriptive. He underlined that the GSC's mandate is on coordination. The Strategic Framework is supposed to be launched during the GSC Annual Meeting.

3. Briefing on Donor Consultation Group (DCG) meetings

Two meetings took place on 11 and 24 April 2024, with presence of the main donors including ECHO, BHA, PRM, NORCAP, SDC, FCDO and various SAG members. All donors participated in both meetings. The GSC hopes to make the group more inclusive and SAG members support in identifying and sharing additional contacts to broaden the group is appreciated.

In the first meeting, the GSC presented priorities for the GSC, and provided information on the process for the GSC strategy. Donors flagged the importance of topics such as climate/environment, localisation, settlements/area-based approaches or even technical issues, while donors also wanted to have insights on country operations. The second meeting, based on donor requests, focused on the Gaza response, with NRC sharing its perspective on some critical issues and the work of the Shelter Cluster in regard to these issues.

The atmosphere of both meetings was constructive and transparent. Donors underlined their openness to transparently share their points, but also mentioned their limitations. SAG members stated that they were surprised about the level of detail of the discussions with donors.

The next meeting with the GSC will take place during the GSC Annual Meeting (in person); later a frequency of two meetings per quarter seems adequate. Donors asked to have one hour during the GSC Annual Meeting to discuss the DCG ToR. SAG members flagged the GSC neutrality is important, and wording should not be influenced by donors' interests or political agendas. Naming the DCG a "consultation group" might be misleading (an alternative proposal could be "Donor Engagement Group"). The GSC will need to clarify what it would like to get out of the DCG, and work on expectation management for both sides.

4. SAG ToR and SAG Elections

The GSC had recently shared a revised [SAG ToR](#) for comments and suggestions. The deadline for comments was Sunday, 21 April 2024 but SAG members are kindly asked to share more comments until 3 May COB. SAG elections are planned before the GSC Annual Meeting in June. An expression of interest for a SAG membership would need to be publicly launched. Clarity needs to be provided on the right to vote in the election. In prior occasions, every organisation present at the GSC Annual Meeting had one vote but voting could also be done via an online process to also include the more than 1100 GSC partners globally. Criteria (jointly developed by selected SAG members) such as e.g. multi-country engagement of organisations could be useful to select organisations which should be eligible to vote. A proposal was made that this year's election should not take place during the GSC Annual Meeting in order not to "disrupt" the event. GSC Coordinators will also check with other clusters and revert on how other clusters manage the process.

5. Update on ongoing operations

No SAG members proposed to provide or requested an update.

6. Update on planning for Global Annual Shelter meeting (and Shelter Week)

The agenda point was not covered due to lack of time; regular planning meetings on the GSC Annual Event are held on Tuesdays, open for all SAG members.

7. Other updates/AoB:

- If SAG partners would like to see their events/sessions at the [HNPW](#) (29 April - 10 May, Geneva) included in a GSC Global Update, they can share the information with the GSC.
- Next week a training on shelter coordination will take place in Honduras. IFRC/Canadian Red Cross organized this training as part of the localization efforts of the REDLAC Shelter WG.

**The next SAG meeting will be held on 30 May 2024
at 13:00 Geneva time, 12:00 London time, 07:00 Washington, 22:00 Melbourne**