

Global Shelter Cluster – Strategic Advisory Group Meeting Notes - 27 November 2025

Participants

ACTED / IMPACT Initiatives (Ugo Semat), Australian Red Cross (Leeanne Marshall), CARE (Step Haiselden and Sue Webb), Common Pipeline Evaluation consultant (Tim Wolter), CRS (Jamie Richardson, Eva Suárez and Mikel Larraza), DRC (Dipti Hingorani), Habitat for Humanity (Lizzie Babister), IFRC (Ela Serdaroglu), IOM (Carolina Cordero-Scales, Taylor Raeburn-Gibson), NRC (Amelia Rule and Maha El Ayyoubi) y UNHCR (Francesca Coloni) and GSC (Pablo Medina, Seki Hirano)

Summary action points:

Action	Responsible	Deadline
Schedule and hold a dedicated technical session on the Common Pipeline Evaluation to present and discuss the full findings.	GSC ST/ IOM	Once the report is shared
Prepare and circulate materials for the Inter-Agency Research and Evidence Group's detailed presentation to the December SAG meeting.	Inter-Agency Research and Evidence Group (Habitat for Humanity, NRC, CRS and CARE)	December SAG meeting
Confirm and communicate the date and format of the joint SAG meeting focused on leadership transition planning.	Pablo / Seki	Before end of 2025

1. Agenda

- Common Pipeline Evaluation – Preliminary Findings (IOM)
- Inter-Agency Research and Evidence Group (Habitat for Humanity, NRC, CRS and CARE)
- Humanitarian Reset Discussions
- Name, Scope and CLA Transition Planning / Joint SAG Meeting
- AOB, including updates on 20-year celebration and podcasts

2. Common Pipeline Evaluation – Preliminary Findings (IOM)






Carolina introduced the session by recalling earlier discussions in DC in an Interaction roundtable about efficiency of the distributions systems such as common pipelines and the decision to look into it. Although the evaluation is a global exercise, it has been led by IOM. It was acknowledged also the consultants' commitment to the work in a pro bono basis when the USAID crisis impacted this work.

One of the objectives of the evaluation was understanding how the common pipeline can be a more integrated part of the cluster set of tools to activate when necessary.

This session was intended to provide only a preliminary briefing due to time constraints, and a fuller, more technical discussion will be scheduled in an upcoming SAG meeting. The draft report is expected the 15th of December and will be shared by the SAG and organized a validation workshop with the SAG.

High-level Findings: Strengths

The CP exhibits significant benefits in several areas

	Localization & Partner Access	Reliable source of high-quality shelter items and logistical support to 300+ national and local partners. <i>“Without the CP, such organizations would not be able to operate.”</i> Alternatives: Partners buy directly, or “umbrella organizations” issue FLAs
	Timeliness & Lead-time Reduction	In protracted emergencies, lead times are slashed by 90% , from 3-6 months to a couple of days through a steady flow of prepositioned stocks that provides a predictable and reliable supply.
	Standardization & Quality	Items sourced outside of the CP are frequently of lower quality , often at higher cost: plastic sheets tearing quickly, cooking sets not fit for local use, etc.), leading to conflict and community dissatisfaction. CP materials are of consistent quality and suitable to needs.
	Cost-efficiencies and economies of scale	Three main drivers for cost savings: 1) bulk purchases; 2) import tax exemptions; 3) reduced overhead. While evidence is not systematized, procurement prices outside the CP are often 20-100+% more expensive . In S.S. alone, 20% reduction implies USD 1m savings.
	Coordination & Neutrality	Reinforces cluster-led decision-making, needs-based allocation, coordinated demand and supply. Reduces duplication.

High-level Findings: Challenges & Areas for Improvements

Clarifying the governance of the CP mechanism is the most important area of improvement

	Governance & Leadership	Not formally institutionalized ; de-facto IOM-led, but governance and ownership is unclear, with lack of important documents and guidance . Confusion and limited understanding, especially among non-IOM organizations. Ambiguities in roles and ownership. → Opportunity to leverage the CP as an effective mechanism with ownership by cluster.
	Parallel Pipelines & Fragmentation	Parallel pipelines exist. In some cases, CP covers WASH cluster items. In others, it only covers part of a country. CP users and partners regularly source items outside the pipeline . Especially larger/int'l organizations have their own pipelines, undermining coordination efforts.
	Localization Gaps	Most items (80-90%) are sourced internationally . Limited production capacity and long-term thinking to increase this capacity. Good examples (Bamboo Treatment Facility in BD) → Mechanism could be leveraged to invest and capacity local suppliers in multi-year initiatives

Questions and comments from SAG members suggested for the final report:

CRS: Jamie shared three points he considered relevant to be included in the final report:

- Design & consensus building: How pipeline “packages” and system components are designed, including processes to ensure partner agreement on future implementation (e.g., shelter designs and material packages).
- Adaptation & flexibility: The need for pipelines to remain adaptive as contexts evolve, responses shift, and markets change.
- Localization & governance: Who should “own” the pipelines, strengthening local government and partner leadership, and how internationals can support governance, long-term transition, and sustainability.

IFRC: Ela, asked about the unused potential that we can leverage more as part of the humanitarian reset and maybe also use to influence the market or the quality.

UNHCR: Francesca, while acknowledging the good initiative, express the need to be careful in not jeopardizing CBI as default option.

3. Inter-Agency Research and Evidence Group

Habitat for Humanity and NRC provided an update on the Inter-Agency Research and Evidence Group (Habitat for Humanity, NRC, CRS and CARE), which started building on discussions from the Shelter Week 2024 and the HNPW session in March 2025.

- The group is examining how evidence is generated and used across the shelter sector, with a focus on systemic changes.
- They developed a theory of change that outlines how we can intentionally promote research and evidence-based programming within the Shelter and Settlement sector and the wider humanitarian community.
- The scaled change expected is equitable, locally owned and inclusive evidence systems adopted by humanitarian agencies, donors and researchers, drive better outcomes for shelter.
- Several potential pathways for improving evidence generation and uptake have been identified; discussions are ongoing on the most effective way forward.
- The group plans to present its progress and proposals in more detail at the December SAG meeting to ensure wider engagement and explore next steps for sector-wide implementation.

4. Humanitarian Reset, Cluster Naming, Scope and CLA Transition Planning

Seki provided an update on global discussions linked to the humanitarian reset, including the evolving architecture for the reimagined cluster, now officially named the **Shelter, Land and Site Coordination (SLSC) cluster**.

The proposed **scope** and structure showcased in the presentation included:

Core priorities

- Shelter and Essential Household Items (EHIs)
- Sites and Settlements Planning
- Site and Area-based Management and Coordination
- Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) and Accountability to Affected People (AAP)
- Housing, Land and Property (HLP)
- Community Engagement and Accountability
- Climate, Environment and Energy

Cross-cutting thematic

- Transition toward solutions, DRR, HPD nexus
- Centrality of Protection, Gender & Diversity & Inclusion
- Localization
- Area-Based Programming, Settlements Approach

There is a current consideration to focus on the humanitarian side of these core priorities.

Transition in Cluster Leadership Arrangements

Seki and Pablo communicated the leadership decision for the cluster was taken two weeks ago. IOM and IFRC will be the Cluster Lead Agencies from January onwards and the transition is ongoing.

UNHCR will handover the global leadership of the cluster but its commitment in the field to keep to the clusters that leads remains.

IOM is working closely with UNHCR and IFRC to sustain the current level of support as much as possible throughout the transition.

NRC is keen to ensure that the HLP Area of Responsibility finds an appropriate “new home” within the emerging cluster configuration. It was underlined the opportunity to reinvigorate the HLP and due diligence dimensions of the cluster’s work in this broader coordination structure.

5. AOB

20-Year Celebration Week & Podcast Series

Seki provided an update on preparations for the Global Shelter Cluster’s 20-year celebration week, planned for 8–12 December. He noted that podcast recordings are underway, capturing different periods in the life of the cluster and reflections from a range of contributors.

Key points included:

- Recordings will be edited and shared with the network as part of the celebration week.
- The celebration week will include interactive sessions where participants can reflect on lessons learned and how these can inform the new cluster configuration.
- Planning meetings for the celebration week are taking place on Wednesdays, and SAG members are welcome to contribute to the design of the sessions.