

Strategic Advisory Group (SAG)

TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR) (April 2017)

Special Note:

Membership of the SAG does come with both expectations and responsibilities. Therefore all organizations wishing to express interest in becoming a member of the SAG should review the ToR that outlines the roles and responsibilities. Organizations either taking a lead role in coordination at field level, or having significant thematic expertise, or having significant operational shelter experience in Afghanistan

One of the roles of the SAG will be reviewing and updating the current ToR and ideally SAG members would fulfill many of the requirements below:

Organizations will have the ability to be represented both in Kabul and various regional areas and are consistent in their engagement within the shelter cluster

Organizations willing to be represented by senior members of their respective organization. Each member will need to have one focal point and one alternate.

Organizations are ready to share information and expertise within the group and share information from the SAG in their agency

Organizations to contribute to the main responsibilities outlined in the ToR as per their capacity and will commit to constructive cooperation.

Background:

After the first round of consultation with Cluster Partners, there was a common agreement to revitalize and reinforce the SAG forum. The SAG was initially activated in 2015 to ensure Cluster's alignment with the country humanitarian strategy and Strategic Response Plan (SRP) 2015 as well as to accompany its reviewing process. Moreover, the need for an active engagement of Cluster Partners (CPs) in SAG discussions is essential.

The SAG is the common debate environment where all active partners should seek to align their own strategies with identified humanitarian needs, operational priorities and humanitarian standards. This should also be the reference body to support the consolidation of common operational strategy, technical guidelines, workplan, preparedness/response plan, reporting, M&E and fund seeking approach.

As this is an important and complementary mechanism to Cluster Coordination, the SAG will be chaired by the Shelter Cluster Coordinator and provide regular updates during Cluster Meetings. The frequency of meetings will be conducted on an ad-hoc basis, as deemed necessary.

Organization and Composition

Aiming on ensuring the wider representation but taking into account the importance to strengthen multilateral coordination, the ideal approach is to have one representative from each main stakeholder group, who in turn, would have her/his own previous consultations among the referred group.

In line with the objective to empower partners and to strengthen leadership among the cluster community, roles and responsibilities should be defined for SAG members.

The organization of the SAG is foreseen as having a Chairperson, a Deputy Chairperson and Group Members. The SAG roles should be agreed/voted by CPs among those organizations volunteering for the tasks. The process should be consultative ensuring the maximum participation of active CPs.

The recommended composition of the SAG should reflect the legitimacy and representativeness of its members and to facilitate the understanding and common approach of each stakeholder group. Decisions on key issues should be achieved by consensus and aligned with the views of the majority of its members. Members representing each group in the below listed table may rotate to ensure wider participation and responsibility sharing among CPs.

Below is a proposed integration of the SAG:

Number of Members	Organization Type	Membership
UNHCR	Shelter Cluster Coordinator/Deputy	Chair/Deputy Chair
IOM	Cluster Co-Chair	Active Member
MRRD, MUDH, ANDMA	GIRoA Representative	Active Member
HRDA & WSTA	National NGOs	Active Member
UN Habitat	HLP Taskforce	Active Member
NRC, DRC, IRC	International NGOs	Active Member
UNHCR	Cluster Lead Agency	Active Member
National Society	Afghan Red Crescent	Active Member
ECHO (OFDA & DFID proposed for 2018)	Donor Representatives	Active Member
UNICEF	WASH Cluster	Active Member
Inter Cluster Coordination	OCHA	Observer
International Society	ICRC	Observer

Core Functions and Responsibilities:

1. Decide the composition, roles and rotation of SAG members
2. Agree on meeting frequency and venues.
3. Establish TWIG to carry technical tasks. i.e, technical designs, cash assistance, assessment tool, PDM tool, etc
4. Review and agree the Cluster Strategy and Contingency Plan and coordinate revisions if necessary.
5. As would be agreed, have quarterly or bi-annual oversight of the Cluster Work Plan to ensure that is progressing well and there are no major issues, and that Cluster Partners are holding accountable to their operational commitments.
6. Ensure that cross cutting issues are integrated in CP responses and oversight its implementation.
7. Review and agree on Cluster's benchmarks, indicators and performance.
8. Coordinate advocacy and develop position papers relevant to Cluster areas/modalities of intervention and people of concern.
9. Guide the Cluster in ensuring liaison and dialogue with relevant GIRoA stakeholders and facilitate the implementation of CPs' programs
10. Support a common and fair approach to fundraising activities/opportunities and inclusive selection processes of CPs.
11. Provide strategic support to ensure that the existing mechanisms and systems are transparent and provide equitable allocation and monitoring of 'pooled' funds available to Cluster partners.
12. Support the Cluster Performance Review Mechanism, provide recommendations on performance improvement and discuss integration of best practices and lessons learned
13. Propose trainings, workshop and capacity building initiatives to strengthen the efficiency of CPs and GIRoA partners.
14. Any other tasks agreed and self-imposed by SAG members in line with its strategic mandate.