**SAG Meeting Notes**

**Date and time:** Thursday, 29 October, 2015. 13h00-14h00 Geneva time **Participants:** IFRC, UNHCR, IOM, World Vision International, NRC, CARE, InterAction, ACTED, Habitat for Humanity International.

**Excused:** UNHabitat.

1. ***Approval of the previous SAG Meeting notes***

* The SAG Meeting Notes for the SAG meeting/teleconference held on 24 September 2015 had been circulated for comments prior to the meeting. No comments or requests for changes were made by SAG members.

**Decisions and Actions:**

* The SAG Meeting Notes for the SAG meeting/teleconference held on 24 September 2015 were approved with no further changes. They can be found [here](http://www.sheltercluster.org/library/meeting-minutes-14).

1. ***SAG membership***

* During the GSC Meeting, two additional agencies, DRC and CRS, approached the GSC co-lead agencies to express an interest to be a member of the GSC SAG. Another agency, Save the Children communicated that they had sent an Expression of Interest (EoI) following the instructions communicated in the GSC email update, but for some reason their EoI had not been registered.
* A proposal on how to respond to the three agencies had been circulated to SAG members ahead of the meeting for decision. This proposal considered it would not be a good precedent to accept EoIs submitted after the deadline, which was the case for DRC and CRS. In addition, DRC did not meet all criteria to be a SAG Member yet, specifically demonstrating a commitment to the GSC by contributing to GSC activities beyond the SAG, for instance through participation in a WG or the GSC Support Team. The interest from both DRC and CRS was however very welcome and both should be encouraged to take a more active role in the GSC activities in 2016 with a view of submitting an EoI for the next SAG renewal in October 2016.
* Save the Children EoI appeared to have been submitted within the deadline and it met all criteria to be a SAG member so the SAG recommended Save the Children membership in the GSC SAG. Because SAG membership is decided by the GSC plenary, a GSC email update should be sent out with a recommendation for Save the Children to become a SAG member, with a timeframe to raise objections by GSC agencies, after which if no objections are raised, Save the Children would be considered a SAG member.

**Decisions and Actions:**

* DRC and CRS interest to become a SAG member is welcome. However, for reasons expressed above, they should be contacted by the GSC SAG co-chairs to communicate that their EoI cannot be accepted at this point. Both agencies should be encouraged to take a more active role in the GSC activities in 2016 with a view of becoming SAG members in the next GSC Meeting.
* The GSC co-chairs will contact Save the Children to inform them that their EoI is recommended for approval. A GSC email update will be sent out to GSC partners, communicating the interest of Save the Children to become a SAG member and setting a deadline for raising objections, after which if no objections are raised, Save the Children will become a SAG member.

1. ***GSC Meeting and related events: initial evaluation/reflections on the events and possible changes for next year.***

* To inform this discussion, a summary of the completed evaluation forms received for both the coordination workshop and the meeting was circulated in advance to SAG members.
* There was general consensus that there is increased desire to discuss more technical and sectoral issues in the Shelter Coordination Workshop and GSC Meeting. The issues discussed have centred around Shelter Coordination almost exclusively. While this was necessary in the past because there was no consistency and clarity on how agencies do cluster coordination, this is no longer the case, with a lot more consistency and coherence in shelter cluster coordination across countries with independence of which the cluster lead agency is.
* Devoting four full days to shelter coordination may no longer be cost-efficient so additional time should be devoted to discuss sectoral issues. Others felt that having all events combined in one week was a good idea and cost-efficient and that anything less than two days for the coordination workshop and two days for the GSC Meeting would be insufficient. Participation in these events is not a requirement so those who feel it is too long may choose what to attend. There was consensus though that it is now time to include more sectoral and technical issues in addition to coordination issues in these events.
* In changing the focus towards including more sectoral and technical issues, it would be wise to assess which issues the cluster is best placed to address itself, taking into consideration the role of the cluster, and which issues the GSC can outsource or use other existing fora to advance them.
* In spite of increased efforts to reduce duplication amongst the different events, some felt there is still some degree of duplication, although less so than in the past. This is almost inevitable as a result of allowing country level shelter coordination team members, who are the main participants in the Shelter Coordination Workshop, to attend the GSC Meeting, which originally was only for GSC agency representatives. The events are more coordinated now, with the Shelter Centre Shelter Meeting no longer taking place on the same day as the GSC events.
* It was also mentioned that for some of the sessions there was lack of clarity as to how to proceed after the session, lacking a summary at the end and possible action points. In response to this, it was mentioned that there will be a report of the events and that in a meeting with over 100 participants it is very difficult to reach conclusions at the end of every session. This is partly the role of the SAG in its retreat, to analyse the events reports and outcomes and translate them into concrete activities for the GSC in 2016.
* It was also mentioned that a meeting with such high number of people cannot result in a GSC workplan (this is for the SAG to develop based on issues raised at the GSC Meeting) and that perhaps the GSC Meeting should be every two years, or focus one year on technical and sectoral issues and the next on coordination issues.

**Decisions and Actions:**

* The SAG retreat agenda should allow some time to further reflect on these annual GSC events and come up with recommendations for the next year events.

1. ***SAG retreat: identification of key issues to be discussed at the SAG retreat, agreement on dates and venue***

* The doodle poll to determine the most suitable dates for the SAG retreat indicated that December 3-4 are the dates when most SAG members can participate.
* There was some consideration to venues other than Geneva, but it was felt that for cost-efficiency and given most SAG members are based in Geneva, the SAG retreat should be held in Geneva.
* Suggestions for issues to advance at the SAG retreat included how the SAG works, SAG internal and external accountability and decision-making; reflection on the GSC events and recommendations for next year events; review of GSC Meeting outcomes and plan for 2016 (and possibly 2017?); governance and management of Communities of Practice (CoPs) and desk service support on different issues (similar to the model established by the Environment CoP); role of the Working Groups vs CoPs; donor roadshow.

**Decisions and Actions:**

* The GSC SAG retreat will take place on December 3-4 in Geneva.
* The SAG co-chairs will develop a proposed list of topics/draft agenda for comments by November 5.
* GSC SAG members to provide feedback on the draft agenda.
* Comments and input to the specific topics agreed will be provided in writing before the retreat itself, with a clear articulation of the ideas and suggestions being put forward for decision, so that the use of time during the retreat is maximized.

1. ***Country-level issues: running agenda item, comments or concerns on country-level clusters.***

* This is a running agenda item of GSC SAG Meetings. There were no comments or concerns raised regarding country level clusters.

1. ***AOB***

**Joint Monitoring Mission of ECHO to Nepal**

* ECHO has requested a Joint Monitoring Mission (JMM) on the implementation of the Enhanced Response Capacity Grant to the GSC. ECHO requested the JMM to take place in Nepal, as it was one of the most significant clusters in 2015. The draft ToRs for the JMM were shared with SAG members ahead of the meeting for feedback.
* Given the high staff turn-over in the response to the Nepal earthquake, it was suggested that the JMM also contacts some of the key staff that were involved at the beginning of the response.
* SAG members are welcome to participate in the JMM if they so wish.

**Decisions and Actions:**

* SAG members to provide feedback on the ToR for the JMM by November 5.
* SAG members who want to participate in the JMM to communicate to the SAG co-chairs by November 5.
* SAG co-chairs to suggest to ECHO the value of contacting those who were involved at the beginning of the response but may no longer be in Nepal.

**Clarification on last SAG Meeting decision regarding the possible participation of donors in the SAG and concern on SAG decision making process**

* A concern was raised by one of the SAG members regarding the need for further discussion on the proposal for donors to participate in the SAG, which was discussed at the last SAG meeting.
* A concern linked to this was raised with regards to SAG decision making capacity in meetings when there are only a few SAG members participating.
* The SAG co-chairs summarized the discussion held at the last SAG Meeting on this issue, the pros and cons of donor participation in the SAG, and the suggested way forward (reference SAG Meeting Notes of the meeting held on 24 September 2015).
* There were a few suggestions to increase accountability of SAG members and improve working modalities for the SAG to be able to advance its work ensuring wide participation but also timely decision making. These included the possibility of recording participation in SAG Meetings throughout the year in a separate table as well as which members voted for what; appointment of a substitute representative in case a SAG member cannot participate; possibility that a particular agenda item or decision is postponed if a SAG member requests because he/she considers it important enough to require his/her presence; increased use of email for decision making.
* The comment that the SAG was neither strategic nor advisory raised at the SAG dinner and during the GSC meeting needs to be given consideration and further discussion to understand what was meant and how to change this perception. A session on this issue was therefore scheduled for the GSC SAG retreat. There was also a suggestion to perhaps consider observer members of the SAG.”

**Decisions and Actions:**

* As a standing agenda item for the SAG retreat, the SAG will consider changes to its working modalities to advance stronger accountability and more effective decision making.
* For an efficient use of time during the SAG retreat, SAG members will submit their input and suggestions on the SAG working modalities ahead of the retreat, clearly articulating the proposals that are put forward for adoption. This will minimize the time that is spent in discussing internal SAG management issues at the retreat so that more time can be devoted to advancing strategic issues.

**Nepal Shelter Cluster Recovery Advisor**

* Habitat for Humanity International informed that they have deployed a Recovery Advisor to support the IFRC-led Shelter Coordination Team in Nepal during the transition to the Housing, Reconstruction and Recovery Working Group.

**Next SAG meeting will be held on December 3-4 (SAG retreat).**