**Construction Standards Working Group**

**Notes of Meeting #1**

**Date and time:** Tuesday, 23 August, 2016. 13h00-14h00 UK time

**Participants:** Dominic Courage [Save the Children]; Corinne Treherne [IFRC]; Shane Copp [IOM]; Lamis Ahmed [Save the Children UK]; Claudia Melani [UNICEF]

**Apologies:** Brenda Rose Daniel [World Vision International]; Andrew Powell [Save the Children];

***1. Review of progress against the workplan and any revisions required***

Programme is approximately 1 month in delay. The next milestone remains to present a consultation draft for the Shelter Cluster Meeting in Geneva.

A revised programme is attached reflecting changes to achieve this and developed understanding of the activities needed.

DC requested that a slot be arranged for the next Donor Consultation Group meeting arranged by the GSC SAG.

The proposed stakeholder survey is currently on hold until there is more clarity on the areas that would need to be covered.

***3. Discussion of detailed comments received.***

The following major themes from comments received were discussed. Further detail will separately be sought from the reviewers, but the initial position of the group is summarised below. Other issues raised will be addressed on a point by point basis in the next revision.

* **Clarity on who the document aims to representation.** The group agreed that this needs clarifying in the wording. This should reflect that this is a document that is for voluntary self-certification on a project by project basis. Having the GSC badge on it would be highly beneficial but it would not mean that this represents the commitment of the GSC – just that it represents the agreed position on what construction due diligence constitutes. We would definitely aim that this is more than a guide / informational but obviously not defining programming for others.
* **Clarity on audience.** The group agreed that the useful audience for this would be as an external facing commitment – particularly for use with donors, to state that a certain proposal  aims to meet these due diligence standards. This would justify the resources requested compared with other bidders. Further, it would act as a useful internal advocacy tool in a number of participating agencies to help raise standards. In the future it may also serve as a cross organisational commitment but we all agreed that we are some distance from that being viable.
* **Discussion of the level of commitment being made in the document.** The commitment being made is as mentioned above voluntary. In terms of hard commitments, much of the standards are open to interpretation. The only one that we hope wouldn’t be is that of proper resourcing at >5% of the construction value. We agreed that this needs more definition in terms of what it comprises.
* **Balance of construction quality with humanitarian imperative.** The group liked the language of due diligence since this refers to process standards rather outputs and leaves appropriate flexibility for contextual interpretation.
* **Scope of construction being considered.** We agreed that with allowance for appropriate interpretation the aim should be to include all types of simple buildings that NGOs are involved including temporary structures but excluding infrastructure. Exactly how this is defined is still to come and will no doubt undergo some stress testing as the document evolves. We may need to narrow the scope if there is resistance, the project-based voluntary nature of the document may allow scope to be interpreted voluntarily as well. There was an appetite to ensure that owner-driven construction is partially addressed, possibly by only applying stages A-C (proposal development to design). #
* **Application of professional standards.** The group discussed to what extent it was feasible to apply professional standards to the variety of context that the document is trying to address. In general there was agreement that requiring 3rd party verification of design by a professional other than the immediate designer was a desirable standard to be tested with the review group.

***4. Engagement planning with the GSC Donor Consultation Group***

DC requested that a slot be arranged for the next Donor Consultation Group meeting arranged by the GSC SAG.

***6. Next steps***

 ***- Dom to develop an initial draft responding to the initial comments received.***

***- Dom, Shane and other willing parties to finalise a consultation draft to be ready for the GSC in October***

***- Dom to convene the next meeting to discuss specific points relating to the next draft of the document.***