



GENEVA, 19 AND 20 JUNE 2023

Global Shelter Cluster Coordination Workshop

Opening Session

The Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) Coordinators, Brett Moore (UNHCR) and Ela Serdaroglu (IFRC), welcomed participants to Geneva and inaugurated the Coordination Workshop 2023. They reflected on their seven years as GSC coordinators, as their term in this position ends in 2023, and highlighted the developments in the cluster, and role of the cluster and coordinators, over several years. They also shed light on changes and challenges in the humanitarian response system that also impact the GSC. After a brief introduction of the overall GSC support team, which includes colleagues from UNHCR, IFRC, and thematic Global Focal Points, participants briefly introduced themselves, and the agenda for the next two days (Monday and Tuesday) was presented and explained.

This year's social media hashtag for the entire Global Shelter Week (#GSCmeeting23) was shared, and participants were encouraged to share their thoughts and reflections on the different events*.



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1.2 billion USD
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Brett then spoke about the GSC's key achievements in 2022. He highlighted that globally, 19 million people in need were supported through the Shelter Clusters, channeling more than 1.2 billion USD of humanitarian funding through partners. Summarizing the findings of the [“GSC Annual Achievement Report 2022”](#), Brett underlined that although the population in need had significantly increased, the number of people reached did not increase at the same rate because of severe funding gaps.

*The tweet thanking participants of the Coordination Workshop for their insights and contributions, using this hashtag, earned more than 1,100 impressions.

Technical Panel Discussion

The Technical Panel Discussion had a dual objective: it aimed to increase understanding of the specificities of shelter and Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA), but also introduced the most common challenges encountered by country teams. Panelists included Juliet Lang, OCHA Global Lead for Cash Coordination and co-chair of the GCAG (Global Cluster Advisory Group (GCAG), Jennifer Weatherall, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), co-lead of the GSC Cash & Markets Community of Practice (CoP) and four country cluster coordinators, Kostyantyn Dmytrenko (Ukraine SC), Francesca Lubrano (Cameroon SC), Phillip Boterere (South Sudan SC), and Bobbie Francis Baker (Whole of Syria SC), to ensure the perspective of different country colleagues shaped the discussion.

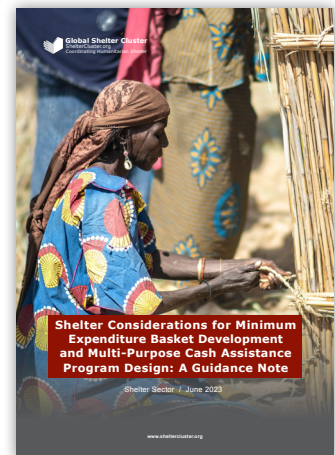
The session introduced the recently published GSC [“Shelter Considerations for Multi-Sectoral Emergency Response \(MEB\) Development and MPCA Program Design: A Guidance Note”](#), which includes key definitions and approaches, and highlights that in some cases, even if the MEB includes shelter needs, it might not be appropriate to include shelter in the MPCA transfer value. The note advises that in such cases, to address these shelter needs, SC partners should provide independent shelter-specific program responses.

Country cluster coordinators from Ukraine, Cameroon, South Sudan and Whole-of-Syria shared the key challenges they faced on the topic, including

- ✓ the complexity of calculating the MEB (Ukraine);
- ✓ the significant problem of tracking the impacts when humanitarian response is delivered via MPCA and the inability to accurately calculate the gap (South Sudan);
- ✓ the need to improve the knowledge of humanitarian actors about the key concepts of MPCA, MEB, and TV (Transfer Value) (Cameroon);
- ✓ the constant risk of double or unclear reporting of cash interventions;
- ✓ and concerns regarding reporting and tracking the progress of the response when cash is the selected modality.

It was highlighted that MPCA can only partially cover the sectoral outcomes or contribute to their achievement, but it cannot guarantee their achievement itself.

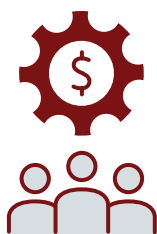
The GSC will continue to work on gathering examples and lessons learned from the clusters to complement the [“Shelter Considerations for MEB Development and MPCA Program Design: A Guidance Note”](#).



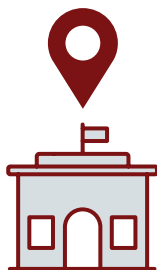


Technical Clinic

The Technical Clinic facilitated peer-to-peer exchanges (roundtables) on six priority topics that had been proposed by the cluster coordinators in the preparation of the event. Experts from different country clusters facilitated the different round tables.



DONOR LIAISON AND FUNDING TRACKING: Active engagement with donors can help SC coordinators to increase funding from year to year and even advocate for multi-year funding. Limitations of the HRP (Humanitarian Response Plan) and FTS (Financial Tracking Service) were discussed, including the challenges of meeting donor expectations. The group underlined the importance of advocacy, evidence-based strategies and using country level systems for gathering more granular data.



LOCALIZATION: Topics discussed included cooperation and engagement with local partners, government authorities, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) among others, including challenges and limitations of UN agencies to engage with local actors, reduced access to funding for NGOs and CSOs, and the use of local materials in construction when local communities do not prefer local construction practices. The need for further capacity building, participation and engagement with local actors and taking anticipatory actions into considerations were highlighted in the group discussion.



INCLUSION OF WOMEN: The discussion including references to existing standards and guidance for programming that strengthens the mainstreaming of gender considerations, AAP (Accountability to Affected Populations), PSEA (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse). The group discussed how to best continue improved mainstreaming and sensitivity in shelter cluster operations and to reinforce the presence of women in decision-making forums.



PREPAREDNESS: The discussion on preparedness focused on funding challenges when organizations are primarily geared towards response rather than preparedness actions. Challenges discussed included the high turnover and limited availability of (technical staff) as well as overstretched capacities and “narrow” mandates. Further engagement with governments through (where applicable) the dual role of RC/HC (Resident Coordinator/ Humanitarian Coordinator), incorporating anticipatory actions, and exploring forecast-based financing were also discussed.



LEADERSHIP & CO-COORDINATION GROUP: The discussion started with clarifying the newly agreed terminologies for cluster coordination, co-ordination, and the roles and responsibilities of each as well as the need for context specific coordination solutions.



DAMAGE ASSESSMENT: The diversity of assessment types was presented, and participants discussed the challenge of a lack of specialists.

RECOMMENDATIONS included the need to establish a harmonized damage classification system and integrate damage assessments considerations into other sectors.

Interpersonal Skills

This interactive exercise aimed to encourage participants to apply active listening approaches, including tips such as maintaining eye contact, avoiding interrupting partners, and showing genuine interest, among others. The session also included guidance on non-verbal communication, such as body language, facial expressions, and gestures.



GSC Short Updates

The various GSC working groups (WG) and Communities of Practice shared updates on their work and products since mid-2022. The [Shelter, Cash & Markets Community of Practice](#) introduced new [tip sheets on MEB and MPCA](#), as well as a guidance note on [market-based programming](#), now available in different languages. The Recovery Community of Practice presented their publication [“Pathways Home”](#) (fast track), shelter response profiles, and a recent event on Impact Evaluation. These resources can be found on the [GSC Recovery CoP webpage](#). The [Disability & Inclusion Working Group](#), recently transformed into the Inclusion CoP, introduced the updated version of the publication and training package [“All Under One Roof.”](#) now available on the [IFRC learning platform](#).

The [Shelter Projects Working Group](#) announced the release of the 9th edition of [“Shelter Projects”](#) (launched online on 14 July 2023 and in-person in September) and highlighted the success of this year’s annual [photo](#) and [video](#) competitions, as well as their dissemination through country-level workshops.

The [Urban Settlements Working Group](#) shared that an updated Urban Settlements Strategy and respective Work Plan are being prepared. They also mentioned holding multiple webinars on topics such as local leadership, localization, and [climate and environmental issues](#). These topics will be incorporated into a new Guidance Note in the coming year. The [Environment Community of Practice](#) provided updates on recently developed fact sheets for different countries and ongoing field support, including in Ukraine, Honduras, and other countries. They also shared a detailed briefing on the outcomes of the ECHO funded project to advance environmental efforts and recent work of the “Green Team” in a dedicated session on day two. The Shelter Vulnerability Classification Working Group introduced the Shelter Severity Classification methodology and toolkit in a dedicated session on day two.

A short update was also provided by ETH Zurich on the upcoming tool for calculating solar solutions in displacement settings, which was developed under the GSC ECHO grant. SC Coordinators had the option to volunteer as pilot countries to provide feedback on the tool before its official publication. The tool will be introduced in the second half of 2023 on the GSC website together with a user’s guide and a short introduction video.

Finally, the updates in the process of the Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring, its dashboard and the preliminary analysis of the overall results for 2023 were both presented.

GSC Advocacy and Communications

This session, facilitated by the GSC Focal Point for Communication and Advocacy, offered an overview of the GSC’s communications and advocacy efforts thus far and provided tips for coordinators on how to better plan and structure their communications and advocacy efforts including the inverted pyramid displaying the “5Ws and 1H” of good communications/advocacy work, but also explaining the difference between communications and advocacy and introducing components of effective advocacy and communications work. Participants then developed 60-second elevator pitches based on situation reports and flash updates circulated and delivered them to the group.



Recap from day one, Monday, 19 June 2023

The GSC coordinators, Brett and Ela, asked participants to share the most important findings from the first day and what they would communicate to their respective teams. Many participants emphasized the significance of the discussions on cash and referred to their experiences in their specific contexts. Some highlighted their increased understanding of advocacy and communication due to the interactive session on this topic.

A brief recap of the logistics for day two, including the agency-specific sessions in the afternoon, was followed by the agenda.

GSC Update: Information Management Session on Shelter Severity Classification (SSC) methodology and tool

The session on the Shelter Severity Classification (SSC) was part of the training series on the recently launched SSC. After launch webinars and two online training sessions in May and June 2023, this session provided an opportunity to reflect on how the SSC can be implemented in different countries through a scenario-based exercise, which was based on frequently asked questions during the training sessions.

The SSC session was divided into three parts: (i) a quick recap and SSC testimony from Honduras on the implementation of an SSC-like approach, demonstrating the feasibility of the SSC and setting the scene for the group work; (ii) group work to discuss scenarios from six countries (see below) and (iii) a plenary brief and Q&A session.

Scenario 1 Protracted crisis with decentralized hubs represented by Cameroon and DRC;

Scenario 2 Protracted recurrent crisis with a full HPC represented by Yemen and Sudan;

Scenario 3 Sudden onset with scarcity of data and non-HPC represented by El Salvador and Honduras.

The groups discussed the main challenges and provided recommendations, focusing on data availability, quality, and representativeness, which varied due to different reasons in each context. Participants highly appreciated the simplicity, adaptability, and contextualizable design of the SSC.

RECOMMENDATIONS included

- ✓ using any available data source and conducting secondary data analysis;
- ✓ organizing more training and translating the guidelines and tools into different languages and
- ✓ expanding the list of guiding indicators,
- ✓ improving existing analysis tools, and ensuring their availability on the platform.

GSC Update: Research and Shelter Projects

RESEARCH

Lizzie Babister, the GSC's focal point for research, introduced the wide network within and supporting Shelter and Settlements-specific research, including five universities, 10 humanitarian organizations and more than 150 participants, encouraging more engagement from the audience. She highlighted that between 2020 and 2022, consultations with cluster coordinators and the SAG were held to establish which priority areas required new research ([GSC Research Baseline Report](#)). Top research priorities identified at that time included longer-term recovery, cash assistance, and the wider impacts of shelter and settlements, leading to two global priority studies on cash programming and identifying barriers between providing relief and recovery and three fellowships.

SHELTER PROJECTS

The 2023 [Shelter Projects Publication](#) was released on 14 July 2023 and will be officially launched in the last quarter of 2023. It includes more than 25 country case studies from 24 countries, introducing Shelter and Settlements responses in conflict and disaster contexts as well as research pieces on the “Constructive Ambiguity: Supporting Recovery from Humanitarian Crises”, “Influences on the Decision to Use Cash Assistance to Support Shelter and Settlements”, and “Addressing adequate housing for Venezuelan refugees in LAC”.



GSC Update: Environment

This session had two objectives: to provide an update on the GSC's greening efforts at global and country levels and to gather feedback from and share experiences with country cluster coordinators on the impact of various tools and resources developed with the support of the global team on their shelter programming and planning.

The team highlighted that the tools and approaches developed at the global level often need to be adjusted and adapted to local contexts. Country cluster coordinators provided examples of how they had contextualized indicators recommended in the HRP (Humanitarian Response Plan) tip sheets in collaboration with cluster partners to better monitor their NFI (Non-Food Item) distribution program and shared their challenges in mainstreaming environmental considerations into their HPC (Humanitarian Program Cycle).

Wrap up and closing

The Coordination Workshop was officially closed before lunch, as participants then attended agency internal sessions in the respective offices in Geneva.

TUESDAY, 20 JUNE 2023