

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Strategic Advisory Group (SAG)

Introduction

The coordination function seeks to engage many Cluster participants, representing various stakeholder groups, in decision-making through consensus management. The process confers legitimacy only through maximising participation and inclusivity. It is difficult to manage large numbers adequately in emergency settings. The key to good Cluster coordination management practice in emergencies, therefore, is to limit representation. This is best achieved through the establishment of a 'Strategic Action Group' typically made up of one individual from the following organizations:

- i. Government
- ii. Cluster Lead Coordinator
- iii. IFRC and National Society
- iv. UN Agency
- v. Donor (ECHO, USAID (and DART), other Bi-laterals)
- vi. 1-2 Large International NGOs (or forums where such exist in-country)
- vii. 1 x Small International NGO
- viii. 2 x National NGOs (or forums where such exist in-country)
- ix. Early Recovery Cluster Focal Point
- x. Other Cluster Coordinators depending on the agenda

To this list could be added as Observers:

- xi. ICRC
- xii. MSF
- xiii. OCHA Cluster Coordinator

This small representative group of no more than fifteen people can be facilitated by the Cluster Coordinator or a representative from a cluster partner agency. Co-chairing with the Government representative is preferred. Those representing larger NGO constituencies can rotate but this is up to the various NGO to decide. The meetings are called by the Cluster Coordinator according to need. As a guide, this is likely to be three or four times in the first week of response, becoming weekly for the next three weeks, and monthly thereafter. Meetings should be held according to 'Chatham House Rules' i.e comments are incorporated but are not attributable to any particular organization.

Terms of Reference

- Agree composition of the Strategic Action Group (SAG);
- Draw up and agree Terms of Reference for Cluster Partners;
- Formulate and agree the Cluster's 'Strategic Framework'; ensure formal ratification by Government; ensure complementarity with government policies and plans at local level; update regularly according to evolving needs; and hold partners to account against this framework
- Formulate and agree the Cluster workplan; and provide strategic oversight of its application by Cluster partners;

- Establish 'Technical Working Groups' (TWIGs) as required and hold such groups accountable to Terms of Reference agreed by the SAG; ensure proper representation within such groups; ensure timely output; ensure transparent reporting; and close such groups;
- Formulate and agree advocacy positions on behalf of the Cluster partners;
- Provide strategic planning oversight for effective and efficient allocation of resources by Cluster partners;
- Provide strategic oversight on integration of cross-Cluster planning and inclusion of cross-cutting issues (in close cooperation with the OCHA Cluster Coordinator);
- Agree benchmarks and indicators;
- Ensure technical standards are agreed and consistently applied;
- Support the Cluster Lead Coordinator in setting up dedicated mechanisms and systems for transparent and equitable allocation and monitoring of 'pooled' funds available to the Cluster;
- Oversight technical, financial, and functional capacities of Cluster partners
- Oversight quality assurance, market price fluctuations, and quantities available from local and/or national markets;
- Ensure coherence of public messaging
- Ensure the Cluster Lead upholds its responsibilities by applying both Cluster and Cluster partner Terms of Reference
- It is the responsibility of the Cluster Lead Coordinator to ensure that outputs from SAG meetings are brought to the attention of, and followed up with relevant authorities, promulgated in plenary coordination meetings, reflected in Situation Reports (which provide the working 'frame-of-reference' for the Cluster membership and beyond), and posted to the relevant web-site.