

Summary of the Governing Board Meeting 09 December 2016

The Solutions Alliance Governing Board held an ad hoc meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, on 09 December 2016. This was intended as a non-decisional meeting to introduce the Governing Board to the new Head of Secretariat. However, a decision needed to be taken on the 2017-2019 strategy and adjunct budgetary discussions in time to receive 2017 contributions. This report summarises the main issues addressed by the Governing Board. The agenda and list of participants are below in the Annex.

The draft report from an internal review of the Solutions Alliance was presented to all Governing Board members prior to the meeting. Given that all members already reviewed the report and submitted comments, **the Chair of the Governing Board requested that the Secretariat use the comments supplied to support the review team in finalising their report. Further discussion on this could occur in 2017, if needed.**

1. Discussion on the Interim Strategy

The Governing Board convened to reflect on the rapid shift in global discourse on approaches to forced displacement due to 2016 events, that the added value of the Solutions Alliance could be redefined in this new context and reflected in its long-term strategy. Meetings including the World Humanitarian Summit, the ECOSOC High-level segment, the September Summits and the adoption of the New York Declaration and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), have presented considerable synergies for the Solutions Alliance. While originally asking for a 2017-2019 strategy, the Governing Board recognised that the Solutions Alliance will need time to calibrate effective approaches to support partner initiatives in this new context. The Governing Board therefore requested an interim strategy for 2017, to be drafted during the first quarter of 2017.

Considering the need to strategically frame the niche and added value of the Solutions Alliance in this new context, the Governing Board reconfirmed the original identity and purpose of the Solutions Alliance. The Governing Board agreed that the interim 2017 strategy should reflect that:

- The *raison d'être* of the Solutions Alliance is to create a coherent approach among members, allowing them to build on each other's activities to create stronger outcomes;
- Approaches should be tailored to context and not be a formalised mechanism;
- Dialogue should be government-led to the extent possible, including local authorities where relevant;
- The growth of the Solutions Alliance should be phased and avoid being overly ambitious at the start;
- The formality of discussing where to create National Groups should be avoided, focussing instead on the implementation of demand-driven interventions;
- The Solutions Alliance should be linked to the CRRF's phased roll-out in relevant contexts;
- Results should be measured on the number of contexts in which the Solutions Alliance has lead to a coherent approach between actors which then leads to a solutions outcome; and
- Best practices would emerge from improving communications to support collaborative action between partners, with the Secretariat particularly helping to improve communications on this between headquarters and the field.

The Governing Board further agreed to discuss additional pending issues during the formulation of the interim 2017 strategy, to ensure due reflection on potential challenges and opportunities.

Given the reconfirmation of the identity and purpose of the Solutions Alliance, the Governing Board reached the following **conclusions and decisions**:

- **The Secretariat will take the discussion outcomes and prepare an outline for the interim 2017 strategy, demonstrating how the Solutions Alliance will support these principles.**
- **This outline will be distributed to the Governing Board by Friday, December 16, with broad responses on the direction of this approach provided by Tuesday, December 20.**
- **The Secretariat will maintain current funding levels until the strategy identifies the need for budget changes. Danida commits to provide a contribution for the first quarter of 2017, subject to broad agreement from the Governing Board on the interim strategy outline.**
- **The Governing Board will consider the long-term strategy of the Solutions Alliance later in 2017, after further reflection on potential challenges and opportunities.**

2. Discussion of the Short-term Budget

The Governing Board reflects that the same phased approach that was applied to the strategy should be applied to the budget, leading to a revision of the projected needs of the Solutions Alliance. The size of the budget will naturally flow out of the ambitions of the strategy. Given this, the Governing Board expressed their intent to maintain current contribution levels for 2017. Agreement was reached that additional resources should be pursued, should the Solutions Alliance need to expand beyond its current capacity for response. These could include in-kind donations, staff secondment and synergies with other initiatives and activities. Additionally, the Governing Board reached the following **conclusions and decisions**:

- **A single donor will contribute to the budget for the first quarter of 2017, to simplify administration. Danida is requested to issue an intermediate grant of USD\$150,000, once all Governing Board members agree to the outline of the interim strategy and fully commit to the continuation and further development of the Solutions Alliance. This will occur before Christmas 2016. Contributions from UNHCR and UNDP will be provided following the formalisation of the long-term strategy.**
- **Additional types of resources will be examined when considering the long-term budget.**

3. Discussion and decision on the Basket Funding Proposal

The Governing Board reviewed their institutional abilities to provide their contributions within the basket funding agreement. Danida clarified that they would be able to contribute within the basket fund, UNHCR stated that some small adjustments would be needed before they can contribute to the basket fund and UNDP shared that they were unable to accept the agreement at this time. UNDP requested that the basket fund and supplemental, external contributions co-exist and shared that they will examine the feasibility of contributing to the basket fund later in 2017. The Governing Board reached the following **conclusions and decisions**:

- **The Governing Board approves the basket funding proposal, with the understanding that some modifications and clarifications remain to be reflected in the final agreement.**
- **All contributions should be included in the basket funding agreement; exceptions may be made in some cases for contributions to exist outside of the fund.**
- **UNDP will continue to provide their contribution on a reimbursement basis, and will examine the feasibility of contributing to the basket fund later in 2017.**

4. Any Other Business

The Governing Board further discussed the need for improved internal and external communications. For the Solutions Alliance to have an effective impact, the exchange of policy and programmatic information must be systematically implemented and accessible to all, from headquarter to field levels. While the Secretariat will initiate bi-monthly internal updates on Solutions Alliance activities, further institutional commitment from partners is needed for the exchange to lead to real results.

The Governing Board additionally reached the following **conclusions and decisions**:

- **A formal Governing Board meeting will be held in April or May 2017, with the possibility of an ad hoc meeting in January or February to provide further input to the strategy, if needed.**
- **The Chair and Vice Chairmanship will remain with UNHCR and the Government of Denmark until the Solutions Alliance has established a long-term strategy and modus operandi, and has ensured that the implementation of these is well underway. This discussion will be revisited during the next formal Governing Board meeting.**
- **A report of Solutions Alliance activities will be distributed every two weeks to the Governing Board. More regular external communications will also be disseminated to the broad network of Solutions Alliance partners.**

Annex

Agenda

15:00 – 18:00 CET

- I. Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Introduction
- II. Discussion on the Interim Strategy
- III. Discussion of the Short-Term Budget
- IV. Discussion and Decision on the Basket Funding Proposal
- V. Any Other Business
 - a) Setting of the 2017 meeting
 - b) Chair & Vice Chair arrangements
 - c) Closing of the meeting

List of Participants

Geneva:

- Kelly Clements, UNHCR
- Ewen Macleod, UNHCR
- Christina Jespersen, UNHCR
- Thomas Thomsen, Government of Denmark
- Carsten Staur, Permanent Mission of Denmark
- Sisse Norman Canguilhem, Permanent Mission of Denmark
- Maria Luisa Silva, UNDP
- Jodi Lee Nelson, International Rescue Committee
- Xavier Devictor, World Bank
- Caroline Sergeant, World Bank
- Berk Baran, Government of Turkey
- Stephan Maurer, Danish Refugee Council
- Niels Harild, Solutions Alliance Secretariat
- Claire de Forcrand, Solutions Alliance Secretariat

Videoconference:

- Izumi Nakamitsu, UNDP
- Bruno Lemarquis, UNDP