

Communications and Advocacy Strategy for the Global Shelter Cluster 2014 - 2017

Date: 13 March 2014

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Overview

Communications and advocacy objectives, actions and outcomes in support of the Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) Strategy 2013-2017*	
Objective 1	Improve access of Shelter Cluster partners to appropriate resources for shelter activities
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop master narrative and global advocacy messages • Establish global thought leadership for humanitarian shelter and settlement issues • Demonstrate impact of shelter sector and Shelter Cluster activities, within and across sectors • Develop advocacy tools that help to influence decision makers • Build communications and advocacy capacity at country level
Outcomes and Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelter Cluster Partners initiate discussions around shelter and settlements online and offline and publicly engage in other relevant discussions. • Global advocacy messages are developed and endorsed by the Strategic Advisory Group • A set of communications and advocacy tools is developed that can be used to quickly illustrate the needs or the impact of different country level Shelter Clusters to stakeholders • A communications and advocacy manual for country level Shelter Clusters is rolled out and used • The Shelter Cluster presents itself with consistent branding and visual identity
Objective 2	Increase coordination between shelter actors at the national and international level
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve coordination between communications and advocacy staff at the global level and mainstream GSC messages in partner's communications and advocacy products • Improve coordination of consistent information and advocacy messages at country level • Improve information flow from the field • Demonstrate that coordination is in the interest of shelter stakeholders who are not Shelter Cluster partners
Outcomes and Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and advocacy experts from partners develop and use common, high level messages • Communications and advocacy experts from partners actively seek out and use information from the Shelter Cluster • Country fact sheets and/or similar reporting products are updated and shared regularly • Shelter Cluster partners use consistent figures and advocacy messages in their products • Information for affected people is coordinated by country level Shelter Cluster partners
Objective 3	Increase transparency and accountability of Shelter Cluster activities and shelter actors
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share performance of the Global and country level Shelter Clusters according to agreed key performance indicators • Share information in an accessible fashion • Share information in a timely fashion • Improve feedback mechanisms
Outcomes and Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSC key documents are translated into all UN languages. • Shelter Cluster documents at country level are produced in local languages. • All functions of the website are accessible to users using Chrome, Internet Explorer, Firefox and Safari (all browser versions released since 2011) as well as through mobile devices. • More stakeholders find the ShelterCluster.org website and access subject matter information on the site (reduced % of bounces on homepage and country landing pages). • More sites link to ShelterCluster.org thus increasing traffic and search engine ranking. • Factual enquiries concerning Shelter Cluster activities are answered within 24 hours.

* Please refer to Chapter 3 to see how each objective is connected to the GSC Strategy.

1. Introduction

The “Communications and Advocacy Strategy for the Global Shelter Cluster” will help the Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) use communications and advocacy more efficiently to support the GSC’s overall strategic goal and aims¹.

More specifically, the strategy is trying to address the following questions:

- What does the GSC want to achieve by communicating?
- Who does the GSC need to communicate with, to achieve its goals?
- How can communications and advocacy activities support these goals?
- Which communications channels should the GSC focus on?

The strategy is written with the duration of the Shelter Cluster’s Strategy in mind, i.e. 2013-2017. However, as communications means are subject to constant and rapid changes, this needs to be considered a living document that should be reviewed no later than June 2015.

Terminology: This document specifically refers to the Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) and country level Shelter Clusters where appropriate. In instances where both the global and the country level are concerned, the term “Shelter Cluster” is used by itself and should be read to encompass all levels.

2. Background

The Shelter Cluster is a global coordination mechanism that seeks to support all stakeholders involved in the provision of humanitarian shelter to better coordinate their efforts. The goal of the Shelter Cluster is to provide people affected by natural disasters and conflict related crises with the means to live in safe, dignified and appropriate shelter until a permanent housing solution has been found.

2.1 Definition: communications and advocacy

Many different definitions for the terms communications and advocacy exist². In the context of this strategy, the terms are used in the following way:

- **Communication:** the act of sharing information with somebody else. Communication can go into a single direction, be bi-directional or multi-directional.
- **Advocacy:** a specific form or targeted communication with the goal to change a decision maker’s opinions, attitudes, actions or lack of actions. Advocacy usually aims to influence public policy or resource allocation within political, economic and social systems and institutions.

2.2 The role of communications and advocacy in the Cluster Approach

The IASC mentions advocacy³ as one of the core functions of country level clusters:

¹ See: Global Shelter Cluster Strategies: <https://www.sheltercluster.org/Global/GSC2012/GSC%20Priorities%202012.docx>

² While the IASC views advocacy as a core function of country level clusters, it does not define the term itself.

- *Identify advocacy concerns to contribute to [Humanitarian Coordinator] and [Humanitarian Country Team] messaging and action*
- *Undertake advocacy activities on behalf of cluster participants and the affected population⁴*

As such, all country level clusters have a responsibility to deliver on this objective and the GSC has the responsibility to support all country level clusters in improving their advocacy.

2.3 The current situation

To meet its responsibilities, the GSC's Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) decided in 2012 to increase the amount of resources made available for communications and advocacy. To lead these efforts, the GSC has obtained the services of a Global Focal Point for Communications and Advocacy.

At country level, communications and advocacy activities depend on the initiative and capacity of the coordinator or team and are not part of a larger strategic framework. While advocacy is part of the country level Shelter Cluster strategy template, there is currently no guidance that could assist cluster coordinators in developing an advocacy strategy. This results in a lack of predictability of communications and advocacy initiatives at country level.

Going forward, advocacy activities are supposed to be monitored and evaluated as part of the IASC Cluster Performance Monitoring Tool.

2.4 Why the GSC needs a Communications and Advocacy Strategy

Shelter is a core human need, similar to food and water. It is also a fundamental human right, enshrined in international law. Lack of shelter over a sustained period of time directly affects the likelihood of a person's survival. It affects security, health and livelihoods as well as many protection issues and the psychological wellbeing of people affected by disasters. In an emergency, few people would argue against shelter assistance. So why does the GSC need a communications and advocacy strategy?

Based on interviews that the Global Focal Point for Communications and Advocacy conducted in 2013, there are a number of external and internal issues that could be improved through more strategic communications and advocacy.

The issues that were mentioned most frequently by interviewees were:

- When we do not advocate for shelter, it remains underfunded compared to other sectors

³ Communications is not mentioned explicitly by the IASC, but as elaborated above, advocacy is a specific form of communication and cannot take place without communication.

⁴ Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level:

http://clusters.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/iasc-coordination-reference%20module-en_0.pdf

- Shelter is often incorrectly perceived as a product rather than a process and many stakeholders are not sufficiently aware that good shelter programming needs experience and expertise and is closely connected to other sectors.
- Lack of awareness of the positive contributions that coordination has on programming. This applies to shelter agencies as well as to governments, donors and local organizations.
- Limited awareness within parts of the management of lead agencies about the commitment to lead/convene the Shelter Cluster and the role of country level Shelter Cluster personnel in the field.
- Limited awareness within lead agencies, how leading on coordination can positively impact their profile.
- Limited communication between shelter actors and the affected population, both in disaster response, disaster preparedness and risk reduction.
- Shelter is highly visible and as result, lack of shelter or (perceived) inadequate shelter is frequently criticised by the media.

Many of these issues can be addressed by better informing stakeholders about various aspects of the work of the country level Shelter Cluster coordination team and partners. The importance of improved communications and advocacy was therefore emphasized by partners during the GSC meetings and subsequently included in the Global Shelter Cluster Strategy for 2013 – 2017.⁵

3. Communications and advocacy objectives to support the Global Shelter Cluster Strategy

The Global Shelter Cluster Strategy

Global communications and advocacy objectives in support of the Strategy

Country level communications and advocacy objectives and strategies are guided by the global goals in support of local solutions.

Figure 1 The global communications objectives support the goal and aims of the GSC as outlined in the 2013-2017 strategy. They also provide guidance and inform country level communications and advocacy activities.

Better communication and advocacy are not goals in themselves, neither is increased name-recognition or successfully delivering key messages to the media. Instead, communications and advocacy have to support the overall vision and goals of the organization.

⁵ Global Shelter Cluster Strategies: <https://www.sheltercluster.org/Global/GSC2012/GSC%20Priorities%202012.docx>

In the case of the GSC this is:

“Goal: to more effectively meet the sheltering needs of populations affected by humanitarian crises, by strengthening the shelter response of humanitarian actors through leadership, coordination and accountability in the humanitarian shelter sector.”⁶

The GSC has further identified three strategic aims in support of this goal, one of which focuses on communications and advocacy:⁷

Strategic Aim 3: Increased recognition of the shelter and settlements sector as an essential component of the humanitarian response, through enhanced advocacy and communication.	
3.1	A raised profile and understanding of the humanitarian shelter sector, resulting in a reduced gap in funding coverage of stated shelter needs.
3.2	A diverse, predictable, and consistent donor base for shelter coordination and response.
3.3	Coherent, coordinated and targeted public communication and advocacy on humanitarian shelter issues, with governments and other humanitarian stakeholders.
3.4	Consistent and accurate understanding and messaging of the shelter sector capacity and resource needs.
3.5	Wider acceptance of a settlements approach in humanitarian response strategies.
3.6	Increased integration of the humanitarian shelter response, through strengthened linkages with other sectors.
3.7	Broader understanding among humanitarian stakeholders of the role and scope of the shelter sector in the coordination of NFIs.
3.8	Enhanced articulation of the linkages between shelter risk reduction, preparedness, relief, recovery, and development, through a resilience approach, resulting in a seamless transition from emergency relief to recovery and reconstruction.
3.9	Increased professionalization of the humanitarian shelter sector, through enhanced partnerships with the private sector, academic establishments and research institutions.

Based on the GSC Strategy 2013-2017, the following three actionable communications objectives can be identified in support of the strategic aims:

Communications and Advocacy Objectives		Supports Strategic Aims Number
Objective 1	Improve access of Shelter Cluster partners to appropriate resources for shelter activities	3.1, 3.2 and 3.4
Objective 2	Increase coordination between shelter actors on the national and international level	3.3, 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7
Objective 3	Increase transparency and accountability of Shelter Cluster activities and shelter actors	3.1, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.8

Communications objectives at the global and country level differ naturally since they address different topics with different stakeholders and have to deal with different challenges. However,

⁶ ibid

⁷ ibid

ultimately the global and country level communications objectives should support each other and each country level communication strategy should link up with the global objectives.

4. Target audiences for GSC communications and advocacy activities

The GSC has a wide variety of stakeholders with whom it potentially wants to communicate. However, considering who in a position to influence the GSC' objectives, some audiences have higher priorities than others. The following table tries to provide a rough prioritization based on the influence, the current knowledge and the desired knowledge of Shelter Cluster activities.

The ratings in the three middle rows are not based on any empirical evidence, but are assumptions based on interviews, anecdotal knowledge and experience in the field.⁸

Audience	Influence on shelter activities	Current knowledge of SC role/activities	Desired knowledge of SC role/activities	Priority for intervention
Host governments	High	Low	High	High
Traditional donors	High	Medium – High	High	Medium
Non-trad donors	High	Low – Medium	High	High
Other cluster leads	Medium – High	High	High	Low
OCHA	Medium	High	High	Low
Shelter Cluster partners	High	Medium – High	High	Low
Lead agency mgmt.	High	Low – Medium	High	High
IFRC/UNHCR staff	Medium	Low – Medium	Medium	Low
Other UN	Medium	Low – Medium	Medium	Low
Shelter actors who are not partners	Low – High	None – Low	High	High
Other orgs (not shelter)	None	None – Low	Low	Low
Affected population	Low – High	None	Low - Medium	Medium
Private sector	Low – Medium	None	Medium	Medium
Journalists	Low – High	None	Medium	High
General public in non-affected countries	None - Low	None	None – Low	Low

Target audiences for the GSC. The priority of intervention depends on the both influence and the required change in desired knowledge. At country level this table will almost certainly look different.

Based on this table, the audiences with the highest priority for the GSC are:

- Host governments (incl. government representatives on the local level)
- Donors, with an emphasis on non-traditional donors
- Lead agency management
- Shelter actors who are not Shelter Cluster partners
- Journalists

Every communications and advocacy activity of the GSC has to be relevant for at least one of the high priority stakeholders.

⁸ This table was developed based on interviews with various stakeholders. It is understood that there are of course host government who are extremely knowledgeable about the role and activities of the Shelter Cluster, while there are also some Cluster Partners who know very little about what the Shelter Cluster does. The table is not trying to be scientifically accurate, but provide orientation and guidance.

A medium or low priority in this list does not mean that nothing will be done for these target audiences. Well written communications and advocacy products will frequently benefit multiple stakeholders, including those who are not of the highest priority.

Additional clarification:

- While assisting the **affected population** is the raison d'être of the Shelter Cluster, direct communicating between the GSC and even country level Shelter Cluster Coordination Teams and the affected communities is not necessarily a high priority. Instead, it is the position of the GSC's Accountability Working Group that communication with affected people should be the responsibility of partners, with support of the Shelter Cluster. Therefore, direct communication with the affected population is only of medium importance to the Shelter Cluster.
- **Journalists** are listed as a high priority audience even though the media are not the ultimate target of the communication, but the means through which influencers can be reached. However, what the media says, shows or writes can have a significant impact on host government policies, donors and humanitarian agencies. Journalists are important not because of who they are, but because of who they can influence and communications activities targeted towards journalists should always also target a second, high priority audience.

At country level, this prioritization will almost certainly look different and in most countries additional stakeholders will need to be added to a local version of this list. However, country level strategies should take the global target audiences into account and address their needs where possible.

5. Achieving the GSC's communications and advocacy objectives

Communications and advocacy is often seen as an activity that is in addition to or separate from the other duties of programme staff when in fact, effective communication and clearly defined advocacy objectives can support and improve programme delivery. Agreed advocacy messages should be part of all documents, reports, presentations or conversations that the Shelter Cluster and partners produce at the global or country level.

None of the objectives or activities described on the following pages can be achieved by the Geneva-based Global Shelter Cluster coordination team alone. All activities require the willingness of Shelter Cluster partners and country level coordination teams to commit more time and resources to communications and advocacy.

Objective 1: Improve access of Shelter Cluster partners to appropriate resources for shelter activities

This communications and advocacy objective has the widest in scope. It recognizes that currently shelter activities are not appropriately resourced and sees the Shelter Cluster as an appropriate mechanism to improve this situation.

Based on the interviews that informed this strategy, many Shelter Cluster stakeholders assume, that more resources would be made available, if decision makers were better informed about how the shelter sector as well as the Shelter Cluster contribute towards improving the overall humanitarian response.

The enabling actions in support of this objective are:

- ***Develop master narrative and global advocacy messages***

By its very nature, the Shelter Cluster has to unite the different mandates of a large number of humanitarian organizations. This multitude of mandates can make it difficult for interested parties to understand what the Shelter Cluster as an entity stands for at global and at country level. The fact that humanitarian coordination by itself is already a difficult subject matter and that some of the target audiences have had no prior exposure to the international humanitarian system, adds additional challenges.

When Shelter Cluster team members or partners approach the target audiences, it is therefore important that they have a common master narrative and common advocacy messages, so that stakeholders hear the same high level messages, no matter with whom they speak and ideally even no matter in which country they speak to Shelter Cluster team members and partners. While some advocacy messages obviously have to vary depending on country, they should recognizably follow a common theme. Currently, this theme has not been defined.

In addition to consistent messaging, this includes having a common look and feel for all outputs from the Shelter Cluster, so that international target audiences such as donors start to recognize the Shelter Cluster brand and associate it automatically with the master narrative.

- ***Establish global thought leadership for humanitarian shelter and settlement issues***

In order to receive appropriate resources, the GSC needs to be seen as competent and trusted institution that has demonstrated knowledge of the relevant issues and can provide realistic solutions for shelter and settlements challenges worldwide.

To achieve thought leadership, the GSC leadership needs to initiate and engage in discussions that are accessible to the target audiences. Where relevant, the GSC leadership should add its voice and lend its expertise to topics that are beyond the comparatively narrow scope of shelter in non-refugee situations. This can include discussions about developments in the shelter sector as a whole, as well as humanitarian coordination in general.

- ***Demonstrate impact of shelter sector and Shelter Cluster activities, within and across sectors***

The best advocacy is evidence based. To demonstrate to the target audiences that a coordinated shelter response contributes positively to the overall response, the GSC should increase efforts to collect reliable and comparable data across different emergencies.

Since many of the target audiences don't think in terms of sectors, the evidence should not only show how coordination can improve delivery of shelter, but how this can positively impact other sectors such as protection, health or WASH.

By demonstrating how some of the needs of multiple sectors can be addressed through coordinated shelter programming, the Shelter Cluster is more likely to be able to influence stakeholders that are in a position to support the allocation of additional resources for the shelter sector and the Cluster.

Example: In Somalia the Shelter Cluster and the Health Cluster argued jointly that shelter should get additional resources, since hypothermia contributed to the deaths of many people and shelters would be able to mitigate that risk. Subsequently, additional funds were made available.

- ***Develop advocacy tools that help to influence decision makers***

Communications and advocacy products need to be targeted to the needs and the level of detail that the target audience can understand and is willing to engage in.

The GSC needs to develop a set of tools that facilitate the quick creation of appropriate communications and advocacy products for the global and country level with as little expert knowledge and software as possible.

Example: In preparation of the visit of a minister from a donor country, the Myanmar Shelter Cluster produced a one page infographic that summarized the situation and emphasized key advocacy points. After receiving the document, a member of the donor's staff wrote: *"This sort of thing is always useful, particularly for ministers who don't have time to read long documents when they're on the go. [This] is a great visual memory-jogger."*

- ***Build communications and advocacy capacity at country level***

Obviously communications and advocacy is most effective if the person in charge of these activities knows the local context and speaks the local language(s). However, this is also something that the global level cannot deliver. In order to achieve maximum impact, the GSC should therefore maximise capacity building for country level Shelter Cluster coordination teams and partners.

Example: With support from the Global Shelter Cluster, the Shelter Cluster in Myanmar produced a brochure in English and Myanmar that explains the role, function and key priorities of the Cluster to stakeholders. Later, the Cluster in Myanmar translated and produced the brochure in another local language without further support from the global level.

Objective 1 - expected outcomes:

- Leading members of the Shelter Cluster initiate discussions around shelter and settlements online and offline and publicly engage in other relevant discussions.
- Global advocacy messages are developed and endorsed by the SAG
- A set of communications and advocacy tools is developed that can be used to quickly

illustrate the needs or the impact of different country level Shelter Clusters to stakeholders

- A communications and advocacy workbook for country level Shelter Clusters is rolled out and used
- The Shelter Cluster presents itself with consistent branding and visual identity

Objective 2: Increase coordination between shelter actors on the national and international level

Coordinated communication and advocacy can improve overall coordination, since it reduces misunderstandings and confusion on all levels. If all target audiences receive the same information from all shelter actors, less time is spent on resolving inconsistencies and more time is available to find optimal solutions for the affected population.

The enabling actions in support of this objective are:

- ***Improve coordination between communications and advocacy staff at the global level and mainstream GSC messages in partner's communications and advocacy products***

The majority of GSC partners are medium or large humanitarian organizations that have dedicated communications and advocacy staff at headquarters. However, so far there has been no concerted effort to involve them strategically and consistently to mainstream Shelter Cluster messages either during emergencies or between emergencies.

The GSC should increasingly invest in building and maintaining relationships with communications staff to increase the outreach potential of its messages and to strengthen its role as global thought leader.

- ***Improve coordination of consistent information and advocacy messages at country level***

Similarly to the previous action, information and advocacy messages need to be better coordinated by those engaged in communications and advocacy at country level. As mentioned in the introduction to this objective, the Cluster's work is going to be more efficient if all stakeholders at country level receive consistent information from all shelter actors. The GSC needs to develop and provide resources to support this process.

Example: In response to Typhoon Haiyan, the Shelter Cluster in the Philippines produced key messages and frequently asked questions weekly. This document was widely used by communicators from Shelter Cluster partners and other UN agencies who used it to communicate with their stakeholders. Since numbers and answers had been harmonized through this simple document, communication across the whole sector was more consistent.

- ***Demonstrate that coordination is in the interest of shelter stakeholders who are not Shelter Cluster partners***

One of the key target audiences are shelter actors who are not (yet) Shelter Cluster partners. This can be due to lack of knowledge, lack of interest or conscious policy decisions. The Shelter Cluster needs to develop communications and advocacy materials that are specifically targeted towards these stakeholders with the goal of them becoming Shelter Cluster partners. This is another action where evidence based advocacy will be crucial.

Objective 2 - expected outcomes:

- Communications and advocacy experts from partners develop and use common, high level messages
- Communications and advocacy experts from partners actively seek out and use information from the Shelter Cluster
- Country fact sheets and/or similar reporting products are updated and shared regularly through means that are accessible to all stakeholders
- Shelter Cluster partners use consistent figures and advocacy messages in their products
- Information for affected people is coordinated by country level Shelter Cluster partners

Objective 3: Increase transparency and accountability of Shelter Cluster activities and shelter actors

Humanitarian organizations are frequently criticised for their performance. Communications objective 3 is based on the assumption that in many cases this criticism is not justified and that better information about why decisions were taken or why certain things have (not) happened can successfully mitigate the criticism of stakeholders. The Shelter Cluster and its partners should also demonstrate how they are using the resources that they have been entrusted with.

Communicating for reporting purposes is what many shelter actors are most familiar with, but there is room for further improvement. Where in the past, many Clusters and organizations have omitted, or at least de-emphasized, problems in their programme delivery, modern means of communication - such as mobile phones and internet connections – have made this unrealistic. The Shelter Cluster and its partners should embrace this as a chance to pro-actively gain the trust of relevant stakeholders and to enhance transparency and accountability by also talking about the challenges.

The enabling actions in support of this objective are:

- ***Share performance of the GSC and country level Clusters according to agreed key performance indicators***

The GSC's Strategy for 2013 – 2017 currently does not include defined key performance indicators (KPIs) against which the work of the GSC could be measured. In order to communicate to the target audiences, that the GSC is using resources efficiently to implement its strategic goals, KPIs should be defined, monitored and the results communicated. This will demonstrate that the GSC is both accountable and transparent and will increase the likelihood that target audiences feel comfortable working with the Shelter Cluster.

- ***Share information in an accessible fashion***

Target audiences need to be able to consume Shelter Cluster information in a way that facilitates their understanding of the information. Depending on the target audience this might mean that information has to be provided in a certain technical format (such as XML, CSV, etc), a certain (locally) spoken language or written in a way that is adequate for their professional background (for example: no jargon). In some cases this will mean that messages will have to be simplified in order to reach the intended audiences.

Example: During the first few months of the 2010 Haiti earthquake response, the Haiti Shelter Cluster published all information in English. As more French speaking capacity was added to the coordination team, updates and documents were published in French, which is one of the two official languages in Haiti. This enabled more local stakeholders to participate in the Haiti Shelter Cluster.

Improved accessibility also needs to extend to the Shelter Cluster's website.

In particular it means that

- accessibility for search engines as well as search engine optimization needs to be improved so that more stakeholders find Shelter Cluster content through search engines
- where possible, documents need to be made available as HTML/XML and not as Word/PDF/XLS/ZIP so that users face less obstacles when trying to access content
- all major web browsers for desktop/notebook computers must be supported
- the website has to become mobile device friendly
- users should be able to easily share content through social media or email

- ***Share information in a timely fashion***

In order to advocate on behalf of the shelter sector, information about the activities of the Shelter Cluster needs to be up to date and shared in a timely fashion. Only then can Shelter Cluster team members at country or global level successfully engage multipliers such as the media or communications staff at partner organizations.

The GSC needs to be able to quickly provide authoritative information about what country level Clusters are doing in response to crises worldwide. This includes information about why the Shelter Cluster is not responding to certain crises. In most rapid onset disasters, the window during which the media will pay attention is no more than 72 hours and taking more than 24 hours to respond to queries bears reputational risks.

- ***Improve feedback mechanisms***

Accountability includes the willingness to listen to feedback and adjust programmes and strategies based on that feedback if necessary. The GSC should support Cluster Partners by developing best practice for multi-directional communication with the affected population, including complaints mechanisms. While, as described above, direct communication with the affected population is not one of the key priorities of the Shelter Cluster - since this should be done by the partners - supporting feedback mechanisms for the affected population demonstrates to target audiences that

accountability is important to the Shelter Cluster.

Objective 3 – expected outcomes:

- GSC key documents are translated into all UN languages.
- Shelter Cluster documents at country level are produced in local languages.
- All functions of the website are accessible to users using Chrome, Internet Explorer, Firefox and Safari (all browser versions released since 2011) as well as through mobile devices.
- More stakeholders find the ShelterCluster.org website and access subject matter information on the site (reduced % of bounces on homepage and country landing pages).
- More sites link to ShelterCluster.org thus increasing traffic and search engine ranking.
- Factual enquiries concerning Shelter Cluster activities are answered within 24 hours.

6. Channels - Paid, Owned, Earned Media

The different channels through which a brand or organization communicates can be broken down as “paid, owned and earned media” (POEM).

For the Shelter Cluster this framework can be applied as follows:

	Definition	Channel/media	Current role	Future role
Paid	Brand pays to leverage a channel	Advertisements in print or digital publications	Not being used	Not part of this strategy. While promoting the Shelter Cluster through paid ads could raise the profile of the Shelter Cluster, spending the money on ads could create reputational risks which outweigh the potential benefits. The GSC cannot apply for free advertisement through GoogleAds et al. since the GSC is not an independent non-profit organization.
Owned	Brand owns and controls the channel	Website	Main tool to share information with target audiences	The website will remain the main tool to store and share information with the target audiences. However, a major overhaul is needed to make it more accessible and encourage sharing of content by site visitors.
		GSC Updates (mailing list)	Effective way to push time-critical information to GSC key stakeholder	GSC updates should be promoted more and be more visible on the website. Giving subscribers the option to choose which type of information they would like to receive should be considered once more.
		Visibility items	Very limited	Raise the profile of the Shelter Cluster by targeting stakeholders with high quality and long lasting visibility items.
		Meetings, conferences, workshops	Important opportunities to influence policy	Face to face meetings will continue to be the most important opportunity for advocacy at the global and country level. Communications and Advocacy tools will help to increase the impact of these occasions.
Earned	Brand reaches out and interacts through third-party channels	Traditional media	Currently not utilized	Traditional media continue to be an important vector to reach decision makers. By providing more media friendly communications materials Shelter Cluster key messages are more likely to be repeated by the media.
		Social media	Monitor and publish information	Connect to influencers by continuously sharing relevant information related to humanitarian shelter and coordination as well as initiating and engaging in discussions about these topics.
		Other websites, blogs	Currently not utilized	Demonstrate thought-leadership in shelter, settlements and coordination issues by actively engaging in discussions online and writing articles and guest-blog posts.

7. Related Documents

- **Global Shelter Cluster Strategy for 2013-2017:**
<https://www.sheltercluster.org/Global/Global%20SAG/2013%20GSC%20Strategy.doc>
- **Shelter Cluster Brand Guidelines:**
<https://www.sheltercluster.org/Global/Communication%20and%20Advocacy/1.%20Shelter%20Cluster%20Brand%20Guidelines.pdf>
- **Communicating Shelter to Affected People**
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1x3JupQWbXObKrej9LABrCZpy1o2OYVSmlRnlz4oQcRc/edit>