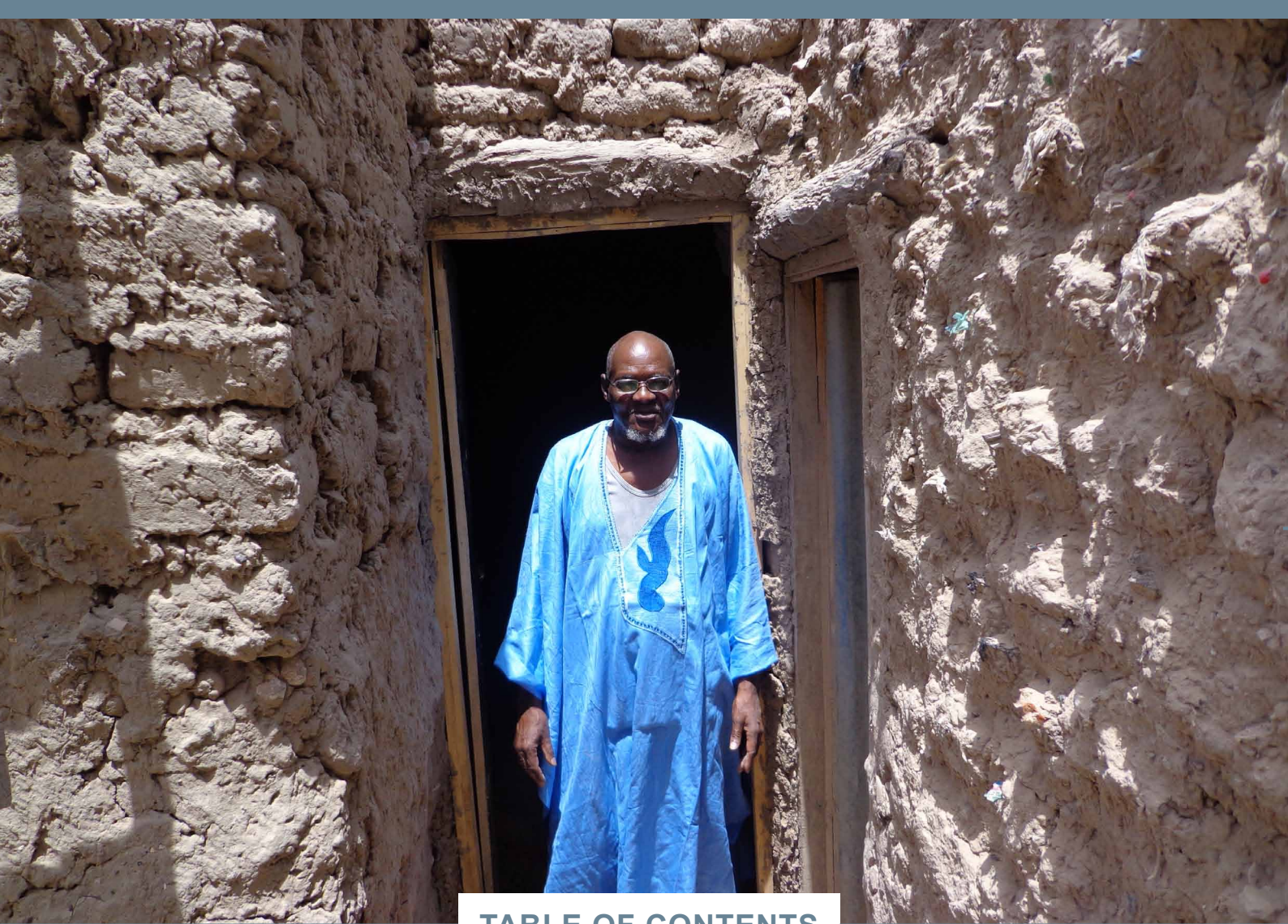


# Global Shelter Cluster

## 2014 Achievements Report





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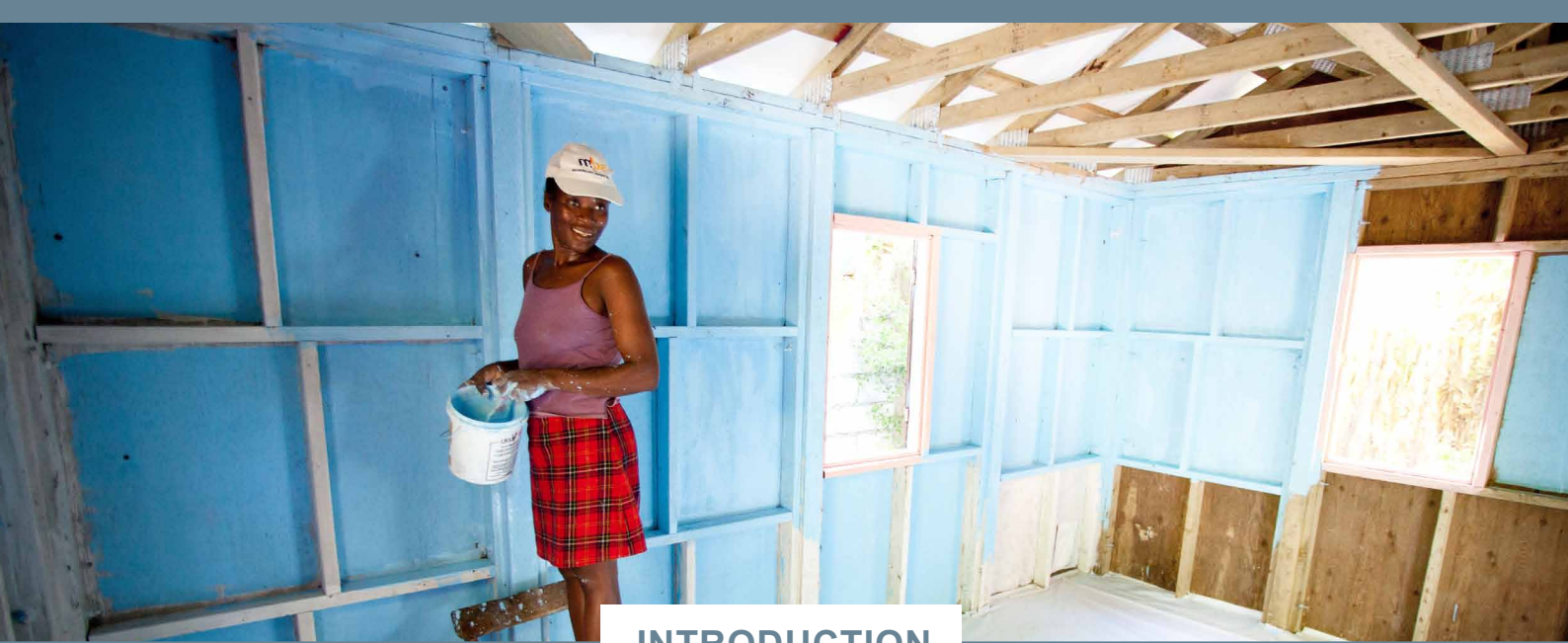
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### **2015 FOR THE SHELTER CLUSTER**

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## INTRODUCTION

Building on the achievements of prior years, during 2014 the Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) continued to provide timely and relevant support to country-level clusters worldwide as they responded to a significant number of emergencies due to conflict and natural disasters. At the same time, the GSC team continued to work towards reaffirming the strategic importance of the shelter sector in humanitarian response through more effective communication and advocacy at the global level.

This report summarizes the achievements of the GSC one year after the launch of the *Global Shelter Strategy 2013-2017*, and is intended mainly for individuals and organizations interested –or engaged– in humanitarian shelter responses worldwide. Additionally, members of the wider humanitarian community might also find it useful, as it provides key information on how functioning coordination and sound shelter programming can reinforce the effectiveness of assistance in areas ranging from protection to community development.

### THE GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER

Co-led by IFRC and UNHCR, the GSC is a coordination mechanism of 35 global partners working together to support people affected by natural disasters and internally displaced people affected by conflict with the means to live in safe, dignified and appropriate shelter. The GSC enables better coordination among all shelter actors, including local and national governments, so that people in need of shelter assistance receive the right kind of support as quickly as possible.

All activities of the GSC are undertaken within the frame of the *Global Shelter Cluster Strategy 2013-2017*, which was developed and agreed upon by shelter partners to strengthen the shelter response of humanitarian actors through leadership, coordination and accountability in the humanitarian shelter sector. The Strategy aims at developing a responsive and flexible support to country-level shelter coordination mechanisms, an effective and well-functioning GSC, and improved advocacy and communications to increase the recognition of the shelter and settlements sector.

<sup>1</sup> Figures estimated from humanitarian dashboards, situation reports, GSC fact sheets and partners' reports.

### 2014 FOR THE GSC

During 2014, the GSC strengthened and improved the tools available to support operations in the field. This was the case, for example, of the GSC surge capacity: Global Focal Points and Regional Focal Points proved to be essential in providing support to country-level clusters in a timely manner whenever their assistance was required. Through both remote and in-country support, it is estimated that the GSC supported approximately 8.2 million beneficiaries in 2014.<sup>1</sup>

The communication and advocacy capacities of the GSC were further strengthened, as well as its capacity to develop guidance and policy to inform shelter programming worldwide through its various Working Groups. All of these efforts were possible thanks to the continued financial support of the DG ECHO<sup>2</sup> and other shelter partners whose valuable contributions have ensured the sustainability of the GSC activities.

<sup>2</sup> Additional information on the DG ECHO contribution to the GSC can be found [here](#).

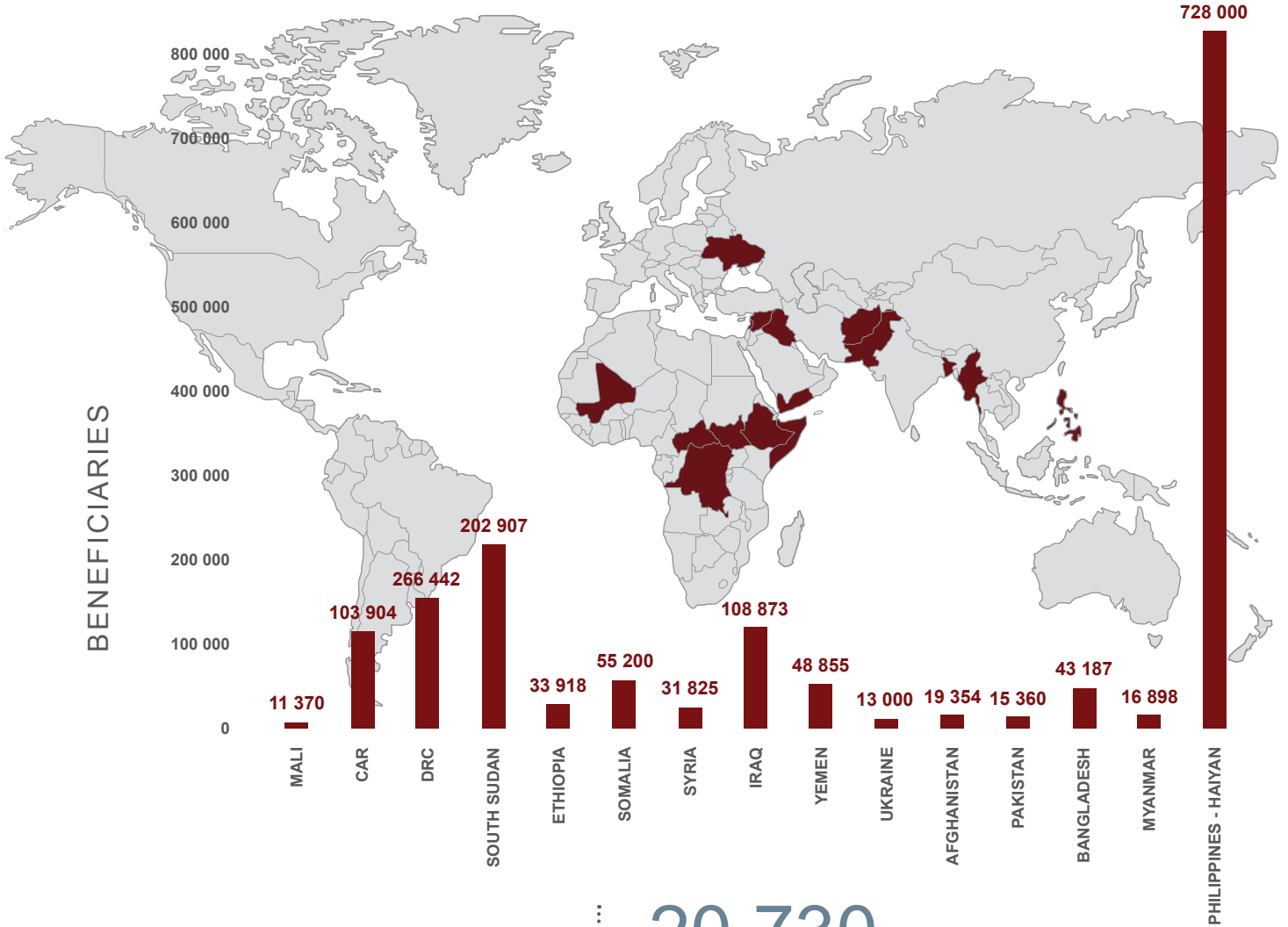


Humanitarian Aid  
and Civil Protection

# 8,2

MILLION PEOPLE ASSISTED WITH SHELTER AND/OR NFI SOLUTIONS

## THE TOP 15 COUNTRIES THAT WERE ASSISTED WITH SHELTER



# 8,2

MILLION PEOPLE ASSISTED

# 24

ACTIVE SHELTER CLUSTERS OR CLUSTER-LIKE MECHANISMS

# 51

MISSIONS TO

# 19

COUNTRIES

# 16

MEMBERS OF A SUPPORT TEAM PROVIDED INFORMATION MANAGEMENT, COORDINATION & MONITORING SUPPORT

# 20,730

UNIQUE VISITORS TO [www.ShelterCluster.org](http://www.ShelterCluster.org) (50% INCREASE COMPARED TO 2013)

# 49.2%

OF ALL VISITS DURING 2014 WERE FROM NEW VISITORS

# 88

MEMBERS FROM

# 35

ORGANIZATIONS

PARTICIPATED IN THE GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER MEETING

# 1,101

TWITTER FOLLOWERS (@SHELTERCLUSTER)

## GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER STRATEGY

Developed as an output of the 2012 GSC Meeting, the 2013-2017 Global Shelter Cluster Strategy was approved by the Strategic Advisory Group in early 2013. It has the 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. The Strategy has three strategic aims:

- 1 - Responsive and flexible support to country-level shelter coordination mechanisms.
- 2 - An effective and well-functioning Global Shelter Cluster.
- 3 - Increased recognition of the shelter and settlements sector as an essential component of the humanitarian response, through enhanced advocacy and communication.

### RESPONSIVE AND FLEXIBLE SUPPORT TO COUNTRY LEVEL

#### ► GLOBAL AND REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS

In order to address the need to deploy staff with the right skills and experience from the onset of humanitarian crises, Global Focal Points (GFPs) and Regional Focal Points (RFPs) provide coordination, information management, assessment, communication and advocacy, surge capacity, and contingency planning support to country-level clusters.

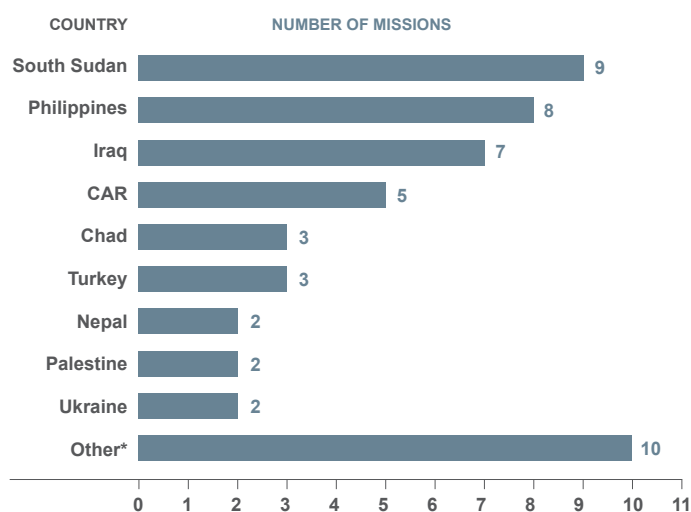
- Three GFPs for Coordination
- One GFP for Information Management
- One GFP for Communications and Advocacy
- One GFP for Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Regional Focal Points for Africa, Americas, Asia/Pacific, and Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

Thanks to this flexible structure, in 2014 the GSC managed to deploy a trained and experienced shelter cluster coordinator to each emergency before the official activation of all new clusters. This allowed new clusters to undertake joint assessments and produce strategies within the first month of the emergencies and to keep them up-to-date, setting the foundations of a coordinated shelter response.

#### ► ASSESSMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION (AME)

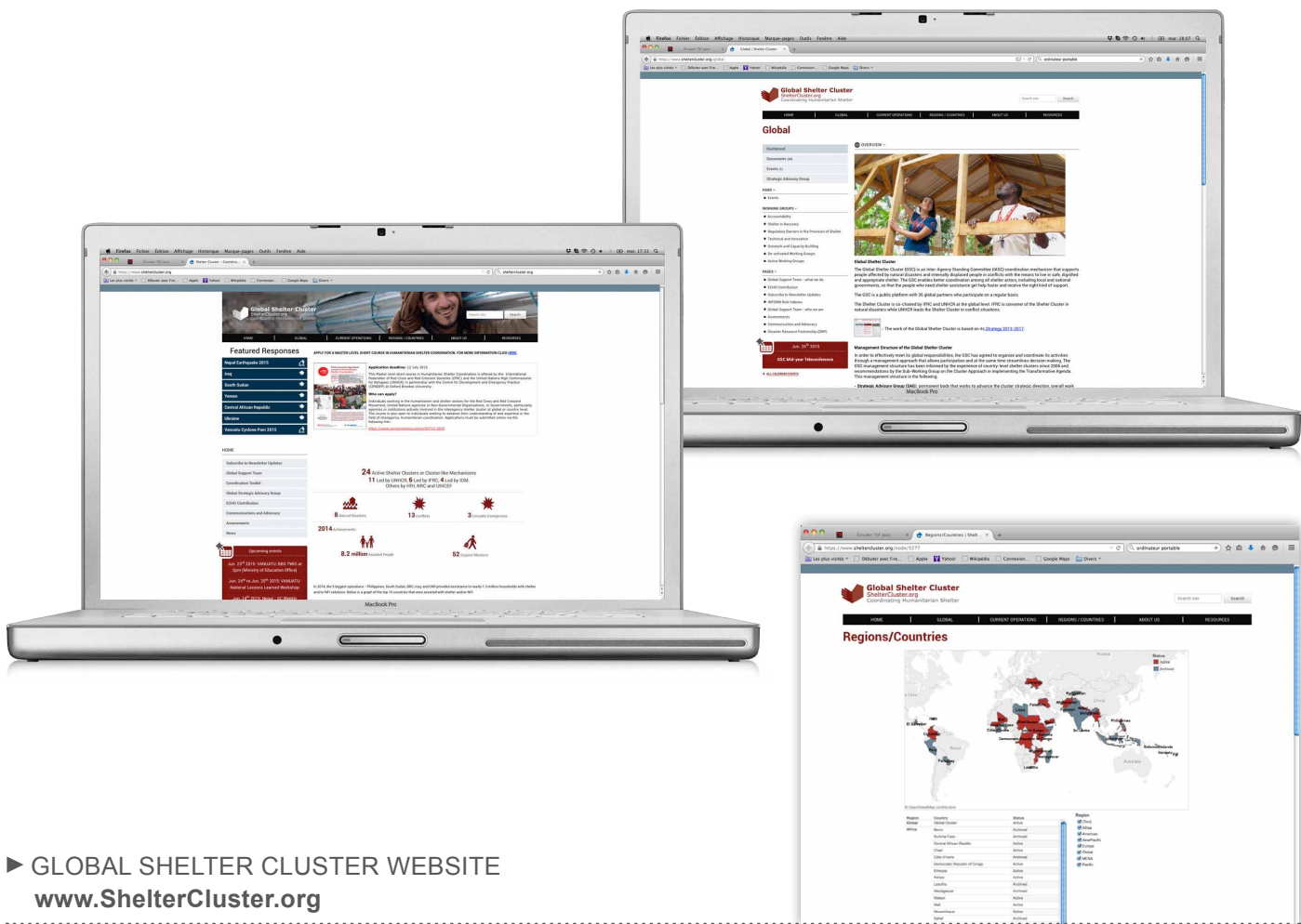
Continuing the work of 2013, support to need assessments, monitoring and evaluations was provided, including the provision of backstopping for assessments in Somalia (three baselines and one evaluation), the Philippines (two response monitoring missions), Myanmar (one deployment, although the assessment was not finalized) and Pakistan (one evaluation).

In 2014, the GFPs and RFPs undertook a total of 51 support missions to 19 countries :



\*1 mission to each of the following countries : Guatemala, Lebanon, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Panama, Peru, Samoa, Senegal, Mali and Kenya

Additionally, the GSC provided training to country cluster coordinators and cluster members: The AME GFP facilitated training sessions on assessments during the GSC coordinators retreat. It is important to note that all agencies participating in field assessments have been trained in-country before conducting an assessment (training provided directly by AME GFP in South Sudan and Central African Republic).



► GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER WEBSITE  
[www.ShelterCluster.org](http://www.ShelterCluster.org)

The ShelterCluster.org website provides key information to both shelter clusters and external users worldwide, and also serves as the GSC’s library and knowledge management system, providing valuable information services for the Global Shelter Cluster activities and useful reference materials for all shelter agencies.

Seeking a more financially sustainable approach to web-based knowledge management for the GSC resulted in the development and redeployment of a completely newly migrated website, ShelterCluster.org. This website supports both global and country level clusters with the goals of improving web-based information sharing in lower-bandwidth areas, improved usability for response administrators, and upgraded information consumption by end users using a variety of devices.

As a result, country-level cluster support teams can more easily upload content for stakeholders, a larger audience can be reached due to performance improvements, and end users have access to more information. Additionally, the basic platform

and information architecture that has been developed lends itself to easily be improved over time as additional functionality and use requirements are identified by cluster stakeholders.

During 2014, the website had 40,962 visits from 20,730 unique visitors in 191 different countries. This represents approximately a 50% increase in the number of visits and unique visitors compared to the same period a year before.<sup>3</sup> The site had an average of 113 visits per day from 57 unique visitors. Users spent, on average, 5:00 minutes on the website, and viewed four pages per visit. The site had an average of 156 daily visitors during the Global Shelter Cluster Meeting (October 2014).

Bearing in mind that 49.2% of all visits during 2014 were from new visitors, these numbers indicate that the site’s user base is growing, contributing to the continued dissemination of key GSC information, and to a better understanding of the strategic importance of humanitarian shelter programming worldwide.

<sup>3</sup> From 1 Jan 2013 to 31 Dec 2013, this website had 27, 879 visits from 13,823 unique visitors that viewed 118,048 pages

## EFFECTIVE AND WELL-FUNCTIONING GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER

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### ► SUPPORT TEAM

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A team of 16 professionals from different cluster partners (ACTED, Australian Red Cross, IFRC, IOM, NRC, SDC, and UNHCR), the Support Team functions as the secretariat of the GSC, and provides surge and remote support to country-level shelter clusters under the overall supervision of the GSC Coordinators from UNHCR and IFRC. Its members identify, train, deploy, and support country-level cluster coordination teams.

When not deployed to field locations, the members of the Support Team provide remote support to country-level clusters as needed. Additionally, they facilitate the work of the GSC (e.g. Working Groups, GSC meetings, etc.), provide inputs to inter-agency

discussions and inter-cluster coordination at the global level, and contribute to building capacity and enhancing preparedness.

During 2014, the GSC Support Team was comprised of:

- Two Cluster Coordinators
- Two Deputy Cluster Coordinators
- Three Global Focal Points (GFP) for Coordination
- One GFP for Information Management and an Information Management Assistant
- One GFP for Communications and Advocacy
- One GFP for Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation
- Four Regional Focal Points
- One ECHO Grant Management Assistant

### ► STRATEGIC ADVISORY GROUP

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The Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) continued monitoring the progress of the GSC and country-level clusters. During 2014, the SAG held teleconferences with four of the system-wide Level 3 emergencies to understand their main challenges. The SAG also worked to increase the sustainability of the Cluster by developing and promoting a collaborative approach to resourcing the GSC.

During 2014, the SAG met for a total of eight times. Additionally, members of the SAG had a retreat after the GSC meeting to

evaluate the work undertaken, revise the feedback received during the meeting, plan for 2015, and address issues that cannot be solved during regular SAG meetings, which are usually one-hour teleconferences. The feedback received from SAG members indicates that the SAG has increased its *inclusiveness, transparency and effectiveness*.

Members of the SAG in 2014 were: ACTED, Australian Red Cross, CARE, Habitat for Humanity, IFRC, Interaction, IOM, UNHCR, NRC, UNHABITAT and World Vision International.

### ► WORKING GROUPS

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During 2014, the following Working Groups (WGs) were active:

#### **Accountability WG**

In 2014, The Shelter Cluster Accountability WG (co-led by IMPACT Initiatives and IOM) worked on several projects to strengthen the ability of shelter cluster partners to gather and manage information around humanitarian responses. These included:

- Finalization of the new Cluster Evaluation Guidelines led by UNHCR, which were piloted in 2013 for the Mali evaluation and during 2014 for the cluster evaluations in Pakistan and in Somalia.
- Supported a shelter response monitoring exercise in the Philippines to understand how shelter needs have changed since the collection of baseline data in the direct aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan.
- Compilation of a global collection of information management tools and templates, used by cluster information managers

and coordinators in current and recent responses, with a view to making these available through the GSC website.

- Feasibility study to evaluate the suitability of *ActivityInfo* as a component of a Shelter Information Portal. The feasibility study was conducted in conjunction with a pilot online portal, based on the preparation from a cluster assessment in Myanmar.

#### **Shelter in Recovery WG**

This working group was co-chaired by UN-Habitat and Habitat for Humanity. Its achievements in 2014 are linked to activities initiated in 2013, and include the following:

- Development of Terms of reference (ToR) for handing over the leadership of the cluster beyond emergency. The ToR include the two most frequent scenarios: the handover between humanitarian organizations, and the handover to national governments.
- Continue the creation of a registry of agencies' Shelter Recovery Advisor candidates, as well as a joint mechanism

for their early deployment as part of the Shelter Cluster Co-ordination Team.

Additionally, the WG provided some direct support to the Philippines Cluster in drafting their Shelter in Recovery Strategy.

### Regulatory Barriers WG

Co-chaired by NRC and IFRC, the regulatory Barriers WG made progress on meeting all objectives of the WG work plan.

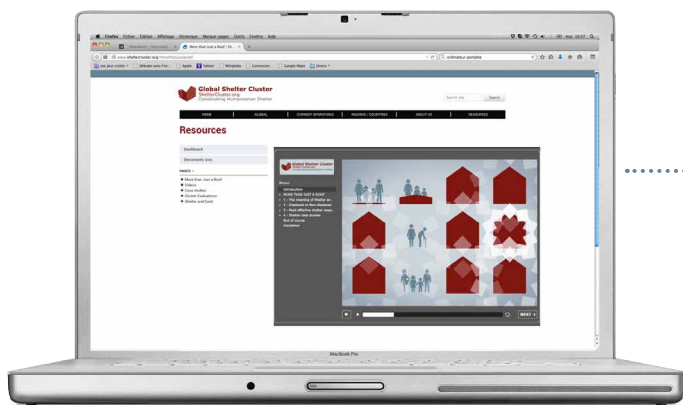
► Pilot trainings of the one day HLP training for practitioners were held in the Philippines in December 2013 and a further secondary pilot was run in Panama in December 2014 following adjustments to the materials based on feedback from the first training in the Philippines.

► Members of the WG were able to finalize a technical guidance document on HLP for Shelter practitioners “Land Rights and Shelter - the Due Diligence Standard,” which is available on the GSC website and has additionally been translated into Spanish.

### Outreach and Capacity WG

This Working Group was co-chaired by Canadian Red Cross/IFRC and UNHCR. It was newly formed in 2014 and its main achievements were the increase in the number of global cluster partners by five new partners, and the development of the Shelter online training:

The online learning platform “More than Just a Roof - An Introduction to Shelter Programming,” was completed in consultation with the Outreach and Capacity Building WG. This course describes the basics of why shelter programming is an important component of humanitarian response, outlines the challenges that shelter affected families often face in natural disasters and conflict crises, and describes the essential elements of how humanitarians can complement the shelter activities of affected families while imparting the rudimentary awareness of the language used by shelter experts when describing approaches used to adequately shelter vulnerable families.



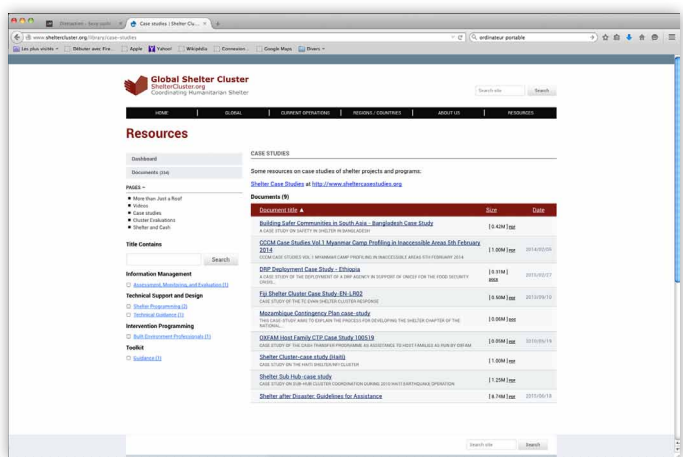
### Technical and Innovation WG

This Working Group was co-chaired by CARE and IOM. It was newly formed in 2014 and rapidly produced concrete results, and has promising prospects for the future. Core outcomes include three key documents produced:

- Template - Technical Guidance for Emergency (and Early-Recovery) Shelter Assistance.
- Guidance Notes - Technical Guidance for Emergency (and Early-Recovery) Shelter Assistance.
- Bibliography/List of Links – Technical Guidance for Emergency (and Early-Recovery) Shelter Assistance.

The WG was also able to support the Shelter Centre meeting, for the first time bringing this ongoing sectoral discussion and workshop within the GSC, ensuring that the cluster and agencies work more closely together. In so doing, it was also able to ensure that sectoral discussions on shelter issues continue at the global level.

Whilst developing the work plan, the WG has pushed the SAG to clarify the distinction between cluster and non-cluster activities as in the document “Endorsement by the Global Shelter Cluster.” The WG has proven to be a committed forum for people interested in technical shelter discussions.





## ► GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER MEETINGS

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### *Global Shelter Coordination Workshop*

The third joint GSC Coordination Workshop took place in Geneva on October 6-7, 2014. This annual event brought together personnel from cluster lead and partner agencies involved in shelter cluster coordination at the country-level, to review and revise shelter coordination methodologies, tools and practice. Drawing on the experiences of Shelter Cluster Coordination over the past year, participants reviewed what had worked well and what needed improvement, and were informed on recent developments in country-level shelter cluster coordination guidance and tools. Most of the workshop was held jointly with shelter cluster country-level lead agencies, as increased coherence within the cluster means most sessions were on issues of common interest to different country-level shelter cluster lead agencies. A half-day was held by each agency to look at their own specific internal agency related issues.

### *GSC Meeting*

The GSC Coordination Workshop was followed by the annual GSC Meeting in Geneva. Framed along the pillars of the GSC 2013-2017 Strategy, agencies and institutions participating in the GSC addressed issues emerging from country level clusters and IASC global level cluster-related initiatives, reviewed GSC progress and deliverables from the implementation of the GSC Strategy and activities in 2014, endorsed the nominations of agencies to a new GSC SAG, and defined the GSC priorities for the implementation of the GSC Strategy in 2015. This meeting was attended by 88 participants from 35 different organizations, more than any previous GSC Meetings.<sup>4</sup> 17 country-level clusters or cluster-like mechanisms were represented, 70% of the total of 24.

## ► CAPACITY BUILDING

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### *Shelter Coordination Training*

In order to build the capacity to provide coordination services to shelter actors at country level, the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the masters level short course in "Shelter Coordination in Natural Disasters", previously known as the IFRC Shelter Coordination Training (SCT), took place in June-July 2014. The training was revised to incorporate new guidance arising from the Transformative Agenda process. This course was offered and accredited in partnership with Oxford Brookes University in the UK. The course comprised a combination of a tutored online component requiring a minimum of 50 hours and a 6-day residential workshop. Successful participants earned 10 UK masters level

<sup>4</sup> The 2012 GSC meeting was attended by 64 participants from 31 organizations, while the 2013 GSC meeting was attended by 85 participants from 31 organizations.

credits (CATS), equivalent to 5 European masters level credits (ECTS), and have the opportunity to use their knowledge and understanding of interagency coordination through deployment in humanitarian emergencies subject to the requirements of the deploying agencies. The course had two phases:

- First phase: Tutored-led distance learning. This took place during a period of five weeks (June 2 - July 6, 2014). This first phase dealt with most of the theoretical basis of the module.
- Second phase: A 6-day face-to-face workshop which was delivered by specialists working in the sector and guest speakers with experience of coordination in practice at field level (21-26 July, 2014). Participants engaged in a combination of individual and group activities. The face-to-face workshop is based on a scenario that simulates the deployment to and coordination of an evolving emergency.

After an initial selection of applicants based on eligibility criteria and maximum course capacity, a total of 25 participants started the course. A total of 21 participants successfully completed the course and were included in the shelter coordination surge capacity roster.

### *Co-lead training*

UNHCR undertook two editions of its Coordination and Leadership training. This training brings together cluster coordinators or future cluster coordinators from the three clusters led by UNHCR: Shelter, Protection, and CCCM. The training is open to participants from other organizations and has a particular focus on conflict.

## ► IASC ACTIVITIES AND INTER-CLUSTER COORDINATION

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The Global Shelter Cluster has actively contributed to IASC activities particularly through the Global Cluster Coordinators Group. The GSC Coordinators or Deputy Coordinators participated in the meetings of this group and in the retreat that took place in Rome bringing together all the Global Cluster Coordinators. The deputy Global Shelter Cluster Coordinator for conflict joined the Global Cluster Coordinators joint mission to South Sudan. The Global Focal Point for Information Management continued participating in the inter-cluster Information Management Working Group. The Global Shelter Cluster shared training resources with OCHA to inform common training resources.

## ENHANCED ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION

### ► COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY STRATEGY FOR THE GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER 2014 - 2017

One of the Global Shelter Cluster's strategic priorities is to communicate as clearly and consistently as possible on the role and activities of the Shelter Cluster, both at the global and at the country level.

During 2014, the GSC Communications and Advocacy made significant progress. The principal achievement in this key area was the adoption of the *Communications and Advocacy Strategy for the Global Shelter Cluster 2014 - 2017*. This document will help the GSC use communication and advocacy more efficiently to support the GSC's overall strategic goal and aims. More specifically, the Strategy tries to address the following questions:

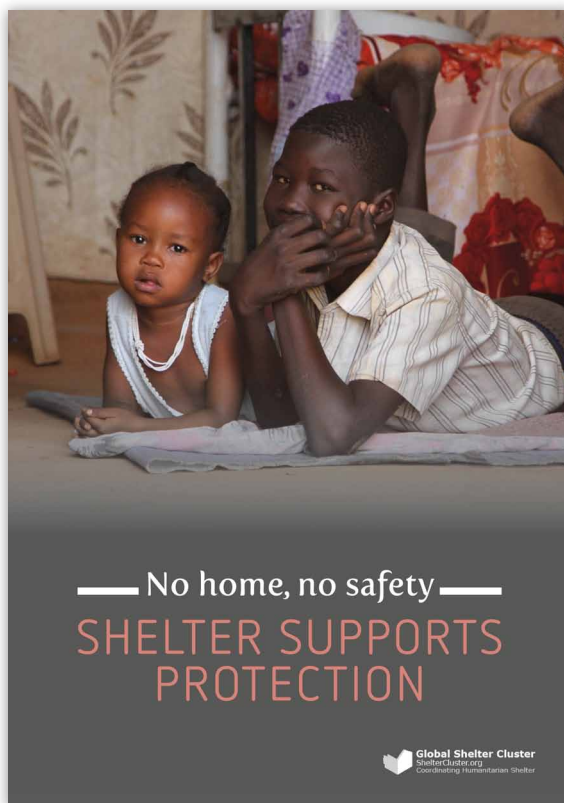
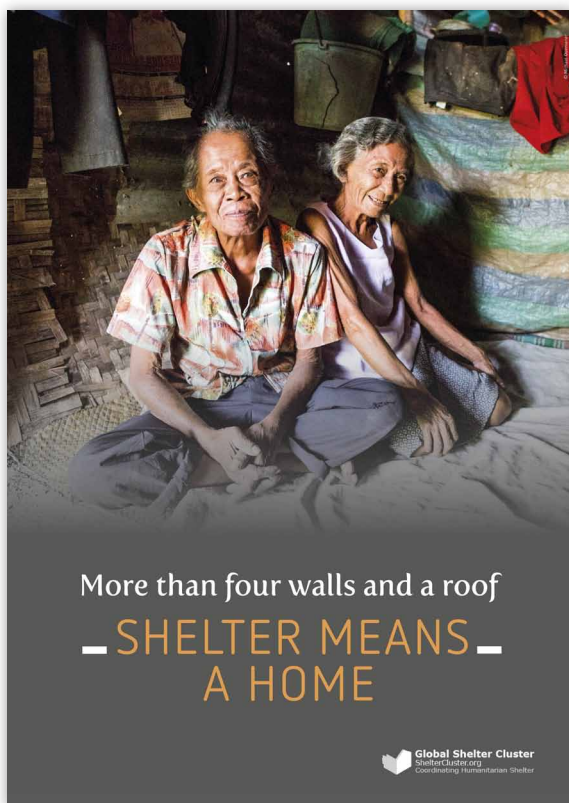
- What does the GSC want to achieve by communicating?
- Who does the GSC need to communicate with, to achieve its goals?
- How can communications and advocacy activities support these goals?
- Which communications channels should the GSC focus on?

The Strategy is written with the duration of the Shelter Cluster's Strategy in mind, i.e. 2013-2017. However, as communication means are subject to constant and rapid changes, it should be considered a living document, and should be reviewed and adapted as needed.

Awareness-raising materials were prepared to advocate for a better understanding of the Shelter sector and its impact in other sectors such as Protection, Health, Livelihoods, and other activities. These posters are available and can be used by cluster partners adding their logo next to the one of the cluster.

### ► GSC UPDATES

A total of 31 global updates providing information on country-level shelter clusters and global initiatives were sent to an audience of 718 people. The number of followers on Twitter was multiplied by 50 from April 2013 to December 2014. The number of Twitter followers increased from 20 at the beginning of 2013, to 1,101 at the end of 2014, for a potential reach of more than 12 million people.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>5</sup> The potential reach is measured by the number of direct followers of the direct followers of the account. It expresses how many people could be reached if all the followers of the account retweeted a message of the GSC.

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## 2015 FOR THE SHELTER CLUSTER

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Entering the second phase of the GSC Strategy, starting in January 2015, the GSC will strengthen and solidify the capacities created to support country-level clusters as well as the sustainability of these core services.

Building on the lessons learnt over the past two years, the deployment of surge capacity in the short and medium term will be enhanced to ensure the continuity and predictability of country-level cluster coordination. The GSC surge capacity model will be strengthened by reinforcing and adapting the

existing immediate surge capacity, making it even more flexible and capable to respond to urgent needs in the field, while maintaining the remote support to country-level clusters.

During this phase, the GSC will also enhance its monitoring and evaluation capacity of country-level clusters, and the sharing of good practices and lessons learned. The Cluster's capacity to engage with national actors will also be enhanced with a view to increasing national capacity and reducing dependency on international resources.



