



Terms of Reference for the Strategic Advisory Group of the Global Nutrition Cluster

1. Background

A Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) was introduced into the Global Nutrition Cluster structure during the GNC Face to Face Meeting in January 2013. The interim SAG was tasked with provision of strategic direction for, and oversight of, the activity of the GNC in key areas. The initial six month TOR was extended until February 2014 based on the outcome of the GNC Annual meeting in July 2013. During this one-year interim period, the SAG largely met its objectives¹ and provided strategic support and guidance around specific issues to the GNC Coordination Team (GNC-CT). Based on this experience, the GNC Coordinator requested a more permanent SAG to guide and support activities and in February 2014, the interim SAG membership was updated, with two previous members who remained to provide institutional memory.

Following the GNC face to face meeting in September 2014, and based on reflections on the SAGs performance from the GNC-CT and the collective, and in light of the increased demands on the GNC-CT to deploy its staff to support multiple Level 3 emergencies, the GNC CT and the SAG agreed that the SAG TOR should be revised to reflect the SAG role under both normal and extenuating circumstances. Priorities for the SAG support are reviewed every 6 months by the GNC-CT and the collective.

2. Role of the SAG

Overall, the GNC-CT provides leadership, in consultation with the SAG, to the broader Global Nutrition Cluster.

The SAG members contribute in several areas:

- **GENERAL**
 - Commit to working on the activities identified for the SAG to take forward during the GNC annual meeting. These priorities are proposed between the GNC-CT and circulated to the GNC membership for feedback and finalization.
 - The SAG also recommends to the GNC-CT other issues or areas that are in the best interest of the collective to address, even if they are not raised in the GNC meetings.
 - The SAG provides supportive advice to the GNC-CT on specific issues that the GNC-CT identifies would benefit from additional strategic feedback.

¹ For further information on the SAG membership and priorities, please refer to the companion document “Historical Overview of the Global Nutrition Cluster Strategic Advisory Group.”

- The SAG need to be available for regular (ideally monthly) skype calls of 1 hour during which a pre-agreed agenda will be followed. SAG members alternate the role of chairing and taking minutes of these calls every three months.
- **GNC MEETINGS**
 - The SAG collaborates with the GNC-CT to define the objectives and specific outcomes of the meeting. The SAG also collaborates with the GNC-CT to develop the agenda (eg. proposing resource persons, topics and materials, etc) and provides additional inputs into content as requested by the GNC-CT. SAG members also chair the sessions during the GNC Annual Meetings.
- **DEVELOPING THE WORKPLAN**
 - In years where a new GNC Strategy and a work plan (WP) are to be developed, the GNC-CT in collaboration with the SAG is responsible for drafting a Strategy and a WP (based on feedback and discussion at the annual meeting and on teleconferences).
 - The GNC-CT and SAG review, discuss and finalize WP activities for each strategic area. If the GNC-CT and SAG substantially change activities proposed by the groups at the meeting, a written explanation is provided to partners when the final draft of the Work Plan is circulated. Partners provide feedback to the GNC-CT on the final draft. The GNC-CT in consultation with the SAG review any concerns or issues raised and are responsible for taking the final decision regarding WP activities.
 - In collaboration with the GNC-CT, the SAG reviews the WP after each GNC meeting in order to revise prioritization of items for action.
- **TASK FORCES**
 - In collaboration with the GNC-CT, the SAG reviews the GNC WP and mechanism to deliver agreed upon outputs. The SAG can suggest where the formation of a Task Force may be helpful and can also review TORs for Task Forces as suggested by others. The GNC CT and the SAG will ensure that outputs and a clear timeframe for Task Forces is agreed when the Task Force is formed.
 - A minimum of one SAG member should be present on each Task Force. Each Task Force will nominate a chair and a co-chair. SAG members on the Task Force may volunteer to chair or co-chair but it is not expected that they will chair and other chairs are encouraged.
 - The GNC-CT and the SAG will receive regular updates from the Task Force Chairs and will provide feedback as needed.
- **MONITORING THE WORKPLAN**
 - The GNC-CT develops a traffic light based on the review of the GNC WP every three months to facilitate the discussion on the monitoring of the GNC WP with the SAG.
 - The SAG supports the GNC CT in monitoring the progress on the GNC WP²; highlighting and suggesting actions if off track through quarterly review and ad hoc inputs as needed.
 - When required, the lead agency for the specific GNC activity will be invited to the SAG/GNC-CT call when discussion on the WP progress is being undertaken.

² Recognizing that the daily oversight and monitoring of the GNC work plan is the responsibility of the GNC CT.

- The SAG advises on the best course of action if there are identified bottlenecks.
- **COMMUNICATION AROUND TECHNICAL ISSUES**
 - In case of a technical issue or query, GNC partners are to communicate with the GNC-CT via email or phone for clarification. In case the issue requires further discussion and consultation with the SAG, it will be included in the agenda for the monthly SAG call or an urgent SAG call will be conducted if necessary. It is also possible for the SAG to directly raise an issue with the GNC-CT, upon consultation, if it is found that the issue needs collective deliberation of the members, this will be communicated to the respective partners so that a call is arranged around the issue to be resolved.
 - When needed, the SAG/GNC-CT might seek external expert support on technical issues and these experts might not be members of the GNC but never the less, have technical knowledge on the issue at hand.
- **EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION**
 - If a statement or response is needed within 48 hours, the GNC-CT will aim to secure inputs from the SAG if possible, but in any event will respond.
 - If the statement requires the input and the review of the collective GNC members, the SAG and the GNC-CT will find a way to consult with the GNC partners on the issue.
- **FUNDRAISING**
 - A multi-donor funding proposal will be developed by the GNC-CT with inputs from the SAG and WP leads/ Task Forces.
 - The GNC-CT, WP leads, Task Forces and SAG will collaboratively develop a fund raising strategy which outlines how funds will be raised to implement the GNC WP.
 - The GNC-CT will routinely update the SAG and the GNC members on the funding situation during face to face meetings and when there is new funding made available for the GNC WP through the collective GNC partners proposal or through the CLA.

Under extenuating circumstances, such as the deployment of the GNC-CT to multiple Level 3 emergencies, the SAG and GNC-CT will consult to define what additional operational support may be needed to ensure the GNC-CT facilitate the realization of outcomes in the GNC workplan.

3. Composition and membership of the SAG

3.1 Composition of the SAG

The SAG is composed of representatives from:

- UNICEF Programme representative (permanent membership given UNICEF’s role as Cluster Lead Agency);
- WFP Programme representative as a permanent member (permanent membership given WFPs role in MAM management);
- UNHCR Programme representative as a permanent member (permanent membership given UNHCRs role in refugee context);
- Another UN agency representative (to be elected by GNC partners);

- Three NGO/operating agencies representatives (to be elected by GNC partners);
- Country Cluster Coordinator representing all CCs and IMOs (to be elected by CCs/IMOs);
- One donor representative (to be elected by GNC partners).

3.2 Criteria for membership

To be represented on the SAG, organizations must have been a GNC partner for 12 months or longer.

Individuals interested in being represented on the SAG should have significant relevant work experience at a strategic level along with a solid understanding of the humanitarian aid sector. Selected individuals commit to represent the interests of the GNC and not their own agency's interest.

3.3 Nomination, establishment and duration of the SAG

The SAG membership will be reviewed and updated every 1st quarter of every year. Two previous SAG members should be retained in order to maintain institutional memory.

- *Interested agencies*³ are asked to submit an expression of interest and identify the individual who will fulfil this role on behalf of the agency. A brief outline of the added value of the organisation's participation in the SAG (approximately one paragraph) and a short bio (no more than half of one page) of the nominated individual should be submitted to the GNC Coordinator.
- In the event that the *individual is an independent*, the short bio and brief outline of added value should be submitted to the GNC Coordinator.
- *Country Cluster Coordinators* who are interested to take on this role may also put themselves forward and/or can be nominated by their peers. A short bio should be included along with the expression of interest.

SAG members are to serve the GNC for a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 2 years.

3.4 Selection of SAG members

There will be a parallel selection process:

- SAG members will be elected by the GNC partners (each agency will have 1 vote).

Country Cluster Coordinators will elect their representative from the selection of Country Cluster Coordinators nominated (one vote per CCC). Voting will take place through an on-line survey. In the event that there is only the required number of volunteers for each level of representation, a vote will not be needed.

³ The "agency" means an entity or an organisation, which is the partner of the GNC with all its various sections.

4. Implementation arrangements

4.1 Time commitment

Monthly SAG meetings/conference calls will be scheduled; SAG members would be expected to attend 80% of the meetings. In addition SAG members may be required to engage on issues by email or conference calls between the monthly conference calls.

There will be a face-to-face SAG meeting around the time of the GNC meeting (date to be decided but generally June/July), as well as one additional face to face meeting around six months later; the remaining meetings will be organized by phone/skype.

4.2 Chair of SAG

The SAG Chairperson (or co-Chairpersons) will be nominated by the SAG. The Chairperson (co-Chairperson) position/s is to be rotated every 3 months. Any members of the SAG can chair the SAG, it would not be a conflict of interest for any SAG member to chair.

4.3 Accountability and Transparency

- The GNC-CT, in consultation with the SAG and possible Task Forces, commits to share drafts and final drafts of all strategic documents as well as key decisions to be made with GNC partners for their input and feedback.
- The SAG has a decision-making role only if delegated by partners (through email or at meetings).
- Decisions made by the SAG shall be taken to the extent possible on the basis of consensus.
- Presence of at least 50% of the SAG members at a meeting constitutes a quorum.
- Decisions will be recorded in minutes.
- Agendas and minutes of SAG meetings/teleconferences will be uploaded on the GNC website.
- The SAG shall report to the annual GNC Meeting on the accomplishment of its functions.

4.4 Review of SAG functions

A review of the SAG functions will be conducted in 2020 alongside the review of the 2017-2020 GNC Strategy.

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