## IASC GRG Meeting

November 21, 2017  
UN Women Headquarters

**Meeting Chair**Caroline Rusten, UN Women  
Jina Krause-Vilmar, HIAS

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| **Participants** |
| Fabrizia Falcione -UNFPA |
| Kate Hunt – CARE International |
| Benard Muinde – IASC Secretariat |
| Emma Pearce – WRC |
| Elizabeth Eilor – OCHA |
| Tess Dico-Young – Oxfam |
| David Coffey – UN Women |
| Nuhad Al Alfi – IASC Secretariat |
| Merrin Waterhouse – GenCap |

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| **Guest Speakers** |
| Ines Smyth, Gender Policy Consultant |
| Tanja Chopra, Gender Accountability Framework Consultant |

1. AGENDA ITEMS
   1. **IASC Guidelines on Persons with Disabilities** [WRC]

Consultation process and drafting for the Guidelines on Persons with Disabilities are ongoing. Regional consultations planned in Asia Pacific (Jan) and MENA (6th and 7th, March). Others to be planned. The first draft following the consultations will be piloted.

**Next Steps:** Co-hosts are welcome for consultations. GRG welcomed to lead on specific consultations for the Guidelines with GBV actors. Emma will share Briefing Notes for the Guidelines with the GRG. GRG is also invited to sit in on the TT meetings and consider joining review groups once they are established. WRC can also act as an informal coordinator by bringing products to the GRG for feedback and inputs in the meantime. WRC has also offered to facilitate the creation of a space for a ‘training plus action lab’ at the HQ level.

* 1. **The way forward on the Gender Policy (GP) and Gender Accountability Framework (GAF)** [UN Women]

Recap of the consultation process [David]: Drafts shared periodically with the advisory group. And GRG kept updated through a matrix of changes.

**Key comments on Gender Policy Draft and Responses** [Gender Policy Consultant]:

Accepted comments and reflected changes include: emphasis on women’s capacities and men’s vulnerabilities, inclusion of clear standards and detailed roles and responsibilities, stronger intersectionality, addition of an appendix with working definitions, and prominence of the role of women’s rights organization. As per comments, the 15% financial target has been substituted with text calling for all IASC organizations to fully resource for both mainstreaming and targeted action by creating specific budget lines.

The suggestion to include a menu of options to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment was not accepted as it could be counterproductive. Instead, the GP provides programme standards and organizational processes. In response to the question on how the ‘gender and age marker’ / the’ gender marker’ will be referred to, the policy indicates that they are under revision.

References, few in number, to peacebuilding have been retained to reflect the latest understanding of the humanitarian-development-peace building nexus.

The responsibility of monitoring policy commitments has been edited from the GRG to ‘To be decided.’

Reference to ‘Senior Focal Points’ have been retained because commitments will simply be partially effective unless assigned to a person of seniority.

**Key comments on GAF and Responses** [Gender Accountability Framework Consultant]

1. Questions on how to ensure adequate enforcement of policy raised.

2. How best to proceed on monitoring of the policy? Global versus field level. Suggestion to focus on collective work i.e., what did organization A, as a collective body, achieve?

3. Concern over monitoring framework and additional burden for field personnel. This can be addressed by the creation of a separate desk that can liaise with the field and develop monitoring documents. The location of this IASC desk is yet to be determined. The GRG itself should not have a monitoring function due to the conflict of interest.

**Concerns raised by OCHA on Gender Policy and Gender Accountability Framework Drafts and Corresponding Responses**

OCHA happy to see the finalization of the GP and GAF process and recognizes its value

1. Concern with use of “empowerment” and whether it is realistic to set this as a goal. We can work towards participation but is “empowerment” too heavy a goal? [OCHA]

Response from UN Women and seconded by GP consultant: The term was not newly introduced as the precedent is there in the original policy. To remove it would be a step backwards. Also, process was to update the policy rather than to rewrite it.

Oxfam in agreement with response but added that it would be worth unpacking the term in concrete terms particularly for the field.

It was agreed to retain “empowerment” with a clearer articulation of the term and better reflected in the GAF to ensure accountability.

1. Concern with references to a single institution, specifically UN Women, in the GP, without references to contributions by other agencies [OCHA]

Clarification from GP Consultant: It was included to record what has changed institutionally since the previous policy in 2008.

Response from UN Women: It is not necessary to mention any agency specifically. Suggest that the language be edited to reflect more generally, institutional changes since the previous policy.

The above suggestion was accepted.

1. Suggestion to use GenCap Support Unit as IASC Desk to avoid creating parallel systems [OCHA]

Response from UN Women: Supporting the GRG is not the role of the GenCap Support Unit or GenCap. As reiterated during the donors meeting, the role of GenCap is to provide standby capacity. As this is not a role expected of, or played by the Support Unit, the problem of creating a parallel system does not arise.

Agreement to the above from UNFPA: Role of the Support Unit has not been to support the GRG. Furthermore, we are already trying to make the Support Unit more efficient. We will look at other existing structures to avoid creating new structures.

Addition to above points from GAF Consultant: Entrusting a monitoring role to the GenCap Support Unit will also lead to a conflict of interest.

It was therefore agreed that language on this matter will be left open in the Gender Policy. A decision will be made after dedicated discussions on this topic at a later stage.

1. Concern with references to peace-keeping departments [OCHA]

Response from GP Consultant: References are, in particular, to the WPS agenda and bearing in mind the humanitarian-development-peace&security nexus.

Agreement to retain references to the peace and security bridge.

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| **AGENDA ITEM B - Action Point:** Revised copy with proposed new text as per the decisions noted above on the Gender Policy and the Gender Accountability Framework will be circulated and to be returned with comments in two days. |

* 1. **Results from the GRG discussions in Geneva: Status of the gender focus** – *Skipped due to time limitations*
  2. **IASC Subsidiary body workshop: results and way forward for GRG** [UN Women & IASC Secretariat]

UN Women raised concerns with the unclear message received from the IASC Secretariat regarding panel findings.

The message referred to GRG funding and seemed to question what will happen after May 2018. This is misleading because the GRG does not receive any funding and therefore, there is no deadline for May 2018. that will end in May 2018. It is absolutely important that the GRG is sustained, given its critical role in ensuring that gender issues are collectively addressed. In addition, there was an oral communication from the IASC Secretariat that the GRG may not be continued after May 2018.

Response from the IASC Secretariat: Views shared were of the panel that reviewed the subsidiary bodies, not of the IASC Secretariat. The ASG is reviewing the views and will share next steps. This will be discussed at the Principal’s Meeting (Dec 4th).

UN Women also raised questions on the transparency of the panel review process, its findings and how it will be utilized. This information had not been clearly relayed.

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| **AGENDA ITEM D - Action Points:**   * The GRG will draft an email in response with references to planned milestones * Share GP and GAF with ASG Muller for presentation to the WG for Dec 4th Meeting * GRG to send letter signed by co-chairs to ASG Muller requesting that it be taken to the WG. Would also be useful to hold a Roundtable for ASG Muller to inform other agencies and actors |

* 1. **AWP 2017: Update on Status and initiation of discussion on 2018 workplan** – *Skipped due to time limitations*
  2. **Date for 2018 Annual Retreat**:

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| AGENDA ITEM F - Action Point:  Save the Date will be sent out for February 2, 2018. |

1. AOB

IASC Gender Handbook Testing Update [UN Women]

Plan to test the Handbook roll-out training in Bangladesh for the Rohingya response. (Dec 13,14,15).

Endorsement of the completed handbook by the IASC Working Group required.

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| **AGENDA ITEM AOB:**  UN Women to follow up with IASC Secretariat for endorsement by IASC WG |