

GCCG Meeting

25 January 2023, 14:00 – 16.00 GVA time

Participant/Global Cluster: Angel Pascual and Ela Serdaroglu (GSC); Linda Doull (GHC); Dher Al-Hayo and Wan Sophonpanich (CCCM), Samuel Cheung and Celine Maret (GPC), Emma Fitzpatrick (GHC); Brent Carbno (ETC); Michelle Brown and Maria Agnes Giordano (GEC); Monica Ramos (GWC); Jennifer Chase (GBV); Ron Pouwels (CP); Mailin Fauchon (GLC); Bruno Donat and Hannah Holloway (MA); Mary Pack and Marina Skuric-Prodanovic (Co-Chairs), Annarita Marcantonio, Randa Hassan, Darya Sagaydak, Mari Sawai and Nicole Butler (GCCG-S).

Invitees: Aida Mengistu (P2P), Nisar Syed (UNICEF / P2P Myanmar mission member); Erik Kastlander (IMWG); Moria Little (OCHA New York).

Summary and action points

Updates and follow-up on GCCG action points

1. The Co-Chairs, Ms. Marina Skuric-Prodanovic and Ms. Mary Pack, welcomed participants, encouraged GCCs to attend future meetings in person and to propose future agenda items, and outlined the meeting agenda. Ms. Mari Sawai was introduced, replacing Ms. Janet Puhalic within the GCCG-S who has been seconded to OCHA's Policy Branch for one year. She proposed to move the agenda item on Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring (CCPM) mapping survey results to the February meeting due to time constraints. No other changes to the agenda were brought forward. Ms. Skuric-Prodanovic then provided the following updates:
 - **Updates from recent IASC meetings:** A meeting of IASC Taskforce (TF) 5 on Localisation took place, with no significant updates to report. It was noted that two OPAG meetings would take place in the coming weeks and Ms. Skuric-Prodanovic called for volunteers to attend particularly the meeting on localization in February. She thanked GCCs who had shared information and further questions on the Flagship Initiative led by the USG of OCHA and said that Mr. Strohmeyer would join the next meeting in February to further brief on details. The Joint Inter-Sectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF) Advisory Group (JAG) took place on 24 January. One GCC raised concerns around the prolonged timeline and making the HPC even more time-consuming than before while another encouraged all GCCs to be engaged to ensure GCC voices were heard in the process given their central role in the rollout. Ms. Pack informed GCCs that the PMU of JIAF would provide a briefing for NGOs in the coming days. The group agreed with the suggestion that a briefing by the PMU of JIAF be included in the agenda of the GCCG meeting in February GCCG to clarify key asks and expectations from GCCs.
 - **Action points:** On pending points, possible support mission to DRC in 2023 is still being explored; the terms and definitions paper is awaiting final comments by the GPC/AoRs; the draft paper on lessons learned from the Iraq transition will be circulated shortly for GCCs comments.
 - **GCC field mission plans:** GCCs were asked to share upcoming missions for planning purposes. GEC noted its cluster coordinator retreat and annual meeting was scheduled from 29 May to 2 June in Nairobi. GPC noted an upcoming mission to Somalia (26 February to 3 March). CCCM is planning a mission to Ukraine in February. GBV AoR Core Member Meeting is planned for 27 to 29 March. The JIAF pilot roll out is scheduled to take place 19 to 23 February in Somalia, to be supported by some of the cluster IMOs. GWC noted below upcoming events: National Cluster Coordination Workshop in Budapest (27 February to 3 March), UN Water Conference in New York (23 to 24 March), GWC Annual Meeting in Budapest (8 to 12 May), WASH Operational Coordination Leadership Course in Amman (21 to 25 May), Humanitarian After Action Review in Yemen (end May to early June).
 - **Updates and reminders:** GCCs were reminded to encourage their respective clusters to send in good practices on localization (via the shared template). On coordination mapping, Ms. Randa Hassan (GCCG-S) noted that the survey would be sent back to GCCs for endorsement before being sent to the field. The north-east Syria region would be included.

Briefing on Peer-2-Peer mission to Myanmar

2. Ms. Skuric-Prodanovic introduced the agenda item on Peer-2-Peer (P2P) mission on Myanmar and welcomed Ms. Aida Mengistu and Mr. Nisar Syed, members of the P2P mission to Myanmar. She invited them to provide a brief presentation on the mission findings focused on issues relevant to the global clusters.
3. Ms. Aida Mengistu presented an overview on the mission context. The P2P mission had been called for by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in February 2022 with an objective to review the coordination architecture to ensure alignment with the new operating context of increased needs, restrictive operating space and limited funding. The mission was conducted virtually and met with over 200 individuals and carried out 15 workshops with various stakeholders. The team was composed of UN agencies (WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF) and INGOs (NRC, Mercy Corps) supported by the P2P secretariat.
4. Mr. Nisar Syed moved on to the second part of the briefing: six key findings from the mission. These were: (i) shrinking humanitarian space as being the most critical concern requiring strong HCT leadership and pragmatic solutions; (ii) the HCT's work being hampered by a patchy information flow and poor feedback loop; (iii) the need

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to adjust the humanitarian coordination architecture to reflect operational realities; (iv) the humanitarian structures do not meaningfully engage local/national NGOs and civil society and the relationship is not equitable; (v) the importance of working with development actors to identify nexus opportunities to mitigate losses and build community resilience; (vi) donors, UN and INGO headquarters should provide more support to the HCT's advocacy efforts for securing access and in raising protection concerns. The concerns highlighted by the mission were lack of stability in the HC/RC position; legacy coordination structures particularly in Rakhine; HCT and ICCG acting as information sharing bodies rather than taking a coordinating role; and a lack of robust coordination structures at the sub-national level. On localization, recommendations included developing a localization plan at the HCT and ICCG level and involving national NGOs at the sub-national level to take up leadership roles in coordination bodies.

5. Ms. Mengistu asked for GCC support in the implementation of the following HCT actions. On cluster coordination and localization, these were: investing in the training and development of national staff as cluster and inter-cluster coordination; increasing OCHA and cluster leads' coordination capacity including OCHA's role in the Cash Working Group; and encouraging NNGO cluster co-leadership. On information management, one of the recommendations was the development and dissemination of clear guidance on OCHA reporting requirements; and on nexus, strengthening efforts to expanding nexus programs wherever possible. The floor was then opened for questions.
6. CCCM/UNHCR welcomed the mission findings and recommendations. He stressed that it was extremely challenging to engage local actors in Myanmar given their heightened safety risks and limited funding for local actor coordinator roles. GHC questioned the feasibility of local actor engagement in the health cluster given the prominent role of health sector workers in the opposition movement, and how protection for local partners was considered in the recommendations. Mr. Syed noted that the mission had acknowledged the challenging context and highlighted the importance of engaging with all actors on the ground. Regarding safety and protection for local actors, this related to finding 6, whereby support was required at the regional and headquarters levels. With regard to the funding for local actors, this was linked to registration issues of national NGOs and their access to financing mechanisms. Health and nutrition clusters which were traditionally more in contact with the *de facto* authorities for operational issues had in turn deterred local actors from engaging with the clusters. Ms. Mengistu noted that national organizations were already taking a risk and had even proposed additional avenues for engagement in various humanitarian coordination fora. It was also noted that donors were also prepared to give funding to local actors. In closing, Ms. Pack reminded that the next P2P mission was planned for Sudan.

Action point

- i. GCCs: Cluster coordinators to follow up with (1) trainings and appointment of national staff as cluster and inter-cluster coordinators, and (2) support Myanmar cluster coordinators to enhance the participation of national NGOs in cluster coordination structures.

Operational Updates

7. Ms. Pack opened the agenda item on operational updates, noting that a full briefing on Afghanistan was scheduled in February. She invited Ms. Moria Little (OAD/OCHA) to give a brief operational update on Afghanistan. Ms. Little gave an overview of the situation on the ground and an update of the ongoing IASC mission. On 24 December 2022, the latest series of directives from the Taliban authorities stated that NGOs could not hire female national staff. This was immediately and unevenly implemented, leading to confusion amidst a lack of parameters for application across the sectors. Ms. Little noted that it was a dangerous moment for humanitarian community, with donors indicating that all funding would be stopped if the Taliban did not rescind the ban. The HCT then consulted the IASC Principals.
8. Over the last several weeks, an "operational pause" has been in place with the intention to give space to the clusters to assess the impact of the ban on their work and to give time to negotiate with the Taliban authorities on operational issues. This was followed by an IASC Principals mission led by the ERC, and composed of Save the Children US, Care, UNICEF. The mission is expected to end on 26 January. The mission met with the HCT, partners on the ground and the ministries with the aim to determine where scope remained to work with women and to define principles on restarting programs and continuing advocacy. The findings would be articulated in the form of a concept of operations articulating what aid would look like following the ban, to be followed by a period of monitoring and trial. She noted that the ban has had a very severe impact on operations, and the goal of consultations has been to balance pragmatism with principles. In Afghanistan, 28 million people are in need assistance, and the coldest winter in 15 years has already resulted in deaths and severe impact on livestock.

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9. On Somalia, Ms. Randa Hassan (GCCG-S) noted that there would be a joint HCT-ICCG retreat in February. The discussions have focused on giving greater presence to the clusters and ensuring that Cluster Lead Agencies (CLAs) were interacting effectively with the clusters. The HC plans to meet with all the clusters ahead of the retreat with an aim to bolster the role of CLAs. OCHA is planning a training at the sub-national level on coordination with clusters and partners. The system-wide scale-up in Somalia will expire next month and discussions are ongoing on how to take this forward.
10. On Haiti, the EDG met several times to discuss ways to strengthen coordination and a possible scale-up of response. No decision has been reached so far; a collective commitment remained to strengthen the cholera and nutrition responses given that cholera has now reached the entire country. The decision on possible activation of clusters also remained pending. A donor briefing was held on 26 January to explore ways to strengthen funding for coordination. GCCG-S received a request to organize a workshop on coordination fundamentals and good practices. GCCs were invited to participate in the virtual workshop to support the sectors in Haiti. GHC and GLC expressed interest. More details would be provided in due course.

Action point

- ii. GCCs: Express interest in participating in the virtual workshop to support sectors in Haiti following further information from GCCG-S.

GCCG support mission to oPt

11. Ms. Ramos provided an overview of key findings from the GCCG support mission to oPt between 9 to 21 January. There were four members in the mission: GWC, GFC, GCCG Co-Chair and GCCG-S. The aim of the mission was four-fold: (1) capacity strengthening of cluster coordinators in Gaza and the West Bank; (2) advise on overall coordination structure for oPt; (3) provide expert guidance to Localization Working Group; (4) support mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues. The mission held in-depth discussions with the ICCG, met with over 400 humanitarian and other actors relevant to the response (UN, international and national/local NGOs, women-led organization, donors, PA, affected people), and held over 40 meetings on various focus areas working across all regions, some of which included training components. A draft mission report will be shared with the HCT for comments in the first week of February.
12. Key underpinning issues included: (i) Do you need clusters in both West Bank and Gaza? Adaptations need in view of protracted nature of crisis? Should one or various of Areas A, B, and C be prioritized? (ii) How do you reconcile and differentiate national and West Bank cluster coordinator roles which have become blurred? (iii) Do you need a national ICCG (NICCG)? Questions were raised around whether maximum efficiencies in coordination were present given that same actors were present across various coordination bodies. Variability in the level of knowledge and resources across the clusters was seen. Priority actions required from cluster coordinators were: induction briefings and packages for new cluster members and refreshers for existing cluster members; Strategic Advisory Groups (SAGs) to be placed across all clusters; CCPM roll-out across all clusters; support learning opportunities; and increasing frequency of travel of national coordinators to Gaza, where 75 per cent of the response is being coordinated from.
13. Five options were developed and presented for restructuring the current coordination structure in oPt. Ms. Ramos elaborated on the recommended option – model 2, which entailed West Bank and Gaza ICCGs having direct lines to the HCT, and the NICCG as a strategic body to drive and inform decision-making. The need to improve linkages with development actors and the clusters, NICCG and the HCT was highlighted.
14. On localization, action points identified include engaging LNAs in leadership roles in coordination structures; encouraging INGOs to support shadowing and mentoring of LNAs; streamlining coordination and HRP processes; continually exploring opportunities for transition of clusters functions; exploring opportunities to engage with SDGs WGs – UNSDCF; and including clusters in localization taskforce. On AAP, recommendations were to better share AAP feedback; promote better understanding of correlations between MSNA findings and service delivery, and maximize potential to enhance the use of CBO networks to support AAP efforts.
15. Ms. Skuric-Prodanovic referred to the varying levels of engagement with the authorities across different clusters/agencies. She noted that one of the follow up points was to follow up with GPC and GSC on how support was provided to non-traditional cluster leads in oPt. A dedicated briefing by the oPt mission team members will be organized outside of a GCCG meeting to present the findings in more detail, and bilateral meetings will be organized with some clusters on specific issues.

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16. The floor was opened for questions. Mr. Angel Pascual (GSC) proposed a bilateral meeting, if necessary, regarding coordination issues identified in the Shelter cluster in oPt. Mr. Bruno Donat (MA) inquired if the mission had met with AoRs including Mine Action in Gaza. This was confirmed by Ms. Ramos.

Action points

- iii. GCCG-S: Finalize and disseminate oPt mission report to the GCCG.
- iv. GCCG-S: Organize a dedicated briefing on oPt support mission.

2023 GCCG Workplan

17. Ms. Skuric-Prodanovic introduced the agenda item on the 2023 GCCG Workplan, noting that there was some carry-over from 2022.
18. Ms. Hassan (GCCG-S) presented the draft GCCG Workplan, thanked participants for their inputs and invited GCCs to consider whether it was over ambitious. Pending issues were: (2.1) ICC Training Module Development and Rollout – GCCs requested clarity on resourcing for the rollout and which aspects will be included in the ICC Training Module. The task team focal points have been contacted to clarify; (4.2) Terms and definitions – One GCC asked whether this activity should be linked to the timeframe of a possible review of the Cluster Coordination Reference Module (CCRM). GCCG-S suggested to first finalize activity 4.2 (February-May 2023) given repeated requests from the field and have the terms and definitions paper contribute to future efforts as needed (IASC IDP review, CCRM review as relevant); (4.4 & 4.5) Non-activated settings and cluster transition – these have been split into two activities. As the same groups remain responsible for both activities, GCCs were asked to re-consider their engagement to ensure commitment and proper follow up; (4.5) Cluster transition – following comments that this is an ambitious activity, this item will now stretch into 2024; (4.6) Preparedness – request to review the timeframes on this, which will now be Q3 2023-Q1 2024; (4.7) Revision of CCRM – questions remain around feasibility of undertaking this, given ongoing IDP review and the USG Flagship Initiative; (6.1) Localization – indicative timeframes added, along with a note that localization elements should be included in the next survey in 2024.
19. The floor was opened for discussion. GHC and CCCM/IOM noted that activity 4.7 should not be a light review, and a proper review would take a minimum of 12 months. Ms. Skuric-Prodanovic proposed coming first to an agreement on the scope of such a review, sounding out the appetite across the IASC especially in light of the IDP review that has been launched, before getting into details of timelines, etc. GHC sought clarity on who would give the mandate to review CCRM and who would be tasked with its implementation. Ms. Skuric-Prodanovic clarified that agreement would need to be sought from the IASC – most probably OPAG – and that a task force of the GCCG would be the most logical lead of this. Ms. Hassan further clarified that for 4.4 and 4.5, since these were split, each group must identify new leadership roles. GBV AoR asked about the difference between being a lead and a participant. GCCG-S will follow up bilaterally with GCCs on pending items in order to finalize the Workplan.

Action points

- v. GCCs: Provide feedback on their participation in the activities related to non-activated settings and cluster transitions, as well as clarifying leadership roles.
- vi. GCCG-S: Finalize 2023 GCCG Workplan following further GCCG feedback.

AOB

20. Due to time constraints, the agenda item on CCPM survey results will be postponed to February. Survey results will be shared via email.
21. Ms. Skuric-Prodanovic announced that the next regular GCCG meeting will be on 15 February 2023 from 14:00 – 16:00 GVA. Tentative agenda items are: (i) update on the USG Flagship Initiative; (ii) briefing on Afghanistan; (iii) JIAF update; (iv) briefing from the Disability Reference Group; (v) CCPM mapping survey results. In addition, a separate briefing on the oPt support mission be held outside of the next GCCG meeting.
22. Mr. Ron Pouwels (CP) requested the GCCG to consider a mission to Somalia given the current coordination issues identified on mission. This will be further elaborated in the next meeting.

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- vii. GCCG-S: CP to briefly give the background to a possible GCCG mission to Somalia in the next meeting.