IPC Technical Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of the IPC Technical Advisory Group (TAG) is to lead the technical development of the IPC. The TAG is responsible for identifying issues and topics that need to be revised, tested or developed and for addressing specific requests from the IPC Global Steering Committee (SC).

This group also develops the terms of reference and timeline for specific tasks, activates and monitors technical working groups (TWG) on an as-needed basis to ensure delivery.

It supports the SC in decision-making and final approval of IPC tools and procedures.

Roles and responsibilities

The TAG structure aims at ensuring that issues related to the IPC acute scales and the chronic food insecurity scale are addressed by dedicated technical groups that have relevant expertise, while ensuring technical coherence, complementarity and consistency across IPC scales. To that end, the TAG leads technical development and proposes adaptations to the protocols common to the three IPC scales. Specifically, the TAG will undertake the following:

- Technically advise and make recommendations to the SC on IPC technical development, applied research, and compliance with IPC protocols, as needed.

- Identify needs for additional external technical expertise and recommend the establishment of a working group focusing on a specific issue.

- Provide oversight and guide the work of the working groups.

- Review, provide inputs, and validate outputs of the working groups; and clear technical reports, guidance notes and new tools and procedures.

- Organizations represented in the IPC governance structure commit to pursue the common interest of the IPC global initiative and respect the principles of equitable partnerships and confidentiality.

Membership

IPC TAG membership is restricted to Global IPC member agencies. The IPC TAG is composed of technical experts from agencies with a humanitarian and/or development/resilience mandate. Experts with a humanitarian profile are nominated to address issues related to AFI/AMN and those with development/resilience profiles to address issues related to the CFI. All TAG members will work on cross cutting issues that relate to all three scales.

To ensure balanced representation between AFI, CFI and malnutrition, agencies with cross-cutting mandates should also have multiple representation in the IPC TAG. In principle, a member organization working across the streams i.e., Acute and Chronic food insecurity and Malnutrition, may nominate three technical experts. Organizations may thus be represented by more than one person in the TAG but have only one vote in decision making to ensure equity.

Due to the interlinkages between the management structures of the IPC, it is important to have unique representation at TAG and SC (i.e., one dedicated person per group without overlap) to ensure accountability and management of the groups.

When the TAG activates a working group, the most appropriate technical expert from IPC member agencies should take part. Depending on the topic, this can be a TAG member or any other relevant expert from the organization. Other organizations that are not members of the TAG may also be invited to join a working group based on their area of expertise.

The IPC TAG is chaired by the IPC Global Lead for Technical Development and Information Systems, who is the overall Technical Lead in the IPC Global Support Unit (GSU).

The inclusion of new member organizations in the TAG will be subject to the decision of the IPC SC, as per SC standard decision-making processes, bearing in mind the need to maintain a workable size of the membership to ensure a balance between participation and efficient functioning of the IPC governance bodies.

Reporting lines and support

- The IPC TAG Chair, in collaboration with TAG members, reports regularly on activities to the Steering Committee.

- The TAG presents technical issues and recommendations to the IPC SC for review and decision.

- The SC holds the TAG accountable for work-plans and commitments.

- The IPC GSU acts as secretariat of the TAG and is responsible for documenting meeting minutes and action points for each meeting.

Working modalities

- The TAG functions as a dynamic technical advisory group to the IPC that is convened quarterly in structured teleconferences or face-to-face meetings. The TAG may have additional teleconferences as needed to review and advise on ongoing technical development issues.

- The meeting agenda is proposed by GSU in agreement with the TAG Chair with each topic labeled either (i) AFI/AMN, (ii) CFI or (iii) Cross cutting All TAG members receive the agenda and are invited to join sessions based on their expertise. For decisions related to the CFI scale, those TAG members with a development/resilience portfolio should convene, while for AFI and AMN related discussions TAG members with a humanitarian profile will convene.

- Members appointed as acute food insecurity and/or malnutrition experts make decisions on the AFI and AMN. Members appointed as development/resilience experts make decisions on the CFI scale. TAG representatives from organizations which do not have a second representative for CFI may also participate in decision making on the CFI scale. Cross-cutting decisions involving all IPC scales and the functioning of the IPC are made by the entire TAG, with each member organization having a single vote.

- Technical clearance of products by the TAG is made by consensus, or at a majority of at least 75 percent of TAG member organizations participating in the meeting, with one vote attributed to each organization. It is expected that, for decisions related to the IPC CFI, for agencies that have dual representation, it will be the member of the TAG designated as a development expert who will express the organization's position. The quorum for TAG meetings is set at 50 percent or more of the total number of member organizations.

- The TAG establishes procedures to activate Working Groups on an as-needed basis.

- TAG meeting minutes are systematically shared with all TAG members.

- Communication with TAG members may also be in writing (via e-mail), including capturing TAG comments on documents, feedback/positioning on specific questions/issues or validation.