

GiHA WG July 2025 Monthly Meeting Notes

Date & Time: Tuesday | 15 July 2025 | 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Location: ISCG Conference Room, Cox's Bazar

Attendees: Representatives from ISCG, Sectors/WGs (GVBSS, Protection, SCCCM, PSEA), organizations (ActionAid Bangladesh, BRAC, GUK, SCI, NGOP, CARITAS Bangladesh, PLAN International, Bandhu, Aid Cumilla, IFRC), WLO/WRO (BTS, RWWS, JNUS, BNPS), UN Agencies (UN Women, WFP, UNFPA, IOM, UNHCR, UNESCO, UNDP)

Agenda:

1. Introduction
 - Welcoming
2. Operational update from GiHA WG members
3. WLOs/ WROs workshop organized by NGO platform and GiHA WG
4. SCCCM organized workshop for CiCs on Gender
5. GBVSS organized training collaboration with GiHA WG and SRH WG
6. ISNA 2025 GiHA indicators
7. AoB

Agenda	Summary / Action Points
Welcome and introduction.	<p>1. Introductions</p> <p>Mehbuba Jabin, GiHA Coordinator for the ISCG Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group (GiHA WG), extended a warm welcome to all members in her opening remarks. All the members have given their brief introduction including members who joined online. Mehbuba Jabin briefly introduced the agendas before starting the discussion.</p>
Operational update from GiHA WG members	<p>JNUS Executive Director Sheuly Sharma shared a presentation outlining the organization's operational context, highlighting both strategic opportunities and persistent challenges.</p> <p>JNUS has significant opportunities to expand its impact through increased funding and partnerships, driven by a global emphasis on women's leadership and growing interest from UN agencies and NGOs. JNUS also has potential to influence policy through its grassroots presence and engagement with advocacy platforms. Additionally, it is leading innovation in humanitarian response by applying adaptive, context-specific, and community-driven approaches. JNUS faces challenges related to capacity gaps, including limited specialized expertise, difficulty attracting skilled staff, and the need to improve internal systems. Coordination remains complex due to a fragmented aid landscape, unequal partnerships, and risks of duplication. Protection concerns persist, including staff safety and safeguarding of beneficiaries. The organization is heavily</p>

dependent on short-term and competitive funding with complex donor requirements. Logistic barriers such as restricted access, security threats, and bureaucratic delays hinder field operations. Lastly, entrenched gender norms, skepticism towards women-led initiatives, and inter-community tensions pose social and cultural obstacles.

After Sheuly Sharma's presentation, Mehbuba invited Fahmida Kanta, Education Sector Focal, to present on gender integration within Cox's Bazar Education Sector response.

Fahmida briefly outlined how the Education Sector, with 47 partners, is promoting inclusive and gender-responsive education through joint efforts in camps and host communities. She highlighted key strategies such as targeted outreach to marginalized groups, female leadership in education spaces, and integration of gender-transformative content in curriculum and teacher training. The presentation also covered findings from a gender inclusion study showing improved decision-making among girls, changing attitudes among boys and educators, and increased confidence among young women. Ongoing and future initiatives include gender-transformative pedagogy, capacity-building with WLOs/WROs, and advocacy efforts to strengthen inclusive education.

Protection sector coordinator Johanna welcomed the emphasis on gender inclusion in education and raised concerns about the potential impact of learning center closures, particularly on adolescent girls, noting the compounded protection risks of school dropout. She recommended that future education sector analyses include this dimension to allow for timely action. Johanna also highlighted the need to address the gap left by departing host community teachers and suggested leveraging this as an opportunity to recruit more female teachers, including women with disabilities, to serve as role models and enhance inclusive education efforts.

After the education sector brief, AID Cumilla delivered a presentation highlighting their ongoing work across five districts, with a focus on GBV prevention, protection services, and women's empowerment in both camps and host communities. The presentation outlined their life-saving case management, community-based outreach (including EMAP and Girl Shine sessions), partnerships, and challenges faced in camp operations—while also sharing recommendations and mitigation strategies to sustain protection activities and staff morale amid operational disruptions.

<p>ISNA 2025 GiHA indicators</p>	<p>Following the AID Cumilla presentation, Mehbuba introduced the draft GiHA indicators proposed for the upcoming ISNA 2025. She clarified that although a wide range of questions had been submitted, only 10 GiHA-specific questions would be accepted in the final ISNA tool. Some of these proposed questions have been merged with those from other sectors and cross-cutting working groups to ensure coherence. Mehbuba walked participants through the draft questions</p> <p>Action Point: GiHA members are requested to review the draft ISNA 2025 gender indicators and submit their feedback or suggestions to Mehbuba by 16 July 2025.</p>
<p>WLOs/ WROs workshop is being organized by NGO platform and GiHA WG</p>	<p>Mehbuba then invited Sukarna Abdullah from the NGO Platform to share a brief on the upcoming workshop jointly organized by the NGO Platform and the GiHA Working Group, scheduled for 30 July 2025.</p> <p>Sukarna explained that the workshop aims to diversify NGO Platform membership by engaging WLOs that are not yet part of the platform, understand and address their priorities and barriers to active participation, and identify the challenges and good practices of WLOs operating in the current context of funding reductions. The expected outcomes include strengthened peer networks among WLOs involved in the Rohingya response, increased inclusion in the NGO Platform, and practical recommendations for enabling sustained and inclusive engagement. Additionally, the workshop seeks to document key WLO priorities for the 2025–2026 humanitarian response and develop proposals for capacity-sharing initiatives tailored to their needs. Mehbuba noted that some support may be required from GiHA Working Group members to ensure the success of the event.</p>
<p>SCCCM is organizing workshop for CiCs on Gender</p>	<p>Mehbuba then invited Arnob, the Gender Focal Point from SCCC, to speak about the upcoming SCCC thematic workshop for Camp-in-Charges (CiCs), which will focus on gender dynamics, inclusion, and the engagement of camp administration in the Rohingya response. Arnob shared that the objectives of the workshop are to promote a shared understanding of gender and protection dynamics—including the needs of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups—foster the exchange of good practices for inclusive coordination and promote leadership models grounded in equity and inclusion. Additionally, the workshop aims to generate practical and scalable recommendations to institutionalize gender-responsive governance across the Rohingya response.</p>

GBVSS is organizing training in collaboration with GiHA WG and SRH WG	<p>Mehbuba then provided an overview of the upcoming training being organized by the GBV Sub-Sector (GBVSS) in collaboration with the GiHA Working Group, focusing on community women's leadership and women-friendly policies. The training targets GBVSS members, SRH Working Group members, and WLOs. She shared that the objectives are to strengthen participants' leadership capacities while promoting awareness and support for the implementation of women-friendly policies. The training also aims to empower participants to facilitate peer exchange, build networks, identify supportive local practices, and navigate decision-making spaces effectively. Additionally, it seeks to enhance collaboration among the participating groups for collective advocacy and the development of inclusive, gender-responsive programming.</p>
Other Discussion	<p>In the final discussion, Sheuly Sharma expressed concern regarding the current livelihood trainings provided to Rohingya refugees, noting that while skills development is ongoing, there is inadequate support to link beneficiaries with broader markets. She emphasized that market linkage with wider consumer bases is crucial for sustaining these livelihood initiatives and suggested that involving the Parjatan Corporation could be a valuable step toward enhancing market access. In response, Mehbuba acknowledged the importance of the issue and assured that she would arrange a meeting with the LSDS sector soon to explore potential solutions and partnerships.</p> <p>Sadik from WFP sought clarification on how the NGO Platform is supporting Women-Led and Women's Rights Organizations (WLOs/WROs). In response, Sukarna explained that the NGO Platform, functioning as a coordination hub, is undertaking several initiatives to support WLOs/WROs. She highlighted that in May, the Platform organized a Donor Dialogue to connect WLOs/WROs with potential donors, aiming to improve funding access. Additionally, dedicated task forces have been established to work on key findings and challenges faced by WLOs/WROs in the field. These working groups also identify funding gaps and explore strategies to address and mitigate them, enabling local organizations to sustain and expand their efforts.</p> <p>Finally, Mehbuba thanked all participants for their active engagement and valuable contributions throughout the meeting and formally concluded the session.</p>
AOB	<p>For further information, please contact Mehbuba Jabin, GiHA Coordinator, ISCG. Email: mehbuba@iscgcb.org Afzal Hossain, Knowledge and Information Management Officer, UN Women. Email: afzal.hossain@unwomen.org</p>

Annex 1: Participant's List

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18	Johanna Reina	ISCG	Coordinator-Protection	Reina@unhcr.org
19	Fahmida Kanta	Plan International	Gender Specialist	Fahmida.kanta@planinternational.org
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20	Dr. Eumna Rahman	UNFPA	NFC-GVBSS	
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22	Rokeya Begum Shafali	AID Cumilla		
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28	Fahomida Amin	UNFPA	NFC-GVBSS	

Annex 2: Photos

